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Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment

Survey site:

9 The Pavement, St Ives, Cambridgeshire PE27 5AD

Client:

Damian Howard

Survey date:

19th June 2025

Project:

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

"The conversion of a vacant office building into four residential dwellings."

PEA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: **PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.**

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: **PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.**

Site Location and Context

The survey site is centred on National Grid Reference TL 3171 4526 and has an area of approximately 0.08ha.

The site is situated in St Ives, Cambridgeshire. The site comprises a single building and an area of sealed surface. The area is underlain by mudstone bedrock, with superficial deposits of sand and gravel. The dominant soil type is freely draining, slightly acid loamy soils of low fertility. The immediate vicinity surrounding the site is predominantly urbanised, consisting of sealed surfaces, infrastructure, and built development, offering limited ecological value. However, the wider landscape is ecologically significant. To the west and south, the River Great Ouse floodplain and Hemingford Meadow support areas of semi-natural grassland and riparian habitat, while to the east and southeast, a mosaic of former gravel pits, lakes, reedbeds, and wet woodland extends through Holywell Fen, providing high-quality habitat for a variety of wildlife. Green corridors such as the Ouse Valley Way enhance ecological connectivity across this network.

Survey Details

The site survey was undertaken by Carly Preen BSc (Hons) MSc, Graduate Ecologist. Licenced surveyor on Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2024-12326-CL17-BAT.

Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
19/06/2025	30	43	0	0	none

Executive Summary

A BMP is required to proceed with the proposed works.

Survey limitations

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on the site and in the wider landscape, the ecology and

biology of species as currently understood, and the known distribution of species as recovered during the searches of historical biological records.}

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.

The roof areas were only partially assessed due to restricted visibility. However, this is not considered a significant constraint, as the general condition of the roof could be reasonably inferred from the accessible sections. Additionally, the proposed internal works are unlikely to directly affect any bats that may be roosting in the roof tiles, as the proposed plans will not impact the roof structure or tiles. The site itself contains no suitable foraging habitat, and the surrounding area offers limited foraging or commuting opportunities, further reducing the likelihood of bat presence, however the wider habitat is of elevated ecological value.

Ecological Survey Factor **Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations**	**Detailed using desk study and site survey (carried out under good weather conditions). 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.**
Habitats and plants (see habitat map in appendix 1, location plan in appendix 2, proposal plan in appendix 3 and photos in appendix 4). Botanical species are described with reference to the DAFOR scale (D = Dominant; A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional, R = Rare).	

Summary of Survey Findings

(*UKHab codes used)*

The site does not contain any habitats listed as a habitat of principal importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006). Other habitats within the site are common and widespread and have low ecological value. Notable habitats are present within 1km/2km.

On-site habitat descriptions

u1b – Developed land/sealed surface

The area to the north of the side is comprised of sealed surface.

u1b5 – Buildings

There is one building on site, B1.

Local notable habitats

There are 5 areas of local notable habitat within a 2km radius of the site boundary, as detailed below:

Habitat Type	Number of Areas	Distance and direction of nearest area
Priority Habitat Inventory – Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh (England)	12	~250m south
Priority Habitat Inventory – Deciduous Woodland (England)	24	~280m east
Priority Habitat Inventory – Lowland Fens (England)	10	~300m east
Priority Habitat Inventory – Good quality semi-improved grassland (Non priority) (England)	2	~750m west
Priority Habitat Inventory – Lowland Meadows (England)	1	~2000m west

<table>
<tr><td>Foreseen Impacts</td><td>On-site habitats
The proposed development will not result in the loss of any habitat.
Notable habitats
No impacts to any notable habitats are anticipated due to the small scale and distance of the proposed development from such habitats as well as the urban location of the site with surrounding physical barriers.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Recommendations</td><td>Biodiversity net gain
The Environment Act (2021) requires all developments (excluding exemptions) to deliver a 10% net gain in biodiversity. This is mandatory for larger developments and comes into force for smaller developments on 2nd April 2024. The project is unlikely to trigger the requirement for a biodiversity net gain assessment as it falls under one of the exemptions (De-minimis), however the Local Planning Authority may still request a net gain assessment under their own local planning policy.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Locality and Designated Sites</td></tr>
<tr><td>Summary of Survey Findings</td><td>On-site designations
The site is not subject to any designation.

