

Bat Survey Report

58 Finchampstead Road, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 2NS

Surveys conducted May-June 2025

Document Control Sheet

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SUMMARY

An internal and external daytime inspection for evidence of bats and bat roosting potential was conducted by ecologists from Arbtech Consulting at 58 Finchampstead Road, Wokingham on the 26th of November 2024.

Full application for proposed erection of 4no detached dwelling houses following demolition of the existing dwelling and associated outbuildings.

The Site consists of a detached, brick-built building situated in the town of Wokingham. Also present on site, are outbuildings. The site sits adjacent to a railway line and is bordered on the south and north by woodland. There are expansive farmlands to the east and south of the site. the wider landscape comprises residential and commercial properties, with interspersed amenity greenspace.

The building was carefully inspected, and the potential features were examined in the accessible spaces using an endoscope. Bat roosting potential was identified in the form of the gaps in the brickwork where the mortar is missing, the gaps in the soffit boxes on the eastern elevation, and some raised roof tiles. No bats or evidence of bats was found within the loft space.

The bat roosting potential was assessed according to the scale negligible, low, moderate, or high and the house and was deemed to have moderate bat roosting potential.

The outbuildings were assessed by Plan Ecology in May 2025 and found to be simple structures with little bat roost potential, these were classed as negligible and no further bat surveys recommended.

Two bat activity surveys were carried out on the house during optimal weather conditions to illustrate the use of the building as a bat roost over a period of time. The surveys were conducted during a time of the year (May-June) when bats are generally fully active.

As per the guidelines from the bat conservation trust two dusks were carried out which is a suitable survey effort for a moderate potential building if used in conjunction with sufficient infra-red cameras. The night vision aids can vastly improve the detection of bats as they emerge from their roosts and reduce the need for dawn re-entry surveys where deemed appropriate.

No bat droppings or other evidence of bats was found during the surveys. No bats were noted to emerge from the building during the emergence surveys and no bats were noted to fly close to or enter roof areas during the dawn survey.

No evidence of bats roosting was found during this survey, it is recommended that the proposed works can proceed without any further bat surveys at this time.

The result of a survey can never completely rule out the presence of bats at a building as use may be obscure or occasional. If bats or evidence of bats such as bat droppings are discovered, the works must be paused, and you should seek advice from Plan

Ecology or Natural England via the Bat Conservation Trust bat helpline Tel 0345 1300 228.

It is recommended that works only take place in the daytime to avoid any light or noise disturbance to bats or birds which may be nesting or foraging nearby.

Biodiversity Enhancements are advised.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Description

The Site consists of a detached, brick-built building situated in the town of Wokingham. Also present on site, are outbuildings and a bungalow which will not be affected by the proposed works. The site sits adjacent to a railway line and is bordered on the south and north by woodland. There are expansive farmlands to the east and south of the site. the wider landscape comprises residential and commercial properties, with interspersed amenity greenspace.

See Appendix 1 for Site Location

1.2 Proposed works

Full application for proposed erection of 4no detached dwelling houses following demolition of the existing dwelling and associated outbuildings.

See Appendix 2 for Proposed Plans

1.1 Aims of the survey

A Phase 1 bat survey was carried out with the aim to look for evidence of bats roosting and for the presence of structures within the buildings which hold bat roosting potential. Bat roosting potential was identified, and Phase 2 emergence surveys were therefore carried out.

1.2 General information about bats and buildings

Loft spaces can potentially be utilised by bat species such as e.g. Brown Long-eared bats or Serotine bats which are known to commonly roost inside loft spaces. This can generally be discovered via droppings inside the loft as the droppings will stay protected from weather elements.

External features of the building can potentially be used as roosting sites by e.g. Pipistrelle bat species (*Pipistrellus* spp). Pipistrelle bats are the most common bats out of the British species and they are known to almost exclusively roost inside buildings utilising areas such as cavity walls, soffits and fascia boards, and between tiles and roofing felt. It is not practical to carry out a full physical examination of such building features, which is why activity surveys must be done during summer months (May-September) when the bats are fully active.

