

**Project**

Reddish House, Broad Chalke, Salisbury,  
Wiltshire  
Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Report

**Project Name**

E925-01

**Client**

ADAM Architecture

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**Report consultants**

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*The advice which we have prepared and provided is true to the best of our knowledge and with the information made available at the time, and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the CIEEM's Code of Professional Conduct.*

**Quality check completed by:**

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**Date**

August 2017

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## 1 Executive Summary

enims Ltd were commissioned by ADAM Architecture in May 2017 to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of Reddish House at Broad Chalke, Wiltshire in order to support a planning application for the site.

The building is a large, Grade II listed detached residential property sitting within a large garden area. The surroundings are mainly residential properties with large gardens, with agricultural downland beyond to the south and the River Ebbel to the north. The proposed work to Reddish House is largely internal with some renovations to the conservatory on the south-east elevation and it is likely that the work will involve some disturbance to the roof where it adjoins the conservatory and as such the presence of bats may provide a constraint to this achieving the aims of this project.

The aim of the inspection was to gather evidence to determine whether the building either had the potential to support bat roosts, or showed direct indications of current or previous use by roosting bats. All surveys were carried out in strict accordance with Good Practice Guidelines published by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2016).

As a result of the inspection, the main house loft space at Reddish House is considered to have high potential as a bat roosting site given the evidence found during the inspection throughout the roof of this building. A small number of droppings were found in the loft void.

The conservatory and pitched roof where it joins the main house support the possibility of roosting opportunities for bats, but the roof void in this area could not be accessed due to a padlocked door. As a result of an external inspection only the roof void is considered to have moderate potential as a bat roosting site.

Further survey work is required in order to clarify the presence and character of the bat roost at Reddish House due to the potential for adverse impacts as a result of the proposed works. It should be noted that if, as a result of these surveys, it is considered that there is potential for adverse effects to roosting bats as a result of the proposed development, then an application for a European Protected Species Mitigation licence from Natural England may be necessary and appropriate mitigation or compensation measures are applied. At this stage and given the evidence already found, it is considered possible that a licence application will be required. The procedure for an application for a Natural England licence is given in the report for information purposes.

## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Background to Commission

enims Ltd was commissioned by ADAM Architecture in May 2017 to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of Reddish House at Broad Chalke, Wiltshire.

As all native bat species are material planning considerations, which must be accounted for before a planning decision is made, it is important to establish their presence or likely absence prior to the removal of any buildings which may potentially act as roosts. For this reason, visual external and internal inspections were conducted at Reddish House and this document provides the findings of the PRA and includes recommendations for any further work prior to a planning application.

### 2.2 Site Location and Surroundings

The site is located in the village of Broad Chalke, Wiltshire, at OS Grid Reference SU038252, in the chalke valley of the River Ebbles. The surrounding landscape consists of residential properties in the rest of the village with large gardens and agricultural downland beyond to the south and the narrow valley of the River Ebbles to the north (Figure 1 and 2, Appendix A).

### 2.3 Site Description

Reddish House is a large, complex detached house of early 18th Century origins and late 18th Century extensions. It is a brick built, two storey structure with a single storey brick extension to the east elevation. There is a glass conservatory on the south-east elevation. It is understood that the building has not been inhabited for some time, however it appears to be in a very good state of repair both externally and internally.

The wider site comprises extensive gardens which slope up towards the south and down to the north towards the river. There is a formal courtyard and drive at the front of the house off South Street.

### 2.4 Project Overview

The proposed development is largely internal with renovations to the conservatory on the south-east elevation and this will necessitate some disturbance to the nearest roofs to this structure.

### 2.5 Legislation and Policy Context

All native bat species are fully protected under nature conservation legislation. Protection is afforded under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) through the species' inclusion under Schedule 5. All native bat species are also defined as European Protected Species (EPS) through inclusion in Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended); the UK implementation of the EU Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora.

