

Report



Preliminary Roost Assessment Westfield Road, Caversham

Submitted by:

Charlotte Martin-Taylor

Date:

November 2019

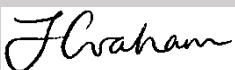
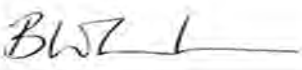
**Address:**

RSK ADAS Ltd
11D Park House
Milton Park
Oxfordshire
OX14 4RS

Commissioned By:

Avalon Construction and Design Ltd
3C Blake Mews
Kew
TW9 3GA

Quality Assurance

Author	Checked	Approved
Charlotte Martin-Taylor BSc MSc GradCIEEM	Joanna Graham BSc(Hons) MCIEEM	Barry Wheeler BSc(Hons) CEnv MCIEEM
		

*Denotes full membership of CIEEM

Disclaimer

Copyright RSK ADAS Ltd. All rights reserved.

No part of this report may be copied or reproduced by any means without prior written consent from RSK ADAS Ltd. If you have received this report in error please destroy all copies in your possession or control and notify RSK ADAS Ltd.

This report has been commissioned for the exclusive use of the commissioning party unless otherwise agreed in writing by RSK ADAS Ltd; no other party may use, make use of or rely on the contents of the report. No liability is accepted by RSK ADAS Ltd for any of this report, other than for the purposes for which it was originally prepared and provided.

Opinions and information provided in this report are on basis of RSK ADAS Ltd using due skill, care and diligence in the preparation of this report and no explicit warranty is provided as to its accuracy. It should be noted that no independent verification of any of the documents supplied to RSK ADAS Ltd has been made.

Revision History

Revision	Date	Amendment
MPT69105- 336(00)	NOVEMBER 2019	INITIAL REPORT

Contents

Summary	1
1 Introduction.....	2
1.1 Background and Survey Objectives	2
1.2 Site Description.....	2
1.3 Proposed Development	3
2 Legislation.....	4
2.1 Bats.....	4
2.2 National Planning Policy Framework	4
2.3 Local Planning Policy	5
3 Methodology	6
3.1 Desk Study	6
3.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment.....	6
4 Results	7
4.1 Desk Study	7
4.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment.....	7
5 Conclusions and Recommendations	10
6 References	11

Appendices

Appendix 1: Proposed Plans

Appendix 2: Preliminary Roost Assessment Map

Appendix 3: Photographs

Summary

ADAS was commissioned by Avalon Construction and Design Ltd to conduct a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PEA) on four buildings at 106-116 Westfield Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 8HL (grid reference: SU 7163 7494). The proposed works are to convert the loft spaces and extend the rear of the buildings to enlarge the existing dwellings and create three additional flats.

A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was undertaken on 12th November 2019 and was conducted by RSK ADAS Ltd. This report details the findings of the survey undertaken of the site.

Throughout Building 1, there were multiple external access points such as holes in the soffits, lifted lead flashing around the chimneys, gaps under ridge and hip tiles, slipped and broken slates, gaps between the soffits and the walls and gaps under the eaves. Due to the number of suitable roosting features, Building 1 was classed as having a 'moderate' suitability for roosting bats. Buildings 2 and 3 were considered to have 'negligible' suitability for roosting bats as the structures provided no roosting features. Building 4 contained few external access points such as a missing apex ridge tile on the northern elevation, lifted tiles, and gaps between the eaves and wooden boarding and was classed as having 'low' suitability.

Buildings 1 and 4 offered moderate and low suitability, respectively, for crevice dwelling bats. It is therefore recommended that two emergence/re-entry bat surveys are undertaken on Building 1 which would involve four surveyors and one emergence/re-entry bat survey is undertaken on Building 4 which would involve two surveyors.

Enhancement recommendations will be made pending the results of further bat surveys and specified to the type of roosts and species present on site. However, to provide further enhancement integrated bat boxes should be included within the new development in accordance with the NPPF and Policy EN12 of Reading Borough Council's Local Plan.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background and Survey Objectives

ADAS were commissioned by Avalon Construction and Design Ltd to conduct a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the main building, which was subdivided into nine residential units, and three outbuildings at 106-112 Westfield Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8HJ.

This report provides a summary of the findings of the desk study and the results of the PRA, with recommendations for any necessary further actions.

