



PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT

PEAR TREE FARM, PITTON, SP5 1EG

FINAL REPORT

September 2026

Report conditions

<i>Report title</i>	Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment – Pear Tree Farm, Pitton	
<i>Client</i>	Atlas Planning Group Ltd. <i>On behalf of their client</i>	
<i>Report status</i>	Final	
<i>Survey date</i>	23 rd June 2026	
<i>Written by</i>	Connor Hill	<i>Date</i> 18/09/2026
<i>Reviewed by</i>	Izabel Phillips	<i>Date</i> 29/09/2026

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Executive Summary

- This preliminary roost assessment report has been prepared in order to support a planning application for the proposed conversion works to the agricultural barn at Pear Tree Farm, Pitton.
- A preliminary roost assessment survey was undertaken on the 23rd June 2026.
- There were no suitable roosting features recorded on the barn. Any crevices present were considered to be too open to external weather elements to be suitable for bat roosting.
- Overall, the barn is considered to support negligible suitability for roosting bats.
- As a result, there is considered to be no reasonable likelihood that bats will be present and affected by the proposed conversion works.
- Information regarding the length of time the findings of this report are valid for can be found in section 5.1.
- Provided the recommendations set out in section 5 are followed, the planning authority can be confident that the development would accord with relevant planning policy, legislation and caselaw.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Report purpose

This report presents the findings of the preliminary bat roost assessment undertaken at Pear Tree Farm, Pitton (central grid reference: SU 21820 31872).

1.2 Description of proposal

The current proposal is for the conversion of the existing agricultural barn on site to holiday accommodation.

1.3 Report context

Atlas Planning Group Ltd. have prepared the application on behalf of their client (the applicant) for the conversion works on the barn at Pear Tree Farm. Phillips Ecology have been instructed by the applicant to undertake a preliminary roost assessment to support this application, which is to be submitted to Wiltshire Council.

1.4 Survey area

The survey area comprised the existing barn and its immediate surrounds.

1.5 Limitations

No limitations were encountered throughout the duration of the survey's completion.

1.6 Relevant documents

The relevant proposal plan used to inform this assessment is presented in Appendix 1.

2. Survey Methodology

2.1 Surveyor/s

The survey was carried out by Laura Baynes of Phillips Ecology.

2.2 Survey area

The survey area extended to all areas of the barn that will be modified by the proposed works in such a way that bats, or their roosts could be impacted (directly or indirectly). Therefore, the survey area included the entirety of the barn.

2.3 Survey date

The survey was carried out during the daytime on the 23rd June 2026.

2.4 Survey description

The survey did not depart from the Bat Conservation Trust's (BCT) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition) which states that "A preliminary roost inspection survey is a detailed inspection of the exterior and interior of a structure to look for features that bats could use for entry/exit and roosting and to search for signs of bats".

The external features of the structure which will be modified by the proposed works in such a way that bats or their roosts could be impacted (directly or indirectly) if present, was systematically inspected in detail to compile information on potential and actual bat access points and roosting places such as lifted or broken roof materials, loose brickwork and open eaves. This included a thorough search for evidence of bat activity such as bat droppings, urine splashes and fur staining.

The interior of the building was inspected in order to identify potential or actual access points and roosting places and to record any evidence of bat activity or bats themselves.

2.5 Survey equipment

Survey equipment comprised:

- High-powered torch
- Ladders
- Camera
- Binoculars

2.6 Weather conditions

Weather conditions during the survey were dry, 70% cloud, a slight southerly breeze, and 26^oC. The weather conditions did not hinder the ecologist's ability to carry out the survey effectively.

2.7 Data search

A desk-based assessment was undertaken by Phillips Ecology on the 15th July 2026 with Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC). The MAGIC database was consulted for records of bat licences granted within a 1km radius.

2.8 Assessment methodology

The suitability of the building for supporting bat roosts will be assessed against the guidelines within Table 1 which have been adapted from the BCT Good Practice Guidelines.