Access points of 1-2 centimetres only are used by bats to enter and exit their roosting sites. Most buildings will have gaps of such size in roof areas as ventilation of the roof void would otherwise not be possible.

Whiskered bats are regularly found in buildings and can be found in modern house but more particularly in older buildings. The Whiskered bat is a crevice dweller, often roosting under hanging wall tiles, above soffits, in cavity walls and under ridge tiles.

2. METHODOLOGY

The surveys were undertaken in accordance with the methods described in the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn), Bat Conservation Trust (BCT). As per the guidelines from the Bat Conservation Trust three dusks were carried out which is a suitable survey effort for a high potential building if used in conjunction with sufficient infra-red cameras. The night vision aids can vastly improve the detection of bats as they emerge from their roosts and reduce the need for dawn re-entry surveys where deemed appropriate.

2.1 External and internal inspection - Phase 1

The main building was surveyed during the daytime on the 26th of November 2024 by ecologists from Arbtech Consulting.

The buildings were inspected for evidence of bats in the form of live or dead bats, droppings, urine staining and insect feeding remains such as moth and butterfly wings. A careful visual search using a Clulite torch was conducted in the loft space. An endoscope (Ridgid) was used for spot checks of internal and external gaps. The exterior of the building was surveyed for droppings on walls and window ledges.

See Arbtech's 'Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment' for Photographs

The outbuildings were assessed by Plan Ecology in May 2025 and found to be simple structures with little bat roost potential, these were classed as negligible and no further bat surveys recommended.

2.2 Bat roosting potential – Phase 1

The buildings were examined internally and externally to identify structural features that hold bat roosting potential.

The bat roosting potential was assessed according to the scale negligible, low, moderate, high or confirmed:

Negligible: Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats. For example; a simple wooden garden shed, a corrugated iron barn or precast concrete modular garage may fit this category.

Low: A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost Sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/ or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation).

Moderate: A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions, and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.

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 and surrounding habitat.

Confirmed: This category is used where evidence of bats such as live or dead bats or bat droppings are present, or where there are records of a bat roost in the building.

2.3 Emergence survey methodology - Phase 2

Emergence surveys of the buildings were conducted by Nick Kirke (Bat licence 2020-50736) Myfanwy Price (Bat Licence 2019-40496), Hayley Johnstone, Lisha Price (Level 2 Class licence) and Ashley Johnson (Level 2 Class licence) of Plan Ecology Ltd on 8th May and 3rd June 2025. The survey started 15 minutes before the official sunset and were completed 1½ hour after sunset. Bat passes were recorded with EchoMeter Pro Touch bat detectors. Infrared cameras (Sony AX53) and associated equipment was used to assist the surveys. A series of large infrared lights are used to light up areas for the camera once it is dark enough to use night mode.

2.5 Weather conditions

This information was taken from the BBC Weather online forecast for Wokingham to illustrate that the survey was conducted during suitable weather conditions. Bats are generally fully active in the months of May - September at temperatures above 10°C if there are favourable weather conditions such as no strong winds (less than 15 mph) and no overnight rain.

Survey date	Sunset/ Sunrise	Weather 22:00/04:00	Temp	Wind speed	Humidity
8 th May 2025	20:37	Clear	14°C	8 mph	58%
3 rd June 2025	21:12	Mostly cloudy	16°C	7 mph	60%

2.6 Sound Analysis

The recordings made during the surveys were analysed on kaleidoscope software. All bat call recordings were compared to published reference material such as British Bat Calls Jon Russ (2012) and to a private reference library of previous recordings made from known bat species.

3. RESULTS

3.1 External and internal inspection results – Phase 1

Bat roosting potential:

The main building was carefully inspected, and the potential features were examined in the accessible spaces using an endoscope. Bat roosting potential was identified in the form of the gaps in the brickwork where the mortar is missing, the gaps in the soffit boxes on the eastern elevation, and some raised roof tiles.

The outbuildings were assessed by Plan Ecology in May 2025 and found to be simple structures with little bat roost potential, these were classed as negligible and no further bat surveys recommended.

See Appendix 5 for details of the outbuilding assessment.

