

Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site:

Hurstpierpoint College, Hurstpierpoint, Hassocks, West Sussex BN6 9JS

Client:

Hurstpierpoint College

Survey date:

26th March 2025

Project:

This report is prepared to inform two separate planning applications with the Mid-Sussex District Council. The proposal is described as:
The demolition of a swimming pool and pavilion.

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 Ashleigh Domblides, Accredited Agent on Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2018-33540-CLS-CLS					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
26/03/2025	15	63	10	5	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 Location plan in Appendix 1, PRA plan in Appendix 2, proposed plans in Appendix 3 and additional photos in Appendix 4.					
Background and Site Location					
Summary of site and desk Study		<u>Site description:</u> The site is centred on TQ 28878 17542 (Swimming Pool) and TQ 28899 17879 (Pavillion) and has an area of 0.05ha (Swimming Pool) and 0.007ha (Pavillion). Each site is comprised of one building (B1 and B2) with no land included in the proposed development. The site is set within a rural area on a college complex, with school buildings and managed fields within close proximity of the buildings to be demolished. The wider area comprises of grassland with small parcels of woodland and small residential parcels and villages. The site is moderately well connected to the local area, with minimal commuting features within the college grounds such as scattered trees and hedgerows but more substantial habitat shortly beyond the grounds such as tree and hedge lined fields. To the author’s knowledge, no previous ecology reports have been produced for this site. EPSLS There are no ESPLs for bats returned within 2km of the site. It is worth noting the majority of land within this radius comprises undeveloped grassland and woodland, reducing the likelihood that works requiring an EPSL will have been completed within this area. Designated Sites The site is not subject to any designation, however, there is one statutory site within 2km of site: South Downs, National Park, located ~1.4km south of site. The South Downs consists of a mosaic of habitats including woodland, chalk grassland, heathland, farmland, water bodies, pastures and orchards. The South Downs support populations			

	of rare invertebrates, reptiles (including smooth snakes and sand lizards), amphibians (including great crested newts), birds and most species of bat including greater mouse-eared. There are no bat designated Special Areas of Conservation within 10km of site. The site is within the SSSI Impact Risk Zone for Ditchling Common and Wolstonbury Hill, however, there are no anticipated risks associated with the proposed plans. In addition to the nearby designated sites, the following priority habitats were identified within 2km: • Deciduous woodland, closest parcel ~25m south of the swimming pool and 95m east of the pavilion. • Ancient woodland, closest parcel ~50m south of the swimming pool and 275m south of the pavilion. • Woodpasture and Parkland, closest parcel ~1.75km south of the swimming pool
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	There are no anticipated impacts to designated sites as a result of the proposed development, however, the demolition of the buildings may result in low levels of pollution to the nearby deciduous woodland.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution affecting the nearby deciduous woodland must be implemented during construction.
Field survey results	
Feature	Description
Bat foraging and commuting habitat	While there is no suitable habitat within the red line boundaries, the wider habitat within the ownership boundary includes scattered trees, hedgerow and shrubs, providing suitable foraging and commuting habitat. The wider habitat nearby consists of grassland and woodland connected via a network of tree and hedge lined trees. While these do not connect directly to the red line boundaries, they do connect to the wider site increasing the value for foraging and commuting bats. The site is considered to have moderate suitability for foraging and commuting bats.
B1 - overview	B1 (Fig 1) is a single story swimming pool constructed of brick and mortar. The western portion of the roof is flat bitumen felt, while the eastern roof is gabled corrugated asbestos. There are windows along the full length of the northern and southern elevation, and a fascia board along the northern elevation.

	 Fig 1
B1 – exterior	The brick and mortar (Fig 2) and windows (Fig 3) appear to be in good condition and tightly fitting, leaving no gaps. There is one small area of lifted fascia board (Fig 4), however, this is blocked by a cable and is therefore not considered to be a suitable roosting feature.  Fig 2  Fig 3  Fig 4 The asbestos roof appears tightly fitting with no gaps between sheets or at the ridge (Fig 5). There are occasional gaps beneath the asbestos sheet at the eaves (Fig 6), providing access to the interior of B1. As the roof is skinned, this does not provide any roosting opportunities for crevice dwelling bat species. The bitumen felt also appears to be in good condition and tightly fitting (Fig 7), leaving no gaps.