Statutory designated sites (within 2km)
There is 1 known statutory site within 2km of the site.
<table>
<tr><th>Designation Name</th><th>Designation Type</th><th>Distance and Location</th><th>Reason for Designation</th></tr>
<tr><td>Houghton Meadows</td><td>SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest)</td><td>~1.9km west</td><td>Houghton Meadows is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) due to its rare, species-rich neutral grassland, which has become increasingly uncommon in the UK. The site features ancient hay meadows with traditional ridge and furrow patterns and supports a wide variety of wildflowers, including the scarce green-winged orchid. Managed by the Wildlife Trust, the area also provides important habitats</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
</table>

				for a range of wildlife such as grass snakes, great crested newts, and green woodpeckers. Its rich biodiversity and historical landscape make it a valuable site for conservation.

Statutory designated sites (within 10km)

There is 1 national network site (SAC, SPA, Ramsar) located within 10km, as detailed below:

Designation Name	Designation Type	Distance and Location	Reason for Designation
Ouse Washes	Ramsar	~8.2km northeast	The Ouse Washes is Ramsar site supports one of the most significant concentrations of wildfowl in the UK, especially during the winter months. This internationally important wetland provides critical habitat for species such as whooper swans, wigeons, and teals. Its seasonally flooded washlands create ideal breeding and feeding grounds for a variety of waterbirds and wetland plants. Additionally, the site plays a vital role in flood management and helps maintain the ecological balance of the surrounding Fens landscape.

Non-statutory designated sites

The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Environmental Records Centre (CPERC).

Foreseen Impacts

On-site designations

No impacts foreseen.

Statutory and non-statutory designated sites

No impacts to designated sites are anticipated due to the small scale and distance of the proposed development from such sites (where known) as well as the urban location of the site with surrounding physical barriers.

Recommendations

On-site designations

None required.

	Statutory and non-statutory designated sites None required.
Invasive / Non-native species	
Summary of Survey Findings	No problematic invasive and non-native species recorded on site.
Foreseen Impacts	N/A
Recommendations	No further surveys but remain vigilant.
Invertebrates	
Summary of Survey Findings	The habitats present on-site, are unlikely to provide common invertebrates with opportunities to forage and shelter. The site contains no further notable habitats which may provide niches for specialised or protected invertebrates.
Foreseen Impacts	None foreseen.
Recommendations	No further surveys.
Bats	
Summary of Survey Findings	**EPSL data and local records** 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. No EPSLs are present within a 2km radius of the site. There are no Special Areas of Conservation designated for bats within 10km of the site.

	Foraging and commuting habitat Habitats recorded on site consist entirely of sealed surfaces and are not considered suitable for foraging or commuting bats. The immediate surrounding area is predominantly urban, offering limited foraging opportunities. While there are occasional scattered trees in the vicinity, these are isolated and do not form continuous or high-quality foraging habitat. Although the wider landscape includes features of high value to bats—such as large water bodies, the River Great Ouse, wetlands, and surrounding woodlands—these areas are significantly more suitable for bat activity than the site itself. Given the site's barren character and high knighting lux levels, it is considered unlikely that bats would use the area for foraging or commuting. **Roosting habitat** Buildings and trees to be impacted by the proposed development are assessed for their suitability to support roosting bats below. There is a total of 1 building on site; the main commercial building (B1). No evidence of roosting bats was identified on or within B1.

B1 Building description	***Photographs***
Summary B1 is a three-storey mid-terrace property. The front elevation is painted, with a flat roofline. The rear consists of exposed brick and includes a series of pitched and tiled roofs. Much of the roof could not be observed due to the proximity of surrounding buildings. Several potential roosting features are present, including accessible voids, bargeboard gaps, and raised tiles. These features would support void and crevice dwelling species. The building is surrounded by sealed surfaces and artificial lighting, with no habitat on site to support foraging or commuting. The immediate area surrounding is also void of these features, and this will reduce the habitat value of the site. The building has **high habitat value**.	

