



**ORIGIN
ENVIRONMENTAL**
ECOLOGY

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

SITE LOCATION

Former Barclay's bank, Fore street,
Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 8HY

CLIENT

Consensus Planning Ltd

REFERENCE

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1. Introduction

1.1 Scope & Purpose

1.1.1 Origin Environmental was commissioned by Consensus Planning Ltd. to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) at the former Barclays Bank Site, 3 Fore Street, Trowbridge, BA14 8HY. This report has been prepared to assess the baseline conditions and the potential presence of any protected habitats to inform a planning decision to develop the site.

1.1.2 The author of this report is Jon Hayter, Technical bat lead and Senior Ecologist, who holds extensive professional experience undertaking baseline habitat surveys, assessing for protected species and writing reports and licenses to support planning applications. Jon holds a level 2 bat license from Natural England. (Reference CL18-2019-39842-CLS-CLS).

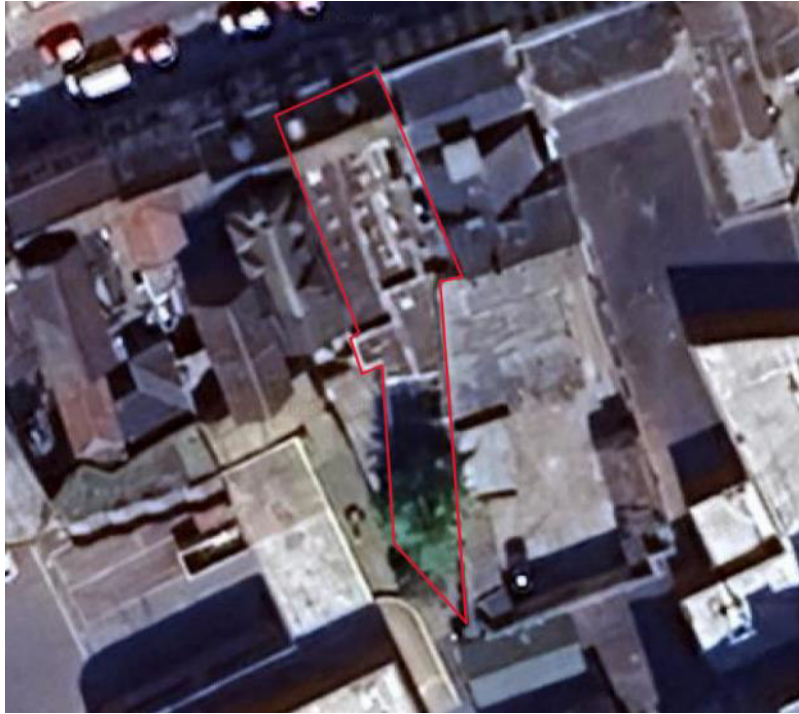
1.2 Location

1.2.1 Please refer to Figure 1 for the site location. The site is located on Fore Street within the town centre of Trowbridge in Wiltshire. (see Figure 2 for the red line boundary of the Site)

Figure 1 Site Location



Figure 2 Red line boundary



1.3 Objectives

1.3.1 The objectives of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal are as follows:

- Identify the major habitats present.
- Ascertain the presence or potential presence of any legally protected or notable species or habitats.
- Identify any mitigation required and opportunities for strategic wildlife enhancements.

2. Methodology

2.1 Desk Study

2.1.1 An initial desk-based assessment of the site was undertaken to collate baseline data. The desk study included:

- A 1km local data search obtained from Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC), received on the 30th of September 2025.
- Review of Magic.gov.uk website for details of any designated sites, notable habitats, and presence of European Protected Species Licences.
- Review of aerial and OS maps for habitat information, as well as determining locations of potential waterbodies to be considered in the assessment.
- Review of potential habitat links on and off site, to determine the potential zone of influence of the proposed development.
- On site consultation with the landowner which provided valuable information regarding historic land use and known species and habitats present within the site.

2.2 Protected & Notable Species Assessment

2.2.1 A search for signs of protected and notable species of fauna was undertaken during the site walkover. This included both field signs of species, as well as the potential for species to be present based on habitat availability.

2.2.2 The searches broadly included the following:

- Assessment of waterbodies on-site and within 250m of the site boundary, and terrestrial habitats for suitability to support notable amphibians.
- Searches for field signs of, and habitat suitability for bats.
- Suitability of habitats to support reptiles, and searches for incidental field signs.
- Searches for field signs of badger (*Meles meles*), including setts, mammal paths, snuffle holes, badger hair and latrines to indicate activity.
- Assessment of the suitability of the site to support notable bird species and recording any field sightings of birds during the walkover.
- Assessment of the site's ability to support notable invertebrates and flora.
- Searches for non-native invasive species.

2.3 Vegetation & Habitat Assessment

2.3.1 An Ecological Appraisal of the site was undertaken by Jon Hayter, Technical Bat Lead and Senior Ecologist. The survey was undertaken on the 9th of September 2025. The weather was clear and sunny (2/8 oktas), with no precipitation, 4mph wind speed and a temperature of 20°C.

2.3.2 The walkover survey was undertaken broadly in line with standard UK HAB Methodology. The assessment is undertaken with consideration of methodology as per "Preliminary Ecological Appraisal" (CIEEM, 2018).

2.3.3 A UK HAB Plan has been produced and is presented in the Appendix of this report. Standard methodology has been used, though adjustments have been made based on judgment to demonstrate habitats in a clearer manner, or where standard guidance does not fit the conditions found on site.

2.4 Bat Assessment

2.4.1 A PRA (Preliminary Roost Assessment) and Ground-Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) of the tree located within the site was undertaken by Jon Hayter during the site visit, who holds a Class 2 Bat Survey Licence from Natural England (Reference CL18-2019-39842-CLS-CLS)

2.4.2 The survey was undertaken following the guidance set out in Collins (2023). This includes undertaking a detailed inspection of any features to compile information on potential and actual bat entry/ exit points, roosting locations, and evidence of bats from ground level.

2.4.3 The commuting and foraging assessment methodology is based on information contained within the Bat Conservation Trust guidelines 4th edition (Collins, 2023).

2.4.4 GLTA and Potential Flightpaths and Foraging Habitats were assessed as per categories listed in Table 4.1 Collins (2023) and demonstrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3 Table 4.1 (Collins, 2023).

Table 4.1. Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement.

Potential suitability	Description	Potential flight-paths and foraging habitats
	Roosting habitats in structures	
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).
Negligible ^a	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions ^b 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 and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats ^c).	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. 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 a patch of scrub.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions ^b and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-paths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	A structure 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, shelter, protection, conditions ^b and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight-paths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. 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. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.

^a Negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant'. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute).

^b For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance.

^c Evidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten *et al.*, 2016 and Jansen *et al.*, 2022). Common pipistrelle swarming has been observed in the UK (Bell, 2022 and Tomlinson, 2020) and winter hibernation of numbers of this species has been detected at Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland (National Trust, 2018). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK, but ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in prominent buildings in the landscape, urban or otherwise.

