



Beth Ellison-Perrett BSc (Hons) MSc MRSB

Senior Ecologist

Email: bethep@arbtech.co.uk

Arbtech Consulting Ltd

arbtech.co.uk

Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site:

299 Wokingham Road, Earley, Reading, RG6 7DU

Client:

Paul Garner

Survey date:

27th February 2025

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with the Wokingham Borough Council. The proposal is described as:

The demolition of a dwelling

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2024](#).

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.

The site survey was undertaken by Beth Ellison-Perrett BSc (Hons) MSc, MRSB, Senior Ecologist (2023-11066-CL17-BAT and 2024-11998-CL08-GCN)					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (mph)	Rain
27/02/2024	9	79	5	9	None
PRA Survey Factor		Detailed using desk study and site survey. Any specific limitations noted within relevant section. This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.			
See PRA plan in Appendix 1, location plan in Appendix 2, proposed plans in Appendix 3 and photos in Appendix 4.					
Background and Site Location					
Summary of site and desk Study		Site description The site is located at National Grid Reference SU 75265 71808 and has an area of approximately 0.08ha comprising two buildings and one temporary building with its associated driveway, and bare ground to the rear. Only B1 was surveyed as this building is the only one affected by the proposed plans. It is surrounded by residential dwellings within the town of Earley. Further afield are pockets of woodland to the north, south and west of the site and a large lake (South Lake) is located 400m north of the site. The town of Reading is located to the north-west of the site and the town of Wokingham is located to the south-east. 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. This has been undertaken with due consideration to the “Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists —Good Practice Guidelines” publication (Collins, 2023). To the author’s knowledge, no previous ecology reports have been produced for this site. Limitations			

	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. These limitations have been taken into account during the evaluation of the site and requirement for further surveys and mitigation. Designated Sites Two statutory designated sites were identified within 2km of the site. <u>Highwood Local Nature Reserve</u> – located 550m north The site has exotic tree species which were part of an arboretum (collection of trees) in the house grounds and include giant redwoods and monkey puzzle. It is a fine example of mixed lowland woodland with an attractive heathland area. Birds include kingfisher, goosander, pochard, shoveler, cormorant, heron, grey wagtail, waxwing, treecreeper and greater spotted woodpecker. <u>Maiden Eriagh Park Local Nature Reserve</u> – located 590m south Habitats include lowland mixed deciduous woodland, ancient semi natural woodland and eutrophic open water. Non-statutory designated sites The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km cannot be established without biological records data from Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre. EPSL data A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licensed sites <2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitat either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence or will relocate to other known roosts sites in close proximity to the licensed site. There are
--	---

