

Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site:

Bincknoll Farm, Bincknoll Lane, Royal Wootton Bassett, Wiltshire, SN4 8QT

Client:

R D Horton & Sons

Survey date:

16th September 2025

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with the Wiltshire Council. The proposal is described as:
The conversion of two agricultural buildings into residential dwellings (Class Q).

The survey results and recommendations contained within this report are valid for 18 months. An updated site visit may be required if the report is to be used any longer than 18 months after completion. PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2024](#).

The site survey was undertaken by Jade Lemm BSc (Hons) DipHE MRSB (Natural England Protected Species Licence Numbers: Great Crested Newt (2023-11450-CL08-GCN) and Bat Class 1 (2025-12750-CL17-BAT)).					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
16/09/2025	15	73	40	6	None
PRA Survey Factor		Detailed using desk study and site survey. Any specific limitations noted within the relevant section. This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consents. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.			
See the PRA plan in Appendix 1, the location plan in Appendix 2 and the proposed plans in Appendix 3.					
Background and Site Location					
Summary of the site and desk Study		<u>Site context and background</u> The old milking parlour (B1) is located at National Grid Reference SU 10679 79751, and the agricultural barn (B2) is located at National Grid Reference SU 10707 79797. The development site consists of two buildings, both of which have a total area of approximately 0.052ha (wider ownership boundary ~50ha). It is immediately surrounded by an agricultural farm to the north, agricultural fields to the east, residential dwellings to the west and deciduous woodland to the south. The wider landscape comprises Quidhampton Wood ~5m south, ponds ~40m north, Bincknoll Wood ~250m south-west, Basset Down Wood ~500m east, Salthrop Wood ~750m east, Honey Hill Copse ~850m south-west and Wiltshire & Berks Canal ~1.8km north. <u>Desk study</u> To the author’s knowledge, no previous ecology reports have been produced for this site.			

	There are no granted European Protected Species Licences (ESPL) listed on Magic Maps within 2km of the site. The site is not subject to any designation, and there are two known designations within 2km of the site. The site lies within the impact risk zone for SSSIs. However, the proposed development type is not listed as a possible high risk for this designation. Details are summarised in the table below. <table><tr><th>Designated site name</th><th>Distance from site</th><th>Reasons for notification from Natural England</th></tr><tr><td>Bincknoll Dip Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</td><td>115m south</td><td>This wooded area is of considerable importance due to the presence of populations of nationally and internationally rare moss. There also exists a variety of other bryophytes and typical woodland vascular plants.</td></tr><tr><td>Goldborough Farm Meadows SSSI</td><td>1.9km north-west</td><td>Goldborough Farm Meadows comprises three floristically rich, traditionally managed hay meadows, a habitat type severely threatened throughout England by modern agricultural practices. A large number of locally scarce plants flourish both within the meadows and along boundary hedges and ditches. A pond adds further to the habitat diversity.</td></tr></table> A range of notable local habitats within 2km of the site. These include: - Deciduous woodland ~5m south - Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland ~125m south - Lowland calcareous grassland ~350m south - Lowland meadows ~1.9km west	Designated site name	Distance from site	Reasons for notification from Natural England	Bincknoll Dip Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	115m south	This wooded area is of considerable importance due to the presence of populations of nationally and internationally rare moss. There also exists a variety of other bryophytes and typical woodland vascular plants.	Goldborough Farm Meadows SSSI	1.9km north-west	Goldborough Farm Meadows comprises three floristically rich, traditionally managed hay meadows, a habitat type severely threatened throughout England by modern agricultural practices. A large number of locally scarce plants flourish both within the meadows and along boundary hedges and ditches. A pond adds further to the habitat diversity.
Designated site name	Distance from site	Reasons for notification from Natural England								
Bincknoll Dip Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	115m south	This wooded area is of considerable importance due to the presence of populations of nationally and internationally rare moss. There also exists a variety of other bryophytes and typical woodland vascular plants.								
Goldborough Farm Meadows SSSI	1.9km north-west	Goldborough Farm Meadows comprises three floristically rich, traditionally managed hay meadows, a habitat type severely threatened throughout England by modern agricultural practices. A large number of locally scarce plants flourish both within the meadows and along boundary hedges and ditches. A pond adds further to the habitat diversity.								
Field survey results										
Summary of Survey Findings	Foraging and commuting habitats									