2.5 Survey Limitations

- 2.5.1 This survey does not constitute a full botanical survey. Key species for each habitat type have been identified to give a broad representation of habitats present within the site.
- 2.5.2 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no investigation can ensure the complete characterisation of the natural environment. This survey does not constitute a full botanical survey. Plant species may have been under-recorded, unidentifiable, or not visible due to a number of factors, including the time of year the survey was carried out.
- 2.5.3 The protected species assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species occurring on the site. This is based on the suitability of the habitat, known distribution of the species in the local area (provided by data searches) and any direct evidence within the survey area.
- 2.5.4 It should be noted that while biological records obtained from the Local Environmental Record Centre are based on current records, they do not represent an exhaustive or complete list of species for the defined search area. Records are mostly provided by individuals on an ad hoc basis. Therefore, a negative result does not necessarily indicate the absence of a protected species from the area, since a deficiency of records for less ubiquitous species is likely to be reflected in the returned data.

2.5.5 The findings of this report represent the professional opinion of qualified ecologists and do not constitute professional legal advice. The client may wish to seek professional legal interpretation of the relevant wildlife legislation cited within this document.

3. Survey Results

3.1 Site Context

3.1.1 The site comprises of a mid terrace, two storey, town centre building and associated single story extensions to the southern elevation. It was formerly in use as Barclays bank but has been empty for several years. The site is dominated by built structures with small areas of hardstanding in the form of two courtyard patios, one to the eastern and one to the southern end of the extensions on the south of the building.

3.1.2 It is situated within the town centre of Trowbridge in an urban environment. There is only one area of sparsely vegetated ground to the southern extremity of the site, and one mature tree sits within this space. This natural feature is confined and contained by a large courtyard perimeter wall effectively preventing any movement from offsite into the site.

3.1.3 The site boundaries are dominated by urban residential and commercial buildings and there is very little greenspace within proximity of the site.

3.1.4 The River Biss is located 120m to the east of the site, running north to south, and the local park known as Trowbridge Park, is located 320m to the south. The town outskirts and more favourable rural environs are located at their closest 600m to the north, but these are located across major roads and the railway line posing considerable anthropogenic dispersal barriers to terrestrial species. Apart from the areas listed, there are very few habitats other than the urban environment close to the site and it is considered fragmented and contains sub optimal habitat which offers little in the way of resources for most flora and fauna species.

3.2 Designated Sites

3.2.1 The following statutory sites were located within 5km of the site boundary based on consultation with Magic.gov.uk:

- The closest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is Picket and Clanger wood SSSI, located approximately 3.6km south of the site. It is a floristically rich ancient woodland supporting an outstanding range of butterfly species. The combined butterfly and moth faunas include several scarce species with limited national distributions, among them two which are rare and vulnerable in Great Britain. The site also accommodates a diversity of bird's characteristic of ancient woodland in southern and western England. Lying between Trowbridge and Westbury, most of the site overlies Oxford Clay and slopes gently towards the north-west; the steeper gradients of the southern and eastern edges are associated with Corallian Lower Calcareous Grit. The site totals around 66ha and the site falls within the outermost Z.O.I of this SSSI.
- Gripwood Quarry SSSI, is located approximately 3.8km northwest of the site. This SSSI is designated as it shows the junction between the Bradford Clay and the underlying limestones of the Great Oolite, both of Bathonian age. Only here can be seen the relationship between these two rock units. The Bradford Clay locally yields the rich marine fauna, for which it has been famous for two hundred years. Its diverse fauna of crinoids, brachiopods, molluscs and bryozoans is the richest in this part of the geological column. A site of considerable historical, palaeontological and stratigraphic interest. The site totals 2.9ha.

- Southwick Local Nature reserve (LNR) is located approximately 2.2km west of the site. SCP LNR used to be a dairy farm. There have been no fertilizer inputs on the land since 1989 and the grassland is being managed to increase floristic diversity. Annual hay and silage crops are taken from most of the grassland. The old hedgerows and copses are still in place with some splendid veteran and ancient oak and ash trees among established woodland flora. Lambrook Stream and its tributary and ponds are important to the park's biodiversity. SCP LNR is home to protected species such as water voles which have colonized the stream banks. Nine species of bat, among them the very rare Bechstein's bat, which is known to roost here, and the greater horseshoe bat; 11 UK BAP Priority Species of Lepidoptera; 12 species of Odonata including the red-listed scarce chaser, otters, grass snake, adder, slow worm and a species list includes 15 of the RSPB's red listed birds. The site totals 53ha.
- Green lane LNR is located 2.6km east of the site. Plants indicating ancient woodland are present including Solomon's Seal, Stinking Iris and a host of orchids. Grass snake, slow worm and butterflies such as Silver washed Fritillary and Duke of Burgundy. The site totals 39.4ha.
- Although not located within close proximity of most of the sites within the Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), the site is located marginally inside (100m) the outermost Zone of Influence of the Bath and Bradford upon Avon Bat SAC consultation zone, which relates to annexe 2 bat species such as Greater horseshoe (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*), Lesser horseshoe (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) and bechsteins (*Myotis bechsteinii*) bats, and therefore is deemed relevant to this assessment.

3.2.2 Non-statutory designations are also commonly referred to in planning policies as 'local sites.' The following site was identified within 1km of the site boundary:

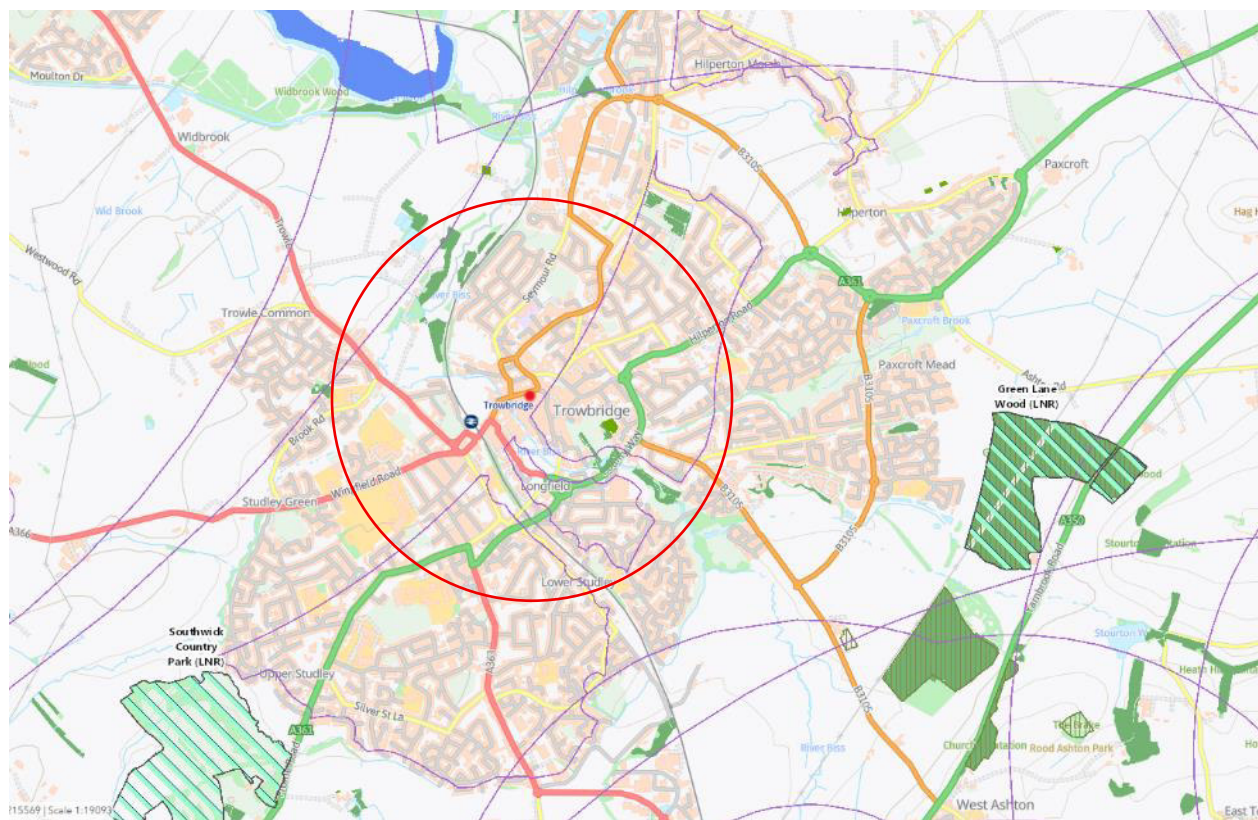
- Biss meadows Country Park Local Wildlife Site (LWS) contains priority habitat Lowland meadows and species rich fen, grassland and scrub located on the floodplain of the River Biss. It is located approximately 680m south of the site at its closest point and totals 12.6ha.