Feature	*Materials*	*Condition/description/suitability*	*Photograph(s)*
Walls	Brick and mortar. Painted on the southern elevation.	**Condition/description** Brickwork is in good condition with no areas of damage or missing mortar. **Suitability/access/evidence of bats** The walls provide no roosting opportunities for bats.	
Roof	Clay tiles. Four separate pitched roofs.	**Condition/description** The roof is comprised of four separate pitched sections, each with overlapping clay tiles. The roof on the western and southern elevations could not be viewed due to the structure of the building and the proximity of surrounding buildings. The condition of the roof however is likely to be similar to the visible sections of roof and was treated as such. There are numerous (>40%) raised tiles throughout the field tiles.	

		Suitability/access/evidence of bats Space under tiles could accommodate crevice dwelling bats and provide ingress points to internal areas. Around 40% of the tiles were raised, however due to the amount of roof which could not be assessed, this figure could be higher.	
Eaves	Closed	**Condition/description** Eaves are closed and gutter lined. The guttering is in good condition and affixed tightly to the brickwork. **Suitability/access/evidence of bats** Eaves provide no roosting opportunities for bats.	

Barge boards/fascia boards	Timber	**Condition/description** There are gaps between the bargeboards and brickwork where the timber has lifted and warped. **Suitability/access/evidence of bats** Gaps under the timbers provide roosting opportunities for bats.	
Window/doors frames and lintels	Timber and uPVC	**Condition/description** Windows and doors fit tight to the surrounding brickwork, with no observable gaps. **Suitability/access/evidence of bats** Windows and doors provide no roosting opportunities for bats.	

Internal void 1	Pitched and gabled. Timber rafters and ridge beam. Lined.	**Condition/description** Internal space measures approx. 8.5m long, 8.5m wide, floor to ridge height approx. 2m. The void is pitched and gabled, with timber beams and rafters. There beams are in good condition with no gaps or cracks. The roof is lined, with the lining having no tears or areas of damage. There is one small area of light ingress observable at the eaves. **Suitability/access/evidence of bats** The lining of the void is in good condition and offers no ingress point for bats. There is one small gap present at the eaves, however the likelihood of bats finding and utilising this is minimal. The void is not considered to be suitable for roosting bats.	 

			
Void 2	Pitched and gabled. Timber rafters and ridge beam. Lined.	**Condition/description** Internal space measures approx. 15m long, 6m wide, floor to ridge height approx. 2.5m. The void is pitched and gabled, with timber beams and rafters. There beams are in good condition with no gaps or cracks. There are some shallow areas of missing mortar at the gable walls. The roof is lined, with the lining having no tears or areas of damage. There are no areas of light ingress observable.	

		Suitability/access/evidence of bats Despite internal roosting features being present, the lining of the void is in good condition and offers no ingress point for bats. Void 3 is not considered suitable for roosting bats.	
Void 3	Pitched and gabled. Timber rafters and ridge beam. Lined.	**Condition/description** Internal space measures approx. 9m long, 5m wide, floor to ridge height approx. 2.5m. The void is pitched and gabled, with timber beams and rafters. There beams are in good condition with no gaps or cracks. There are some shallow areas of missing mortar at the gable walls. The roof is lined, with the lining having no tears or areas of damage. There are no areas of light ingress observable. **Suitability/access/evidence of bats** Despite internal roosting features being present, the lining of the void is in good condition and	

		offers no ingress point for bats. Void 2 is not considered suitable for roosting bats.	 
Foreseen Impacts	**Roosting habitat [Buildings]** The proposed development involves the internal conversion and renovation of B1, including the removal of internal walls and the installation of insulation on the interior face of the external walls. Neither the tiles nor the roof will be impacted by the development. Roosting features suitable for crevice-dwelling bat species are present, including gaps beneath raised roof tiles and at the bargeboards. While the proposed works are not		

	expected to directly affect these external features, there is potential for indirect disturbance to bats through internal demolition activities and window replacement. The likelihood of bats being present within the building is considered low, due to the limited availability of surrounding foraging and commuting habitat and the lack of strong connectivity to areas of higher ecological value. **Foraging and commuting habitat** The proposed development will not result in the removal of any habitats which could be used by foraging or commuting bats. However, the proposed development will include the use of lighting which could spill on to bat roosting, foraging or commuting habitat and deter bats from using these areas. **Artificial lighting** The proposed development is unlikely to lead to an increase in the amount of current lighting of surrounding habitats given the urban context or the area and lack of foraging and commuting habitat.
Recommendations	**Roosting habitat [Buildings]** As the proposed works will not affect any identified roosting features, nor involve alterations to the roof or roof structure, the development can proceed without the need for further bat surveys. However, if the plans are revised to include works to the roof or roof tiles, a minimum of three bat emergence and re-entry surveys will be required in accordance with best practice guidelines. **Foraging and commuting habitat** No further surveys are required. **Artificial lighting** None required. **Suggested biodiversity enhancements** The installation of one bat box at the site will provide additional roosting habitat for bats.