Table 1 Suitability assessment guidelines

Suitability Description of Roosting Habitats

<i>Negligible</i>	Structure has no reasonable likelihood of supporting roosting bats i.e. no suitable roosting features present.
<i>Low</i>	A structure which could be used opportunistically by individual bats i.e. one or more potential roost sites which do not provide sufficient space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions (e.g. temperature, light, humidity) and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats.
<i>Moderate</i>	A structure which could be used by bats but is not likely to support a roost of high conservation status (e.g. maternity roost). This structure would support features which exhibit suitable size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat for roosting bats.
<i>High</i>	A structure which is obviously suitable for supporting larger numbers of bats, on a regular basis and for longer periods of time.

3. Survey results

3.1 General site overview

The application site comprises an agricultural barn situated in the southern corner of the wider farm property. The immediate surrounds of the barn consist of ruderal and modified grassland. Hedgerows abut the south-western (rear) and south-eastern (side) elevations of the barn.

The wider site comprises a hardstanding farm vehicle access track, two recently constructed residential dwellings, ruderal / ephemeral communities, grassland, native hedgerows, an associated farm residence, and active agricultural land.

The wider landscape is rural, with expanses of cropland, arable grassland, and woodlands forming an open mosaic of land-use, connected by largely uninterrupted hedgerow networks. The settlement of Pitton is situated 0.78 km south of the redline boundary.

Local infrastructure comprises primarily single-track farm access lanes, and small residential roads. The most notable infrastructure feature within 2 km includes the 'A30' located 1.98 km to the north.

3.2 Existing information

The data search revealed no records of protected species with a 1km radius of the site, in relation to European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licences that have been issued by Natural England.

3.3 Building description relevant to bats and their roosts

The barn comprises a single-storey metal and wooden framed structure rising to a mono-pitched and gable end roof design. The building is oriented northeast to southwest. Both the roof and elevations are clad with corrugated metal sheets. A lean-to section of a similar design protrudes from the north-western elevation of the barn. The north-eastern elevation remains mostly open.

Internally the structure remains open and there are no roof voids present. The building is uninsulated, unlined and primarily used for material storage.



Figure 1 – northern corner of the barn with lean-to extension.



Figure 2 – north-western elevation of the barn in context of the surrounding habitat.



Figure 3 – interior of the barn looking southeast.



Figure 4 – interior of the barn looking northwest.

An account of suitable access/egress features and recorded evidence of bat activity is given in table 2.

Table 2 – Recorded features and activity

Suitability	Evidence
Exterior The following suitable access/egress and roosting features were recorded externally during the survey: - The eastern entrance remains open allowing for continuous access/egress. - The eaves remain open allowing for continuous access/egress, but remain too open and exposed to offer roosting potential.	No evidence of roosting activity was recorded externally during the survey.
Interior No access/egress and roosting features were recorded internally during the survey.	No evidence of roosting activity was recorded internally during the survey.

Assessment

When assessed against the criteria in Table 1, the features identified and lack of recorded activity are considered consistent with negligible suitability for bat roosting i.e. *“the structure has no reasonable likelihood of supporting roosting bats.”*

3.4 Site grounds

The immediate surrounds of the building comprise, ruderal and modified grassland. These habitats offer little in the way of foraging resource for bats, however, the surrounding landscape does offer suitability for bats.

Parcels of Deciduous Woodland and Lowland Meadows are located immediately adjacent to the site's eastern boundary which also has connectivity to wider ancient woodlands. This woodland is typical of habitats with value to roosting and foraging bats. Bat populations if present using this woodland could freely commute through the application site as part of a wider commuting pattern.

Mature native hedgerows are present adjacent to the barn and could also form part of the foraging / commuting network.

It should also be noted that the Mottisfont Bats SAC is located within 9.82 km southeast of the site. Whilst this remains outside of the 7.5 km statutory planning consultation buffer, the generally accepted foraging range for barbastelle is between 7 km – 11 km. As such, there is potential for this species to pass through the site as part of their wider foraging networks, though this site itself supports minimal foraging opportunities for this species.

3.5 **Other protected species**

During the course of the survey, no nesting activity was noted inside the barn. However, the barn does provide ample nesting opportunities for breeding birds such as pigeons, doves and swallows.

4. Discussion and Assessment of Impacts

4.1 Preliminary assessment of suitability and potential impacts

On the basis that the barn is considered to support negligible suitability for roosting bats, there is considered to be no reasonable likelihood of impacts on bats associated with the proposed conversion works.