3.3 Priority Habitats

3.3.1 Consultation with Magic.gov.uk highlighted the presence of the following Priority Habitats within 1km of the site boundary:

- Trowbridge Park priority habitat deciduous woodland is located approximately 380m south of the site its closest point.
- Two further priority habitat deciduous woodland blocks associated with the River Biss riparian habitat are located 500m north of the site at their closest points extending to 1km northwards.
- Trowbridge Park also has priority habitat traditional orchards located 450m to the southeast of the site.

Figure 4 Priority Habitats within 1km from the Site (Magic.gov.uk, 2023)



- Legend**

- Priority Habitat Inventory - Colaminarian Grassland (England) - Priority Habitat Inventory - Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh (England) - Priority Habitat Inventory - Good quality semi-improved grassland (Non Priority) (England) - Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland Calcareous Grassland (England) - Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland Dry Acid Grassland (England) - Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland Meadows (England) - Priority Habitat Inventory - Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture (England) - Priority Habitat Inventory - Upland Calcareous Grassland (England) - Priority Habitat Inventory - Upland Hay Meadows (England) - Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland Heathland (England) - Priority Habitat Inventory - Mountain Heaths and Wetland Scrub (England)	- Priority Habitat Inventory - Upland Heathland (England) - Priority Habitat Inventory - Blanket Bog (England) - Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland Fens (England) - Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland Raised Bog (England) - Priority Habitat Inventory - Reedbeds (England) - Priority Habitat Inventory - Upland Flushes, Fens and Swamps (England)	National Forest Inventory (GB) - Assumed woodland - broads/leas - cloud / shadow - conifer - coppice - coppice with standards - felled - planted - ground prep - low density - mixed mainly broadleaved - mixed mainly conifer - shrub - uncertain
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3.4 Habitats

3.4.1 Please refer to Appendix 2 for the Habitat Map for the site.

The site comprises of developed land in the form of buildings and areas of hardstanding with one area of sparsely vegetated land and one mature tree to the southern boundary of the site.

u1b Developed Land; Sealed Surface.

3.4.2 The site consisted of one main two storey mid-terrace building with two interconnected single storey extensions extending southwards. There are associated areas of hardstanding in the form of sealed surface patio courtyards and concrete surfaces within the southern extent of the site.

s Sparsely vegetated land.

- 3.4.3 The site contained one section of sparsely vegetated land measuring around 6m² along the southern boundary of the site, species present were limited to bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), buddleia (*Buddleja davidii*), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and self-set volunteer sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) saplings which were also found within the developed land courtyards.

Secondary code – s 32 Individual tree

- 3.4.4 One individual tree was located within the sparsely vegetated land and courtyard area in the southern section alongside the boundary of the site. The tree was a mature female maidenhair tree (*Ginkgo biloba*) with a Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) of 580mm, it had two co-dominant leaders and was in good vigour and health. The tree had no visible PRF features following the GLTA inspection and was rated as holding negligible bat potential.

3.5 Species

Flora

- 3.5.1 The data search returned 77 records of notable plants within the local area, including (not limited to); perfoliate pondweed (*Potamogeton perfoliatus*), caraway (*Carum carvi*), tubular water dropwort (*Oenanthe fistulosa*), shepherds needle (*Scandix pecten-veneris*), corn parsley (*Sison segetum*), bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), spiked star of Bethlehem (*Ornithogalum pyreniacum*), greater butterfly orchid (*Plantanthera chlorantha*), common cudweed (*Filago germanica*), great lettuce (*Lactuca virosa*), good king Henry (*Blitum bonus-Henricus*), corn spurrey (*Spergula arvensis*), keeled fruited cornsalad (*Valerianella carinata*), Jacobs ladder (*Polemonium caeruleum*), spotted medick (*Medicago arabica*), strawberry clover (*Trifolium fragiferum*), dwarf gorse (*Ulex minor*), yellow vetch (*Vicia lutea*), bucks horn plantain (*Plantago coronopus*), meadow saffron (*Colchicum autumnale*), large leaved lime (*Tilia platyphyllos*), marsh willowherb (*Epilobium palustre*), silver hair grass (*Aira caryophyllea*), true fox sedge (*Carex vulpina*), rats tail fescue (*Vulpia myuros*), Welsh poppy (*Papaver cambricum*), creeping spearwort (*Ranunculus reptans*), shrubby cinquefoil (*Dasiphora fructicosa*), henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*) and yellow juiced poppy (*Papaver lecoqii*).
- 3.5.2 No notable flora was recorded during the survey. Given the limited floristic diversity and absence of significant species during the walkover, along with the site's lack of ecological connectivity to the wider landscape, the presence of notable plant species can be reasonably discounted.

Invertebrates

- 3.5.3 The data search returned 47 records of invertebrates within the local area, only three of these were related to species other than moths, these being the alder leaf beetle (*Agelastica alni*), common darter (*Sympetrum striolatum*) and scarce chaser (*Libellula fulva*), these species are associated with the riparian habitat of the River Biss.
- 3.5.4 Notable species of moth included green brindled crescent (*Allophyes oxycanthae*), brown spot pinion (*Anchoscelis litura*), centre barred sawfly (*Atethmia centrugo*), dark spotted moss moth (*Bryotropha basaltinella*), small square spot (*Diarsia rubi*), September thorn (*Ennomos erosaria*), jersey tiger (*Eupagia quadripunctaria*), ghost moth (*Hepialus humuli*), rosy rustic (*Hydracecia micacea*), rosy minor (*Litoligia literosa*), oblique carpet (*Orthonama vittata*), argent and sable (*Rheumaptera hastata*), blood vein (*Timandra comae*), cinnabar (*Tyria jacobaeae*), grey dagger moth (*Acronicta psi*), and buff ermine moth (*Spilosoma lutea*).
- 3.5.5 Limited flowering species were observed across the site, offering minimal foraging value for invertebrates. While shrubs such as buddleia may support generalist species, their ecological

contribution is low, with significantly greater invertebrate opportunities expected in nearby priority habitats which are heavily disconnected from the site.

- 3.5.6 Overall, minimal numbers of common invertebrates are anticipated to be present onsite given only sub optimal habitat exists.