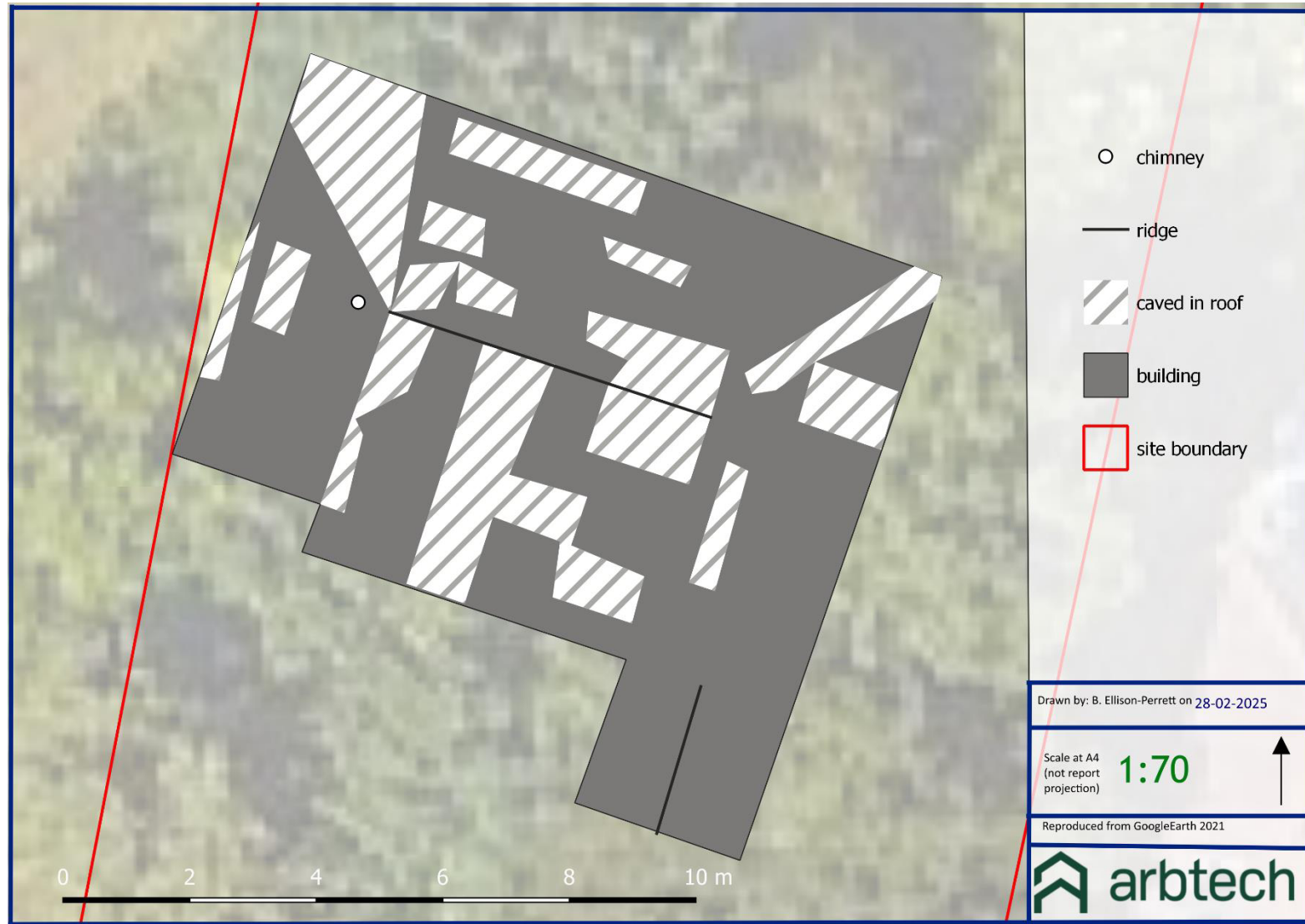
	five EPSL licences within 2km of the site, with the closest located 510m east involving the destruction of a breeding place for brown long eared bats.
Field survey results	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	B1 Exterior B1 is a detached two-storey brick-built building with a pitched and gabled roof clad in clay roof tiles. The building itself is in very poor condition due to being abandoned for many years. This has caused the building to deteriorate massively, causing the roof to partially cave in and walls to come away from the building. The building is in a very dilapidated state and on the verge of falling down. The roof tiles which remain are well-sealed together with no raised areas, with the exceptions of gaps where sections have caved in. There is a single storey extension on the eastern elevation and a catslide roof on the northern elevation, both of which have sections of roof caved in and missing tiles, allowing direct access into the building. The doors and windows are wooden framed and appear in relatively good condition with no suitable bat roosting sites. However, there is no glass within the windows, allowing direct access internally. Additionally, this will cause high levels of temperature fluctuations within the building. The brickwork around the building, with the exception of the western elevation, appears in good condition with no gaps or cracks within which crevice-dwelling bats could roost. The western elevation wall has come away from the rest of the building and a large gap has been created, however, this gap is very open and exposed to adverse weather and predators and would not be a suitable roosting feature for crevice dwelling bats. There are no soffits or bargeboards around the building. The eaves are open due to the poor condition of the building (movement of the roof from the cave-ins). There is one chimney on the western elevation of the building. The brickwork on the chimney is in poor condition, with large holes and missing bricks within the stack. These gaps allow direct access into the chimney and are very open and exposed. The brick gable ends, on the southern and eastern elevations are in good condition with no gaps around the tops of the gable ends. The gable end on the western elevation is completely missing around the chimney, due to deterioration of the building. B1 Interior