	Suitable bat boxes include Habibat Bat Box, Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box or similar alternative brand. Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from artificial light.
Birds	
Summary of Survey Findings	**Buildings** No evidence of nesting birds was identified on or within B1, however the building is considered suitable for nesting for species such as tits which will utilise gas under rooftiles for nesting. **Trees and vegetation** No suitable habitat present on site for nesting birds. **Barn owls** The site does not appear to provide any suitable nesting sites for barn owls. **Overwintering birds** Due to the small size of the site and the extent and type of the habitats recorded, the site not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/or notable birds.
Foreseen Impacts	**Buildings/trees** The proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests. **Barn owls** None foreseen. **Overwintering birds** None foreseen.

Recommendations	**Buildings/trees** 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. **Barn owls** None required. **Overwintering birds** None required. **Suggested biodiversity enhancements** The installation of a minimum of one bird box or on retained buildings will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. Schwegler No 17 Swift Nest Box (buildings) Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace (buildings) Or a similar alternative brand. Tree boxes should be positioned approximately 3m above ground level where they will be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight. Small-hole boxes are best placed approximately 1-3m above ground on an area of the tree trunk where foliage will not obscure the entrance hole.

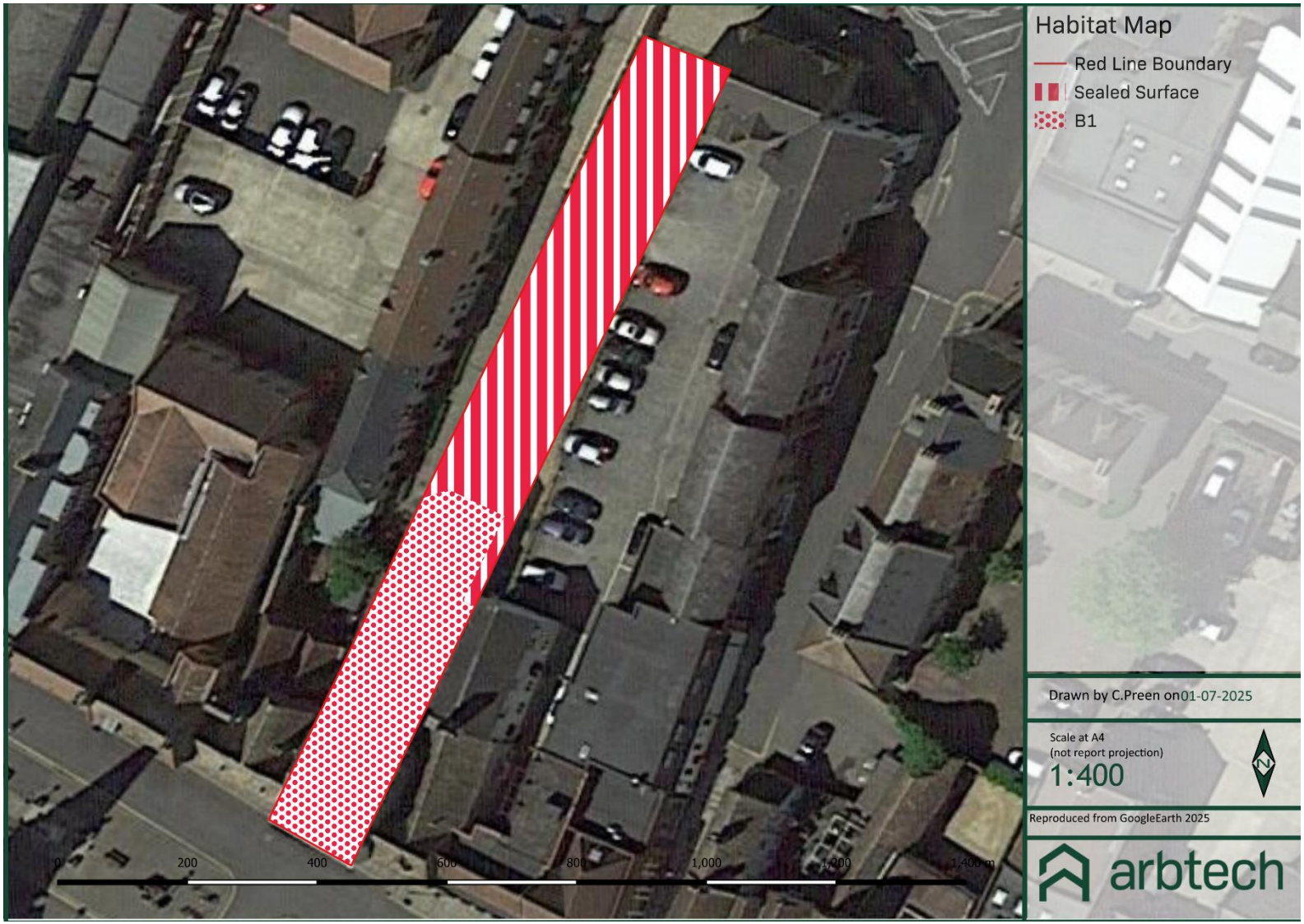
Reptiles	
Summary of Survey Findings	**EPSL data and local records** A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for protected reptiles within 2km of the site. **Habitat suitability** There is no suitable habitat present on site for reptiles due to a lack of habitats such as scrub and rank grassland which would offer refuge for these species. Further, the site is surrounded by urban development (i.e. roads and buildings) which is considered sub-optimal for reptile migration and therefore reptiles are considered unlikely to migrate from any nearby suitable habitats to the development site. As such it is likely that reptiles are absent from the development site. **Wider landscape** The nearby sections of the River Great Ouse, St Ives. Lakes Fishery and woodland are of elevated ecological value within the wider landscape and may represent important resources for local reptile populations. These adjacent habitats provide optimal foraging, commuting, and refuge opportunities for reptiles and are well connected to further suitable habitat in the wider landscape. The presence of reptiles utilising these adjacent habitats is unlikely to affect the proposed development.
Foreseen Impacts	No impacts are anticipated on reptiles as a result of the proposed development.
Recommendations	None required.
Amphibians	
Summary of Survey Findings	**EPSL and survey data** A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for great crested newts within 2km of the site. Further, no positive class survey licence return or DLL historic survey data (2017 – 2019) were present within 2km of the site.