Amphibians

- 3.5.7 The data search returned 11 records of great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) (GCN) and 18 records for common frog (*Rana temporaria*), with four records for common toad (*Bufo bufo*) within the 1km search.
- 3.5.8 All of these records were located outside a 250m radius of the site and all bar one for common frog and two for GCN are deemed historic as they are pre-2015.
- 3.5.9 The common frog record was from Jenkins Street located 550m to the north and the two GCN records are from 900m to the west and 800m to the northwest respectively, therefore they are deemed to be outside of the maximum dispersal zone given the heavily urban setting and considerable anthropogenic barriers to movement.
- 3.5.10 Consultation with Magic.gov.uk returned no granted European Protected Species Licences for GCN within 1km of the site boundary.
- 3.5.11 No ponds were located onsite or within 250m of the Site boundary (The GCN's upper dispersal limit is generally considered to be up to 250m from a waterbody, though occurrences at greater distances have been recorded). As such, great crested newts are deemed absent from site.
- 3.5.12 It is noted that ponds associated with nearby residential gardens could be present which are not mapped online, these could support breeding common amphibians.
- 3.5.13 The site consists of only developed land with a small area of sparsely vegetated land in the southern extremity of the site, which is not noted as valuable habitat for amphibians. Furthermore the high walled perimeter feature is an additional insurmountable barrier for amphibians. Therefore, GCN and other common amphibians are reasonably discounted from site.

Reptiles

- 3.5.14 The data search returned 25 records of reptile species within the local area. Most of these records related to slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*) and grass snake (*Natrix Helvetica*) with one record of common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*). Only 13 slow worm records are deemed recent (post 2015).
- 3.5.15 The site provides limited value for reptiles, given it is comprised of urban developed land. This lacks the structure and habitat quality to support the species group. Due to the presence of considerable anthropogenic barriers and the perimeter boundary wall it is determined that they cannot access the site, therefore, they are reasonably discounted from the assessment.

Birds

- 3.5.16 A total of 53 records of bird species were returned during the 1km data search. Records relevant to the site included (not limited to); swift (*Apus apus*), tree sparrow (*Passer montanus*), house martin (*Delichon urbicum*), rook (*Corvus fruilegus*), greenfinch (*Chloris chloris*), collared dove (*Streptopelia decaoto*), wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*), stock dove (*Columba oenas*), lesser back backed gull (*Larus fuscus*), common gull (*Larus canus*), black headed gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), dunnoek (*Prunella modularis*), swallow (*Hirundo rustica*), herring gull (*Larus argentatus*), linnet (*Linaria cannabina*), yellow wagtail (*Motacilla flava*), grey wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*), song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), barn owl (*Tyto alba*), sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*), red kite (*Milvus milvus*), fieldfare (*Turdus*

pilaris), wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*), mistle thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*), tawny owl (*Strix aluco*), redwing (*Turdus iliacus*) and peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*).

- 3.5.17 One sensitive record for goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*) was returned in the data search, but the species is not anticipated to be present on site given that the habitat is not optimal as they prefer heavily wooded environments.
- 3.5.18 The site does not provide potential breeding habitats for the vast majority of the birds listed in the data search, other than those that are heavily associated with buildings. There is no habitat present to support foraging or nesting in the form of scrub or vegetation bar the individual tree and no nests were observed within the external areas of the site during the survey of the buildings.
- 3.5.19 A notable number of feral pigeons (*Columba livia*) were identified within the proximity of the site in association with the first floor of the main terraced building, the rear door was open, and the birds had been accessing the open plan room. Considerable evidence of nesting was found including various nesting materials, feathers and discarded eggshells across the floor. Therefore, the building was assessed as supporting an active colony of nesting individuals. A total of seven birds left the building during the site walkover and no other bird species were noted during the site visit.
- 3.5.20 Ground nesting birds are not anticipated on site, as the site habitats are not suitable with limited to no ground cover available on site.

Bats

- 3.5.21 The data search returned a total of 319 records for bats within 1km of the site boundary, which related to both activity and roost locations. Species records were dominated by common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) making up 150 of these records. Brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*) was the next most frequently recorded species followed by serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*), noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*), Leislers (*Nyctalus leisleri*), lesser horseshoe, greater horseshoe, daubenton's (*Myotis daubentonii*), barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*) and whiskered (*Myotis mystacinus*) bats. There were also 40 records of unidentified myotis species within the returned records as acoustic data.
- 3.5.22 A total of eleven species of bats are known to be present within 1km of the site, which is a high concentration and over 60% of the known UK species, including three annex 2 species.

- 3.6.1 Consultation with Magic.gov.uk returned eight granted European Protected Species Licences within 3km of the site boundary:
- 3.6.2 All of these records were for destruction or disturbance of resting places only and no breeding sites were identified for six bat species, contemporary with the results of the data search.

Case reference of granted application	Species on the licence*	Distance from site (KM) and direction (N,S,E,W)	Licence Start Date	Licence End Date	Does the Licence				
					impact on a breeding site?	allow damage of breeding site?	allow damage of a resting place?	allow destruction of breeding site?	allow destruction of a resting place?
EPSM- 2017-2727-MIT	BLE, BRANDT, WHISK	2.2 N	2012	2012	N	N	N	N	Y
EPSM- 012-5169-MIT	C-PIP	2.6 NE	2012	2015	N	N	N	N	Y
EPSM-2015-11070-MIT	C-PIP	0.9 E	2015	2020	N	N	N	N	Y
EPSM-2020-48340-MIT	C-PIP	0.75 E	2020	2025	N	N	N	N	Y
EPSM-2015-15090-MIT	C-PIP, L-HORSE	0.5 S	2015	2020	N	N	N	N	Y
EPSM-2014-5466-MIT	BLE	3 S	2015	2020	N	N	N	N	Y
EPSM-2019-43957-MIT	C-PIP	3 S	2020	2025	N	N	N	N	Y
EPSM-2011-3909-MIT	C-PIP, SERO,BLE	3 SW	2012	2012	N	N	N	N	Y

Species on license	Species name	Latin name
C-PIP	Common pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>
BLE	Brown long-eared bat	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>
BRANDT	Brandts bat	<i>Myotis brandtii</i>
WHISK	Whiskered bat	<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>
SERO	Serotine bat	<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>
L-HORSE	Lesser Horseshoe bat	<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>

- 3.6.3 The individual tree onsite provided no opportunities for roosting bats with no potential roosting features identified. Therefore, the individual tree was found to provide no bat roosting potential. Please refer to the appendix for photographs.
- 3.6.4 Given the species records within the data search and the known roosts within 3km of the site, it is deemed that the surrounding local area offers optimal habitat and foraging resources for bats. A number of the more common species are known to prefer buildings as roost sites throughout the year and suitable consideration must be given to the function of the building even within the urban environment.