1.2 Site Description

The buildings that were proposed to be developed were located on Westfield Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, (grid reference: SU 7163 7494). The site was comprised of four buildings; the main building which contained nine residential units and associated outbuildings which most were being used for storage. The wider area comprised residential housing, the River Thames, parks and recreation grounds (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Site location (shown by redline) and wider landscape.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Digital data © Crown copyright. ADAS License No. AL 100020033. April 2010. Imagery taken from Microsoft Virtual Earth (Bing).

1.3 Proposed Development

The proposed development is to convert the lofts and extend the rear of the building (B1, sections A and B) to enlarge the existing dwellings and create three additional flats. There will also be alterations to the parking area and amenity area. The works will include demolition of existing outbuildings (B2 and B3) and removal of the two chimneys, see draft proposals plans (Appendix 1).

2 Legislation

2.1 Bats

Bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 it is illegal to:

- *Kill or injure bats;*
- *Cause disturbance at their resting places; or*
- *To block access to, damage or destroy their roost sites.*

Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 it is an offence to:

- *Deliberately capture or kill a bat;*
- *To damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of any bat. (This is an absolute offence and intent or recklessness does not have to be proved); and*
- *Deliberately disturb a bat (this applies anywhere, not just at its roost).*

2.2 National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) February 2019, is an update to the previous version issued in July 2018, and is a policy framework document which provide a range of important principles. Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural local environment by:

‘Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.’

Paragraph 171 goes on to state:

‘... take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.’

When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying the following principles (paragraph 175):

‘Opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged.’

2.3 Local Planning Policy

Table 1: Summary of relevant Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019).

Policy	Description
EN12 - Biodiversity	On all sites, development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible. Development should: • Protect and wherever possible enhance features of biodiversity interest on and adjacent to the application site, incorporating and integrating them into development proposals wherever practicable; and • Provide new tree planting, wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological enhancements (such as wildlife ponds, bird and bat boxes) wherever practicable. In exceptional circumstances where the need for development clearly outweighs the need to protect the value of the site, and it is demonstrated that the impacts cannot be: 1) avoided; 2) mitigated or; 3) compensated for on-site; then new development will provide off-site compensation to ensure that there is “no net loss” of biodiversity.’

3 Methodology

3.1 Desk Study

A desk study was carried out identify bat records within 2km of the site using data provided by Berkshire & South Buckinghamshire Bat Group and Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC).

3.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment

ADAS Senior Ecological Consultant Sarah Thornton-Mills BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM and Assistant Ecological Consultant Charlotte Martin-Taylor BSc (Hons) MSc GradCIEEM carried out the Preliminary Roost Assessment on 12th November 2019. This involved systematically checking the interior and exterior of each building, identifying and classifying any features or structures suitable for bat roosts, entry/exit points, including evidence of bats such as physical bats, bat droppings or feeding remains. All building inspections were carried out in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust guidelines (Collins, 2016).

The suitability of these buildings for roosting bats was classified according to the number and type of the features identified and considered quality and extent of surrounding habitat. Each building was then categorised as: negligible, low, medium and high.

4 Results

4.1 Desk Study

Nine European Protected Species Mitigation Licenses for bats were granted within 2km of the works area. Multiple bat roosts were recorded within 2km; the closest recorded bat roost was for a pipistrelle species (*Pipistrellus* sp.), located 170m northwest of the site. Other species of bats recorded within 2km included serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*), Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*), whiskered bat (*Myotis mystacinus*), Natterer's bat (*Myotis nattereri*), myotis species (*Myotis* sp.), Leisler's bat (*Nyctalus leisleri*), noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*), Nathusius's pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*), common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*) and long-eared species (*Plecotus* sp.).

