

Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site:

Tilehurst Cobbler, School Road, Tilehurst, Reading RG31 5AR

Client:

Manjit Gill

Survey date:

02/07/2026

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Reading Borough Council. The creation of a single-person studio at the back of Tilehurst Cobbler, the creation of a dormer on the existing roof of Tilehurst Cobbler as well as internal rearrangements.

On the assumption that site conditions and habitats remain unchanged, the results of this assessment will remain valid for 18 months from the date of this survey i.e. until January 2028, in accordance with CIEEM guidance in the lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys. This survey and report should be updated if a planning application has not been submitted within this timeframe.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following is work you will need to commission to obtain planning permission and to comply with legislation. Further information, along with opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, are outlined in the proceeding sections of this report.

Table 1: Summary of key findings arising from this survey.

Key Findings
B1 and B2 are classified as having negligible value for roosting bats and as such no further surveys are recommended.

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the PRA was to determine the presence or evaluate the likelihood of the presence of roosting bats, and to gain an understanding of how bats could use the site for roosting, foraging or commuting.

No previous ecology reports have been produced for this site by Arbtech Consulting Ltd or, to the author’s knowledge, by any other consultancy.

Methodology

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2025](#).

Survey Details

The site survey was undertaken on 02/07/2026 by Harriet Pryer BA (Hons), MA, accredited on a Level 2 Natural England Bat Licence (number available on request), Graduate Ecologist.

Table 2: The weather conditions during the survey.

Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
24.4	46.0	9	9.6	None

Survey Limitations

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on the site and in the wider landscape, the ecology and biology of species as currently understood.

There were no specific limitations to the survey.

2. SITE LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

2.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Site Location & Context

The site is centred at National Grid reference SU 67018 73928 and has an area of approximately 0.01ha.

The site comprises one dwelling (B1), outbuilding (B2) and associated hardstanding. It is situated within the civil parish of Tilehurst, Berkshire. There are no noteworthy habitats onsite. Aerial imagery shows the local landscape to have an urban character, with several small parks nearby. The closest waterbody is the River Thames, which lies 1.3km to the northeast. Such features likely enhance the area for a variety of species, including bats.

Priority Habitats

There are six priority habitats within 2km of the site. These comprise deciduous woodland, ancient & semi-natural woodland, lowland dry acid grassland, open mosaic habitats on previously developed land, wood pasture and parkland and ancient replanted woodland. The closest priority habitat comprises deciduous woodland, located 280m NE from the site.

Due to the site and its surroundings being densely urbanised, the site is not considered to be well-connected to any priority, important, or otherwise more extensive, habitats in the immediate vicinity.

Designated Sites

Statutory Designations within 2km

There are four statutory designations within 2km of the site, as detailed below:

Table 3: The statutory designated sites within 2km of the site boundary.

Designation	Distance from Site
Blundells Copse Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	415m SE
Mcilroy Park Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	710m NE

Lousehill Copse Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	725m SE
Round Copse Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	790m E

SSSI Risk Zone

The site does fall within the impact risk zone for Pincent's Kiln SSSI however, the proposed development type is not listed as possible high risk with regard to this designation.

Non-Designated Sites

The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from the local records centre. Whilst some habitats in the wider landscape may host designations, the immediate environs of the site do not host habitats likely to be of designable quality.

2.2 Foreseen Impacts

No direct impacts to any designated sites will occur as a result of the proposed development, due to the small scale and low overall impact of the development from such sites (where known), alongside additional factors such as distance in combination with connectivity disrupting barriers.

2.3 Recommendations

No recommendations.

3. FAUNA: BATS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

3.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL data and local records

A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licensed sites <2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitat either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence or will relocate to other known roost sites in close proximity to the licensed site. There are 4 EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site, as detailed below:

Table 4: EPSL survey returns for bats within a 2km radius.

EPSL Reference	Bat Species Affected	Distance from Site <i>(EPSL records are accurate to 100m)</i>	Impacts Allowed by Licence
EPSM2011-3499 EPSM2010-2341	Common pipistrelle (C-PIP); soprano pipistrelle (S-PIP); brown long-eared bat (BLE) C-PIP; BLE	~940m south	Destruction of a resting place
EPSM2011-3384	C-PIP	~780m southeast	Destruction of a resting place
2015-18545-EPS-MIT 2015-18545-EPS-MIT-1 2015-18545-EPS-MIT-2	BLE,C-PIP,S-PIP	~1.1km north	Destruction of a resting place
2019-41955-EPS-MIT 2020-50627-EPS-MIT	C-PIP	~1.6km west	Destruction of a resting place

There are no Special Areas of Conservation designated for bats within 10km of the site.