3.6.5 The buildings were subject to a full detailed PRA inspection, and the results are presented below in Table 1.

Table 1 PRA of the buildings on site

Building Ref	Description	Photograph
Main two-story mid terrace building	External: The building occupies a roadside position on Fore Street with the northern elevation facing the road. It is constructed from square stone blocks and has a large bay window on the ground floor, four sash windows on the first floor and two dormer sash windows within the roof pitch. The roof is covered with stone flagstones acting as an interlocking layered roof covering which reduces in size from the wall plate up to the ridgeline. A small parapet wall creates a gulley at wall plate level, so no fascia or soffit are present. The stonework is in good condition and no PRF's (potential roost features) were observed within the masonry. The northern roof elevation offers multiple crevice type features between the flagstone roof shingles and within the same features on the dormer windows acting as hanging tile coverings. These were rated as PRFS. The rear southern elevation was of similar construction however the masonry was rendered and painted and there were only three sash windows to the western end and a door in the eastern first floor level accessed via a set of stairs. The door was ajar on the ground floor and first floor elevation of the site and appeared to have been so for a considerable period given the evidence of weather ingress and detritus which had blown internal of the first-floor level. One small roof light was positioned in the roof at the top of the eastern end of the roof. The roof covering on this side was in a poor condition compared to the northern elevation and more features were evident where flagstone shingles had failed or were missing. These features were rated as holding potential for crevice type bat roosting. There was a well-sealed fascia timber under the wall plate, and no roost features were present. The eastern and western elevations were abutted by the buildings on either side of the terrace. The eastern elevation was subservient to the neighboring property and adjoined the gable wall, there was a line of leadwork which appeared intact and offered no PRF's.	 Northern elevation viewed looking south  Close up of roof flagstones and PRF features on southern

The western abutment joined at roof level and continued into the neighboring property.

Southern elevation:

There were two single story structures connected to the main building extending from the southern elevation across the full width of the site.

The first consisted of a flat bitumen roof with lightwells located within it. It led to a slightly elevated additional room again with a bitumen flat roof sealed to the adjoining properties with a lead flashing. This was intact and offered no PRF availability.

Alongside the first extension was a small concrete courtyard which contained the door to the ground floor level and the stairs to the first-floor level. Some volunteer ruderal vegetation was present partially blocking the ground floor access which was also ajar.

To the rear of the second raised extension there was a further sealed surface courtyard accessed by a metal staircase, with a small area of sparsely vegetated ground surrounded by a large boundary wall, inside which the individual maidenhair tree was located.

The surrounding walls of the extensions and boundary wall were fully inspected for features and no PRF's were identified on the remainder of the external facades.

elevation



Southern elevation viewed from the south looking north



Southern roof elevation and first southern extension flat roof



View south to second single story extension and flat roof



Rear courtyard showing hard standing, sparsely vegetated ground and individual tree surrounded by tall boundary wall.



First courtyard with access steps and sealed surface and ruderal vegetation.

Internal
spaces

Main building

Ground floor:

The ground floor was divided into a series of 3 rooms all connected by closed fire doors; they originally formed the bank frontage and offices. They had been stripped and cleared, and full access and visual inspection was possible.

The ceilings consisted of suspended tiled panels and no PRF's were identified.

The first extension housed the vault and further offices and storage, there were no signs of bats, and the rooms were sealed by fire doors.

The second extension offered toilet facilities and a kitchen with a rear window, the rooms were again sealed by fire doors, and no evidence of bats was encountered.

First floor:

The first floor was accessed via the first courtyard and external staircase. The door was ajar and there was considerable evidence of feral pigeon nesting in the form of droppings, feathers and discarded eggshells.

There was evidence of recent nesting in the dormer window abutments.

The space was fully open plan with no ceilings present and the exposed bitumen felt was evident. It appeared that works had been completed to the roof whereby new timbers had been inserted and metal braces installed on the A frames.

Some areas had remnants of chipboard internal cladding, creating voids between the internal and external coverings which offered low value PRF's

Various features existed within the timber frame such as old mortice and tenon joints and jointed timbers. They were inspected with a torch and endoscope, and no bats were observed but they offered crevice features within the internal space and were rated as holding bat roosting potential.

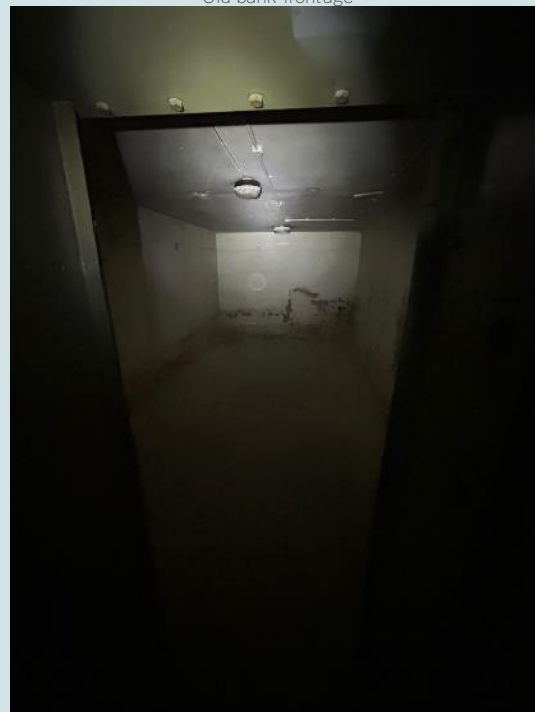
The double window lintel concrete blocks created a cavity feature which extended into the masonry structure. It was 25-40mm wide and extended in places over 300mm inwards and upwards, this created high value features given the open access into the space, most were inspected with an endoscope, and no bats were observed.

The floor of the room was littered with pigeon droppings which made identifying any potential bat droppings difficult, there were no confirmed bat droppings identified anywhere within the internal first floor space.

The room was heavily illuminated by natural light via the bidirectional windows and roof light, and this would decrease suitability for daytime



Old bank frontage



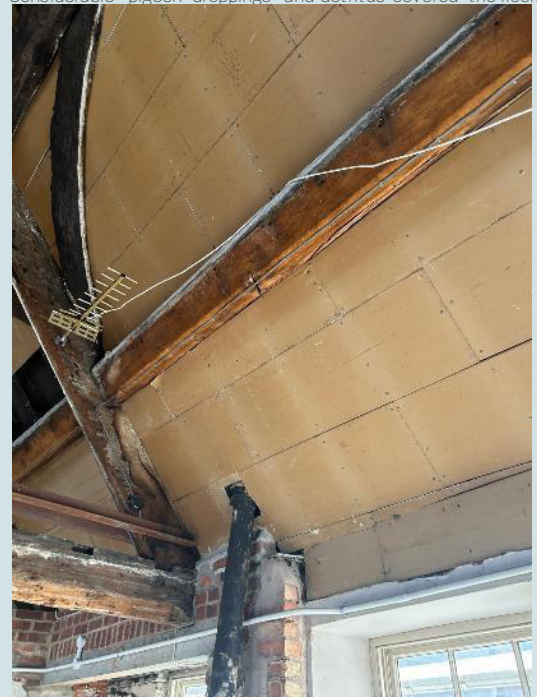
Vault room.

roosting within the space.

Overall, the main two-story structure is rated as holding MODERATE bat roosting potential, and the two extension areas as holding NEGLIGIBLE bat roosting potential.



Considerable pigeon droppings and detritus covered the floor.



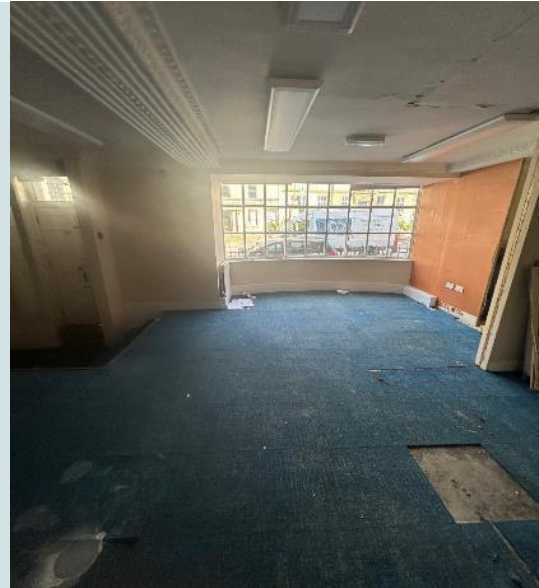
Section of intact internal cladding to southeast end of southern roof elevation.