4.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment

All buildings on site were allocated a number from 1 to 4 (see Appendix 2). The buildings could be described as the following:

- *Building 1 was the main building which contained nine residential units and contained three loft spaces and therefore was split into three sections, A to C (Appendix 1; Photographs 1, 2, 3 and 7 to 10).*
- *Building 2 was in use as a storage shed and was used to store household items limiting access to complete a full internal inspection (Appendix 1; Photographs 4 and 12).*
- *Building 3 was in use as a communal laundry room (Appendix 1; Photograph 5).*
- *Building 4 was another storage area and was used to store household items limiting access to complete a full internal inspection (Appendix 1; Photographs 6 and 11).*

Each of the buildings were assessed in terms of bat roost potential and suitable features of those buildings were identified using the BCT guidelines (Collins 2016). Buildings 1 and 4 offered moderate and low suitability, respectively, for roosting bats due to each building offering multiple roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling species (see Table 1). Buildings 2 and 3 had negligible suitability to support roosting bats as it did not offer any suitable roosting opportunities for bats (see Table 1). In addition, the site was in close proximity to locations in the wider landscape which offered potential foraging and commuting habitat, including the Balmore Walk, a public green space with woodland, grassland and scattered trees and the River Thames.

Table 1: Summarising each buildings features and suitability for roosting bats

Building	Features observed	Potential roosting points	Suitability
1	External: Building 1 was comprised of rendered brick with a slate roof and modern UPVC windows. Sections A and B had two red brick chimneys with lead flashing. There was evidence in some sections of the eaves of anti-bird netting and spikes. Internal: - Sections A and B - The void space had a height of approximately 1.7m and a combined floor area of approximately 90m². The loft space was comprised of a wooden frame, wooden sarking with a bitumen felt liner behind. There was a red brick chimney in the middle of the space and a red brick gable end. Daylight could be seen where the chimney joined the roof on the eastern elevation, gaps along the eaves on both the eastern and western elevations and at the southern gable at the apex of the void. A plasterboard false wall separated Sections A and B. The insulation was comprised of woodchip/cork. A wasp's nest was on the western eaves of Section A. Mouse (<i>Mus musculus</i>) droppings were found but no bat droppings were found. The loft space extended beyond the chimney to the south, but this could not be accessed safely. - Section C - The void space had a height of approximately 1.7m and a floor area of 44m². The loft space was comprised of a wooden frame, wooden sarking with a bitumen liner behind. There was a red brick gable end, no daylight could be seen, however, there was a slight draft. There was a missing section of sarking that lead into another void which could not be accessed safely which was comprised of bitumen liner only, no sarking, and	Features that were suitable for bats included: holes in the soffits, lifted lead flashing around the chimneys, gaps under ridge and hip tiles, slipped and broken slates, gaps between the soffits and the walls and gaps under the eaves.	Moderate

	<i>breezeblocks. The insulation was a modern type fibrous rolls and was present throughout the loft space. Mouse droppings were present but no bat droppings were found.</i>		
2	External: Building 2 was comprised of wooden cladding with a flat bitumen felt roof. Large areas of bitumen felt were missing from the roof and it was very damp and light inside. Parts of the top timbers on the walls were rotten. Internal: There was no loft space. Internally, the building was used to store household items limiting access to complete a full internal inspection.	None.	Negligible
3	External: Building 3 was comprised of rendered brick with a flat bitumen felt roof. There was evidence of rotted wooden boarding along the top of the walls. There were no features for bats found on this building. Internal: There was no loft space. Internally, the building structure was in good condition, but the door was missing to access inside.	None.	Negligible
4	External: Building 4 was comprised of rendered brick with a slate roof and red clay ridge tiles. The building was open to the north and south and an ornamental climbing plant grew within the building from the west. Internal: The roof was comprised of wooden sarking and the building was being used for storage, limiting internal access.	Features for bats included a missing apex ridge tile on the northern elevation, lifted tiles, and gaps between the eaves and wooden boarding on the southern elevation.	Low

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

During the Preliminary Roost Assessment survey, no evidence of bats was found internally or externally, however, there were multiple features suitable for crevice dwelling bats on Buildings 1 and 4 (see Appendix 1). The far north and far south of the loft spaces beyond the chimneys could not be fully accessed safely, therefore, a full internal inspection could not be completed. Given the features on these buildings and the suitable foraging and commuting habitat, including Balmore Walk and the River Thames, Buildings 1 and 4 were classed as having moderate and low potential, respectively, to support roosting bats. Buildings 2 and 3 had no features and were classed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats.

To conclude, Buildings 1 and 4 offered moderate and low suitability, respectively, for crevice dwelling bats. It is therefore recommended that two emergence/re-entry bat surveys are undertaken on Building 1 which would involve four surveyors and one emergence/re-entry bat survey is undertaken on Building 4 which would involve two surveyors. The surveys should be undertaken between May and August and will involve surveyors using bat recording equipment to record bat activity at the site during one dusk survey and one dawn survey.