In brief, these legislative instruments make it an offence to deliberately or recklessly kill, injure or capture any bat. Roosts are protected from damage or destruction, furthermore it is illegal to deliberately disturb a bat whether roosting or otherwise.

In addition, the following native bats are identified as Species of Principal Importance in England under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006:

- Barbastelle bat - *Barbastella barbastellus*
- Bechstein's bat - *Myotis bechsteinii*

- Noctule bat - *Nyctalus noctula*
- Soprano pipistrelle - *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*
- Brown long-eared bat - *Plecotus auritus*
- Greater horseshoe bat - *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*
- Lesser horseshoebat - *Rhinolophus hipposideros*

## 2.6 Local Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (DfCLG, 2012) requires local authorities to avoid and minimise impacts on biodiversity and, where possible, to provide net gains in biodiversity when taking planning decisions:

*“The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity”.*

Other planning policies at the local level which are of relevance to this development include the Wiltshire Core Strategy comprising the local planning policy CP 50 which aims to satisfy their obligations under the NERC Act through the planning process:

*“All development proposals shall incorporate appropriate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats throughout the lifetime of the development.”*

### 3 Methodology

#### 3.1 Site Survey

The aim of the inspection was to gather evidence to determine whether the building either had the *potential* to support bat roosts, or showed direct indications of current/previous use by roosting bats. All surveys were carried out in strict accordance with Good Practice Guidelines published by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2016).

During the survey, a search was made for direct evidence of bat activity, such as corpses, droppings, urine stains and scratch marks. Potential access points, particularly those free of cobwebs and other obstructions, were also recorded, irrespective of whether there was direct evidence of use in the vicinity

The following criteria (Table 1) is utilised to assess the bat roosting potential of the structure and trees and the foraging/commuting potential of habitats (based on the bat surveys for professional ecologists - Good Practice Guidelines published by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2016).

Table 1. Criteria for the potential of features and habitats to support roosting and foraging/commuting bats (after Collins, 2016)

Suitability	Description of roosting habitat	Commuting or foraging habitat
<b>Negligible</b>	Negligible habitat features on-site likely to be used by roosting bats	Negligible habitat features on-site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats.
<b>Low</b>	<p>A structure with one of more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation.</p> <p>A tree of sufficient size and age to contain potential roost features but with none seen from the ground or features seen with only very limited roosting potential.</p>	<p>Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats such as a gapped hedgerow or un-vegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat.</p> <p>Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or patch of scrub.</p>
<b>Moderate</b>	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only – the assessments in this table are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is	<p>Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for commuting such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens.</p> <p>Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.</p>

	established after presence is confirmed).	
<b>High</b>	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat.	<p>Continuous, high quality habitat that is a well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by commuting bats such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge.</p> <p>High quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland.</p> <p>Site is close to and connected to known roosts.</p>

The site survey was conducted on the 13th June 2017, by ecologist Adrian Hutchings MCIEEM, CEnv.

## **4 Inspection Results**

### **4.1 The Main House**

The building is complex, has multiple features, roof voids and faces. In general the roof is in a good state of repair, with only occasional missing tiles and slippages. The soffits and eaves are quite tight with few gaps for access by bats. There are few roof voids in the main part of the building as many roof level voids are in fact rooms. A few voids were found on the south-facing pitch of the main roof which were inspected and a very small number of bat droppings were found in these areas. A bat was found indoors in the recent past by a cleaner, however, it is highly likely it accessed the building via an open window either in the main house or via the conservatory.

The main roof has high potential as a bat roost, as bat droppings were found there, showing this area had be utilised at some point in the past as a bat roost.

### **4.2 The Conservatory**

The conservatory is in reasonable condition with a few bat access points where the lead flashing has lifted and at ventilation points near the dome part of the roof.

The pitched roof nearest the conservatory is the roof void likely to be most affected by the development. This is in a reasonable state of repair, however, there are many gaps between tiles of which a few are at eaves level. The roof void in this part of the building could not be accessed due to a padlocked rooftop door so an internal inspection could not be conducted.