	Aquatic habitat suitability (including ponds within 500m) Great crested newts (GCN) exist in metapopulations and are known to utilise ponds and their connecting terrestrial habitat during their life cycle; great crested newts are typically found within terrestrial habitats up to 500m from breeding ponds (Langton et al. 2001). No ponds are present on site or within 500m of the site. **Terrestrial habitat suitability** The site provides limited suitable terrestrial habitat for amphibians given the lack of optimal habitat (i.e. scrub, rank grassland). The areas of hard standing offer sub-optimal habitat for terrestrial amphibians. The urban nature of the surrounding landscape (i.e. dominated by roads and hard standing which are sub-optimal for amphibians) it is unlikely that amphibians will migrate on to site. Further, there is limited suitable terrestrial habitat across the wider landscape reducing the likelihood of amphibians being present on site and across the surrounding areas.
Foreseen Impacts	Given the lack of suitably connected breeding ponds within 500m of the site, the presence of GCN on-site is considered unlikely and therefore impacts to amphibians as a result of the proposed development are deemed to be acceptably low.
Recommendations	None required.

Badger	
Summary of Survey Findings	No badger setts were noted on site or within a 30m radius of the site. The site is considered unsuitable for badgers given the lack of suitable sett excavation areas/ground. Further, there is limited suitable badger foraging habitat on site given the lack of fruiting trees/scrub. The site is also surrounding by urban development (i.e. roads and buildings), which is sub-optimal habitat therefore reducing the likelihood of badgers being present within the surrounding area of the site.
Foreseen Impacts	No impacts are anticipated on badgers as a result of the proposed development.
Recommendations	None required.
Riparian animals	
Summary of Survey Findings	A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for otters or water voles within 2km of the site. There are no water courses on or connected to the site. There are also no riparian habitats present on site or within an influencing distance.
Foreseen Impacts	No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.
Recommendations	None required.
Hazel dormouse	
Summary of Survey Findings	**EPSL data and local records** A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for hazel dormice within 2km of the site. **Habitat suitability** The site lies outside of the know current range for hazel dormice and there are no suitable habitats within the development area. As such it is considered likely that hazel dormice are absent from site.