Evidence of bats:

No bats or evidence of bats was found during the internal inspection.

See Arbtech's 'Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment' for photographs, methodology and results.

3.2 Emergence survey results – Phase 2

8th May 2025:

Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and Brown long eared (*Plecotus auritus*) bats were seen foraging around the house and garden and commuting over the house.

3rd June 2025:

Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle, Nathusius's pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*) Serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*) bats were seen and recorded foraging around the house, lawn and trees.

See APPENDIX 3 for bat activity information including surveyor positions and night camera views.

3.3 Identified bat roosting areas

No bat access points, or roosts were identified during the survey.

4. ASSESSMENT

4.1 Constraints on study information

All accessible areas of the building could be surveyed without restrictions.

The phase 1 survey was carried out during the month of November. As such, seasonal variations could not be observed and potentially only a selection of all species that occur within the survey area will have been noted. The Survey therefore provides a general assessment of potential nature conservation value. However, it is considered that the combination of biological records from the desk study and the site visit provides an accurate representation of the various species and habitat types present or potentially present within the survey area.

Bat survey results are generally considered to be valid within two years of the survey date or until the next active bat season of May-September. The County Council Ecologists and/or Natural England may ask for updated surveys if the reports are older than two years.

4.2 Potential impacts on bat foraging and commuting habitat.

There will be no negative impact on bat commuting and foraging areas as the building will not increase significantly in footprint enough to have an effect.

4.3 Legislation and policy guidance

As population numbers have fallen, all bats and their roosts are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Under this legislation it is an offence to:

- deliberately capture (or take), injure or kill a bat;
- intentionally, recklessly or deliberately disturb a bat (in relation to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) the offence applies whilst the species is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; in relation to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 it applies anywhere);
- damage or destroy the breeding or resting place (roost) of a bat;
- possess a bat (alive or dead), or any part of a bat;
- intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost;
- sell (or offer for sale) or exchange bats (alive or dead), or parts of bats.

Please refer to the original legislation for the definitive interpretation.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Discussion of results

No bat droppings or other evidence of bats was found during the surveys. No bats were noted to emerge from the buildings during the emergence surveys and no bats were noted to fly close to or enter roof areas during the dawn survey.

As no evidence of bats roosting was found during this survey, it is recommended that the proposed works can proceed without any further bat surveys at this time.

The result of a survey can never completely rule out the presence of bats at a building as use may be obscure or occasional. If bats or evidence of bats such as bat droppings are discovered, the works must be paused, and you should seek advice from Plan Ecology or Natural England via the Bat Conservation Trust bat helpline Tel 0345 1300 228.

It is recommended that works only take place in the daytime to avoid any light or noise disturbance to bats or birds which may be nesting or foraging nearby.

Biodiversity Enhancements have been advised.

5.2 Survey Effort

The house was deemed to have moderate bat roosting potential and two activity surveys were carried out. Each survey took place in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust Bat Survey Guidelines. These guidelines are used by Local Planning Authority ecology team during the planning application process to determine the level of survey effort that is needed.

As per the guidelines from the bat conservation trust two dusks were carried out which is a suitable survey effort for a high potential building if used in conjunction with sufficient infra-red cameras. The night vision aids can vastly improve the detection of bats as they emerge from their roosts and reduce the need for dawn re-entry surveys where deemed appropriate.

Ecological Enhancement Opportunities

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), issued in March 2012, states that the planning system should contribute to "minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures". It also states that "opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged".

The master planning process should maximise opportunities for enhancement, in order to achieve a net increase in biodiversity. This is in accordance with the NERC Act (2006) which requires that “every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat.” Recommendations for ecological enhancement are provided below....

- Minimising light and noise pollution on the site. In particular minimising the hours the construction site is lit.
- Adding bee and insect bricks into the new build to provide additional habitat.
- Adding bat bricks and nesting bricks into the new building can provide roosting opportunities for bats and nesting opportunities for breeding birds.
- Hedgehog house and fence gaps.

Details of possible biodiversity enhancement have been illustrated in Appendix 4.