As the roof space closest to the conservatory could not be accessed, it is hard to assess the potential, but from the external inspection it is thought to have moderate potential as a bat roost.

### **4.3 The Surrounds**

The immediate surrounds of the building are largely comprised of hardstanding and open areas, but in the wider landscape of the property and beyond there are optimal foraging conditions for bats and the nearby river means plentiful invertebrate feeding opportunities for bats. The potentially high number of bats likely to be in the locality means there is a high likelihood the building would be utilised as at least an occasional, opportunistic bat roost, if not more.

## 5 Discussion and Recommendations

### 5.1 Discussion

The main house is considered to have high potential as a bat roosting site as bat droppings were located inside the roof void of the building. There are occasional access points to the internal area via missing tiles and slippages. A single bat has been found inside the building in the recent past and it is concluded that it had managed to access the interior of the building, possibly through an open window, in either the main house or the conservatory. There are signs of occasional, opportunistic roosting activity within the roof void although it is considered unlikely to be a hibernating or maternity roost as there were not enough bat debris found to support these activities.

In accordance with the current guidelines a category of high potential has been decided upon given that the structure has one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically plus the evidence of previous use.

The conservatory and associated area of the roof to which it joins the house are thought to have moderate potential as a bat roost. The conservatory itself has only a few potential access points situated towards the central roof dome where some lead flashing has lifted and around ventilation points.

However, the internal roof void of the house where the conservatory adjoins could not be inspected due to lack of access. There are more numerous gaps between tiles here which may allow greater access to roosting bats.

In accordance with the current guidelines a category of moderate potential has been decided upon given that the structure has access points and it is likely there may be potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically.

### 5.2 Recommendations

Further survey work is required in order to clarify the presence and character of the bat roost potential at Reddish House due to the potential for adverse impacts as a result of the proposed works. In accordance with the current guidance (Collins, 2016), the further survey work should comprise of at least three survey visits between May and September with at least two of the visits conducted between July and August inclusive. The visits should be undertaken at dusk and dawn. The first survey will be a Dusk survey and depending on the findings from the first dusk visits a further dusk and dawn survey will be undertaken or two further dawn surveys will be conducted. It should be noted that if, as a result of these surveys, it is considered that there is potential for adverse effects to roosting bats as a result of the proposed development, then an application for a European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence from Natural England may be necessary and appropriate mitigation or compensation measures are applied. At this stage and given the evidence already found, it is considered possible that a licence application will be required (see below).

Although the development design is at an early stage, consideration should be given at the earliest possible point on how any potential impacts on the roost can be avoided or mitigated. In addition, if the building is to be grossly altered or replaced the possibility of

having to compensate for the loss of the roost site should also be considered. The information from the further surveys recommended above will direct the design of the necessary mitigation or compensatory works as required which will be part of the EPSM licence application if required.

### **5.3 Information on European Protected Species Mitigation Licences**

The possibility of the requirement for an application for a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence from Natural England is mentioned above and as such it is important to provide information on the procedure that this entails. The licence will be required before any work to this property can commence and such a licence can only be approved by Natural England after planning permission has been gained for the proposed development. A comprehensive mitigation and compensation package will be necessary to demonstrate to the local planning authority and Natural England that bats will be protected in the short, medium and long term at this site. It is important to recognise that in the UK all bat species and their roosts are legally protected, by both domestic and European legislation. In England and Wales, the relevant legislation is the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended); the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000; the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC, 2006); and by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010). This means that a criminal offence will be committed if someone:

- Deliberately captures, injures or kills a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly disturbs a bat in its roost or deliberately disturbs a group of bats
- Damages or destroys a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
- Possesses or advertises/sell/exchanges a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly obstructs access to a bat roost.