Foreseen Impacts	No impacts are anticipated on hazel dormice as a result of the proposed development.
Recommendations	None foreseen.
Other e.g. hedgehog	
Summary of Survey Findings	There are limited foraging and commuting opportunities for hedgehogs, ad significant barriers to dispersal by way of urban infrastructure and lack of suitable refuse opportunities.
Foreseen Impacts	No impacts are anticipated on hedgehogs as a result of the proposed development.
Recommendations	None required.

Appendix 1: Survey/Habitat map




PRA Map
B1
Void
Bargeboard Gaps
V1
V2
V3
Drawn by C.Preen on04-07-2025
Scale at A4
(not report projection)
1:200
Reproduced from GoogleEarth 2025
arbtech
0
200
400
600
800
1,000
1,200
1,400 m

Appendix 2: Location map



Appendix 3: Proposed plans (Ground, 1st & 2nd floors)



GENERAL NOTES

Drawings are based on survey information and may not accurately represent what is physically present

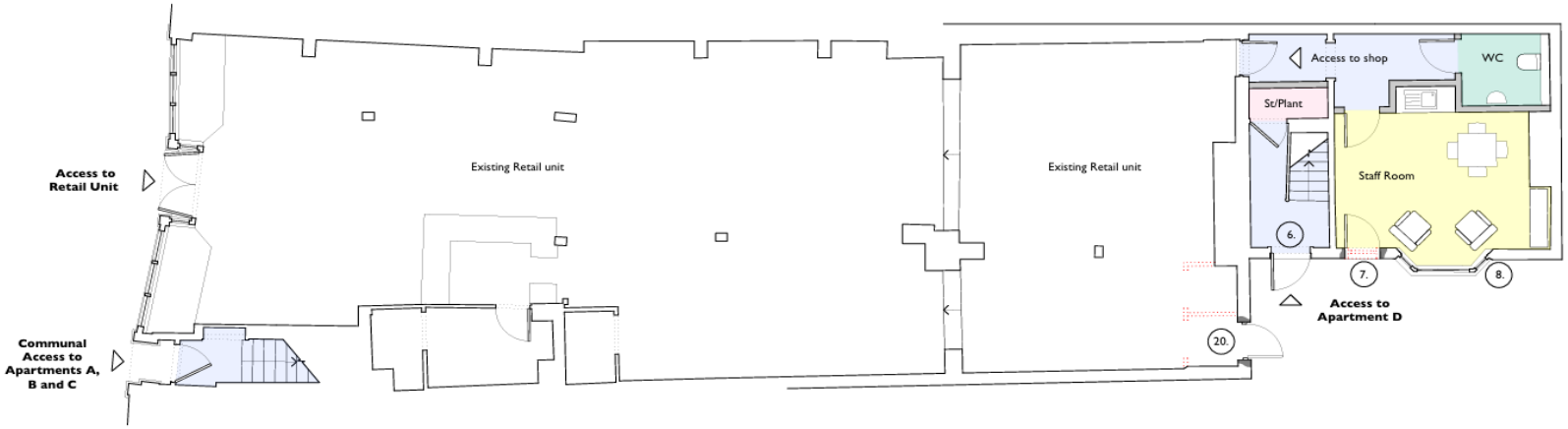
Do not scale from this drawing. All dimensions must be checked on site before proceeding with the works. Graham Handley Architects must be notified of any discrepancies.

All dimensions are in millimeters unless noted otherwise.

This drawing must be printed in colour.

