

**73 Brunel Road
Reading
Berkshire
RG30 3JJ**

Daylight Bat Survey

Ref: R1278/a

December 2015



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1** John Wenman Ecological Consultancy LLP was commissioned by Dan Brown to undertake a survey for the presence of bats within the semi-detached house at 73 Brunel Road in Reading, Berkshire.
- 1.1.2** The survey was commissioned in connection with planning proposals lodged with Reading Borough Council (planning reference 151912) seeking consent to construct a two storey rear and single storey front and rear extensions (refer to existing and proposed elevations in Appendix 3).

1.2 Legislative Background

- 1.2.1** All British bat species are fully protected by the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 ('Habitat Regulations'). In summary, the legislation combined makes it an offence to:
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place or intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a structure or place used for shelter by a bat;
 - Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb bats; in particular any disturbance which is likely to impair the ability of bats to survive, breed or reproduce or nurture their young; or in the case of hibernating or migrating bats, to hibernate or migrate; or to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species;
 - Deliberately kill, injure or take any bat.
- 1.2.2** The government's statutory conservation advisory organisation, Natural England, is responsible for issuing European Protected Species licences that would permit activities that would otherwise lead to an infringement of the Habitat Regulations. A licence can be issued if the following three tests have been met:
- **Regulation 53(9)(a)** - there is "no satisfactory alternative" to the derogation, and;

- **Regulation 53(9)(b)** - the derogation “will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range” and;
- **Regulation 53(2)(e)** - the derogation is for the purposes of “preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment”.

1.2.3 Local authorities have a statutory duty under Regulation 9(5) of the Habitat Regulations to have regard to requirements of the Habitats Directive in the exercise of their functions. They must therefore consider and determine whether these three tests are likely to be satisfied by an application affecting European Protected Species, when a licence is required, before granting planning permission.

1.2.4 If a European Protected Species licence is necessary, a licence can be sought once all the necessary planning consents have been granted. Natural England aims to issue a decision on licence applications within 30 working days of submission.

1.2.5 Licensable projects affecting small numbers of seven commonly occurring species occupying roosts of low conservation importance may fall under the remit of the Low Impact Class Licence, which would enable consultants registered by Natural England to carry licensable work under the Class Licence once sites have been registered in advance with Natural England. Registration forms must be submitted at least three weeks before work is due to start and if acceptable, Natural England aims to register sites within two weeks.

1.3 Site Location and Context

1.3.1 The house at 73 Brunel Road is situated on the southern side of Brunel Road in Southcote to the south-west of Reading town centre, Berkshire (OS grid reference: SU 68490 71530).

1.3.2 The local area is suburban and the house is surrounded by further residential properties and their associated gardens immediately to the east, west and north. An area of woodland, grassland and the Holy Brook is situated on the southern boundary of the house's garden. In the wider area: the Kennet Avon Canal is located approximately 580 metres to the south, providing more extensive potential foraging opportunities for bats.

2 SURVEY METHOD

2.1 Building Inspection

2.1.1 A survey of the interior and exterior of the house was undertaken by two ecologists registered under Natural England Bat Survey Class Licence CL018 on the 11th December 2015.

2.1.2 The search was undertaken with the aid of binoculars and a high power (1 million candle power) torch. Signs of occupation by bats and features that could offer potential roosting sites following standard survey guidelines were looked for (Bat Conservation Trust 2012; Mitchell-Jones 2004; Mitchell-Jones & McLeish 2004).

2.1.3 The following may indicate the presence of a bat roost within a building:

- Bat droppings (these can be found externally, especially in sheltered areas such as window sills, underneath roost entrances or internally within a roof space);
- Piles of insect remains e.g. moth wings (these may be indicative of regular feeding sites used by species such as brown long eared bat);
- Staining at roost entrances or within the roost (urine and oil from fur can leave stains on timbers when bats are gathered for long periods);
- Bats (live or dead).

2.1.4 Residential, hipped and pitched roofed buildings may offer potential roosting sites in a number of locations, favoured locations include:

- Gaps and cracks in brick or block work, which provide access to a wall cavity or sheltered crevice;
- At the eaves behind barge boards and soffits;
- Under lead flashing, roof and ridge tiles;
- Within an enclosed roof space – species such as brown long eared bat for example will typically cluster around the ridge beam or at gable ends.