6. REFERENCES

Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practise Guidelines* (4th edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

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APPENDIX 1: Site Location



APPENDIX 2: Proposed Plans



APPENDIX 3: Activity Survey & Sound Analysis Results

Emergence 1 Survey 8th May 2025

Surveyors Nick Kirke, Myfanwy Price, Hayley Johnstone and Lisha Price

Time	Species	Activity	Flight Direction
20:22	Survey start		
20:57	Official sunset		
20:53	Common pipistrelle	Foraging	W
20:54	Soprano pipistrelle	Commuting over house	N-S
20:58- 21:51	Common pipistrelle	Constant foraging around the house and garden	
21:42	Brown long eared	Foraging on the right-hand side of the house	
21:06- 21:43	Soprano pipistrelle	Foraging around grounds	
22:07	Survey Finish		

Emergence 2 Survey 3rd June 2025

Surveyors Myfanwy Price, Ashley Johnson, Nick Kirke and Lisha Price

Time	Species	Activity	Flight Direction
20:57	Survey start		
21:12	Official sunset		
21:14	Nathusius's pipistrelle	Foraging	
21:30	Soprano pipistrelle	Foraging around house	
21:30- 22:17	Common pipistrelle	Foraging south over lawn, shrubs and trees	
22:24- 22:25	Serotine	Foraging south across lawn	
22:42	Survey Finish		