It is not anticipated that the above offences will apply in this project when a full mitigation and/or compensation programme is implemented, but it is important to recognise that in this case, work can only proceed once the necessary licence is in place. In determining whether or not to grant a licence Natural England must apply the requirements of Regulation 535 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) which are. (1) a licence can be granted 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”. (2) the appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied “that there is no satisfactory alternative”. (3) the appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied “that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.” A mitigation methods statement and reasoned statement accompanying the licence application will need to provide the information necessary to allow Natural England to assess these tests. The application approval process by Natural England can take upwards of 30 days to complete.

## 6 References

- Collins, J. (ed.). (2016). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- DfCLG. (2012). *National Planning Policy Framework*. Department for Communities and Local Government, London.
- Mitchell-Jones, A. J. (2004). *Natural England Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature. Peterborough.
- Mitchell-Jones, A. J. and McLeish, A. P. eds., (2004). *Bat Workers' Manual*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.

Appendix A:



Figure 1. Location of Reddish House in Broad Chalke village

Figure 2. Reddish House and roof configuration

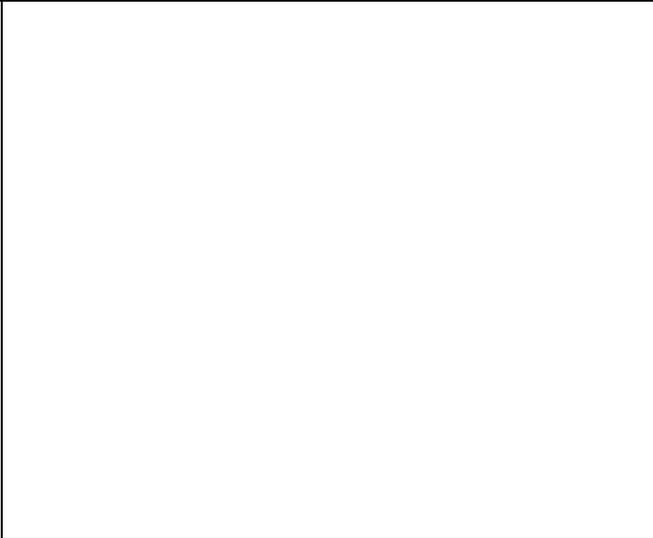
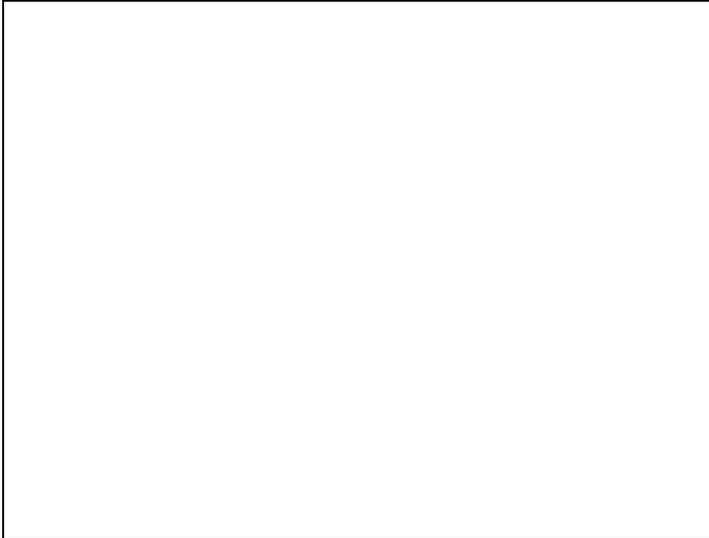
**Appendix B: Site Photographs**



**Photograph 1.**



**Photograph 2.**



**Photograph 3.**



**Photograph 4.**



**Photograph 5.**



**Photograph 6.**



**Photograph 7.**



**Photograph 8.**



**Photograph 9.**



**Photograph 10.**



**Photograph 11.**



**Photograph 12.**



**Photograph 13.**



**Photograph 14.**



**Photograph 15.**