Features with suitability for foraging and commuting bats are located within the vicinity of the site. Therefore, increasing light spill on surrounding habitats could impact roosting, foraging and commuting bats.

4.2 Relevant legislation and policy

Circular 06/2005 identifies that applicants should not be required to provide information on protected species unless there is a reasonable likelihood that they will be present and affected by the proposed development. The site is considered to support habitats with potential for protected species and these may be affected by the proposed development. Therefore, the proposal triggers 'reasonable likelihood' under the Circular.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (commonly referred to as the Habitats Regulations) may apply should protected species be confirmed on site.

In the case that a European protected species is found to be present and impacted by the proposal, the local planning authority will be required to engage with the Habitat Regulations. Permission will be granted unless:

- a) the development is likely to result in a breach of the Habitats Regulations, and
- b) is unlikely to be granted an EPS licence from Natural England to allow the development to proceed under a derogation from the law (under licence).

When considering whether Natural England would not be unlikely to grant a licence for the identified impact, the local planning authority must consider the three tests which are set out in the Habitat Regulations:

1. the consented operation must be for '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'; (Regulation 53(2)(e))
2. there must be 'no satisfactory alternative' (Regulation 53(9)(a)); and
3. 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' (Regulation 53(9)(b)).

Case-law (Morge vs. Hampshire County Council) has clarified that planning authorities are able to grant permission for developments that would cause a breach of the

Regulations is likely (i.e. in the case of this proposal, destruction of a bat roost), provided that sufficient information is provided to give the planning authority assurance that the relevant EPSM licence is not unlikely to be granted - i.e. planning authorities also have a duty to assess planning applications against these tests.

5. Recommendations

5.1 Requirement for further surveys

Where there is a reasonable likelihood that a protected species will be present and impacted by the proposed development, planning authorities require further surveys to properly assess development proposals against relevant planning policy. An assessment of the requirement for further surveys is presented below, however in summary, no further surveys are considered necessary on the condition the relevant mitigation measures suggested are followed.

It is important that planning decisions are informed by current ecological survey data. Due to this, there is a limited time frame that ecological surveys are valid before becoming outdated. This time frame can vary depending on any changes in project circumstances or plans but it is generally considered that ecological surveys are valid for a period of 18 months (CIEEM, 2019). Projects that take place over longer periods than 18 months might be required to carry out further ecological surveys to ensure planning authorities have the necessary up-to-date information to make well informed, evidence-based decisions.

5.1.1 *Bats*

Given that the barn is considered to support negligible suitability for roosting bats, no further survey work in respect of bats is considered necessary.

5.1.2 *Breeding birds*

Subject to the precautionary mitigation measures set out in Section 5.2.2, no further surveys for breeding birds are considered necessary.

5.2 Mitigation strategy

5.2.1 *Bats*

In order to limit any effects on foraging and commuting bats, external lighting should be limited to only that which is absolutely necessary for safety purposes, both during the construction phase and once the proposals are complete. The following lighting measures are required:

- Conversion works between March and October should be undertaken during daylight hours only to avoid disturbance to bats that may forage and commute through or near the site.
- Lighting to the completed development should be as low brightness as possible, kept at a low level and directed away from all boundaries, trees and the roof of the building located to the south of the barn. Lighting on sensors should not be so sensitive that foraging bats trigger them.

All lighting must follow the Bat Conservation Trust's and Institute of Lighting Professionals' guidance on bats and artificial lighting (ILP, 2023).

5.2.2 *Breeding birds*

Care should be taken that the development does not disturb breeding birds. The bird nesting season is taken to be March to August inclusive however certain species like swallows which prefer barn structures like the one being impacted can nest into September. Any removal of suitable nest habitat will either need to be undertaken outside of this period or else checked to ensure that no nesting birds are present. If occupied nests are present then the nest must not be removed and works around the nest can only recommence once the nest becomes unoccupied of its own accord.

5.3 **Enhancements**

The delivery of biodiversity enhancement on development sites is promoted by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

Where opportunities exist it is best practice to provide enhancement features which encourage greater biodiversity within development sites in accordance with the NPPF and the Local Planning Authority's responsibilities under the NERC Act.