Enhancement recommendations will be made pending the results of further bat surveys and specified to the type of roosts and species present on site. However, to provide further enhancement integrated bat boxes should be included within the new development in accordance with the NPPF and Policy EN12 of Reading Borough Council's Local Plan.

6 References

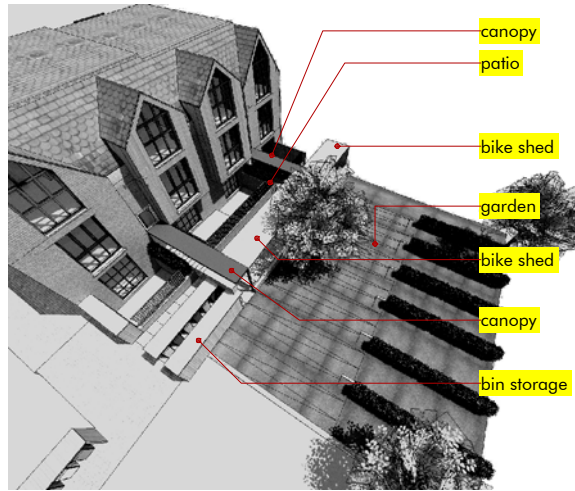
Collins, J. (ed) (2016). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Appendix 1: Proposed Plans

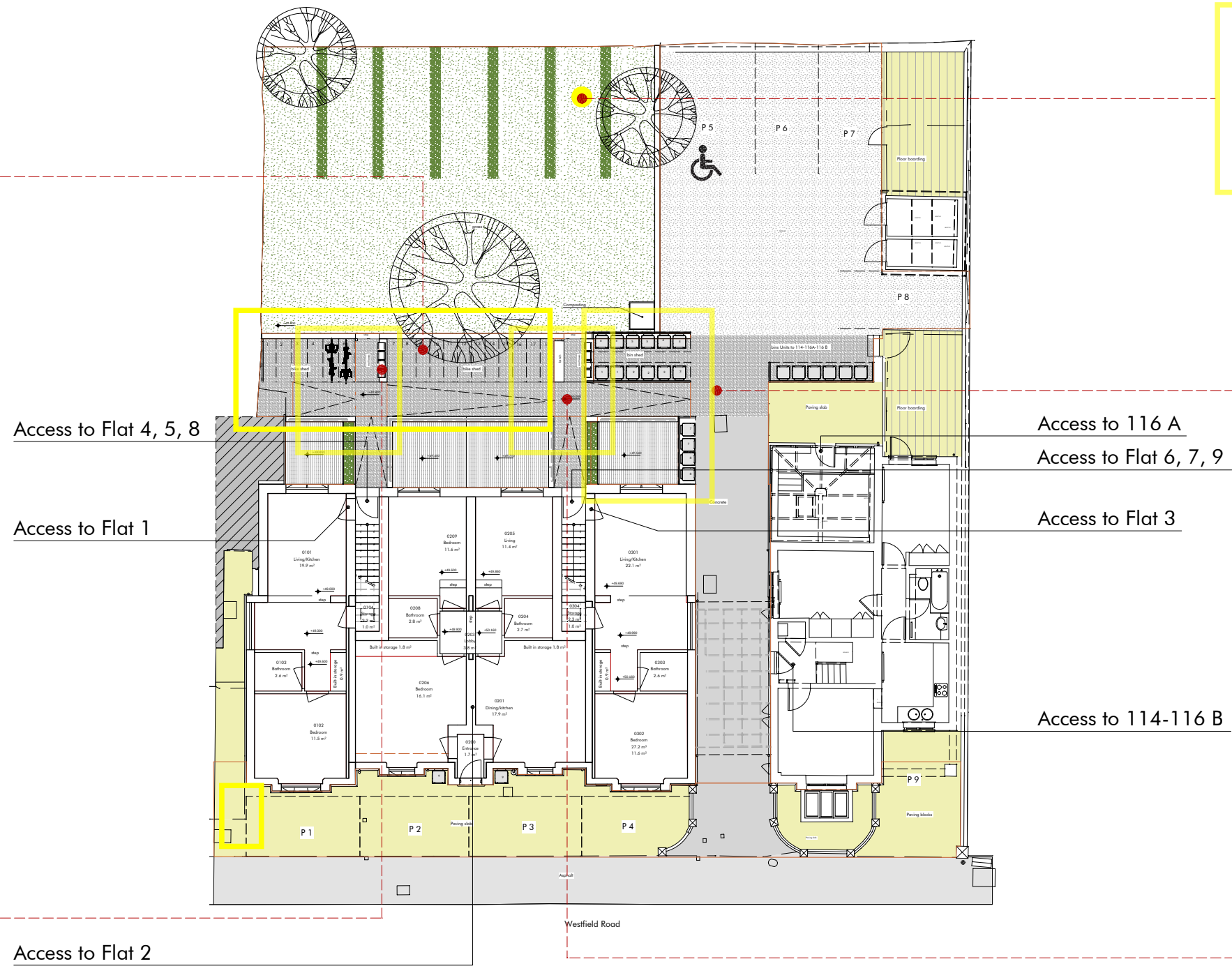
See following page.