	   Fig 5 Fig 6 Fig 7
B1 – interior	While access to the interior was identified via gaps beneath the asbestos sheeting, the interior of B1 is considered to be unsuitable for roosting bats due to high levels of light from the windows, regular use of the swimming pool and chlorine impacting air quality.
B1 – suitability assessment	B1 is assessed to provide negligible suitability for roosting bats. No external roosting features were identified, and the interior is deemed unsuitable for roosting bats. No evidence of bats was identified in or on B2.
B2 - overview	B2 (Fig 8) is a sports pavilion constructed of timber with a bitumen felt roof which is flat on the main portion of the building and slightly pitched to the north and south. The north of B1 is a partially open storage area with no wall to the west, and the south of B1 is a porch area with overhanging eaves. There are windows and a door on the southern elevation.

	 Fig 8
B2 – exterior	The timber wall (Fig 9) and windows (Fig 10) appear to be in good condition and tightly fitting, leaving no gaps. The underside of the roof in the southern porch area appears to be in good condition (Fig 11), leaving no gaps.    Fig 9 Fig 10 Fig 11 The underside of the roof within the partially open storage area to the north is damaged (Fig 12), with some areas of the timber roof missing. This provides access to the cavity roof in this area, providing a suitable roosting location for both crevice and void dwelling bat species. The bitumen felt roof appears to be in moderate condition, with the main roof area appearing mostly intact (Fig 13), however, there is some damage around the bargeboard (Fig 14). The majority of the damaged areas are missing entirely, and those still present are in such poor condition that they

are barely attached to the building, leaving the area beneath heavily exposed to light. This is therefore not considered to be a suitable roosting feature.



Fig 12



Fig 13



Fig 14

The bargeboard is lifted in places (Fig 15), leaving a gap between the bargeboard and wall. This provides a suitable roosting feature for crevice dwelling bat species. The timber bargeboard is also damaged in places (Fig 16, Fig 17), providing access to the cavity roof above the main portion of the building. As this cavity is a crawl space only with a false ceiling below, this is considered to be a suboptimal roosting location for void dwelling bat species due to minimal space for warm up flights.



