



Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site:

The Old Vicarage, Church Lane, Hankerton, Malmesbury, Wiltshire SN16 9LF

Client:

FAO Hetreed Ross Architects

Survey date:

23/04/2026

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Wiltshire Council. This proposal can be described as "Roof height of existing dwelling to be raised by 145mm to allow for over-rafter insulation. All fascia and barge boards will need to be replaced to accommodate an increase in height."

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

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 Tables 1, 3 & 4 of this report.

Key Findings

Roosting bats

Three bat emergence/re-entry surveys are required on B1 during the active bat season (May – September) to confirm presence/likely-absence of bats roosting in or on the building. These survey visits should be completed during the optimal survey period mid-May to August inclusive. The survey visits should be at least three weeks apart.

No works to the property that may block or remove potential roosting features should be carried out until the required surveys have been completed. Undertaking such work beforehand could unlawfully affect bats if present and may compromise the validity of the surveys and hinder the planning application process.

Birds

Precautionary working methods. Please see relevant sections for details.

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Introduction and Context

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 - 2024.](#)

Limitations

Whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report is a preliminary assessment and does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. Nor does it represent a full botanical assessment. It assesses the likelihood of protected, notable and important habitats and species being present, based on a site and landscape level habitat value-based risk assessment. This is based upon the ecology, biology and known distribution of species as currently understood.

A biological records data search has not been undertaken. However, given the location of the site, the nature of the habitats present and the assessed suitability of the site for protected or notable species, it is not anticipated that the purchase of biological records data will add any significant weight or alter the conclusions and recommendations outlined in this report.

Results, Impacts and Recommendations

Site Location and Landscape Context

Table 1: Site location and landscape context

Site Location
The site is located at National Grid Reference ST 97185 90709 and has an area of approximately 0.024ha comprising one building. The site is located in a suburban setting, immediately surrounded by grassland and scattered trees to the north, east and south with residential dwellings and their adjoining gardens to the west. Aerial imagery shows that the surrounding area is predominantly rural, characterised by extensive agricultural fields and grassland in all directions. Occasional woodland copses and small villages are scattered throughout, interspersed within a network of hedgerows and field margins. A review of historic maps indicates the landscape has remained largely unchanged since the late 1800s. There are no ponds or water courses located on or directly adjacent to the site. Medium, loamy but locally light, silt-rich, or sometimes heavy clay-rich soil and subsoil.
Priority Habitats and Designated Sites
Summary of Survey Findings <u>Priority Habitats</u> There are 7 priority habitats located within 2 km of the site. These comprise good quality and semi improved grassland, deciduous woodland, lowland meadows, priority ponds, traditional orchard, ancient replanted woodland and wood pasture and parkland. The closest priority habitat comprises good quality and semi improved grassland, located ~0.27km northeast of the site. Due to the rural character of the surrounding landscape, and the proximity of the nearest priority habitat to the site, the site is considered to be suitably connected to notable habitats through hedgerows and field margins. <u>Designated Sites</u>

There is 1 statutory site within 2 km of the site. This is listed below:

Table 1a: Statutory sites within 2km of the site.

Designation	Reason for designation	Distance from site
Cloatley Manor Farm Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Cloatley Manor Farm Meadows comprises three adjacent fields supporting floristically rich, unimproved and lowland neutral grassland, along with an area of largely semi-improved grassland, all managed as hay meadows. The site provides an example of a habitat that has largely been lost throughout England, as a result of recent intensive agricultural management. The meadows, which lie on Upper Greensand and Gault Clay, are bounded by a number of thick hedges, some of which run along ditches, and two small copses. Typical meadow butterflies, such as the common blues and meadow browns, can be found over the fields, as can be the five-spot burnet moth.	~0.77km northeast

The site does fall within the impact risk zone for Cloatley Manor Farm Meadows SSSI however, the proposed development type is not listed as possible high risk with regard to this designation.

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.

Impacts

No direct impacts on any designated sites or priority habitats are anticipated as a result of the proposed development. This is due to the small scale and low overall impact of the works, together with additional factors such as distance.

Recommendations

No recommendations.

Fauna

The site survey was undertaken by Kiera Horman BSc (Hons), Graduate Ecologist, an accredited agent on the Natural England Class 2 bat survey licence 2025-85589-CL18-BAT (Class 1 techniques only).