Opportunities for enhancement which are proportionate to the scale of the development include:

- the provision of new bat roosting opportunities in the form of a single bat box within the site. This should be installed as high as possible, at least 3m above ground, in a sheltered position either on the newly converted building or on the surrounding trees.
- the provision of bird nesting opportunities in the form of a bird box comprising an open fronted box or a small bird box, installed on the adjacent trees or the newly converted structure.

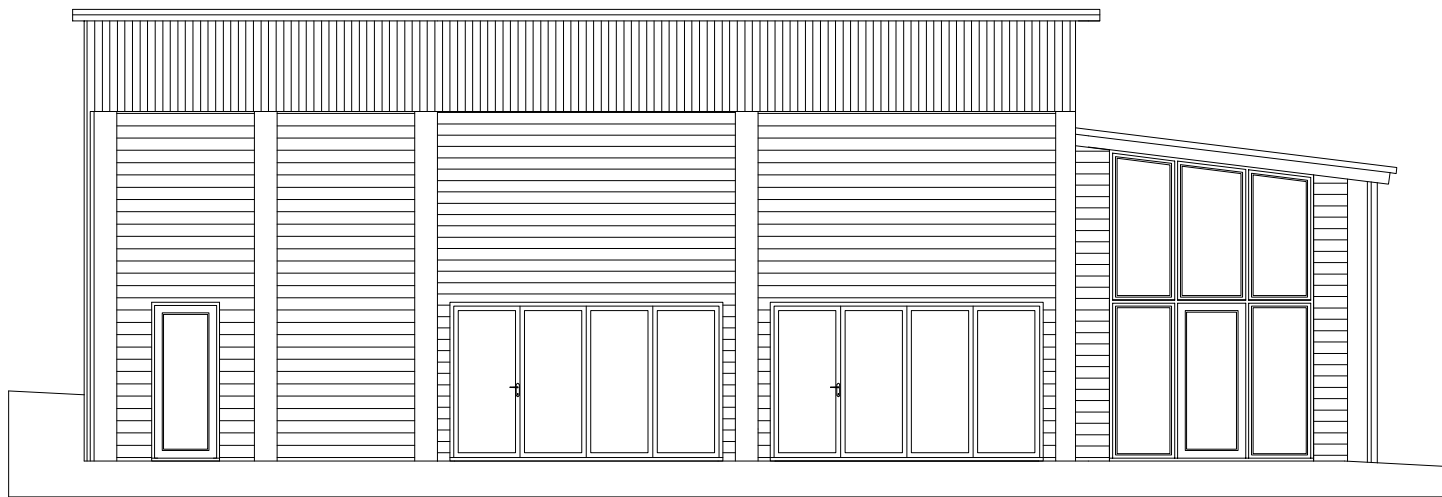
6. Conclusion

The preliminary roost assessment has confirmed that the agricultural barn supports negligible suitability for roosting bats. As such, no adverse impacts on bats or their roosts are anticipated. The site is considered to support suitability for breeding birds and mitigation methods have been suggested for these species. Opportunities for ecological enhancement have also been suggested for the site.

