Helen Evriviades BSc MSc MCIEEM
Natural England CL18 Bat Class Licence (Bat Survey Class 2) Licence number: 2025-84979-CL18-BAT.
9 Kildare Gardens
Caversham
Reading
RG4 5JA

7th February 2026

Mrs Christy Ho
Highview
All Hallows Road
Caversham
Reading
RG4 5LP

BY EMAIL

Dear Christy,

This letter provides a report of a Preliminary Roost Assessment for bats which was undertaken on 7th February at your property at Highview, All Hallows Road, Caversham RG4 5LP. This was undertaken at your request after Reading Borough Council (RBC) (planning officer Nathalie Weekes) asked you to provide a bat survey of the property, to provide information to inform the Council's consideration of the planning application for the extension of the property.

Surveyor Credentials

I am an ecologist, with more than 25 years' experience as a consultant ecologist. I am a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management and have held a Class 2 Survey Licence from Natural England for bats for more than 15 years (current licence number, confirmed by Natural England in November 2025: 2025-84979-CL18-BAT).

Background and Property Context Including Proposed Works Description

It is understood that you are seeking planning permission to extend your property at Highview, All Hallows Road, to provide additional living accommodation for your family. The building is a c. 1960's two-storey detached property of brick construction situated in Caversham, Berkshire. A review of recent aerial photography via GoogleEarth reveals that the property lies within the outskirts of urban Reading but with green space nearby (Reading Crematorium and Henley Road Cemetery 300m to the north and greenspace around the Berry Brook 250 to the south) and the property is on a designated 'Green Link' as per local plan policy EN12. This means that the property sits in proximity to suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bats.

The proposed works to the building will provide a two-storey extension to the rear (north-eastern) elevation, to tie into the existing two-storey rear-elevation section of the house. A further single storey extension is also proposed across the rear of the building, beyond the existing footprint of the building. Furthermore, the plans propose to raise the main roof of the house, replacing the existing main roof with one of a steeper pitch and higher ridge line, to provide a larger internal roof-space. It is understood that whilst the planning application covers all of these elements of the proposed

building extension, the intention is to carry out the works to the rear elevation first (due to commence in 2026), with the raising of the main roof being a longer-term goal of the proposed house improvements that may not take place for some years.

Legislation and Planning Policy Relevant to Bats and their Roosts

As described in the advice provided you by RBC's planning officer, all species of bats receive protection under UK law and it is a criminal offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2017 (The Habitat Regulations), to deliberately or recklessly destroy or damage their roosts, or to disturb, kill or injure them without first having obtained the relevant licence for derogation from the Regulations from the relevant Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (Natural England).

Furthermore, in relation to planning policy and the considerations of RBC, the National Planning Policy Framework refers to Government Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation which provides further guidance in respect of statutory obligations for biodiversity and geological conservation and their impact within the planning system. Paragraph 99 of the Circular states: "It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision. The need to ensure ecological surveys are carried out should therefore only be left to coverage under planning conditions in exceptional circumstances, with the result that the surveys are carried out after planning permission has been granted." This letter report provides the necessary information such that RBC are able to discharge their duty to have due regard to the potential for the presence of protected species (namely bats) in their consideration of the planning application.

Survey Approach

A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the building was undertaken by Helen Evriviades on 7th February 2026. The weather conditions at the time of the survey were overcast but not raining, with a temperature of around 10°C. The survey was carried out using close-focussing binoculars and a high-powered torch where necessary, with reference to current good practice guidance for bat survey (Collins, J (Ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London) (as last updated in March 2024). The building was inspected internally (specifically within the existing roof-space) and externally, with all building elevations accessible during the survey. Ladders were used to enable close inspection of external features, such as soffit boxes, roof tiles and vents etc.

Results

The current property was of brick construction with cavity walls (filled with small bead insulation). The roof structure appeared to be an early type of fink truss roof structure ("w" shaped truss), but it also had a purlin connecting the rafters, along with a central ridge board (See Photo 1). The roof tiles were underlaid with bituminised roofing felt which remained in good repair with no significant rips or holes, except for where a hole had been made for roof solar panel electrical connections. At this location, the solar panel connection point was well-sealed through the interlocking roof tiles, providing no potential access or egress points for bats.

Within the roof space, no ingress of external light or breeze was observed (with the roof-space light switched off). No evidence of bats (droppings, feeding remains, staining, dead or live bats) was observed. Locations in which some bats might typically roost (e.g. along the ridge board) were

observed to be heavily cobwebbed (Photo 2). Furthermore, locations which bats might enter (e.g. top of gable end, through ridge vents, at eaves) etc were observed to be well-sealed and/or full of cobwebs. All these observations indicated no use by bats (Photo 3 & 4).

Externally, the roof tiles were observed to be in good condition, comprising interlocking pan-type tiles which are probably made of concrete given the time of construction of the building. These were observed to be well-sealed over the roof and along the valleys, hips and ridge, with no loose or missing tiles observed. Solar panels were also set on the roof; these are considered unsuitable as bat roosting features due to their wide temperature variability (photo 5). At the eaves, potential gaps in the pantiles at the verge were sealed with an insect mesh and/or mortar (Photo 6). The soffit box under the eaves of the main roof (white plastic with narrow ventilation slits too small to enable bat access) was also in good condition and well-sealed with no gaps suitable for bats between the wall and the soffit right around the building (see Photo 7).