Cavity is created by the double concrete window lintels



Cut roof A frames and bitumen felt, also showing the bracing on the roof.



Bank frontage



First floor internal space

- 3.6.6 The habitats on site are anticipated to provide low value for foraging bats due to comprising of mostly hardstanding areas, with limited connectivity to the wider landscape. However, the structure itself has multiple suitable features, and the main mid terrace building offers potential roosting features for bats given the flagstoneroof covering creating crevice features suitable for singular and multiple bat occupation.
- 3.6.7 Given that the rear door is open permanently and is being accessed by the feral pigeons, it is possible that bats can also gain access to the sheltered internal space for ad hoc roosting, given the large windows and heavy natural light ingress, it is suggested that day roosting internal of the structure is unlikely, however, night roosting is entirely possible.

- 3.6.8 Considering all the information and with the optimal crevice and void bat roosting features within the stone roof flagstones and first floor space, although no direct evidence was encountered during the site inspection, the main two storey mid terrace building is rated as having moderate potential for bats. All the remaining extensions hold negligible potential for bats.
- 3.6.9 As the site sits within the Z.O.I of the known bat SAC at Bath and Bradford upon Avon located roughly 6-7km to the northeast, it is suggested that the survey effort reflect the sensitive nature of the surrounding site. Given the urban nature of the building, it is deemed suboptimal for horseshoe species, however, records suggest they are known within 500m of the site, therefore, due diligence is required, especially given the open flight access and large void which is suitable for ad hoc night roosting and for feeding perch use.

Badger

- 3.6.10 The data search returned no records for Eurasian badger (*Meles meles*) within the 1km search area.
- 3.6.11 No evidence of badger activity, such as paths, latrines, tracks, or fur was recorded on site during the survey. Although the wider landscape may offer suitable habitat, the site itself lies within a heavily urbanised area, subject to frequent disturbance, anthropogenic barriers and is lacking meaningful foraging or commuting opportunities. As such, badgers are not considered further in this assessment.

Other Terrestrial Mammals

- 3.6.12 The data search returned 124 records of the western European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) within 1km of the site. However, the site itself is located within a heavily urbanised town centre and characterised by hard standing, built infrastructure with limited greenspace. The presence of main roads, the high perimeter wall and frequent human activity significantly reduce habitat connectivity and increases mortality risk and as such, the site offers no accessibility or suitability for hedgehogs.
- 3.6.13 No records of brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*) were returned from the data search, and they are considered not to be present on site.

Non-Native Invasive Species (INNS)

- 3.6.14 The data search returned no records of non-native invasive species within 1km of the site.
- 3.6.15 No evidence of INNS species was recorded during the walkover survey.

Species Discounted from Assessment

- 3.6.16 Water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*), otter (*Lutra lutra*), beaver (*Castor fiber*), and white-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) have been discounted from assessment as no suitable aquatic habitats are located on site. The closest aquatic habitat is the River Biss, approximately 120m to the east. This river is separated from the site by a road and buildings, which acts as a barrier restricting movement and preventing the establishment of a direct link to the river.
- 3.6.17 One record of beaver was returned dating from 2024, and 37 records of water vole were returned, all associated with upstream and downstream sections of the River Biss outside of the urban centre of Trowbridge.
- 3.6.18 Red squirrel has been discounted from the assessment. Due to the absence of woodland onsite, combined with the absence of previous records returned in the data search. It is anticipated that high abundances of grey squirrel are present within this region (Shuttleworth/RSST n.d.). This species will displace red squirrels through competition, as well as cause increased red squirrel

mortality through the spread of squirrel pox (The Mammal Society, 2020).

- 3.6.19 Hazel dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) has been discounted from the assessment, as the site lacks suitable habitat and connectivity to support this species.

4. Mitigation Recommendations

4.1 Designated Sites

Statutory Designations

- 4.1.1 The site is located within the SSSI Impact Risk Zone for Pickett and Clanger wood; however, due to its distance from the designated site and the nature of the proposed works, impacts are considered highly unlikely. The site is also separated from designated areas by significant anthropogenic barriers, including roads and industrial infrastructure, which further reduce the potential for ecological connectivity, and as such, no direct impacts are anticipated at a site level, and consultation with Natural England is not considered necessary.

You do not need to consult Natural England on the proposed development at this location.

The Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI IRZs) indicate that at the location selected, the proposed development is unlikely to have a harmful effect on terrestrial Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and the Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or Ramsar sites that they underpin.

Therefore, you do not need to consult Natural England on the likely impacts of development on terrestrial SSSIs and the SACs, SPAs or Ramsar sites that they underpin.

Non-statutory Designations

- 4.1.2 The Biss Meadows Country Park is located approximately 680m from the site at its closest point and is designated as an LWS. The development site does not support ecological connectivity to this area and given the separation distance and intervening urban and industrial infrastructure, any development works are unlikely to result in any direct or indirect impacts on the LWS.

Trees

- 4.1.3 Given the presence of one mature tree on site, a detailed Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) is not deemed necessary. It is suggested that any work to develop the site should include retention of this healthy specimen and provide appropriate buffer zones and working methods to protect the tree during construction.
- 4.1.4 Generally, the protection measures of retained trees will be through use of temporary protective demarcation fencing to protect the trees and shrubs. The fencing must extend outside the canopy of the retained trees and must remain in position throughout the construction phase.
- 4.1.5 The fencing will be in accordance with BS 5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction: Recommendations.

4.2 Species

- 4.2.1 It is recommended that no further consideration of reptiles or amphibians is required within the site boundaries, given the high boundary wall and limited habitats other than sealed surface it is reasonably discounted that either species are present on site.

Breeding Birds

- 4.2.2 Any internal renovations and major construction work should be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season given the presence of the known feral pigeon roosts within the first floor of

the main two storey building, (March to August, inclusive). If this is not possible, a suitably qualified ecologist should undertake a nesting bird check no more than 48 hours prior to sealing the first-floor door thus excluding the birds. If nesting activity is observed, the nest(s) should be left in situ until the young have fledged. A suitable buffer will be maintained and determined by the ecologist and prior to any sealing of the first-floor room. Please note, pigeons nest all year round.

- 4.2.3 There is potential within any new development to include additional small passerine type colony and individual boxes to enhance the site for common and widespread urban species. The site ecologist can recommend and specify boxes and installation guidance.

Bats

- 4.2.4 The habitats of highest potential value for commuting and foraging bats lie offsite, therefore there is not anticipated to be a loss of commuting and foraging habitats for bats by the proposed development of the building.
- 4.2.5 The two-storey mid terrace section of the building holds moderate bat roosting potential given the features observed during the PRA, specifically the first-floor level internal masonry, internal roof void space and the external flagstone roof, therefore, further survey effort is required to determine whether bats are using the structure (see Section 5.1).
- 4.2.6 All bats have some degree of sensitivity to artificial, night-time lighting. Introducing artificial lighting to areas that are not currently illuminated may sever important bat flight lines and discourage bats from using roost provisions. However, given the building's location and the high levels of existing artificial light the renovation and repurposing of the building is not anticipated to have any detrimental effect on an already sub optimal site, unless positive evidence of bats using the building is determined from further surveys.
- 4.2.7 Should evidence of roosting bats be confirmed then further design implications regarding lighting may need to be discussed and detailed pre any development commencing.