	The farmland within the ownership boundary, as well as ponds, hedgerows and deciduous woodland within the local area, could provide suitable foraging and commuting habitats for bats. Due to the rural location of the site, there is limited artificial light spill (no streetlamps). <u>Roosting habitats</u> There are two designated buildings (B1 and B2) within the development boundaries and another building within the ownership boundary (B3). <u>Building B1 (Negligible roost suitability – no evidence)</u> Building B1 is a metal-framed milking parlour with metal panels on the elevations and a pitched corrugated roof. The majority of the building was vaulted. There were two crawl spaces above the north-eastern and south-eastern elevations of B1. Crawl space CS1 extended around the edge of the south-eastern elevation. It was 1m high, 1m wide, and 5m long. The space had lining (exposed corrugated sheeting) and some light spill. There were no crevices for crevice-dwelling bats and no perches for void-dwelling bats. The internal temperature of the void was 15°C, and the humidity was 70%.
--	--



Crawl space CS2 extended around the edge of the north-eastern elevation. It was 1m high, 1m wide, and 5m long. The space had lining (exposed corrugated sheeting) and some light spill. There were no crevices for crevice-dwelling bats and no perches for void-dwelling bats. The internal temperature of the void was 15°C, and the humidity was 71%.



The remainder of the internal space is well-lit, with no roosting features suitable for crevice or void-dwelling bats. There were multiple access points into the building (open elevations). However, there are no suitable interior crevice features for crevice-dwelling bats or perching features for void-dwelling bats in the building.



There were multiple access points into the building (open doors and windows). However, there are no suitable interior crevice features for crevice-dwelling bats or perching features for void-dwelling bats.

Northern elevation



Eastern elevation



Southern elevation



Western elevation



The building was assessed as having negligible roosting habitat value as it lacked suitability for crevice- and loft-dwelling bats (due to the absence of roosting points, unstable conditions and significant light spill).

Building B2 (Negligible roost suitability – no evidence)

Building B2 is a metal-framed barn with a corrugated saltbox roof. There was no separate void (vaulted). The internal space is well-lit, with no roosting features suitable for crevice or void-dwelling bats. There are small gaps between the beams and the corrugated sheeting. However, the gaps had been blocked, so they are unsuitable for crevice-dwelling bats.





There were multiple access points into the building (open elevations). There are external and internal features that may provide roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling bats. The roosting and access features of B2 include:

- Gaps underneath verge boarding (circled in red)

Northern elevation



Eastern elevation



Southern elevation



Western elevation



The building was assessed as having low roosting habitat value due to the suboptimal external crevice-dwelling roost features, absence of internal roosting points, unstable conditions, and significant light spill.

Building B3 (Negligible roost suitability – no evidence) – ownership boundary

Building B3 is a metal-framed barn with a corrugated 'M' shaped roof. The internal space is well-lit, with no roosting features suitable for crevice or void-dwelling bats.



