

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment

Survey site:

Kesson House, Northfleet, Kent, DA11 9HN

Client:

Atelier-SM Architects

Survey date:

25th March 2024

Project:

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

The construction of a care home

[Unsubmitted]

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.](#)

The site survey was undertaken by Craig Williams BSc, MSc, DIC, MRSB (Natural England Protected Species Licence Numbers: [Bats] (2018-33540-CLS-CLS) [Great Crested Newts] (2015-16682-CLS-CLS) [Barn Owls] (CL29/00097))					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
25/03/2025	10	79	60	20	None

Ecological Survey Factor	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.
Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations	
Habitats and plants (see habitat map in appendix 1, location plan in appendix 2, photos in appendix 3 and proposal plan in appendix 4). Botanical species are described with reference to the DAFOR scale (D = Dominant; A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional, R = Rare).	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i> <i>(UKHab codes used)</i>	The survey site is centred on National Grid Reference TQ 6213 7423 and has an area of approximately 0.315ha. The site consists of an former care home building, occupying the majority of the north of the site with several connected sections. Also present are hard standing car parking and ruderal herb in unmanaged areas to the south. The site is set in an urban area surrounded by housing and gardens, with quarries ~80m south-east and ~90m west. A woodland lined railway line is present ~230m south-west, with more woodland beyond. A lake is present ~240m south.

	<u>Developed, sealed surface (buildings) [u1b5]</u> There is one large, connected former care home building on site, designated as B1. This has multiple roofs and sections, which are subdivided in to B1a – B1e and described below. B1a is the Georgian style house part of the building at the south-eastern end, historically a town hall and offices before conversion into a care home in the early 1990s. It has cross gabled main roof of slate tiles, of an overall good condition but with some loose examples and small crevices at the verges. Decorative pediments at the gables, corbelling at the eaves and quoins at the wall corners are mainly intact but with possible small crevices at joins, particularly at the returns and overhangs. The exterior is rendered without holes, aside from one small missing area exposing the brickwork on the south-eastern end which has a small crevice. A lift shaft has a small tower between B1a and B1b, with Louvre shutters - the southern of which has fallen inwards leaving access. A flat roofed bay window has intact flashing, although with an overhanging crevice near the top on the left side. A basement level of B1a has a coal hatch but this is well sealed. No other access is found and no droppings observed inside.
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	There is no loft space within B1a. The top floor eaves cupboards are well sealed. A lift shaft was inaccessible but pigeon noises are heard from within, and around the tower itself. B1b is the more modern care home section attached to the north-east of B1a. It has a flat roof not directly observable from the ground. An overhanging concrete deck soffit is intact. Exterior brickwork is mainly intact aside from a circular hole and small cracks in the northern elevation which may be of bat roosting value. B1c is a gabled roof section to the south-west of B1b. It has a slate tiled roof with some crevices along the ridge, and loose tiles around a vent flue on the western elevation. B1c has gaps at the southern end of the soffit boxes. B1d is a small connection section between B1d and B1e. It has a slate tiled roof with a cross gable, and some loose lead flashing on the northern side of the roof. B1e is a mostly detached section aside from the connection to B1c via B1d. It has a northern gabled roof and a southern flat roofed end. The gabled roof is formed of cement tiles. These are mainly intact aside from a large hole on the eastern side and also with mortar crevices at the verges. An open soffit hole at the south western corner has gauze in an attempt to deter pigeons but leaves gaps. A fascia board around the flat section is also loose creating crevices. The northern gabled roof section has a liner with tears in, loft space has heavy pigeon use.
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	<u>Developed, sealed surface [u1b6]</u> Three access points lead from the road to a tarmac car park around the buildings. <u>Vegetated garden [u1d 231]</u> Small lawn areas are found around the building, with ornamental palms in the south eastern corner by the road. A metal railing fence with clematis runs along the road. <u>Ephemeral/ruderal herb [u1f 81]</u> Ephemeral herbs are found in a cleared wasteground area in the south including bramble, elder, alexanders, cleavers, purple dead nettle, spurge, colts' foot and herb mercury. <u>Ornamental hedge [h2b]</u> An ornamental hedge of privet runs part of southeast boundary. <u>Felled non-native tree lines [h2b 33 206]</u> Short, felled (assumed) conifer tree lines (stumps remain) are found in the south around the ruderal area. <u>Local notable habitats</u> No known nearby, deciduous woodland ~100m north-east.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The habitats on site are widespread and not notable. No impact on adjacent or nearby habitats off site is foreseen.