Fig 15



Fig 16

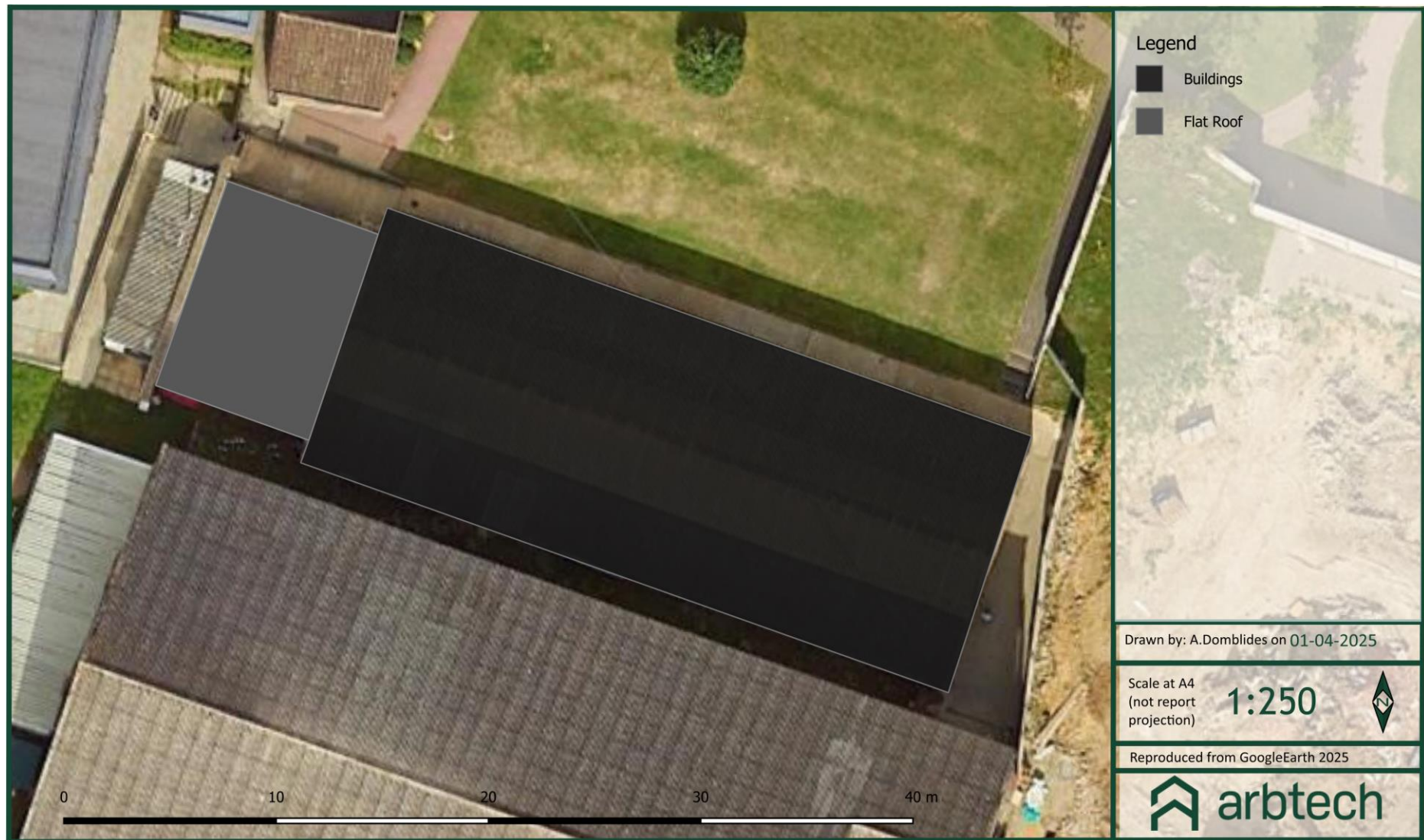


Fig 17

B2 – interior	Due to high levels of light and frequent use (Fig 18), the interior of B2 is not considered to be suitable for roosting bats. While the crawl space between the false roof internally and the main roof was not accessed, it is considered to be sub-optimal for void dwelling bat species due to limited space for warm up flights. However, as access to the void was identified via damaged bargeboard, it is still possible that roosting bats may utilise this space.  Fig 18
B2 – suitability assessment	B2 has been assessed as providing moderate suitability for roosting bats. External roosting features include lifted bargeboard and access to the cavity roof to the north. In addition, access to the crawl space above the main building was identified, though this is considered to be a sub-optimal roosting location. No evidence of bats was identified in or on B2.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Both B1 and B2 will be demolished as part of the proposed plans. Any bat roosts present within B2 will be destroyed when the building is demolished. This could also result in the death or injury of bats. No bats are expected to be roosting within B1, therefore, there are no anticipated impacts to bats as a result of the demolition of B1.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Two bat emergence surveys are required on B2 during the active bat season (May – September) to confirm presence/likely-absence of bats roosting in or on the building. These survey visits should be completed during the optimal survey period mid-May to August inclusive. The survey visits should be at least three weeks apart.

	Two surveyors are required to provide full coverage of the building's elevations to look for emerging/re-entering bats. An infrared camera should also be employed as part of the survey to support the identification of roost access points, if present. If any bat roosts are confirmed from this survey schedule, a bat licence would be required to demolish the building as it would involve the destruction of roosts. This is applied for with the help of a class 2 licensed bat ecologist after planning permission is granted, but before commencement of works. No further surveys are required on B1. In the unlikely event that a bat is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist. Enhancements are dependent on the outcome of further surveys.
Nesting Birds	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No evidence of nesting birds was found on site during the surveys; however, birds could use the buildings for nesting.
<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>	All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged. 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. The installation of one bird box on mature trees within the college grounds or on retained buildings will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. Schwegler No 17 Swift Nest Box (buildings), Bark Boxes Blue Tit 25mm (trees), Woodstone Nest Box (buildings or trees), or a similar alternative brand.