There were multiple access points into the building (open elevations). There are external and internal features that may provide roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling bats. The roosting and access features of B3 include:

- Gaps underneath verge boarding (circled in red)
- Overlapping corrugated sheeting (circled in orange)

Southern elevation



Northern elevation



Western elevation



Eastern elevation



	The building was assessed as having low roosting habitat value due to its suboptimal crevice-dwelling roost features and access points. Building B3 is currently not included in the proposed plans.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	<u>Roosting bats</u> <u>Building B1</u> Bats are very unlikely to be roosting within building B1. As such, there are not anticipated to be any impacts on roosting bats as a result of the conversion of this building. <u>Building B2</u> Due to the low numbers of suboptimal features and conditions for bat species to roost within B2, and given the low risk, further surveys are considered disproportionate. Instead, a precautionary approach is advised to ensure that no bats or roosts are present or impacted by the works. <u>Foraging and commuting bats</u> There is potential for indirect impacts on foraging and commuting bats using habitats adjacent to the site through increased artificial light levels. Therefore, the proposed development may lead to an increase in the amount of current lighting on surrounding habitats. This may disturb commuting bats.
<i>Recommendations</i>	<u>Buildings B1</u> 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 must be contacted for further advice. <u>Buildings B2</u>

	Due to the low numbers of suboptimal features and conditions for bat species to roost within B2, further surveys are considered disproportionate. Instead, a precautionary approach is advised to ensure that no bats or roosts are present or impacted by the works. This includes a toolbox talk to all contractors and inspection of all suboptimal roosting features immediately before the commencement of any soft demolition work (removal of exterior corrugated panels and verge boarding) by a suitably qualified professional. This should include the use of an endoscope and torch to fully inspect both under the verge boarding. In the unlikely event that a bat is identified during this inspection, work must cease, a full suite of 3 surveys must be completed, and a license must be acquired before work can proceed. <u>Lighting</u> A low-impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during post-development, which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors. Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting <u>Enhancements</u> The installation of one bat box on the site will provide additional roosting habitat for bats. The bat box will be installed on a retained building. 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.
Nesting Birds	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<u>Buildings B1 and B2</u> No evidence of nesting birds was found within B1 or B2 during the site visit. However, birds could use the buildings for nesting in the future.

No evidence of nesting barn owls was identified. The buildings do not appear to provide suitable nesting sites for barn owls, as they either lack suitable nesting perches (<10cm width). However, the presence of barn owls cannot be discounted.

Building B3 (ownership boundary)