<i>Recommendations</i>	A biodiversity net gain (BNG) report is likely to be required for the proposal. The felled coniferous tree line in the south may be required in the baseline assessment.
Locality and Designated Sites	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The site is not subject to any designation, and there are no known statutory sites nearby. Baker's Hole Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located ~850m west but is cited for geological reasons.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Recreational impacts on any designated sites are unlikely to occur from the proposal.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None required.
Invasive / Non-native species	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No problematic invasive and non-native species recorded on site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	N/A
<i>Recommendations</i>	No further surveys but remain vigilant.
Invertebrates	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No habitat for protected or notable invertebrates is found on site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	None foreseen.
<i>Recommendations</i>	No further surveys.
Bats	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The local area is average bat habitat with water sources, small areas of woodland and access into the wider landscape beyond from its elevated position. A previous bat European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) was granted ~280m north-west in 2016 for common pipistrelle, displaying a known bat population in the area.

	All parts of the building on site have features of crevice bat roosting value or access as described above (crevices, holes, gaps etc), giving it an overall value of moderate.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	As the proposals include the partial demolition of B1 and exterior repair, renovation etc, any bat roosts within them may be destroyed/damaged/disturbed. This could also result in death or injury of bats. The proposed development may lead to an increase in the amount of current lighting of surrounding habitats. This may disturb commuting bats.
<i>Recommendations</i>	B1 is a suspected bat roosting building of moderate value. Two bat emergence/re-entry surveys are required on B1 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. Sub-optimal: early May and September. Would require greater justification of timing e.g., weather conditions, known local bat activity. One of the surveys could be a dawn re-entry survey, or both can be at dusk if supported by night vision aids (NVA).

	Seven surveyors are required to provide full coverage of the building's elevations to look for emerging/re-entering bats. Infrared cameras (or other night vision aids) should also be employed as part of the survey to see where any specific roost locations are located. Lighting mitigation may be required based on the outcome of the night bat survey(s). If any bat roosts confirmed from this survey schedule are affected by the proposals, a bat licence would be required. This is applied for with the help of a class 2 licensed bat ecologist after planning permission is granted, but before commencement of works. It also requires survey information from the most recent bat survey season. 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 Enhancements are dependent on the outcome of further surveys
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 and hedhe for nesting. No habitat for schedule 1 birds was observed.

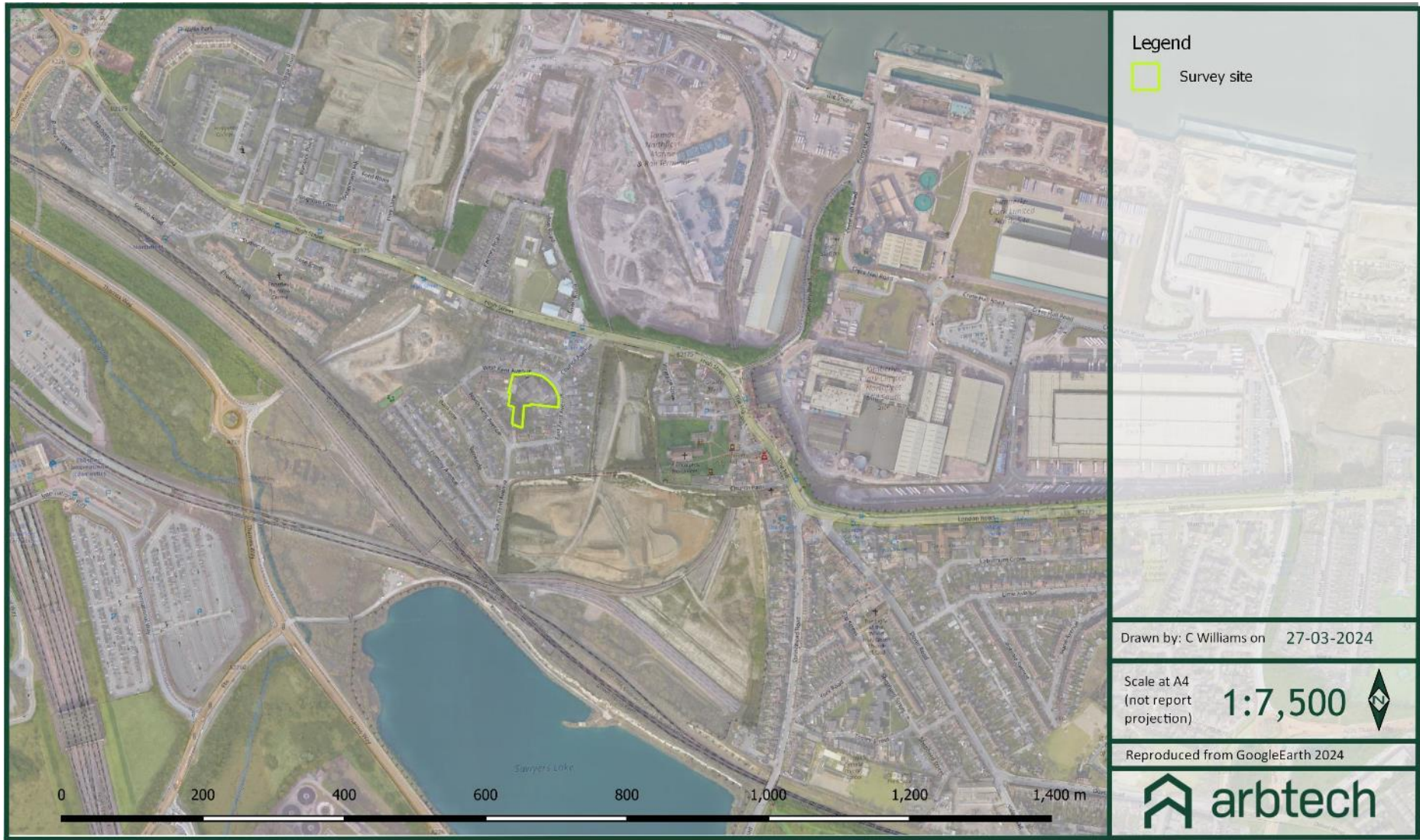
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Any building or vegetation removal should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the vegetation should be undertaken. immediately, by a qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. 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.
Reptiles	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No reptile habitat is present within the site interior.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	None foreseen.
<i>Recommendations</i>	No further surveys are required.
Amphibians	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No amphibian habitat is present within the site interior Amphibians require suitable aquatic habitat in which to breed and none are known from OS maps present in the local area (within 250m). Therefore, protected amphibians are likely be absent from the interior of the survey site year-round.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	None foreseen.
<i>Recommendations</i>	No further surveys are required.