Appendix 1: PRA plan – B1



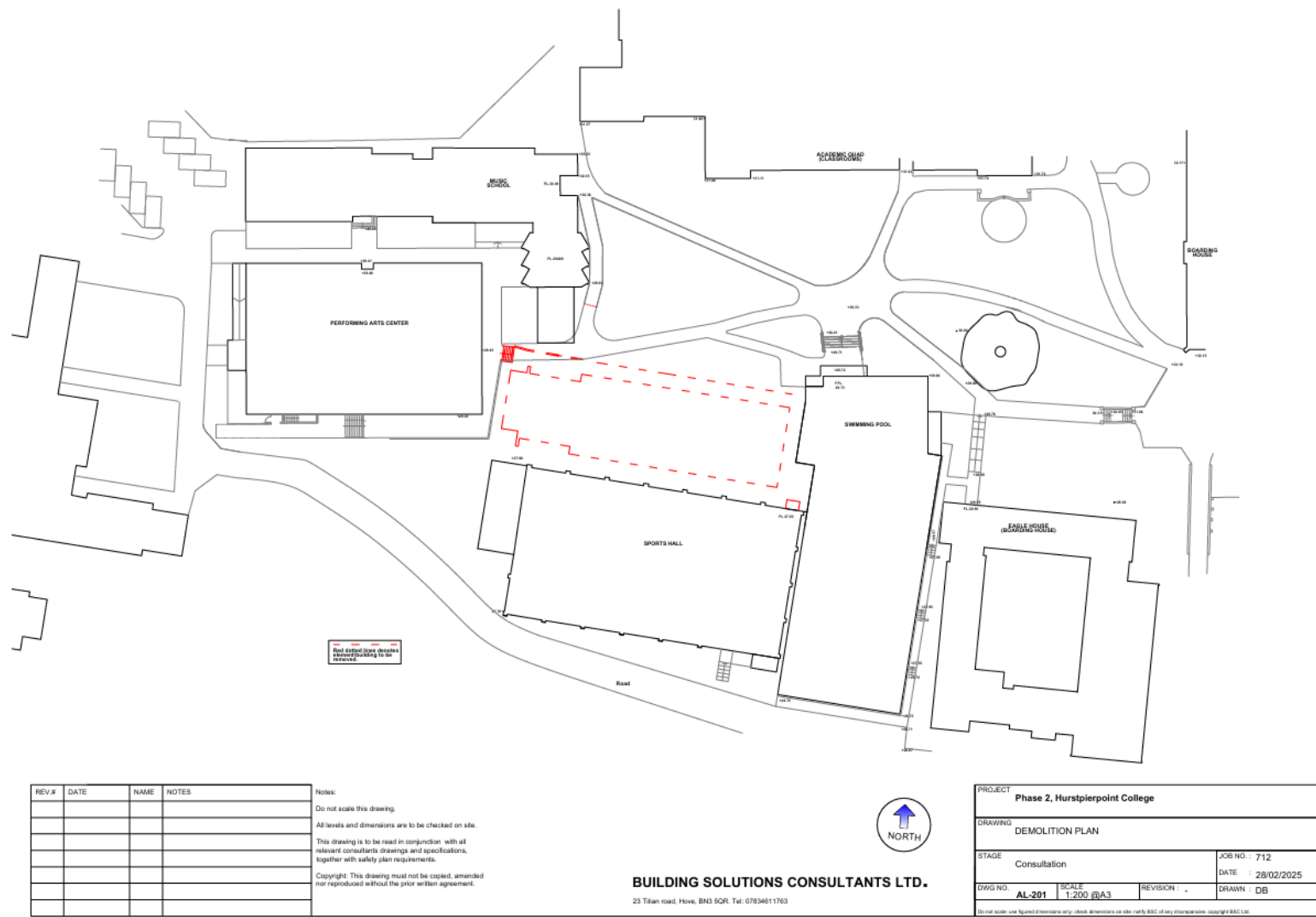
PRA plan – B2



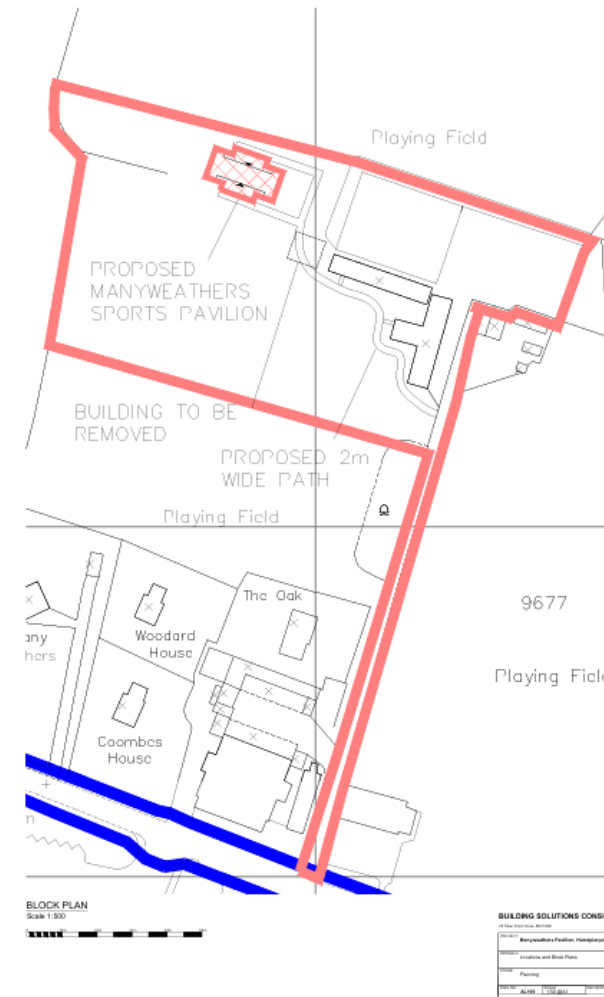
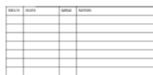
Appendix 2: Location map



Appendix 3: Proposed plan – B1



Please note – this planning application is **only** for the demolition of B2. All other works within the below plan are to be included in a separate planning application.



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