Table 2: Survey weather conditions

Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
23/04/2026	10.9	72	15	24.7	None

Table 3: Fauna

Fauna: Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations

This table 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.

Roosting Bats

Summary of Survey Findings

A review of the MAGIC database for European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) for bats within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. 3 EPSL were identified, as detailed below:

Table 3a: EPSL records within 2km of the site - bats

	EPSL reference	Bat species affected	Distance from site	Impacts allowed by licence
	EPSM2011-2973	Soprano pipistrelle. Brown long-eared, Daubentons, Natterer's and Lesser horseshoe.	~1.44km northeast	Destruction of breeding and resting site, affecting breeding.
	2014-4614-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle and Soprano pipistrelle	~1.66km northeast	Damage and destruction to a breeding site, affecting breeding.
	2014-4614-EPS-MIT-1	Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle and Whiskered.	~1.66km northeast	Destruction of a resting place.
Buildings				
Building B1 Description				

B1 is a two-storey, detached, block-built dwelling with a hipped and gabled roof clad in clay tiles. Minor defects, including slipped or worn tiles, were noted on the roof, particularly around the central chimney. One large internal void was recorded within the building, within which two bat droppings were identified in the western gable end of the void.

In line with Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J (Ed) 2023), B1 is assessed to have high habitat value for roosting bats due to both the identified external potential roosting features and the presence of confirmed bat droppings within B1.



Southern and western elevations of B1.



Southern and eastern elevations of B1.

			 Northern elevation of B1.	
Feature	Materials	Condition/Suitability	Photographs	

	Roof	Clay tiles	The roof is constructed of clay tiles and features a hipped and gabled structure. Minor defects, such as slipped or worn tiles, were observed on the southern elevations. These lifted roof tiles are visible both below and around the central chimney, as well as on the small eastern extension. These features may provide suitable roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling species as well as internal access for void-dwelling bat species.	 <i>Lifted roof tiles below the central chimney.</i>	
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Lifted roof tiles present on the small extension to the east.

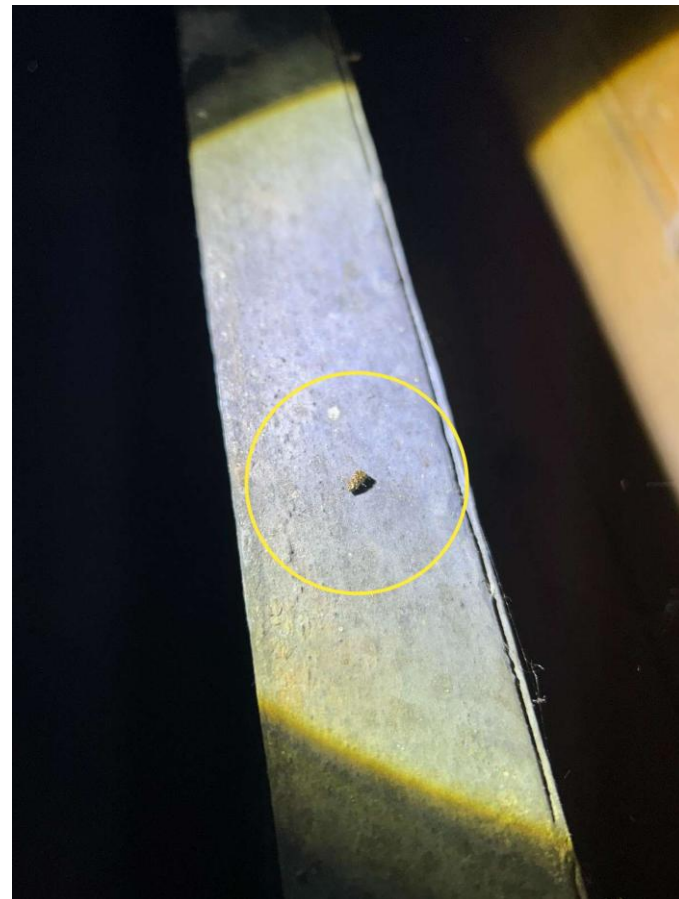
	Barge boards	Timber	Two small holes are present behind the bargeboards at the apex of two of the gable ends: the western-most southern gable and the northern gable. These features appear superficial and are unlikely to provide access into the internal void; however, they may offer suitable roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling species and access features for void-dwelling species.	 <i>Gap behind the baregboard on the western-most southern gable end.</i>	
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Gap behind the bareboard on the northern gable end.