Badger	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	None No evidence of badgers was found on site or suspected within 30m of the survey boundary.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	None foreseen
<i>Recommendations</i>	Basic precautionary mitigation during works is recommended: - Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. - The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to habitats which badgers could use. South and west boundaries. - Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. In the unlikely event that a badger sett is identified within 30m, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.
Riparian animals	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	There are no watercourses on or connected to the site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	N/A
Hazel dormouse	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	Although a previous dormouse European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) was granted ~560m south in a wooded area around a lake in 2020, there is no suitable dormouse habitat present within the site interior.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	None foreseen.

<i>Recommendations</i>	No further surveys are required.
Other e.g. hedgehog	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No significant habitat value.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	None foreseen on habitat, however construction activities could result in the death or injury of hedgehogs, if present.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Similar to the badgers, a precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures: • Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. • The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which hedgehogs could use. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. If any hedgehogs are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.

Appendix 1: Survey/Habitat map

Appendix 2: Location map



IMPACT DEVELOPMENTS GRAVESEND LTD

Notes:

1. Do not scale from this drawing.
2. Site verify all dimensions and levels prior to construction.
3. Report all discrepancies to the Drawing Originator immediately.
4. This drawing is to be used in conjunction with all issued documents and drawings.

Revisions				
Rev	Date	Description	By	CHK

Drawing Originator:

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Drawing Status:

PLANNING ISSUE

Project Name:

KESSON HOUSE

Drawing Date:

ATELIER 06/03/2024

Checked By:

Checked Date:

Scale:

1:200 @ A1

Title:

**GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
 ALTERNATIVE SITE PLAN**

Sheet	Rev	Issue	Date	Author	Checker
A	21251	P	00	200	PS

Appendix 4: Photos



Photo 1: Looking west at the north-eastern and south-western elevations of B1a.



Photo 2: Looking north-east at the south-western elevation of B1a.



Photo 3: Looking south at the tower section of B1a, showing louvres and pigeons. A crevice on an overhanging section on the pediment can be seen on the left.



Photo 4: Looking north-east at the south-western elevation of B1a, showing another crevice near the top of the bay window element.



Photo 5: Crevices in brickwork on the south-eastern elevation of B1a.



Photo 6: Looking south at B1a (left), B1b (centre), B1d (centre-right) and B1e (right).



Photo 7: Holes and cracks in the north-eastern elevation of B1b.



Photo 8: Looking south at B1b (left), B1d (centre-right) and B1c and B1d (right).



Photo 9: Looking north at the south-western and south-eastern elevations of B1e (left), and the south-western and south-eastern elevations of B1c (right).



Photo 10: A gap in the soffit box on the south-eastern elevation of B1d, with a similar feature the other side.



Photo 11: Looking east at the north-western elevation of B1b (left) and at the north-western and south-western elevation of B1e (right).



Photo 12: A soffit box hole in the south-eastern part of the gabled roof section of B1e.



Photo 13: Looking east across car parking and the ornamental hedge in the east of the site near B1a.



Photo 14: Looking west across the car park in the centre of the site.



Photo 15: Looking north at the buildings on site, with B1a (right), B1b (centre-left), B1c (left) and B1e (far left).



Photo 16: Looking south across the area of ruderal/ephemeral herb in the south of the site, with recent tree line felling.



Photo 17: Looking at the small overgrown area of ruderal herb in the south-west of the site.



Photo 18: Inside the basement of B1a.



Photo 19: Looking at the loft lining of B1e.



Photo 20: Looking at the flat roofed section of B1e and the south-western elevation of B1c.

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Version control			
Status	Issue	Name	Date
Final	1.0	Craig Williams, MSc, DIC, MRSB Principal Ecologist	27/03/2024