Key

- Demolitions/Downtakings (ITEMS 13 & 14)
- Installation of new timber stud partitions
- Insulation applied (internally) to external walls (ITEM 18)



1 Ground Floor Plan as Proposed
Scale: 1:100



GENERAL NOTES

Drawings are based on survey information and may not accurately represent what is physically present

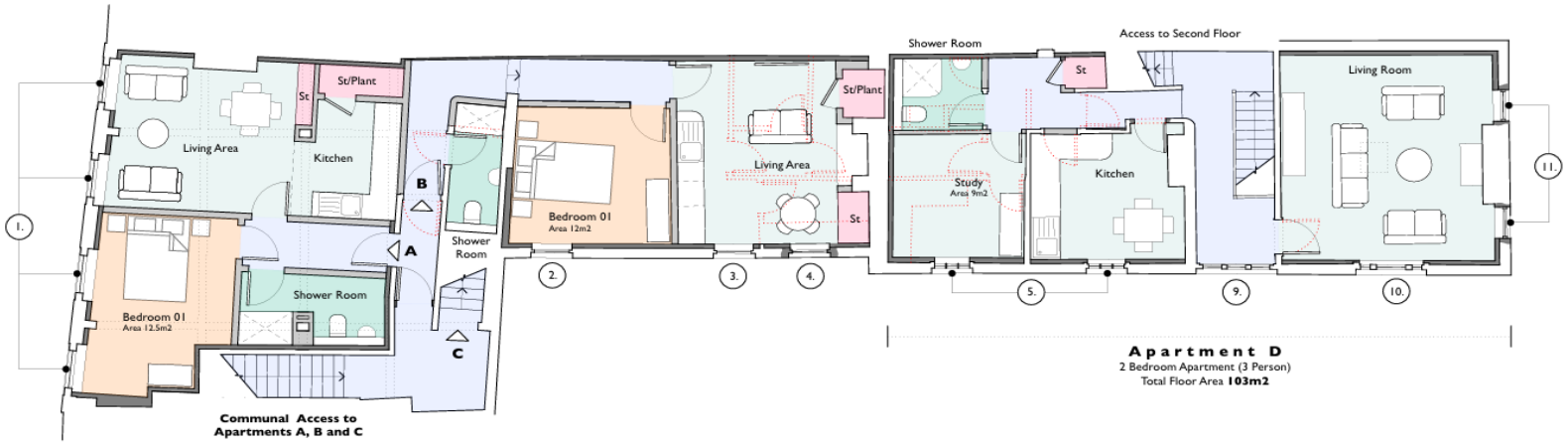
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Key

- Demolitions/Downtakings (ITEMS 13 & 14)
- Installation of new timber stud partitions
- Inuslation applied (internally) to external walls (ITEM 18)



2 First Floor Plan as Proposed
Scale: 1:100



GENERAL NOTES

Drawings are based on survey information and may not accurately represent what is physically present

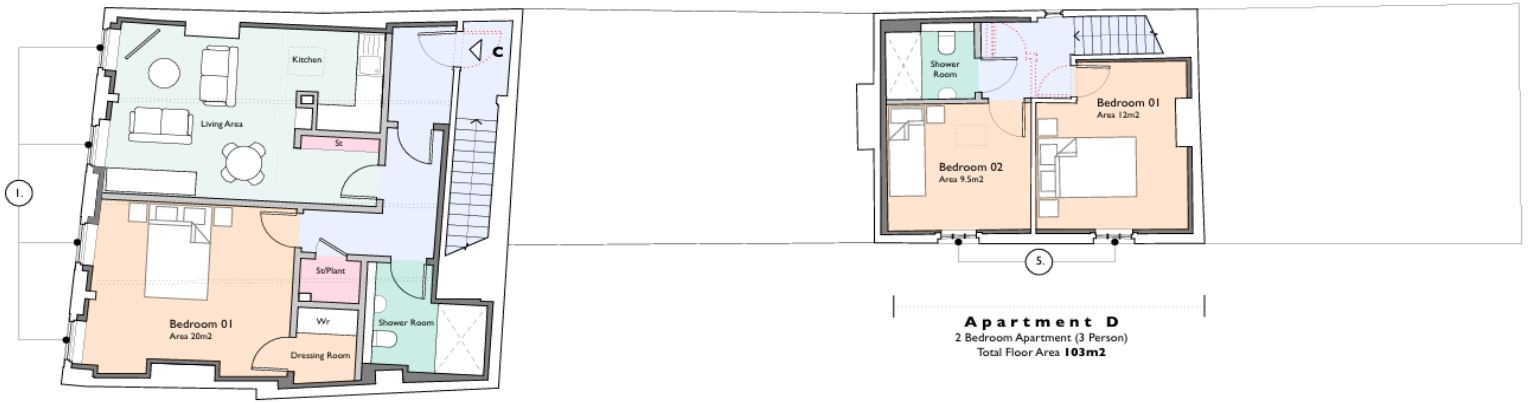
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Key