	Voids	Woollen insulation + Timber rafters + Timber collars	A loft void was recorded within B1. The void is accessible, with the central portion measuring approximately 6.2m in length, 15.2m in width, and 3.2m in height, giving an area of 94.24m². It is insulated with woollen insulation and recorded a temperature of 13.8°C and a humidity of 54.3%. Two bat droppings were found in the western gabled end of the loft void. These were sent off for DNA testing and were confirmed to be from a brown long-eared bat.	 <i>Central section of loft void.</i>  <i>Eastern gable end section of loft void (facing south).</i>	
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				 <i>Western gable end section of loft void (facing south).</i>	
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Bat dropping located within the western gabled end of the loft void.

Impacts

Building 1 will be impacted as part of the proposed works. This could result in the destruction of any bat roosts present and may cause disturbance, injury, or death to bats.

Recommendations

Three bat emergence/re-entry survey will be required on B1, requiring 4 surveyors to provide full coverage of the building's elevations. Every surveyor should be equipped with an infrared camera as part of the survey to determine specific roost locations.

These survey visits should be completed during the optimal survey period mid-May to August inclusive and the survey visits should be at least three weeks apart. Completing surveys in the sub-optimal season, early May and September, would require greater justification of timing e.g., weather conditions, known local bat activity.

Lighting mitigation may be required based on the outcome of the night bat survey(s).

If any bat roosts are confirmed from this survey schedule, a bat licence would be required to impact B1 as it would involve the destruction/disturbance of roosts. This is applied for with the help of a class 2 licensed bat ecologist after planning permission is granted, but before commencement of works.

Foraging and Commuting Bats

Summary of Survey Findings

The surrounding vegetated garden and scattered trees may be used by local bat populations for foraging and commuting. In addition, the site is well connected to more suitable habitats within the wider landscape, including hedgerows, field margins, grassland, and agricultural fields.

Impacts

The proposed development will not result in the loss of any suitable vegetated habitat that may be used by foraging or commuting bats.

Recommendations

The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for foraging bats:

- Planting of locally characteristic tree, shrub and hedgerows to increase foraging opportunities.

Birds**Summary of Survey Findings**

No evidence of nesting birds was identified on or within B1; however, the building may provide suitable shelter and could be used by common nesting species. The site is situated near a network of scattered trees, hedgerows, and field margins to the north, east, and south, with scattered residential properties to the west.

Given the site's small size and the limited extent and type of habitats present, it is not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/or notable bird species.