Bike shed from the rear garden



Bike shed and mailboxes



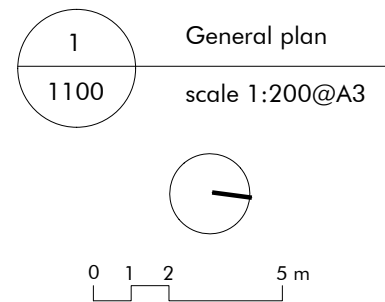
Elevation from the rear garden



Bin storage from the parking area



Access to flats



Revision	Release date	Drawn/Checked	NOTES
A	20/05/2019	CB	First issue for planning

CLIENT: Prospect Development Ltd
GENERAL NOTES



Avalon Construction & Design
a: Black Mews, Richmond TW9 3GA
e: architecture@avalonbuild.co.uk
w: avalonbuild.co.uk
t: 020 7348 9058
m: 07891 174552

PROJECT: Westfield Rd
ADDRESS: 106-116 Westfield Rd - Reading RG4 8JH
DRAWING TITLE: General plan as proposed
DRAWING NO: ACD 05181 100

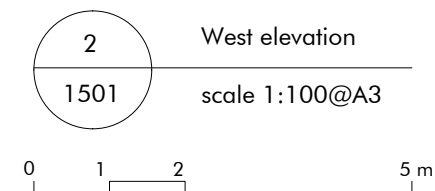
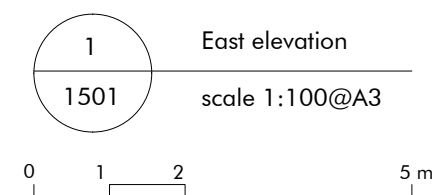
PURPOSE OF ISSUE: PLANNING

SCALE: 1:200

FORMAT: A3



NOTE:
the only intervention to the main
facade consist of the new rooflight
and demolition of existing chimney



Revision	Release date	Drawn/Checked	NOTES
A	20/05/2019	CB	First issue for planning

CLIENT: Prospect Development Ltd
GENERAL NOTES



Avalon Construction & Design
a: Black Mews, Richmond TW9 3GA
e: architecture@avalonbuild.co.uk
w: avalonbuild.co.uk
t: 020 7348 9058
m: 07891 174552

PROJECT: Westfield Rd
ADDRESS: 106-116 Westfield Rd - Reading RG4 8JH
DRAWING TITLE: Elevations as proposed
DRAWING NO: ACD 05181501

PURPOSE OF ISSUE: PLANNING

SCALE: 1:100

FORMAT: A3

Appendix 2: Preliminary Roost Assessment Map

See following page.