Surveyor and camera positions

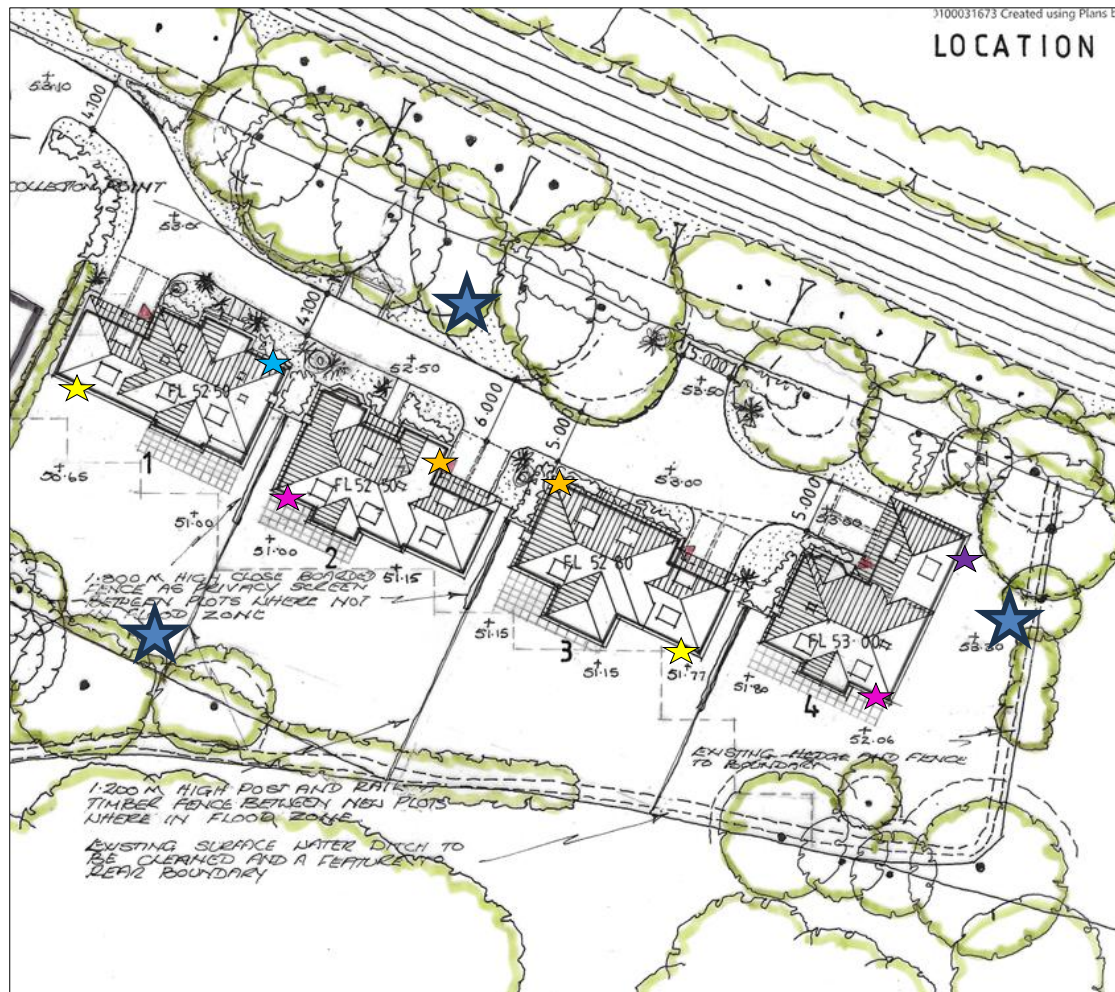


Surveyors and 
camera positions





APPENDIX 4: Biodiversity Enhancements



- ★ Bat brick
- ★ Starling Nest Box
- ★ Open Nest Box
- ★ Sparrow Nest Box
- ★ Bee brick
- ★ Hedgehog house

Hedgehog House





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Bee Brick

These bricks act as an ideal nesting site for solitary bees making a garden look aesthetically pleasing, as well as being a viable option to replace a standard brick in construction which creates more habitat for non-swarming solitary bees. This brick comes in a variety of colours to make an accommodating nesting site for red mason and leafcutter bees, amongst others to suite any bee friendly garden, allotment or building.

Positioning: The Bee Brick should be positioned in a warm sunny spot, south facing, with no vegetation in front of the fascia. Ideally placed at least 1 metre from the ground with no upward limit.



The Habibat Starling Nest Box is a small, solid box made of insulating concrete which provides an internal roost space and can be seamlessly integrated into the fabric of a building as it is built or renovated. The access hole is specifically designed to accommodate starlings.



The Schwegler 1SP Sparrow terrace provides insulated accommodation that is perfect for your local sparrow populations.

The terrace is designed for three families and will be used by both the House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) and the Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*).

Occupants: Sparrows, but also Tits, Redstarts, and Spotted Flycatchers on occasion.



The Forticrete Bat Box has been developed to be used in new build construction or renovation where there is a requirement to provide a habitat for pipistrelle bats.

Width 440mm x Height 215mm x Depth 100mm

Benefits

- The box is made of conventional cast stone front face but is backed with high grade plywood which is sawn and roughened internally to provide a haven for bats.