Impacts

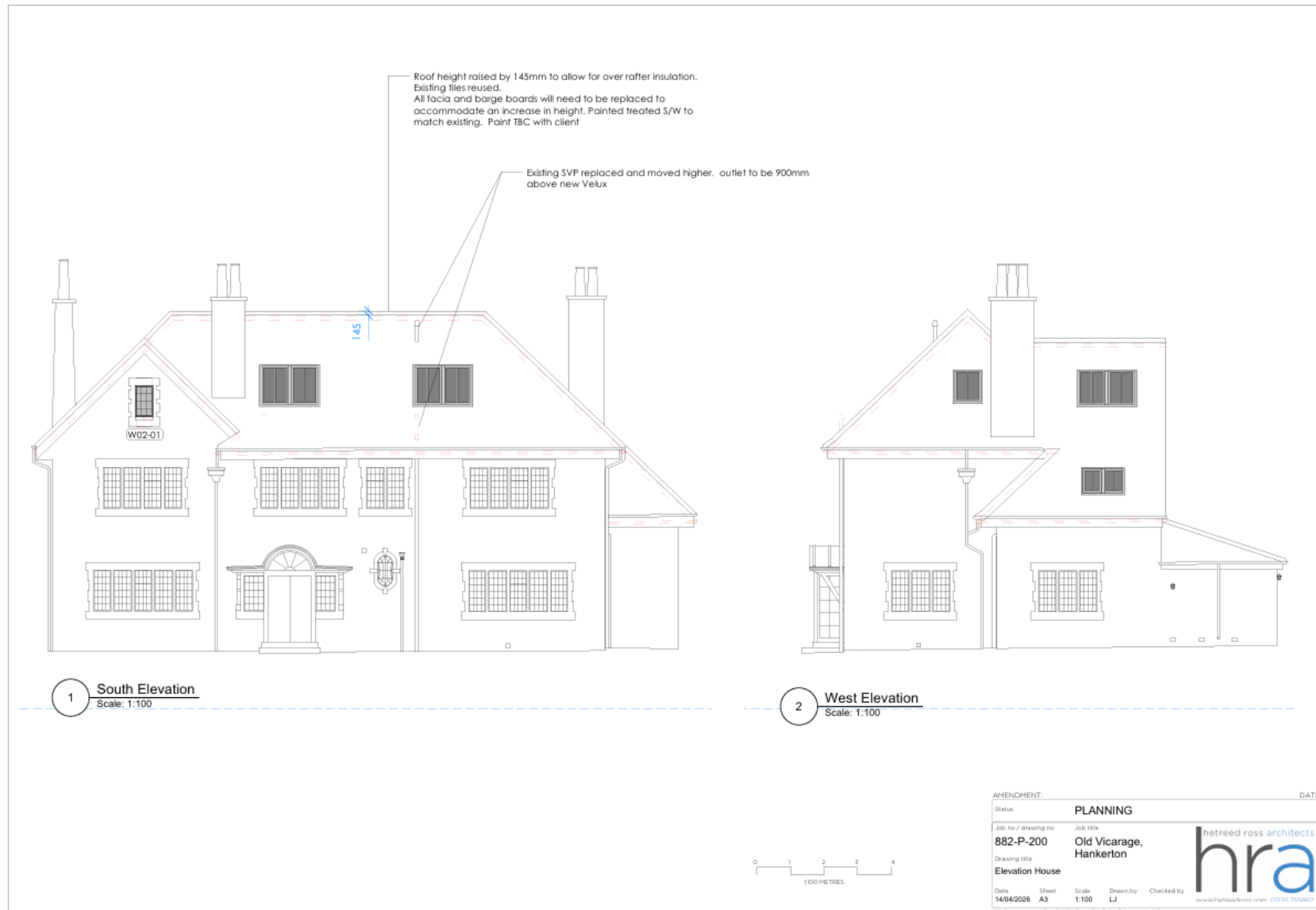
B1 will be impacted during construction. This is likely to be inconsequential to local bird populations owing to its low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, the proposed development could result in the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests.