Foraging and commuting habitat

Given that the site is dominated by buildings and hardstanding, habitats recorded on site are assessed to have no significant value for commuting or foraging bats. Offsite within 2km these include deciduous woodland, ancient & semi-natural woodland, lowland dry acid grassland, open mosaic habitats on previously developed land, wood pasture and parkland and ancient replanted woodland. These habitats are likely to provide micro-climatic conditions that support invertebrates that will in turn provide foraging opportunities for local bat populations. Bats are well known to utilise linear features, including streets and roads, to aid navigation whilst travelling between foraging resources and roost sites.

Roosting habitat

Buildings to be impacted by the proposed development were assessed for their suitability to support roosting bats below. There are a total of two buildings on site. The main building (B1) and a shed (B2). All buildings were surveyed as they will be impacted by the proposed development. No evidence of roosting bats was identified. B1 will undergo structural changes, including amendments to the roof, and B2 will be demolished to facilitate the development.

Buildings

B1 : Commercial lower-storey/residential upper-storey

B1 is a two-storey building, with a split commercial and residential use. Its walls are comprised of painted brick and its windows and doors are uPVC. The roof features slate roof tiles. No evidence of bats was found during the internal inspection. This building has been assessed to have negligible suitability for roosting bats due to an absence of features that can be used by crevice or void dwelling species.



Building B1, northwestern elevation

Table 5a: The roosting features associated with building B1.

Feature	Materials/Details	Condition / description / suitability	Photograph
---------	-------------------	---------------------------------------	------------

Walls	Brick	Condition/description The brickwork was in good condition, with no cracks, crevices or areas of missing mortar that could offer access to crevice dwelling species. Suitability/access/evidence of bats None.	 <i>B1 walls, southeastern elevation</i>  <i>B1 walls, southern elevation</i>
-------	-------	---	--

Roof	Slate	Condition/description The tiles were seen to be in good condition, with no lifted tiles present that could offer suitability for roosting bats. Suitability/access/evidence of bats None.	 <i>B1 roof</i>
Windows	uPVC	Condition/description The windows and doors are in good condition, with minimal signs of wear. They are tight and well-sealed and therefore offer no suitability for roosting bats. Suitability/access/evidence of bats	 <i>B1 window / doors frames and lintels</i>

Internal void 1	Timber rafters. Mineral wool insulation	Condition/description The timber rafters were in good condition, with no evidence of splitting, cracking or crevices that could provide roosting opportunities. No light ingress was observed within the roof void, indicating that there were no discernible access points into the space. Furthermore, no evidence of bats, such as droppings, staining or feeding remains, was recorded during the inspection. The insulation also showed no signs of rodent activity, suggesting that the roof void is well sealed. Consequently, the roof void was assessed as providing negligible suitability for crevice-dwelling bat species. Suitability/access/evidence of bats None.	 <i>B1 internal void 1, facing southwest</i>  <i>B1 internal void 1, floor, facing west</i>
-----------------	--	--	--

B2 : Shed

B2 is a shed with a corrugated iron sheet flat roof. It has brick walls to the west and north and is block built to the east. Internally, it has two voids; however, these voids join at the centre. B2 has been assessed to have **negligible** suitability for roosting bats.



Building B2, southwestern elevation



Building B2, corrugated iron roof

Table 5b: The roosting features associated with building B2.

Feature	Materials/Details	Condition / description / suitability	Photograph
Internal void	Internally, the outbuilding's use is split between a shed (NW) and disused meat refrigerator (NE). The two voids join at the centre (see photo facing north) and have therefore been assessed as one.	Condition/description N/A Suitability/access/evidence of bats Several gaps were identified at the wall tops on the north-west (NW) and south-west (SW) elevations, providing direct access into the roof void. Although these gaps could potentially allow bats to enter the void, no evidence of bats was identified internally or externally, and no suitable crevice roosting features were present.	 B2 internal void, facing northwest, featuring gaps into the building

While the gaps above the ridge beam provide limited access to the roof void for void-dwelling species, each void offers a maximum of approximately 1.5 m of uninterrupted flight space. This is considered insufficient to facilitate warm-up flights typically undertaken by such species within roosts.