2.2 Survey Constraints

2.2.1 Full access was available to the exterior and interior of the house; therefore there were no significant constraints to the survey.

3 SURVEY FINDINGS

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1** The external and internal bat survey findings are detailed on a plan with target notes in **Appendix 2**; photographs of the site are shown in **Appendix 1**. There follows a description of the external and internal survey findings:

3.2 External Survey

- 3.2.1** The semi-detached house had a hipped roof covered in interlocking roof tiles (**Photographs 1 & 2**).
- 3.2.2** The interlocking concrete roof tiles were all in place and tightly fitted, offering limited access and roosting opportunities for bats (**Photograph 3; Target note 1**). The hip and ridge tiles were all in place and mortared fully on the front and side elevation (**Photograph 4; Target note 2**). Mortar was missing from underneath one hip tile on the rear roof elevation; however the gap was only superficial and considered unsuitable for use by bats (**Photograph 5; Target note 3**).
- 3.2.3** Soffits boxes around the eaves of the house were sealed tightly to the brickwork walls and window frames (**Photograph 6; Target note 4**). Lead flashing was tightly fitted around the chimney with limited roosting and access opportunities for bats (**Target note 5**). A number of gaps were present behind the hanging tiles on the wall to the front of the house in particular around the bottom corners of the window (**Photograph 7; Target note 6**),
- 3.2.4** A narrow gap was present behind the lead flashing on the flat roof above the front door, which was thickly cobwebbed and didn't lead into any crevices suitable for roosting bats (**Photograph 8; Target note 7**).
- 3.2.5** No evidence of bats was visible to the exterior of the house.

3.3 Internal Survey

- 3.3.1** The roof space was accessed through a loft hatch and had an estimated floor to ridge height of 1 ½ - 1 ¾ metres. The hipped roof was of 'cut and pitch' construction with a ridge beam which was lightly cobwebbed throughout (**Photograph 9; Target note 8**). The roof was lined with paper covered roofing felt, which had a number of gaps present including where the felt overlapped, where it was sagging and holes were visible exposing the undersides of the roof tiles especially at eaves level (**Photograph 10; Target notes 9 & 10**). The floor of the space was boarded with fibreglass insulation which had been installed in 2014. The eaves were mostly filled with fibreglass insulation (**Photograph 11; Target note 11**).
- 3.3.2** Gaps were visible around the blockwork of the internal dividing wall leading into the neighbouring property (**Photograph 12; Target note 12**). The chimney also had gaps where the felt was loose which were cobwebbed (**Target note 13**).
- 3.3.3** No evidence of bat activity was found inside the loft space during the survey.

4 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1.1** The only external features the house had suitable for crevice dwelling bats, were the gaps behind the hanging tiles to the front of the house; however the planned extension will not have an impact on the tiles and they will be retained as existing. Therefore, in the absence of any evidence of the presence of bats, it is considered highly unlikely that the planned work to extend the property will have any impact on bats or their roosts.
- 4.1.2** In the unlikely event that bats are encountered during the course of the building work, the work should stop immediately and a licensed ecologist called to site to attend to the bat and provide advice on how to proceed; work should not continue until further written advice has been received. At this point, a European Protected Species licence may be required to permit the work to continue lawfully.

5 REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust (2012). *Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines 2nd Edition*. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Mitchell-Jones, A. J. (2004). *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature, Peterborough.

Mitchell-Jones, A. J. & McLeish, A. P. (2004). *Bat Workers' Manual (3rd Edition)*. JNCC, Peterborough.