The existing single-storey section to the rear elevation was roofed with bituminised roofing felt, well-sealed with flashing to the main building (Photo 8). A small, tiled mansard roof section was also present on this single-storey part of the building, also tiled with interlocking tiles to match the main roof (see photo 5); small gaps at lifting flashing on the edge of the mansard section were filled with spiders' webs (Photo 9). The fascia board around the south-easterly edge of the flat-roofed section was mostly well-sealed or had small gaps filled with cobwebs. However, the end of the fascia board of this single-storey section of the building did not quite overlap with the main building, presenting a small gap. However, this small gap, on close observation via a ladder, enabled a view of the insulation board (celotex or similar) to the interior and spiders-webs were also observed in this gap, meaning no evidence of use by bats (Photo 10). The gap at the end of the fascia board also lacked any evidence of staining around it which may otherwise have indicated prior use by bats. Whilst this feature may have initially appeared to potentially provide a suitable access point for bats from the ground, close inspection revealed there was no evidence of bat use and the gap does not appear to provide access to a suitable roosting space or crevice location which could be used by bats and so is not considered a potential bat roosting feature.

The front elevation supported flat hanging tiles which were mostly well sealed with no potential roosting opportunities for bats. However, there were two locations where there was either a missing hanging tile or where there was a lifting tile at the flashing around the window, which may give access to a potential bat roosting space in the narrow gap between the battens on which the hanging tiles would be fixed (Photograph 11). No evidence of use by bats could be observed in these locations but their use by bats cannot be ruled out. However, both these locations are on the front elevation of the building where they will not be affected by the proposed works to the building.

Conclusion and Recommendations.

This report provides the findings of a Preliminary Roost Assessment for bats at Highview, All Hallows Road, Caversham, undertaken on 7th February 2026 by a suitably qualified and bat licensed ecologist. The assessment was requested to inform Reading Borough Council's consideration of the planning application for a proposed extension to the property.

No evidence of bats or bat roosts was found during the survey. No potential bat roosting features were identified to be present, with the exception of two potential access points for bats noted at missing and lifting hanging tiles on the front elevation only. However, no evidence of these features being used by bats was observed. Furthermore, these features will not be affected by the proposed house extension works.

Given these findings, and taking account of the scope of the works, no further surveys with respect to bats are required to inform the planning application, due to the absence of any potential bat roosting features that will be affected by the proposed extension works.

It is recommended that if the works on the main roof are delayed by more than two years that the roof is checked again prior to commencement of works on the roof, to make sure that features suitable for roosting bats have not developed in the intervening period.

It is understood that measures to enhance the building for bats are being sought by the owners. It is recommended that external features (e.g. one or more bat boxes, such as the Lela Bat Box or Schwegler 1FQ Bat Box (available from NHBS or Wildcare, for example) could be affixed to the elevations of the existing building, or to the elevations of the proposed new rear extension. Given the potential for the future works on the main roof, the bat boxes should be affixed below the level of the eaves to avoid them being disturbed by future works on the main roof, but at around c. 2-3m height to avoid potential tampering. If more than one bat box is provided, these boxes should be secured on different building aspects, to provide varied thermal conditions for potential bat use.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Evriviades MCIEEM

Photographs referenced in this letter report – see over.

Photographs of Highview, All Hallows Road, February 2026.

Photograph 1 – Internal Roof Structure showing ridge board, rafters, purlins and “w” frame.



Photograph 2 – Ridge Board Example Photograph



Photograph 3 – Ridge Vent – full of cobwebs



Photograph 4 – well-sealed gable end (internal) and bituminised roofing felt between rafters and tiles.



Photograph 5 – External roof structure and roof tiles





Photo 6 – insect mesh and/or mortar at verge (blocking potential gaps at edge of eaves)

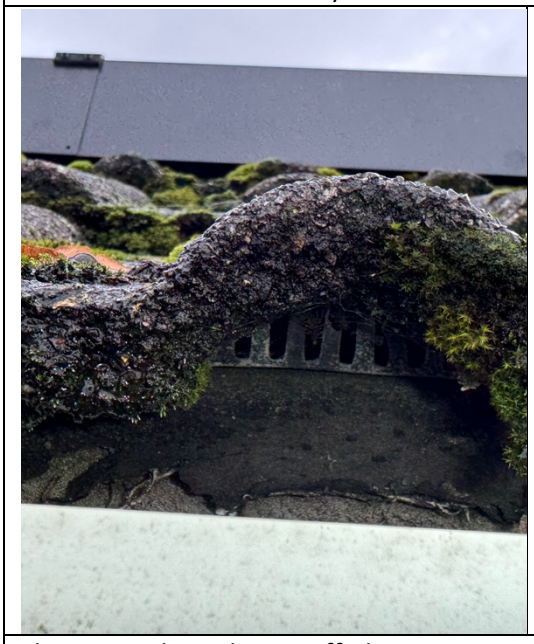




Photo 7 – white plastic soffit box.



Photo 8 – Flashing around single-storey section of building at rear elevation.



Photo 9 – Lifting flashing at edge of Mansard section of flat roof – spiders webbed



Photo 10 – Insulation boarding and spider webs (and lack of staining) observed at gap at end of fascia board of flat-roofed section of building.



Photo 11 – Gaps in hanging tiles at front elevation (NB won't be affected by proposed works).