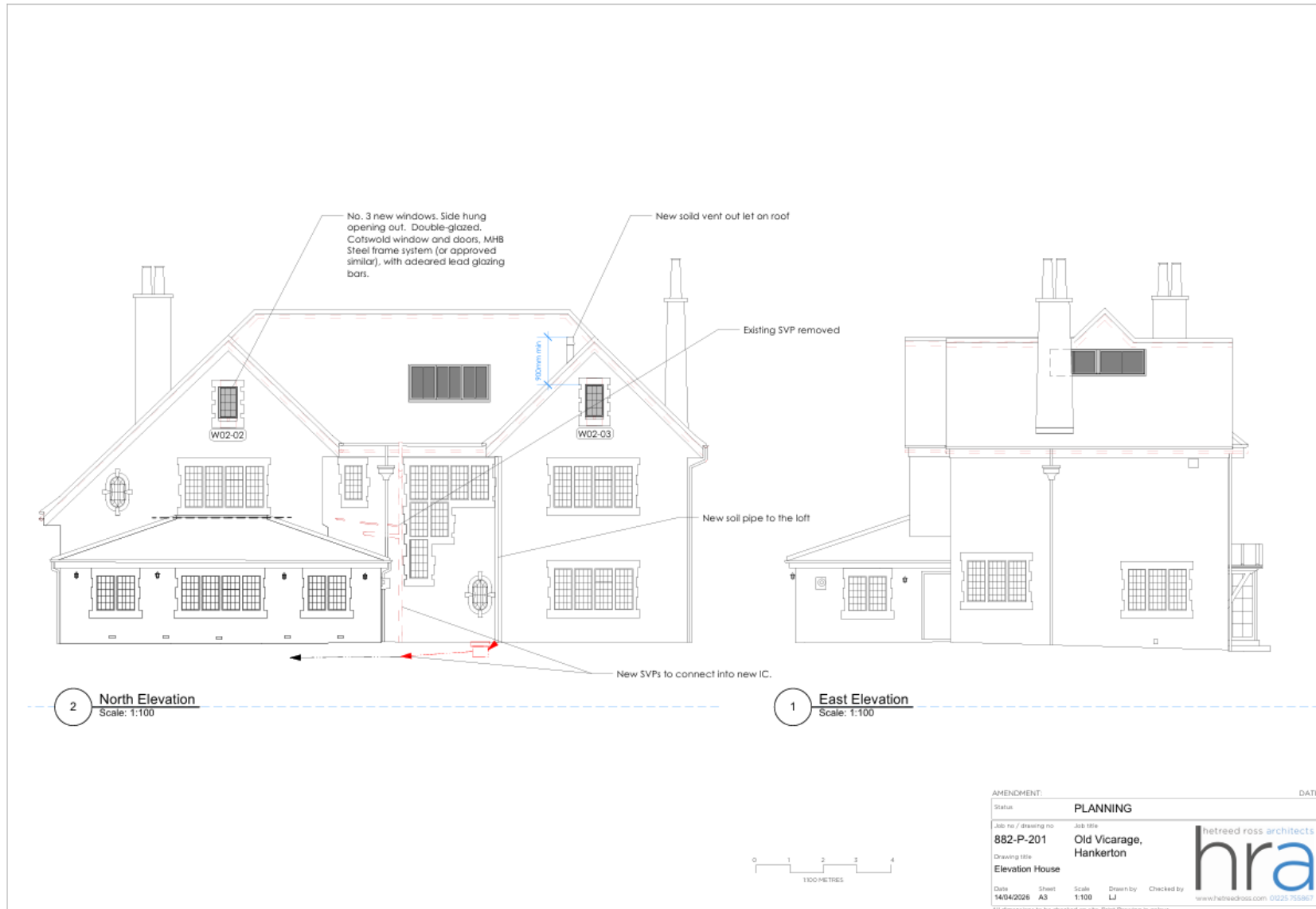
Recommendations

Any impacts to B1 should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the building should be undertaken immediately, by a qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to 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 nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests, depending on species present, until the young have fledged.

Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan





Appendix 2: Site Location Map



Appendix 3: PRA Map



Appendix 4: DNA Analysis



LABORATORY REPORT

Species Identification from Biological Samples

CUSTOMER

Kiera Horman
Arbtech Consulting Ltd.
Arbtech, Unit 3, Well House Barns, Chester CH4 0DH, United Kingdom

ORDER DETAILS

Order Number: EG3185
Order Date: 23/04/2026

Sample Information

Sample ID	EG3185-1
Sample Type	Faecal
Suspected Species	
Site Location	SN16 9LF
Comments	
Date Collected	23/04/2026
Date Arrived at Lab	27/04/2026
Results Date	28/04/2026

Laboratory Information

DNA Extraction Code	EG-2026-0778
Identification Method	qPCR
Analysis Procedure Notes	All UK bat species tested for - only a single species detected in this sample.
Laboratory Comments	None

Species Identified

Species	Ct Value
Plecotus auritus (Brown long-eared bat)	22

Ecotype Genetics Limited.

Laboratory Address: Sussex Innovation Centre, Science Park Square, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9SB
e: orders@ecotypegenetics.co.uk t: 01273704505 w: ecotypegenetics.co.uk

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Appendix 5: Site Photographs



Photo 1: Southern and western elevations of B1.



Photo 2: Southern and eastern elevations of B1.



Photo 3: Northern elevation of B1.

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Version Control

Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	Kiera Horman BSc (Hons), Graduate Ecologist	29/04/2026
Review	0.2	Laurence Wills ACIEEM BSc (Hons), Senior Ecologist	07/04/2026
Final	1	Kiera Horman BSc (Hons), Graduate Ecologist	08/05/2026