APPENDIX 1 - SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



1. Front of the house viewed from the north



2. Rear of the house viewed from the south.



3. Interlocking roof tiles tightly fitted on the roof.



4. The ridge and hip tiles all in place and mortared fully.



5. Mortar missing from a hip tile to the rear of the house.



6. Soffits boxes around the eaves of the house sealed tightly to the brickwork walls and window frames.



7. Gaps behind hanging tiles around window to the front of the house.



8. Narrow gap behind lead flashing on the porch to the front of the house.



9. The hipped roof with a ridge beam which was lightly cobwebbed.



10. Paper backed felt sagging in places.

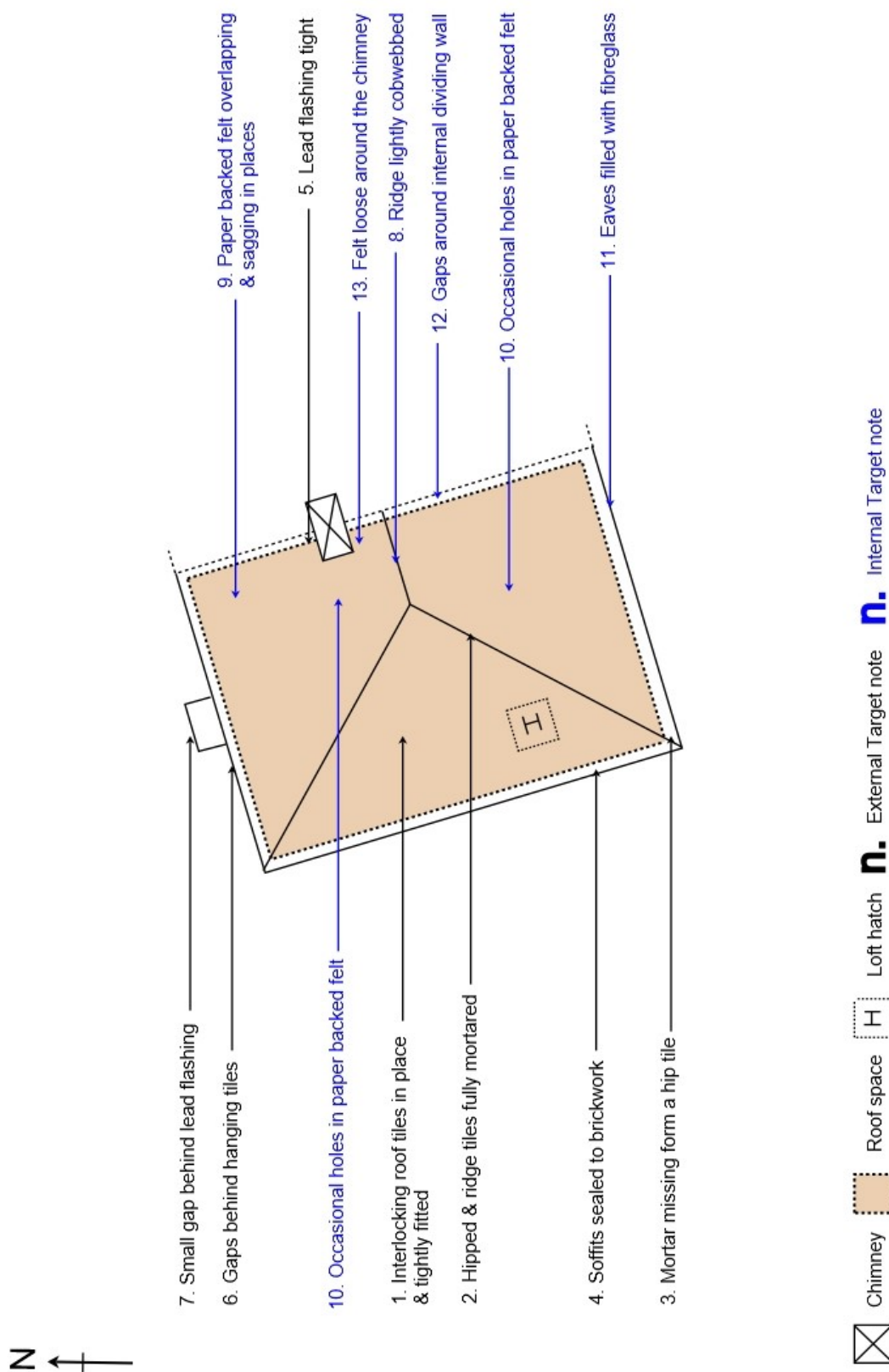


11. Fibreglass insulation extending to the eaves.



12. Gaps visible around the internal dividing wall.

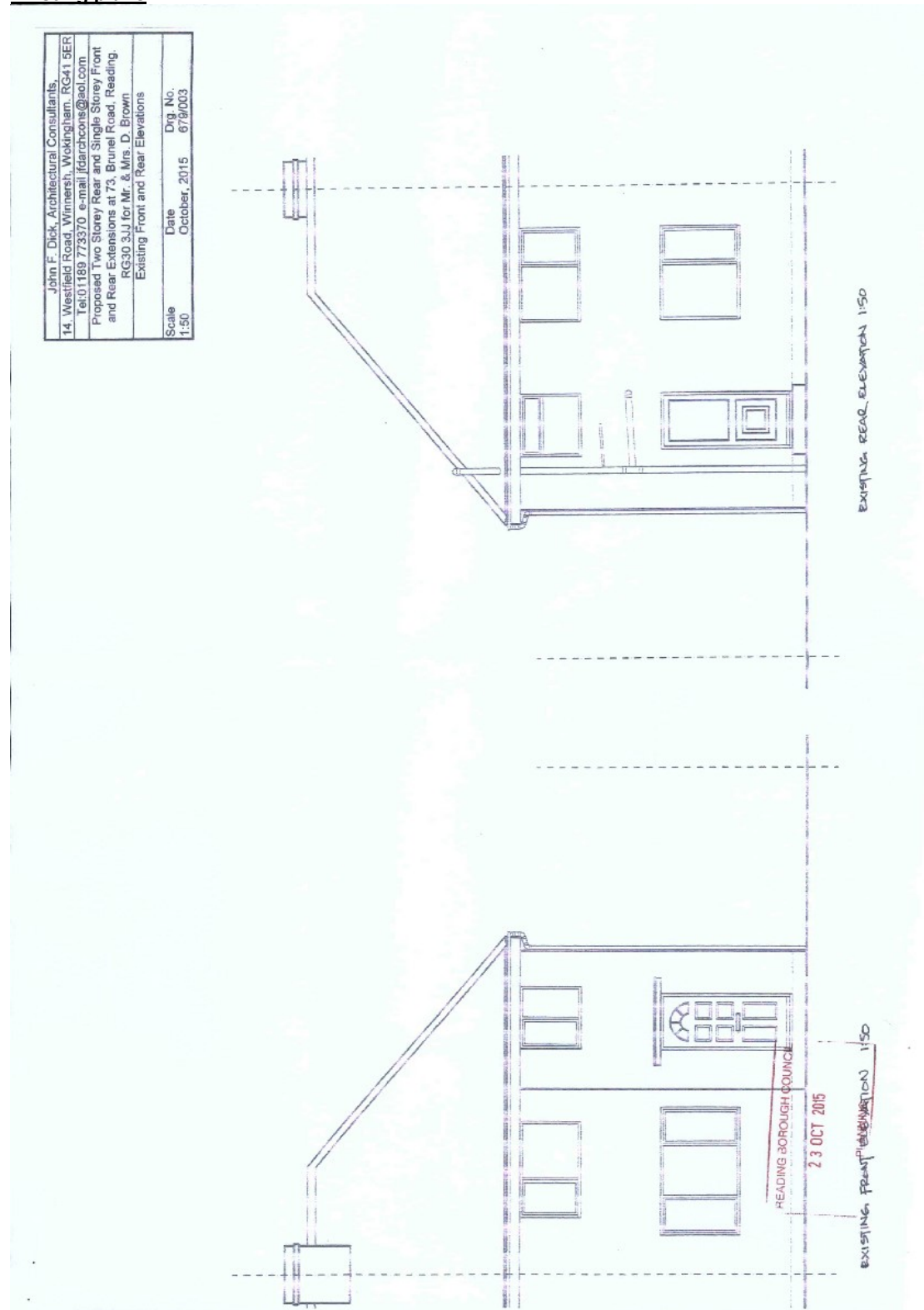
APPENDIX 2 - DAYLIGHT BAT SURVEY FINDINGS