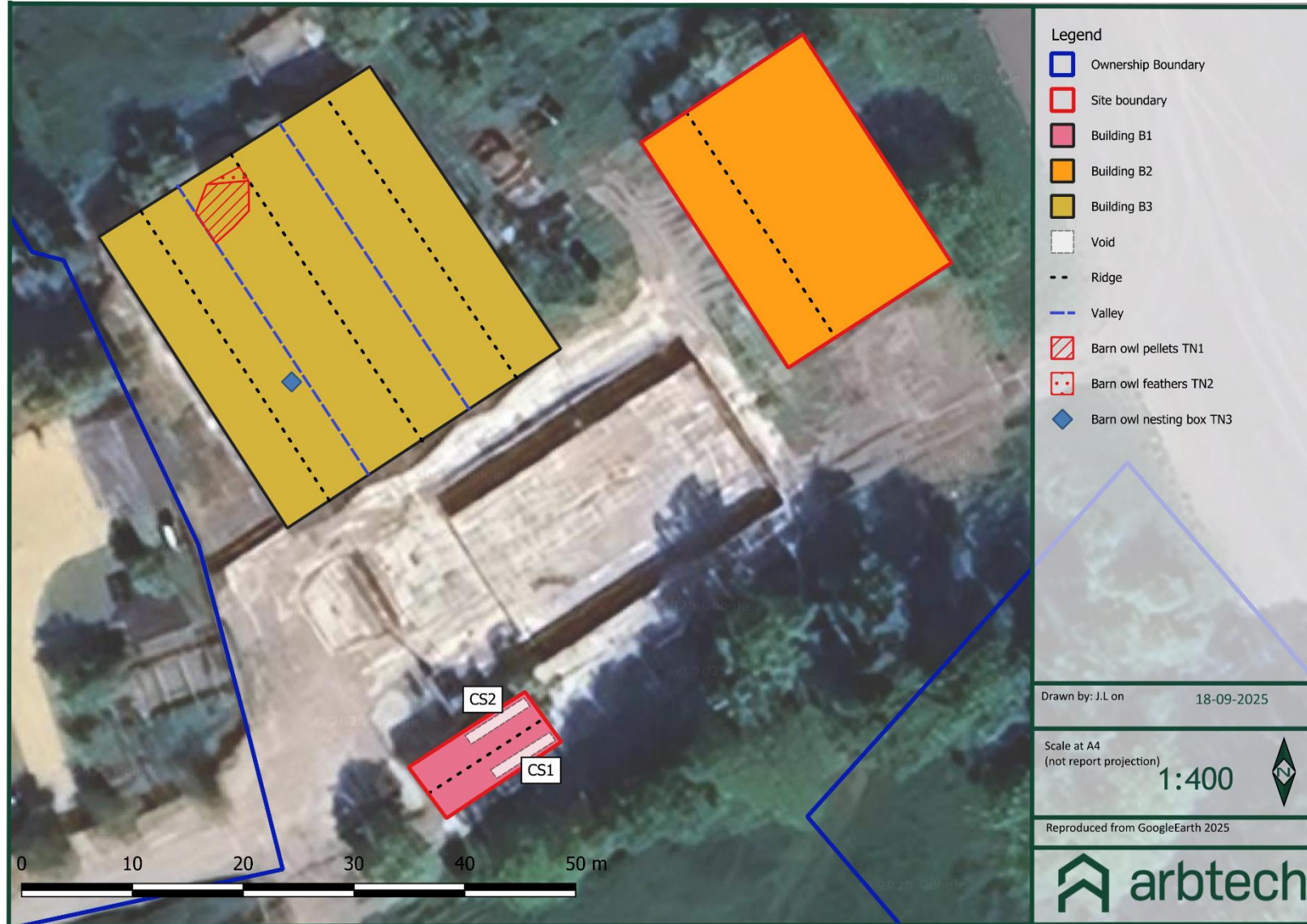
Evidence of barn owls was identified within the ownership boundary (B3) during the site visit (~30 pellets TN1, feathers TN2 and a nesting box TN3). Building B3 is currently not included in the proposed plans and will be retained.



	
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests within B1 and B2. As well as the potential disturbance of the barn owls in B3. There is potential for indirect impacts on foraging and commuting barn owls using habitats on and directly adjacent to the site through increased artificial light levels. Therefore, the proposed development may lead to an increase in the amount of current lighting on surrounding habitats. This may disturb commuting barn owls.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Building B1 and B2 conversion works should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the buildings should be undertaken immediately, by a qualified ecologist, before the commencement of work. All active nests must be retained until the young have fledged. Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby common nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests until the young have fledged.

	Due to the close proximity of barn owls in building B3 to the proposed dwellings, a precautionary working method will be implemented during construction to minimise indirect impacts to barn owls as a result of the proposed development, including the following measures: - The building will be retained as existing, and no works are to take place on the building. - If works are taking place during nesting season, a 40m buffer will be implemented around the building during construction. If a 40m buffer cannot be implemented, work must commence outside of nesting season. - The development works must avoid night-time working and take place in daytime hours (between 8 am and 6 pm) to avoid disturbance of feeding and commuting activity. - A pre-commencement check of all buildings will be undertaken to check for any new barn owl activity immediately before the commencement of the works by a suitably qualified professional. If new evidence is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.
--	---

