

Ground Level Tree Assessment

Survey site:

Land Southeast of Half Acre House, Roch Valley Way, Rochdale, OL11 4DB

Client:

Mrs Anita Lewis

Survey date:

3rd December 2024

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with the Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council. The proposal is described as:
The construction of 5no. dwellings.

GLTA 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.

Site Location and Context					
The site is centred on National Grid Reference: SD 88112 12727 and has an area of approximately ~0.3ha. The site comprises grassland, scrub and woodland. The site is set within an urban high-density area of Rochdale which comprises residential dwellings with associated vegetated gardens and tarmacked roads to the north, industrial infrastructure to the south, and hedge and tree lined amenity fields to the southwest with dense pockets of woodland. These woodlands extend into the wider landscape and act as linear landscape elements which facilitate dispersal for many species of wildlife. The River Roch runs ~120m to the southeast and Rochdale Cemetery is situated ~460m to the north.					
Survey Details					
The site survey was undertaken by Amber Williams BSc, MSc, MPhil, Graduate Ecologist (Accredited on Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2018-33540-CLS-CLS.)					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
03/12/2024	6	92	70	0	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 GLTA plan in Appendix 1, location plan in Appendix 2, proposed plans in Appendix 3.																			
Summary of Survey Findings (UKHab codes used)	The site is set within an urban high-density area of Rochdale which comprises residential dwellings with associated vegetated gardens and tarmacked roads to the north, industrial infrastructure to the south, and hedge and tree lined amenity fields to the southwest with dense pockets of woodland. These woodlands extend into the wider landscape and act as linear landscape elements which facilitate dispersal for many species of wildlife. The River Roch runs ~120m to the southeast and Rochdale Cemetery is situated ~460m to the north. Previous Preliminary Ecological Appraisals were completed by Arbtech Consulting Ltd on 24th October 2018 and 28th October 2024. <u>EPSL data:</u> A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licenced 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. There are three EPSLs within a 2km radius of site. <table><tr><th>EPSL reference</th><th>Bat species affected</th><th>Distance from site</th><th>Impacts allowed by licence</th></tr><tr><td>EPSM2009-709</td><td>Common pipistrelle</td><td>~1.1km northeast</td><td>Destruction of a resting place</td></tr><tr><td>2015-8047-EPS-MIT</td><td>Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, Daubenton’s bat,</td><td>~1.5km northeast</td><td>Destruction of a resting place</td></tr><tr><td>EPSM2011-2750</td><td>Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle</td><td>~1.9km east</td><td>Destruction of a resting place</td></tr></table> There are no Special Areas of Conservation designated for bats within 10km of the site. <u>Local notable habitats</u> There is a parcel of Priority Deciduous woodland situated to the southeastern site boundary which extends off site. Additionally, there are several other priority habitats within 2km of the site boundary. These are as follows: There are several patches of Ancient Woodland, the closest is located ~730m southwest of the site boundary.			EPSL reference	Bat species affected	Distance from site	Impacts allowed by licence	EPSM2009-709	Common pipistrelle	~1.1km northeast	Destruction of a resting place	2015-8047-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, Daubenton’s bat,	~1.5km northeast	Destruction of a resting place	EPSM2011-2750	Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle	~1.9km east	Destruction of a resting place
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	- There are several areas of Priority Woodpasture and Parkland, the closest is located ~1.2km east of the site boundary. <u>On-site designations:</u> The site is not subject to any designation. <u>Statutory designated sites (within 2km):</u> There is one statutory designated sites situated within 2km of the site boundary. These are as follows: Rochdale Canal Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – ~1.6km southeast – <i>The Rochdale Canal contains important habitats for submerged aquatic plants and emergent vegetation, including extensive colonies of the nationally scarce SAC species floating waterplantain Luronium natans. The site also supports a diverse assemblage of aquatic flora, notably its assemblage of pondweeds, Potamogeton spp; the nine species of which found in the canal represent a balanced community which reflects the quality of water.</i> The site lies within the impact risk zone for Rochdale Canal (SSSI). The proposal is not listed as posing a significant threat to the designation. <u>European designated sites (10km)</u> There are two European designated sites within 10km of the site boundary. The closest of these is Rochdale Canal (SSSI) (SAC), detailed above.
Trees – Ground Level Tree Assessment	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	There are 98 trees within the site boundary. T1-2, T5-20, T27-98 are assumed to be felled/pruned to facilitate the works. Additionally, trees directly outside of the site boundary are assumed to be subject to pruning to facilitate the works. Three trees were identified as having features suitable to support roosting bats (T27, T71 and T98, discussed first below): <u>Mature sycamore (T27) – with features</u> T28 is a mature sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>) ~14m height with a DBH of ~46cm situated to the northwestern site boundary at National Grid Reference SD88111272 (Fig.1). Feature one is a linear stem cavity facing south at ~3.5m high (Fig.2). The stem cavity appeared sealed, however there is a crevice at the top of the feature measuring ~8cm L x 6cm W. The crevice is too high to inspect from ground level, and as such the depth of the feature could not be determined. Therefore, as T27 is proposed for removal, the feature requires further investigation (i.e. FAR) to determine its suitability for roosting bats. <u>Mature beech (T71) – with features</u>

