



Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site:

Abbey Gardens, 4-6 Abbey Street, Reading, RG1 3BA

Client:

Randalswood Construction UK Ltd

Survey date:

27/03/2026

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Reading Borough Council. The proposals can be described as:

- 1)** External works to partial areas of all elevations at ground floor level and all areas of each elevation from 1st to 7th floor level, including replacement windows and doors, installation of brickwork following removal of existing glazing, the provision of Juliet balconies on all elevations and protruding balconies on the east and south elevations at 2nd floor level and above, and other associated works.
- 2)** Infilling of the existing undercroft/void beneath the eastern projecting wing of the southern block at ground and lower ground level, associated with the existing office use (Class E).
- 3)** Erection of a lower ground floor extension to the eastern elevation of the central block, associated with the existing office use (Class E).

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

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Introduction and Context

Introduction

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.

No previous ecology reports have been produced for this site by Arbtech Consulting Ltd or, to the author's knowledge, by any other consultancy.

Methodology

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

Limitations

Whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report is a preliminary assessment and does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. Nor does it represent a full botanical assessment. It assesses the likelihood of protected, notable and important habitats and species being present, based on a site and landscape level habitat value-based risk assessment. This is based upon the ecology, biology and known distribution of species as currently understood.

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.

Results, Impacts and Recommendations

Site Location and Landscape Context

Table 1: Site location and landscape context

Site Location
The site is located at National Grid Reference SU 71964 73435 and has an area of approximately 0.42ha comprising one building. The site is located in an urban setting, immediately surrounded by urban development within the town of Reading. The site is adjacent to the river Kennet on the eastern elevation and further urban development on all other elevations. The local landscape is a densely urbanised one, containing small, scarcely vegetated gardens with only a scattered covering of trees/in which trees are largely absent. The river Thames is located 530m north of the site and there is open parkland to the north. The river Kennet is adjacent to the site on the eastern boundary. A variable soil and subsoil typically Peat or layered clay, sand and silt (riverine). Mildly Acidic to Neutral (pH: 4.5 - 6.5).
Priority Habitats and Designated Sites
Summary of Survey Findings <u>Priority Habitats</u> There are 5 priority habitats located within 2 km of the site. These comprise deciduous woodland, coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, traditional orchard, ancient & semi-natural woodland and wood pasture and parkland. The closest priority habitat comprises deciduous woodland, located ~440 m N of the site. The site is separated from the woodland by high levels of urban development and limited areas of open parkland. However, the river Kennet could provide a suitable linear feature for commuting bats to the woodland. <u>Designated Sites</u> There are no other statutory sites within 2 km of the site. There are no statutory sites within 10 km of the site.

The site does fall within the impact risk zone for SSSI however, the proposed development type is not listed as possible high risk with regard to this designation.

The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from the local records centre. Whilst some habitats in the wider landscape may host designations, the immediate environs of the site do not host habitats likely to be of designable quality.

Impacts

No direct impacts to any designated sites will occur as a result of the proposed development, due to the small scale and low overall impact of the development from such sites (where known), alongside additional factors such as distance in combination with connectivity disrupting barriers.

Recommendations

No recommendations.

Fauna

The site survey was undertaken by Beth Ellison-Perrett BSc (Hons), MSc, MRSB, with five years of experience, and holder of Natural England survey licences for bats [2025-86142-CL17-BAT] and great crested newt [2025-83625-SCI-CL08].

Table 2: Survey weather conditions

Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
27/03/2026	11.6	81	100	6.4	Light rain

Table 3: Fauna

Fauna: Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations			
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.			
Roosting Bats			
Summary of Survey Findings			
A review of the MAGIC database for European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) for bats within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. 9 EPSL were identified, as detailed below:			
Table 3a: EPSL records within 2km of the site - bats			
EPSL reference	Bat species affected	Distance from site	Impacts allowed by licence
2019-44194-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle	20m east	Destruction of resting place
EPSM2013-6155	Common pipistrelle	285m north	Destruction of resting place
2017-28045-EPS-MIT	Daubentons	480m north	Unknown
2016-22301-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	495m south	Destruction of resting place
2017-32379-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	1220m south-west	Destruction of resting place
2014-3941-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle	1300m south-east	Destruction of resting place
2014-1343-EPS-BDX	Soprano pipistrelle	1575m north	Unknown
EPSM2011-3175	Common pipistrelle	1660m north	Unknown