Terrestrial Mammals

- 4.2.8 European Hedgehog and other terrestrial mammals are not anticipated to be present within the site, given the large perimeter wall restricting any terrestrial fauna from accessing the site.

5. Further Surveys and Conclusion

5.1 Bat Surveys.

- 5.1.1 The main two storey mid terrace portion of the building was found to provide "Moderate Bat Roosting Potential" and therefore, in accordance with Best Practice guidance (Collins, 2023) a total of TWO further nocturnal emergence surveys should be undertaken between May - September (inclusive) to determine usage by roosting bats. This is predominantly given the site's location within the Bath and Bradford upon Avon SAC and the results of the data search and known roost sites within 1km of the building. It also relates to the roosting potential of the flagstone roof covering and the open first floor door which affords internal access into the exposed masonry and roof structure.
- 5.1.2 Although no direct evidence of bats was found the presence of the heavy detritus and droppings from the feral pigeon roost could easily have obscured any bat droppings and other evidence present.
- 5.1.3 The results of the further surveys will determine if any mitigation is required for roosting bats. If roosting bats are located within the building, a Natural England Mitigation Licence may be

required for development to proceed. The Licence can only be obtained once planning permission has been granted and all wildlife conditions discharged. However, the bat emergence surveys must be undertaken prior to planning permission being applied for as they are a material consideration.

5.2 Other Mitigation Measures

- Protection measures for the retained individual Maidenhair tree.
- Nesting bird check before building works commence if within nesting bird season.

5.3 Conclusion

5.3.1 The site is located within an urban town centre setting and consists of developed land and buildings with minimal vegetated land and one individual tree, offering limited opportunities for flora and fauna on site.

5.3.2 The site is isolated due to anthropogenic barriers that restrict habitat connectivity with the wider landscape. In addition, high levels of disturbance further reduce the site's suitability for supporting most terrestrial species, however, there is evidence of birds nesting on-site, and bats may also be present within the buildings structure.

Further surveys are required for:

- A minimum of two nocturnal emergence surveys on the main two storey mid terrace portion of the building.

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Appendix 1 – Photographs

View of the north elevation looking from Fore street.



Southern elevation of
main building and first
extension.



View from the door of the first floor of the main building showing the first small courtyard and the view south over the single story extensions towards the individual tree on the southern boundary.

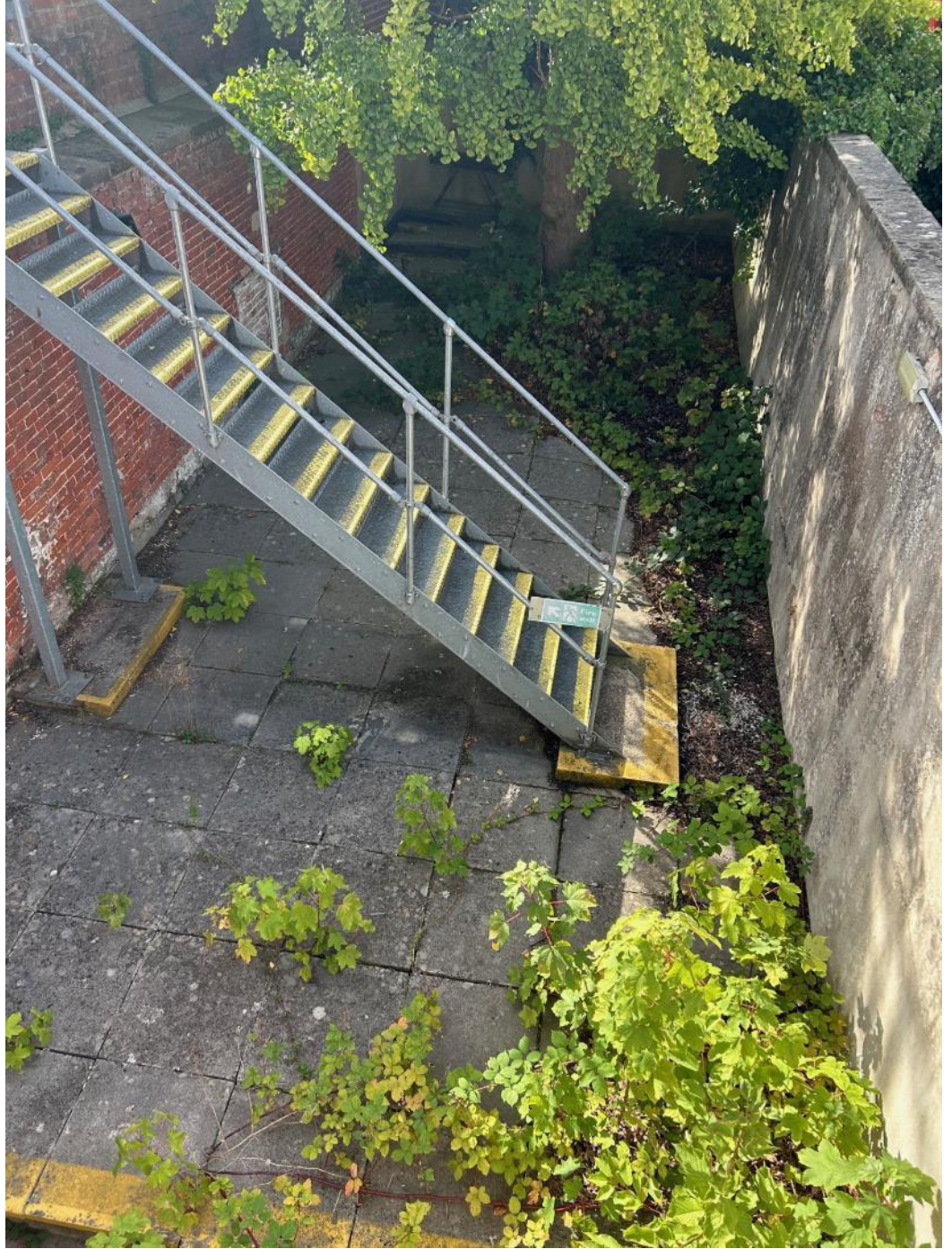


First small courtyard
sealed surface and
self set ruderal
vegetation.