Furthermore, the building is likely to experience significant temperature fluctuations due to the nature of its construction materials, resulting in an unstable thermal environment that is unlikely to support roosting bats. The gaps on the south-west elevation also permit substantial light ingress into the roof void. Taking these factors into account, together with the regular disturbance associated with use of the space for storage, Building B2 is assessed as having negligible suitability for roosting bats.



B2 internal void, facing north



B2 internal void, facing northeast

3.2 Foreseen Impacts

Roosting habitat [Buildings]

Bats are very unlikely to be roosting within B1 and B2 and as such, there are not anticipated to be any impacts on bats in these locations as a result of the proposed development.

Roosting habitat [Trees]

There are no trees on site, therefore no impacts are foreseen.

Foraging and commuting habitat

The proposed development will not result in the removal of any habitats which could be used by foraging or commuting bats.

Artificial lighting

No new lighting will be installed as a result of the proposed development.

3.3 Recommendations

Roosting habitat [Buildings]

In line with current development plans, B1 will undergo roof alterations and an extension to the rear. B1 has been assessed to have **negligible** suitability for roosting bats; therefore, no further surveys are recommended.

B2 will be demolished in line with development plans. B2 has been assessed to have **negligible** suitability for roosting bats.

In the unlikely event that a bat or evidence of bats is discovered during the development all work must stop and a bat licensed ecologist contacted for further advice.

Roosting habitat [Trees]

None.

Foraging and commuting habitat

No further surveys are required.

Artificial lighting

None required.

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

The installation of one bat box at the site will provide additional roosting habitat for bats.

Suitable bat boxes include wall mounted boxes such as Bat Box Beaumaris Midi WoodStone, or similar alternative brand.

Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from artificial light.

4. FAUNA: BIRDS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

4.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Buildings

No evidence of nesting birds was identified on or within B1 and B2. B1 and B2 are deemed to provide negligible habitat value for nesting birds due to a lack of suitable nesting sites or access points.

Trees and vegetation

No habitat for schedule 1 birds was observed.

Due to the small size of the site and the extent and type of the habitats recorded, the site is not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/or notable birds.

Barn Owls

The site does not appear to provide any suitable nesting sites for barn owls.

4.2 Foreseen Impacts

Buildings / trees

No impacts are anticipated on nesting birds as a result of the proposed development.

Trees and vegetation

None foreseen.

Barn Owls

None foreseen.

4.3 Recommendations

Buildings / trees

None.

Trees and vegetation

No additional surveys required.

Barn Owls

No further barn owl surveys required.

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

The installation of a minimum of one bird box on retained buildings will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. e.g. Schwegler No 17 Swift Nest Box (buildings), Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace (buildings), Woodstone Nest Box (buildings or trees) or a similar alternative brand.

Swift and sparrow boxes should be positioned at the eaves of a building and can be incorporated into the fabric of the building during construction.

APPENDIX 1: SURVEY/HABITAT MAP



APPENDIX 2: LOCATION MAP







Side elevation

LIMITATION AND COPYRIGHT

Arbtech Consulting Limited has prepared this report for the sole use of the above-named client or their agents in accordance with our General Terms and Conditions, under which our services are performed. It is expressly stated that no other warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to the professional advice included in this report or any other services provided by us. This report may not be relied upon by any other party without the prior and express written agreement of Arbtech Consulting Limited. The conclusions and recommendations contained in this report are based upon information provided by third parties. Information obtained from third parties has not been independently verified by Arbtech Consulting Limited.

© This report is the copyright of Arbtech Consulting Limited. Any unauthorised reproduction or usage by any person other than the addressee is strictly prohibited.

VERSION CONTROL

Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	Harriet Pryer BA (Hons), MA, Graduate Ecologist	08/07/26
Proof	0.2	Kelly Clarke Dip. H.E, Senior Ecologist	09/07/26
Final	1.0	Harriet Pryer BA (Hons), MA, Graduate Ecologist	09/07/26