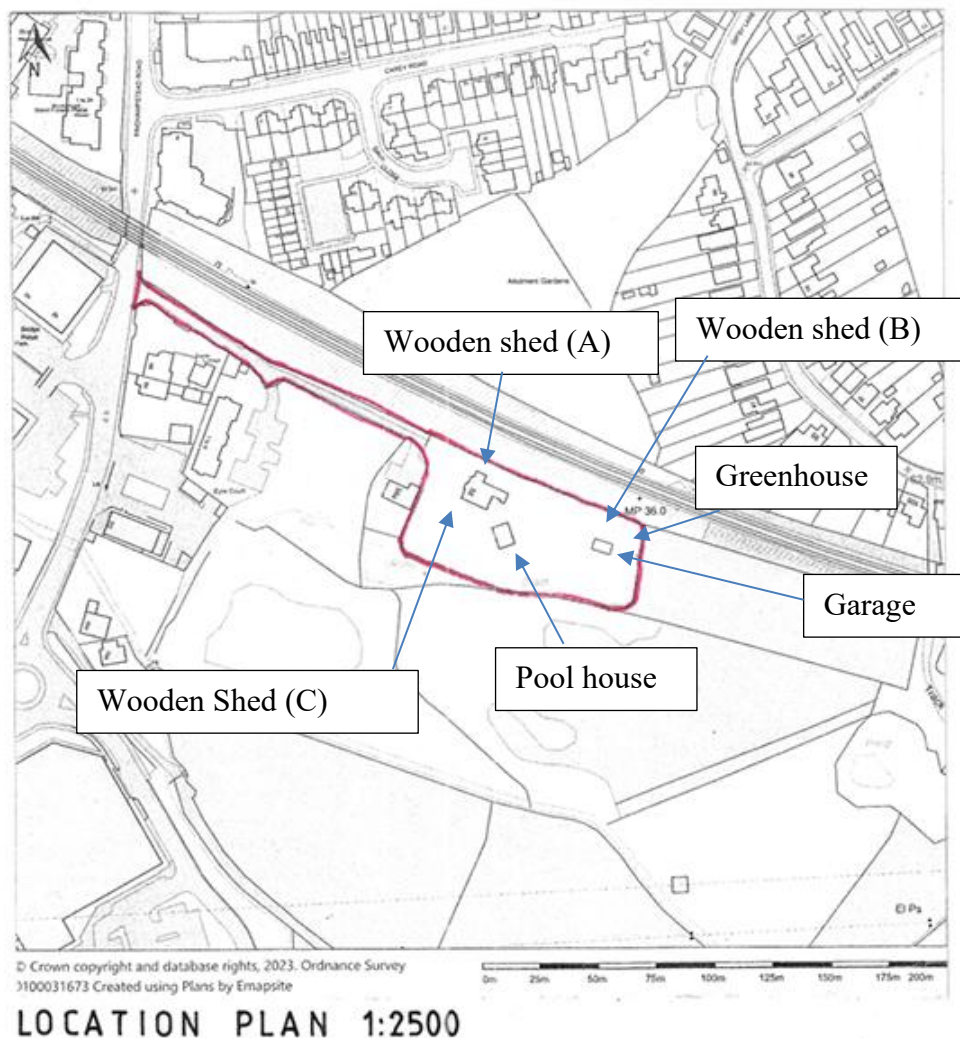
The Bat Box is maintenance free due to bottom entrance.

Woodstone Built in Open nest box



Occupants: This half-open build-in block is an ideal breeding ground for the common and black redstart, the grey flycatcher, the wagtail, the robin, and the wren. Occasionally it will even be inhabited by tits.

APPENDIX 5: Preliminary Assessment of Outbuildings



Carried out by Nick Kirke (Class 2 bat licence 10 years experience) of Plan Ecology Ltd on the 8th of May 2025

Wooden Shed A Located adjacent to house. Timber single skinned shed, felt roof. Negligible Bat Roost Potential.

Wooden Shed B Located to the rear of the garden. Timber single skinned shed, felt roof in disrepair. Negligible Bat Roost Potential.

Wooden Shed C Located adjacent to house. Timber single skinned shed, felt roof with a porch, in a state of disrepair. Negligible Bat Roost Potential.

Pool house Single skinned timber building. Felt shingles and plastic sheet roofing. No visible lifts or gaps. Negligible Bat Roost Potential.

Garage: concrete panels and corrugated roofing. Single skinned, windows and missing roof panels allowing much light in.



Photograph 1: Wooden shed A interior.



Photograph 2: Wooden shed A – negligible potential.



Photograph 3: Shed outbuilding B.



Photograph 4: Interior of Shed outbuilding B.



Photograph 5: Simple structure with asphalt roof B.



Photograph 6: Garage interior with corrugated metal roofing.



Photograph 7: Garage interior



Photograph 8: Greenhouse-negligible potential.



Photograph 9: Garage interior – simple structure with large cavities.



Photograph 10: Garage interior – simple structure with large cavities.



Photograph 11: Front of garage.



Photograph 12: Garage – negligible potential.



Photograph 13: Garage.



Photograph 14: Wooden clad pool house – negligible potential.



Photograph 15: Pool house interior.



Photograph 16: Pool house interior with skylight.



Photograph 17: Pool house.



Photograph 18: Pool house skylight.



Photograph 19: No gaps in roofing.



Photograph 20: No gaps in roofing.



Photograph 21: Front view of pool house.



Photograph 22: Large gaps in shed C.



Photograph 23: Derelict shed C.



Photograph 24: Derelict shed C.