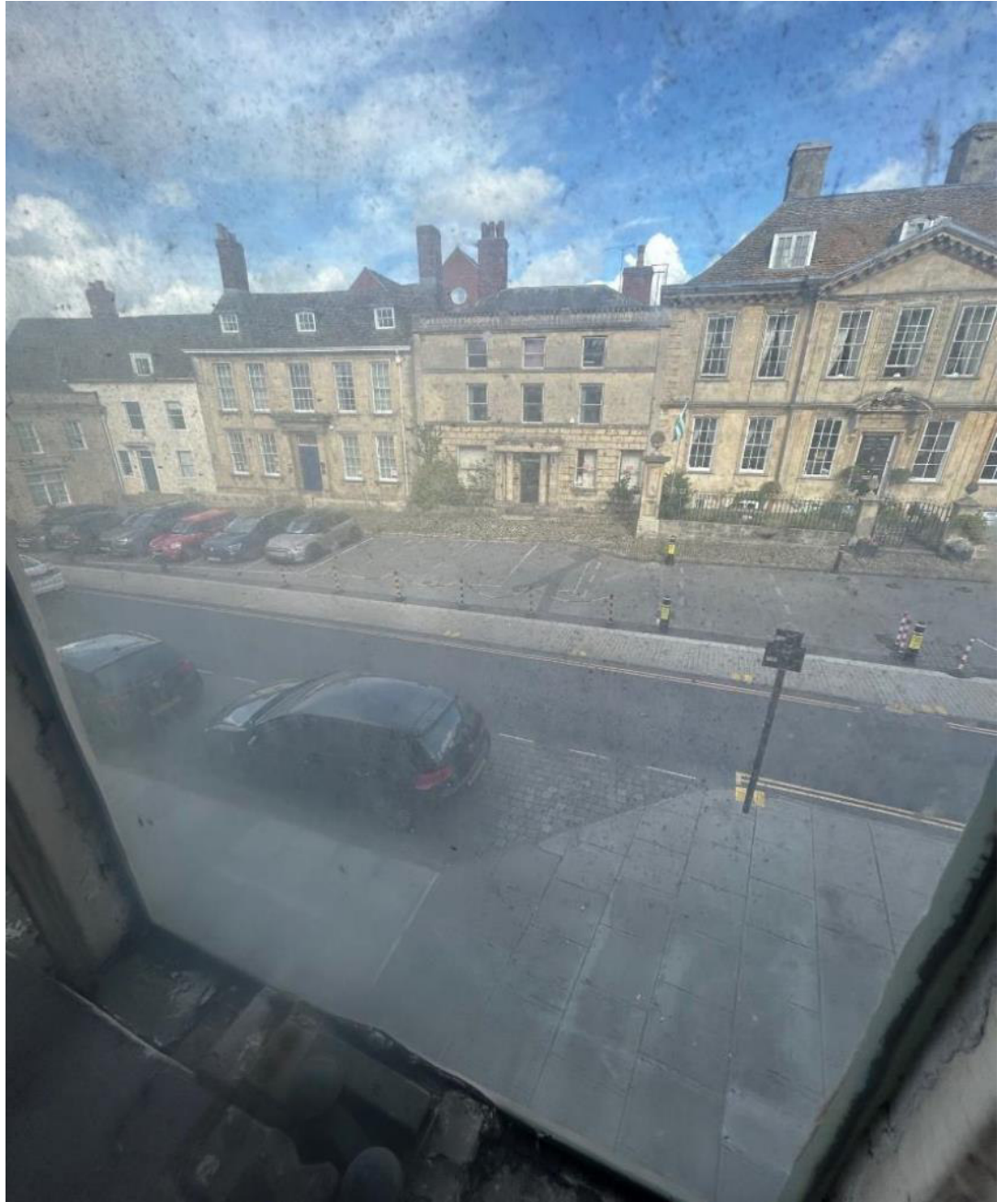


Rear courtyard showing the sealed surface, sparsely vegetated ground and the individual maidenhair tree at the southern end of the site. Also note the large boundary wall restricting any access into the site from external surroundings.

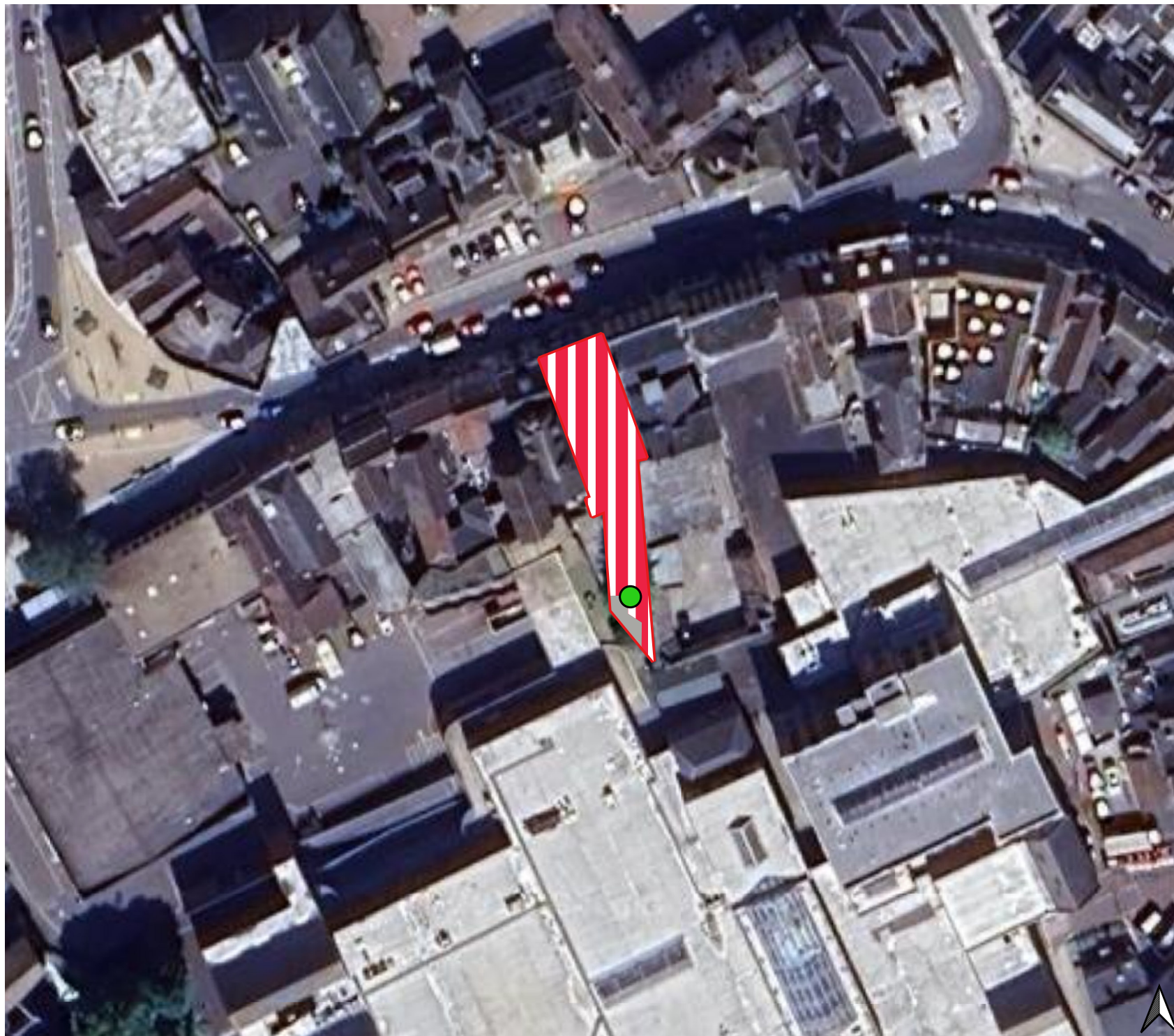
The self-set sycamore saplings form the majority of the vegetation along with bramble.



View from the first floor window looking north out onto Fore street.



Appendix 2 – Habitat Map



3 Fore Street, Trowbridge Baseline Habitats

-  Individual Tree - s32
-  Developed Land Sealed Surface - u1b
-  Sparseley Vegetated Land - s
-  Red Line Boundary

Scale: 1:800

Drawn By: CW

Checked By: JH

Approved By: JH



Client: Consensus Planning Ltd

Site: 3 Fore street, Trowbridge

Project Number: 20-3414

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