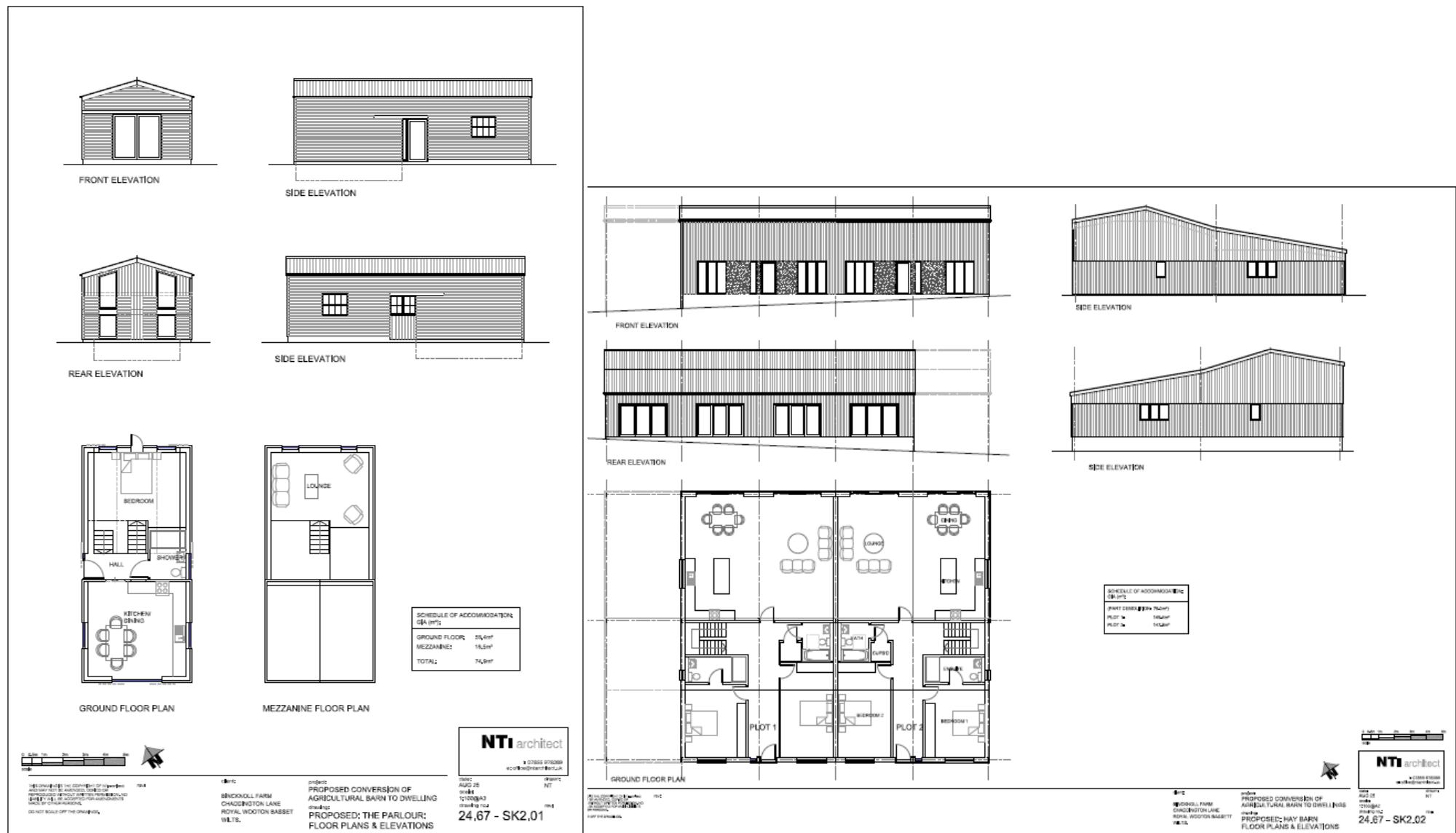
Appendix 1: PRA plan



Appendix 2: Location map



Appendix 3: Proposed plan



Limitations and Copyright

Legal

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	Jade Lemm BSc (Hons) DipHE, Consultant Ecologist	18/09/2025
Proof	0.2	Fay Brotherhood BSc (Hons) MSc, Senior Ecologist	25/09/2025
Final	1.0	Jade Lemm BSc (Hons) DipHE, Consultant Ecologist	26/09/2025