Avalon Construction & Design Ltd

106-112 Westfield Road, Reading

Preliminary Roost Assessment

- Building One
- Building Sections
- Outbuildings
- Target Notes
- Site Boundary

- Key:
- Gap in soffit
 - Gap under lead flashing
 - Gap between soffit and wall
 - Gap under roof tiles
 - Anti-bird device
 - Broken or slipped roof tiles
 - Missing soffit
 - Gap in between fibreglass expanding foam and brick wall
 - Missing apex ridge tiles
 - Gap in wooden boarding
 - Ornamental climber

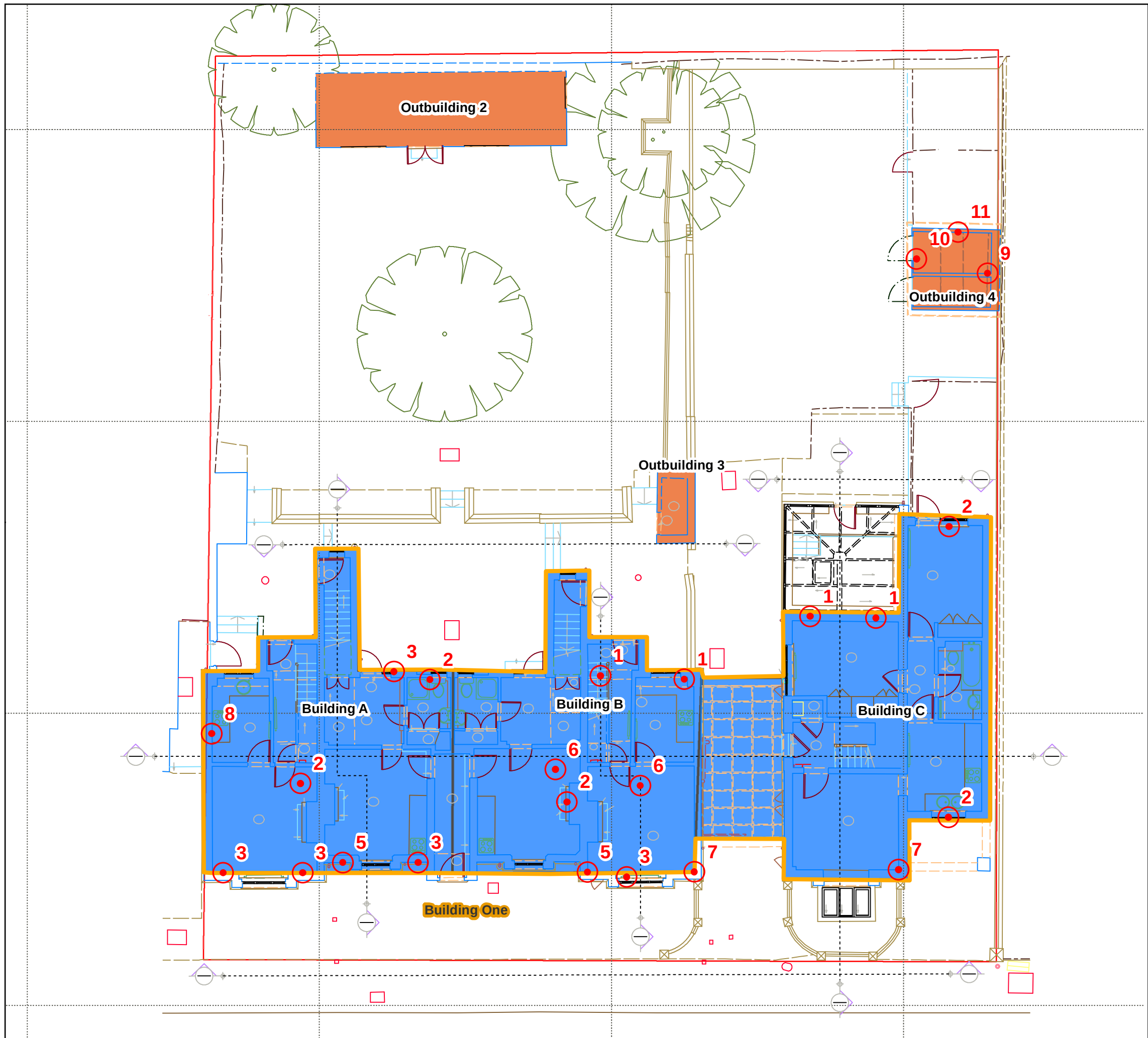
Drawn by: Charlotte Barley Date: 26/11/19
Verified By: Charlotte Martin-Taylor Date: 26/11/19



0 10
Metres
Scale 1:130 at A3 size

This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office
© Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.
RSK ADAS Ltd Licence no. OS 0100058606 November 2019
For reference purposes only. No further copies may be made

RSK ADAS Ltd,
11d Park House,
Milton Park,
Abingdon
OX14 4RS



Appendix 3: Photographs



Photograph 1: Building 1, Sections A and B – west elevation.