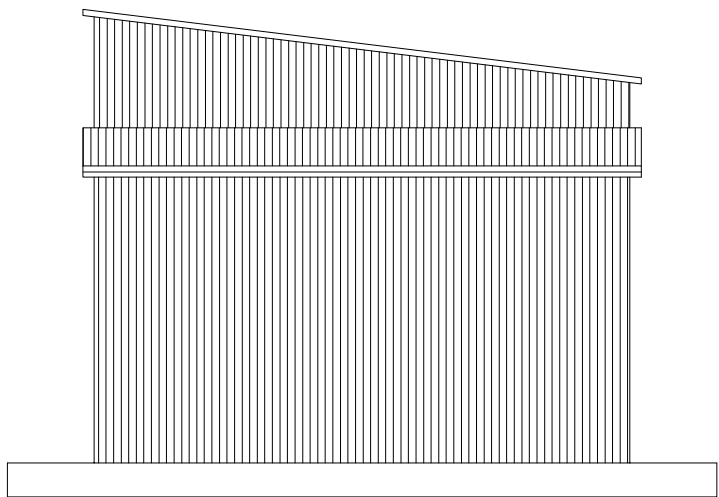
7. References

- **Altringham J D, 2003**, British Bats, Collins New Naturalist
- **Bat Conservation Trust, 2023**, BCT Bat Survey Guidelines Fourth edition
- **Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, 2017**, *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*. CIEEM, Winchester
- **Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2019)** *On the lifespan of ecological reports and surveys*. CIEEM, Winchester
- **ILP 2023, Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night: Guidance Note GN08/23.**
- **ILP, Warwickshire MHCLG, 2018.** *National Planning Policy Framework*. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government; London.
- **Mitchell Jones AJ, 2004**, *Bat Mitigation guidelines*, English Nature
- **Mitchell Jones AJ and McLeish A P, The Bat Workers Manual**, JNCC
- **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006**, Ch 3, s. 40
- **Natural England, 2011** Frequently asked wildlife questions: Bats. Natural England