- Demolitions/Downtakings (ITEMS 13 & 14)
- Installation of new timber stud partitions
- Inuslation applied (internally) to external walls (ITEM 18)



Apartment C
1 Bedroom Apartment (2 Person)
Total Floor Area **65m2**

Apartment D
2 Bedroom Apartment (3 Person)
Total Floor Area **103m2**

3 Second Floor Plan as Proposed
Scale: 1:100

4.0 Description of Proposed Development

4.2 Proposed Works Summary

The works to the property can be summarised as:

- External works to windows (Replacement of uPVC and non-period timber elements with double glazed units) (ITEMS 1,2,3,5,8 &10)
- Insertion of new windows openings in existing fabric (ITEMS 4 & 11)
- Replacement of existing fire door (ITEM 6)
- Enlargement of existing window opening to create access door (ITEM 7)
- Renovation of existing bay window (ITEM 9)
- Internal fabric repairs (ITEM 12)
- Removal of non-period timber features/internal stud partition walls (ITEMS 13 & 14)
- Removal of modern kitchen/WC areas (ITEM 15)
- New Heating and Hot Water System (ITEM 16)
- Retention of existing traditional timber features (ITEM 17)
- Installation of insulation to internal face of external walls (ITEM 18)
- Installation of sound insulation between floors (ITEM 19)
- Installation of new fire door to retail unit (ITEM 20)

Appendix 4: Habitat Photos

Buildings	
Photograph	**Description**
	Figure 1: Commercial building (B1) on site.
	Figure 2: Northern elevation of B1.

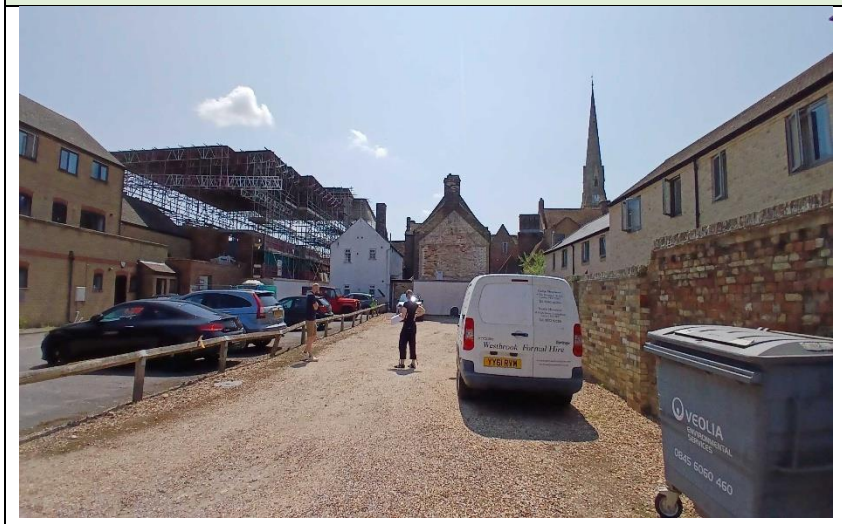
	Figure 3: Easten elevation of B1.
Developed land/sealed surface	
Photograph	**Description**
	Figure 4: Sealed surface at northern end of site, facing south.

	Figure 5: Gravel parking area at northern end of site, facing north.
	Figure 7: Rubble pile at far northern point of site boundary

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Version control			
Status	**Issue**	**Name**	**Date**
Draft	0.1	Adam Walding-Kelly BA (Hons), Assistant Ecologist	30/06/2025
Proof	0.2	Carly Preen BSc(Hons) MSc, Graduate Ecologist	03/07/2025
Draft	0.3	Carly Preen BSc(Hons) MSc, Graduate Ecologist	04/07/2025
Proof	0.4	Rhiannon Jensen O'Brien BSc (Hons) MSc, Consultant Ecologist	04/07/2025
Final	1.0	Carly Preen BSc(Hons) MSc, Graduate Ecologist	07/07/2025