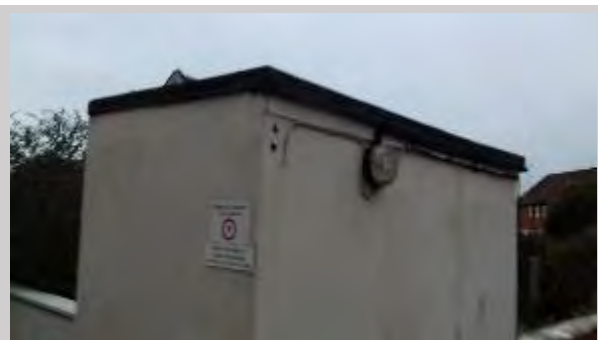
Photograph 2: Building A, Section C – west elevation.



Photograph 3: Building 1 – east elevation.



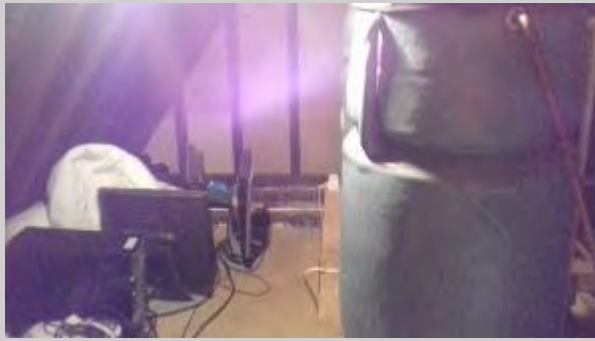
Photograph 4: Building 2 – east and north elevations.



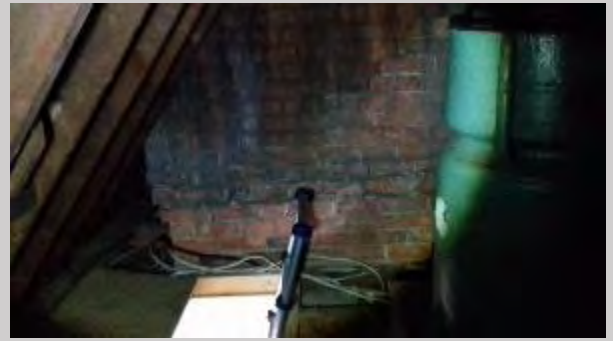
Photograph 5: Building 3 – east and north elevations.



Photograph 6: Building 4 – east and south elevations.



Photograph 7: Building 1 – loft space in Section A facing north.



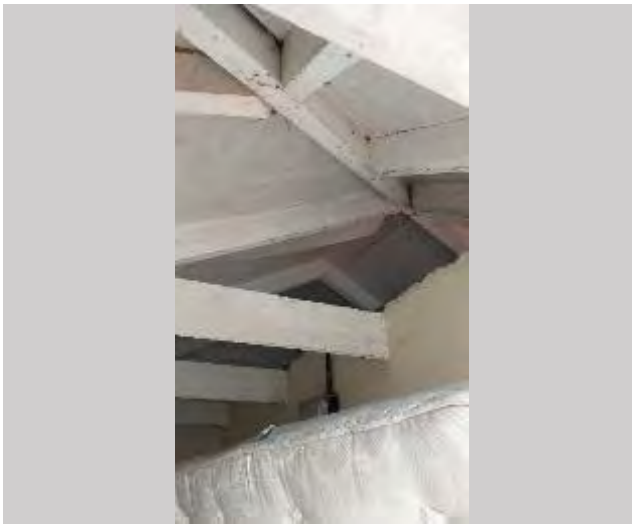
Photograph 8: Building 1 – loft space in Section B facing north.



Photograph 9: Building 1 – loft space in Section C facing east.



Photograph 10: Building 1 – loft space in Section C facing northeast with missing panel leading into additional void that could not be accessed.



Photograph 11: Wooden boarding in Building 4.



Photograph 12: Building 2 – internal view facing northwest.