EPSM2010-2126	Common pipistrelle	1785m south-east	Destruction of resting place
No buildings or trees were present on site with suitable roosting features for bats to utilise. Buildings Building B1 Description B1 is a detached, eight-storey, metal-framed office building. The building is clad in stone render which is in very good condition with no raised or missing sections, under which bats could roost. The main roof structure is a parapet roof, clad in zinc and corrugated metal. The undercroft to the north (where the river's tributary runs) and the undercroft to the east of the site were surveyed for areas which could be utilised by roosting bats. No suitable features were noted on either area of the building. Additionally, the underground area of the building was also surveyed and no suitable roosting features were recorded. No bat evidence was found during the survey of this building. Internal voids, classed as plant rooms were recorded. In line with Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J (Ed) 2023), B1 is assessed to have negligible habitat value for roosting bats due to a lack of suitable roosting features.  <i>Western elevation of B1</i>			

Internal works to the building, particularly to the north, have already been undertaken. This has included the removal of some windows. While some windows have been removed, the areas they now provide access to do not contain any suitable roosting features or habitat. This is due to the fact that internally, the building has no suitable areas for bats to roost, as well as being very light internally due to the windows on all elevations.



Eastern elevation of B1



Roof of the plant room of B1

Feature	Materials	Condition/Suitability	Photographs
Voids	None	There are no loft spaces within B1; however, the roof incorporates plant rooms which are metal-framed. The roof is flat and unlined, allowing the backs of the corrugated metal to be visible internally. The walls of the plant room are clad in a mixture of large ventilation grills covered with thin wire meshing, corrugated metal and zinc cladding, all of which appear well-sealed. Daylight enters the space through the ventilation grills. Access to these plant rooms is not available internally, however, the void itself is accessible.	 <i>Plant room, on the roof of B1</i>
Impacts			
Bats are very unlikely to be roosting within this building and as such, there are not anticipated to be any impacts on bats in this location as a result of the proposed development.			
Recommendations			

None.

Foraging and Commuting Bats

Summary of Survey Findings

The adjacent river Kennet could be used by local bat populations for foraging and commuting.

Impacts

Given the presence of more extensive areas of foraging and commuting habitat in the locality, this is likely to be inconsequential for bats.

Recommendations

A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during and post-development, which will be designed to incorporate the measures laid out in the latest (2023) bat lighting guide Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting.

Birds

Summary of Survey Findings

No evidence of nesting birds was identified on the site. There are no suitable habitats on site which provide habitat for nesting birds.