	There is no loft space within the building. Additionally, the roof is unlined, and the backs of the tiles can be seen from the ground and first floor, reducing the suitability of bats roosting onsite. The building has many holes within the roof and no glass within the windowpanes and therefore, is prone to adverse weather and temperature fluctuations. Foraging and commuting habitat The site itself has no habitat value for foraging or commuting bats as it is comprised entirely of bare ground and shingles. The adjacent dwellings also have limited habitat value for commuting bats in the form of a small section of tree line/ hedgerow along the northern boundary. The surrounding area provides limited suitable habitat for bats to forage, roost and commute due to the mix of open gardens and corridors of trees and hedges connecting the habitat areas. However, further afield are pockets of woodland to the north, south and west of the site and a large lake (South Lake) is located 400m north of the site which could be utilised by foraging and commuting bats.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Roosting habitat Although the building overall is in very poor condition, due to deterioration, there is very limited features in which bats could utilise to roost. This is due to the fact that there is no loft space and limited tiles on the main section of roof, allowing all types of weather to enter the building. Furthermore, the roof tiles which remain are well-sealed and the only gaps created are from the caved-in roof. B1 has very low to negligible habitat value for roosting bats. There was no evidence of bat activity located internally or externally on the survey building. Artificial lighting The proposed development may lead to an increase in the amount of current lighting of surrounding habitats or the retained building without mitigation. This may disturb commuting bats.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Roosting habitat Owing to the nature of the proposed development, the unsafe nature of the building and the very low potential for impacts to bat roosts, further bat surveys are considered to be disproportionate. It is anticipated that any risk to bats can be reduced to an

	acceptably low level through the implementation of a precautionary working method during and post-development. This will include the following measures: • Works will be scheduled during the winter months (November to March) when bats are least likely to be present, insofar as is possible. • A toolbox talk will be given to contractors to make them aware of the possible presence of bats on the site. • An inspection of the potential roost features identified in this report will be undertaken prior to works commencing. • The potential roost features will be removed by hand prior to any mechanical demolition. • In the unlikely event that a bat or evidence of bats is discovered during the development all work must stop and a bat licensed ecologist contacted for further advice. Foraging and commuting habitat No further surveys are required. Artificial lighting A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during post-development which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors. Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting-2
Nesting Birds	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	Buildings No evidence of nesting birds was identified within the buildings during the survey. Barn owls The site does not appear to provide any suitable nesting sites for barn owls.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests.

<i>Recommendations</i>	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 until the young have fledged. Suggested biodiversity enhancements The installation of one bird box at the site will provide additional nesting habitat for birds. The bird box will be installed on the new dwelling. General purpose bird boxes should be positioned 3m above ground level where they will be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight. Species-specific bird boxes should be installed in line with manufacturers specifications.
------------------------	---

Appendix 1: PRA plan



Appendix 2: Location map



Appendix 3: Photos



Photo 1: the southern elevation of B1



Photo 2: a close up of the caved in roof on the southern elevation of B1



Photo 3: the eastern elevation of B1



Photo 4: the northern elevation of B1



Photo 5: the north-western corner of B1



Photo 6: internally within B1



Photo 7: internally within B1

Limitations and Copyright

Legal

Arbtech Consulting Limited has prepared this report for the sole use of the above-named client or their agents in accordance with our General Terms and Conditions, under which our services are performed. It is expressly stated that no other warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to the professional advice included in this report or any other services provided by us. This report may not be relied upon by any other party without the prior and express written agreement of Arbtech Consulting Limited. The conclusions and recommendations contained in this report are based upon information provided by third parties. Information obtained from third parties has not been independently verified by Arbtech Consulting Limited.

© This report is the copyright of Arbtech Consulting Limited. Any unauthorised reproduction or usage by any person other than the addressee is strictly prohibited.