Drawn by:	Date	Scale:	73 Brunel Road Reading	
VP	Dec 2015	Not to scale	Daylight Bat Survey Findings	

APPENDIX 3 – EXISTING AND PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

Existing plans

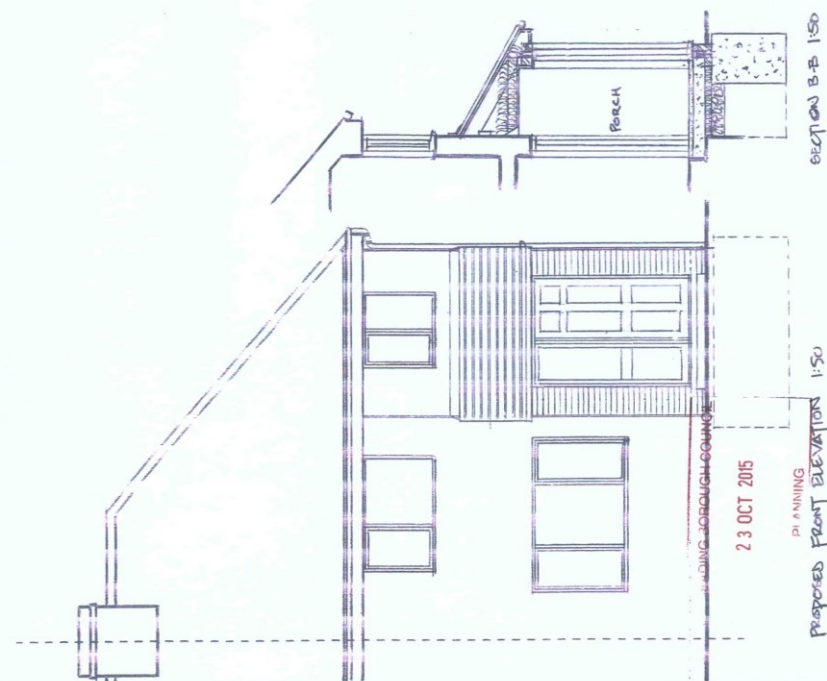
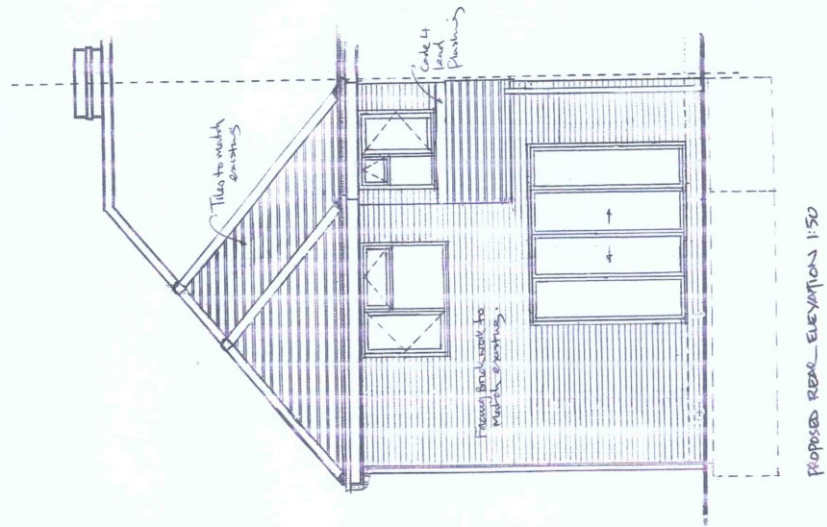


John Wenman Ecological Consultancy

73 Brunel Road, Reading - Daylight Bat Survey (R1278a)

Proposed plans

John F. Dick, Architectural Consultants, 14, Westfield Road, Winnersh, Wokingham, RG41 5ER Tel: 01189 773370 e-mail: jfdarchcons@aol.com			
Proposed Two Storey Rear and Single Storey Front and Rear Extensions at 73, Brunel Road, Reading, RG30 3JJ for Mr. & Mrs. D. Brown			
Proposed Front and Rear Elevations and Section B - B			
Scale 1:50	Date October, 2015	Dwg. No. 679/005	



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