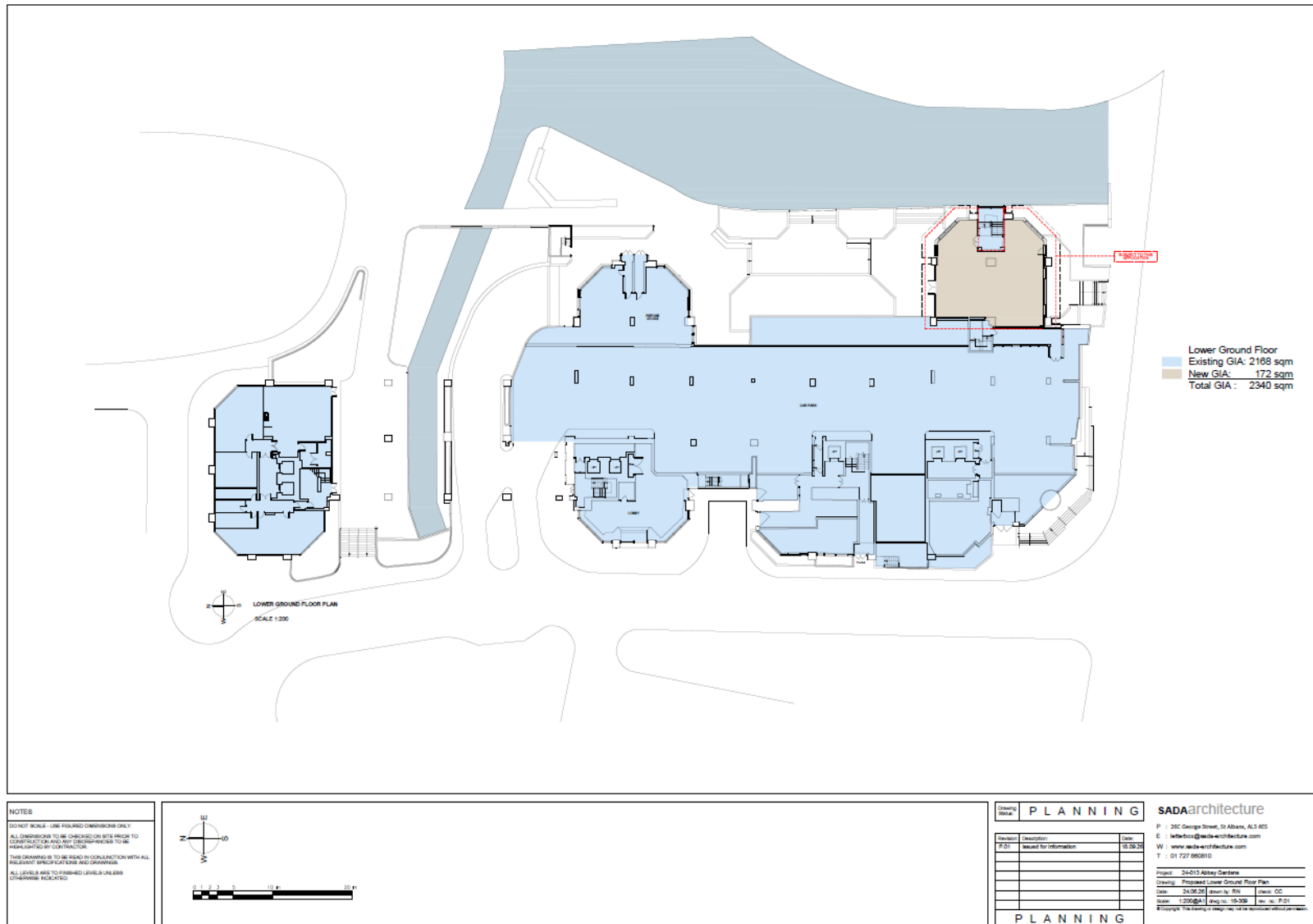
Impacts

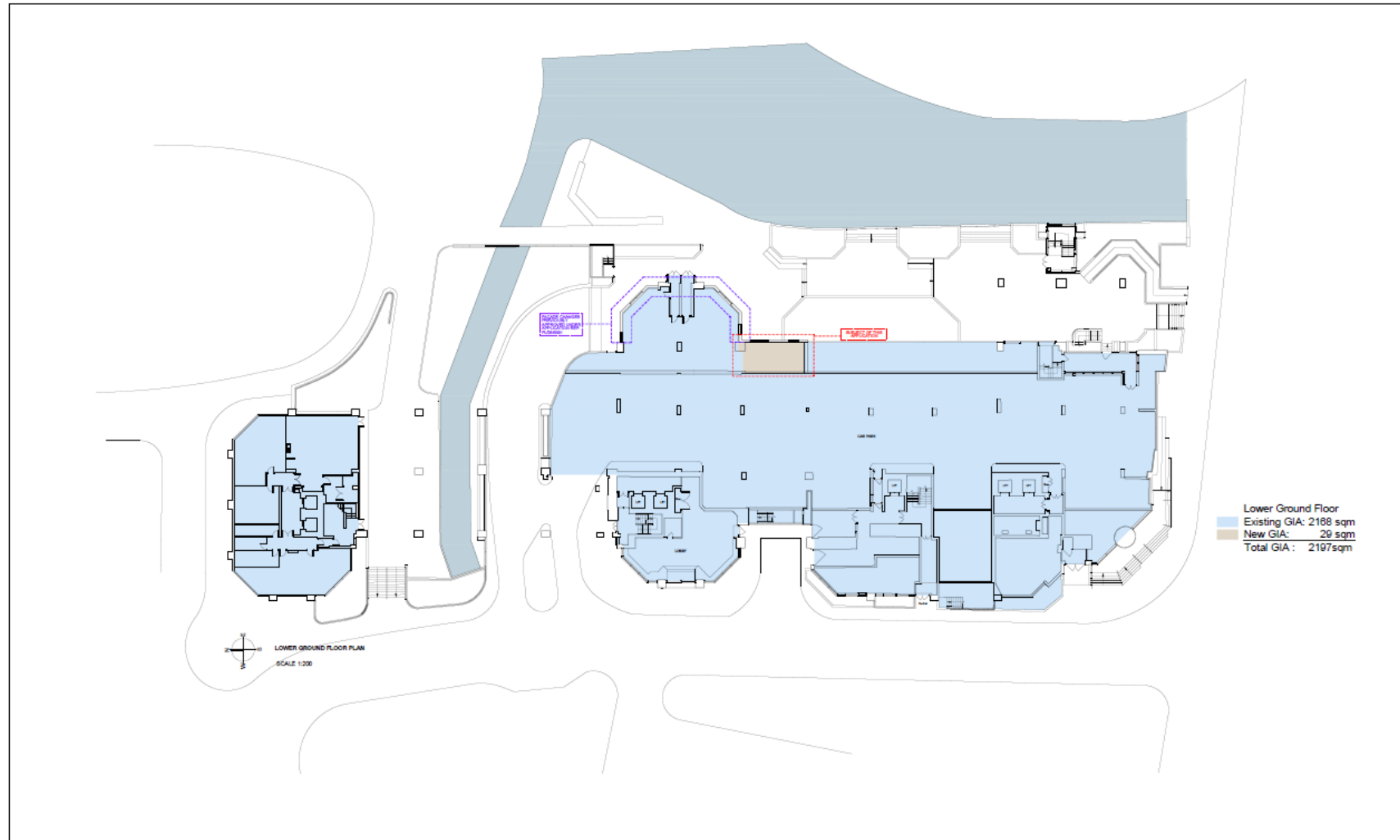
No impacts are anticipated on nesting birds as a result of the proposed development.

Recommendations

None.

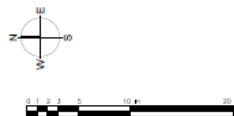
Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan





NOTES

DONOT SCALE - USE FIGURED DIMENSIONS ONLY
ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED ON SITE PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION AND ANY DISCREPANCIES TO BE HIGHLIGHTED BY CONTRACTOR
THIS DRAWING IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL RELEVANT SPECIFICATIONS AND DRAWINGS
ALL LEVELS ARE TO FINISHED LEVELS UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED



PLANNING		
Revision	Description	Date
P.01	Issued for information	25.06.20
P.02	Issued for information	11.08.20

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Project: 24-013 Abbey Gardens
Drawing: Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan
Date: 25.06.20 Drawn by: SJA Check: OC
Scale: 1:200 (BA) (Proj No: 15-308 Rev No: P.02)
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PLANNING

Appendix 2: Site Location Plan



Appendix 3: PRA Plan



Appendix 4: Site Photographs



Photo 1: Western elevation of B1



Photo 2: Eastern elevation of B1



Photo 3: Roof of B1, to the north



Photo 4: Internally within the roof of B1, to the south



Photo 5: undercroft area, subject to infilling



Photo 6: area subject to extension

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Version Control

Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	Beth Ellison-Perrett BSc (Hons), MSc, MRSB, Senior Ecologist	31/03/2026
Final	1.0	Beth Ellison-Perrett BSc (Hons), MSc, MRSB, Senior Ecologist	08/04/2026
Updated	2.0	Beth Ellison-Perrett BSc (Hons), MSc, MRSB, Senior Ecologist	28/04/2026