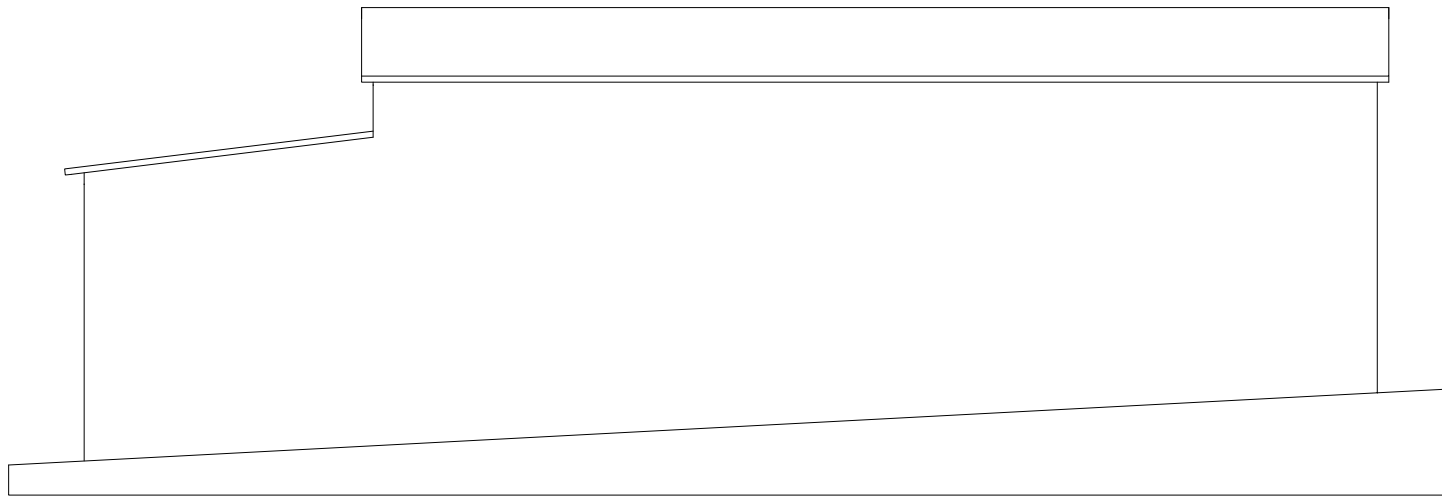
Appendix 1 – Proposal plans



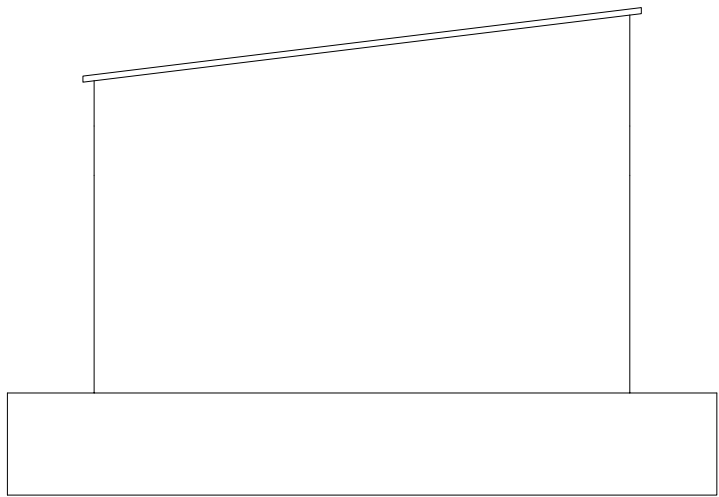
FRONT ELEVATION - NE



SIDE ELEVATION - SW



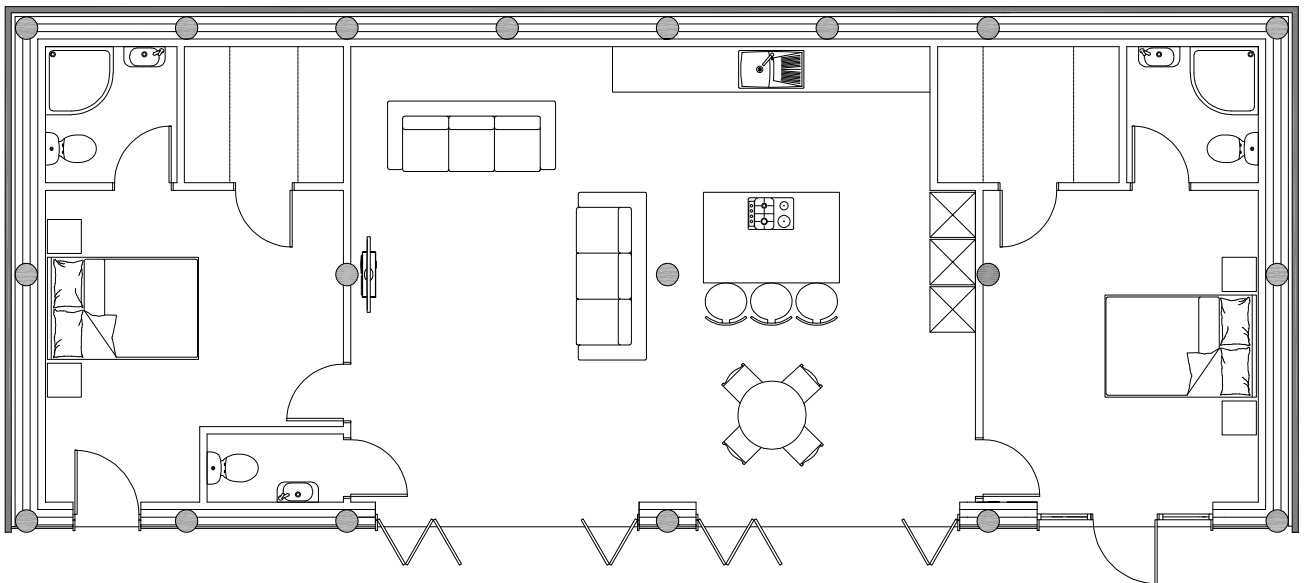
REAR ELEVATION



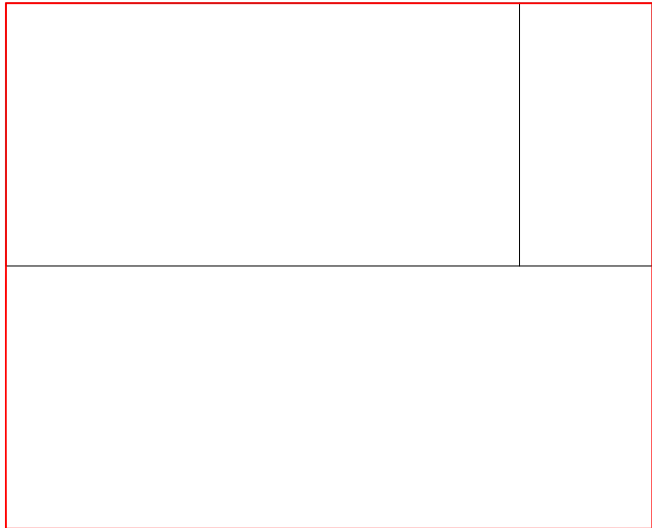
SIDE ELEVATION

Class R operational works
at
peartree farm
pitton
PLANS AS PROPOSED
scale 1:100 & 1:200 date July 2026
drawing no Lp/p/101 B

APARTHOTEL FLOOR SPACE = 96m²



PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN



BLOCK & ROOF PLAN 1:200





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