	T71 is a mature beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>) ~ 14m height with a DBH ~36cm situated to the southwest of T27 at National Grid Reference SD88091271 (Fig.3). Feature one is a linear stem cavity facing west at ~4m high (Fig.4). The stem cavity measures ~90cm L x 10cm W. The crevice is too high to inspect from ground level, and as such the depth of the feature could not be determined. Therefore, as T71 is proposed for removal, the feature requires further investigation (i.e. FAR) to determine its suitability for roosting bats. <u>Mature goats willow (T98) – with features</u> T98 is a mature goats willow (<i>Salix caprea</i>) ~ 6m height with 5 main stems of which the largest had a DBH ~30cm situated to the south of T71 at National Grid Reference SD88101268 (Fig.5). Feature one is a linear stem cavity facing south at ~1m high (Fig.6). The stem cavity measured ~60cm L x 8cm W. The cavity measured ~12cm deep, therefore is not assumed to be a suitable roosting feature as is assessed as NONE. Feature two is a linear stem cavity facing south at ~2m high and measuring ~13cm L x 4cm H (Fig.6). The crevice is too high to inspect from ground level, and as such the depth of the feature could not be determined. Feature three is a linear stem cavity facing south at ~2.5m high and measuring ~8cm L x 3cm H (Fig.7). The crevice is too high to inspect from ground level, and as such the depth of the feature could not be determined. As T98 is proposed for removal, features two and three require further investigation (i.e. FAR) to determine its suitability for roosting bats. <u>Mature beech (T1, T9-11, T69-70) – no features</u> T1, T9-11 are mature beech trees (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>). T1 is situated at the northern site boundary and T9-11 are clustered at the southwestern site boundary. T69-70 are situated to the site centre. The DBH of these trees range from 20cm – 40cm. None of these mature beech trees appear to have wounds or features which could support roosting bats and thus are assessed as NONE (Fig.8). <u>Mature sycamore (T2, T3, T6, T7, T12-16, T18-21, T73-74) – no features</u> T2, T3, T6, T7, T12-16, and T18-21 are mature sycamore trees (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>). T2 and T3 are situated at the northern site boundary to the east of T1. T6 and T7 are situated to the southeastern site boundary. T12-16 are situated at the northwestern site boundary. T18-22 at the southwestern site boundary to the northeast of T9-11. T73-74 are situated to the northwestern site boundary. The DBH of these trees range from 14cm – 94cm. None of these mature sycamore trees appear to have wounds or features which could support roosting bats and thus are assessed as NONE (Fig.9). <u>Mature goats willow (T4, T72, T77, T82, T85-87, T97) – no features</u>
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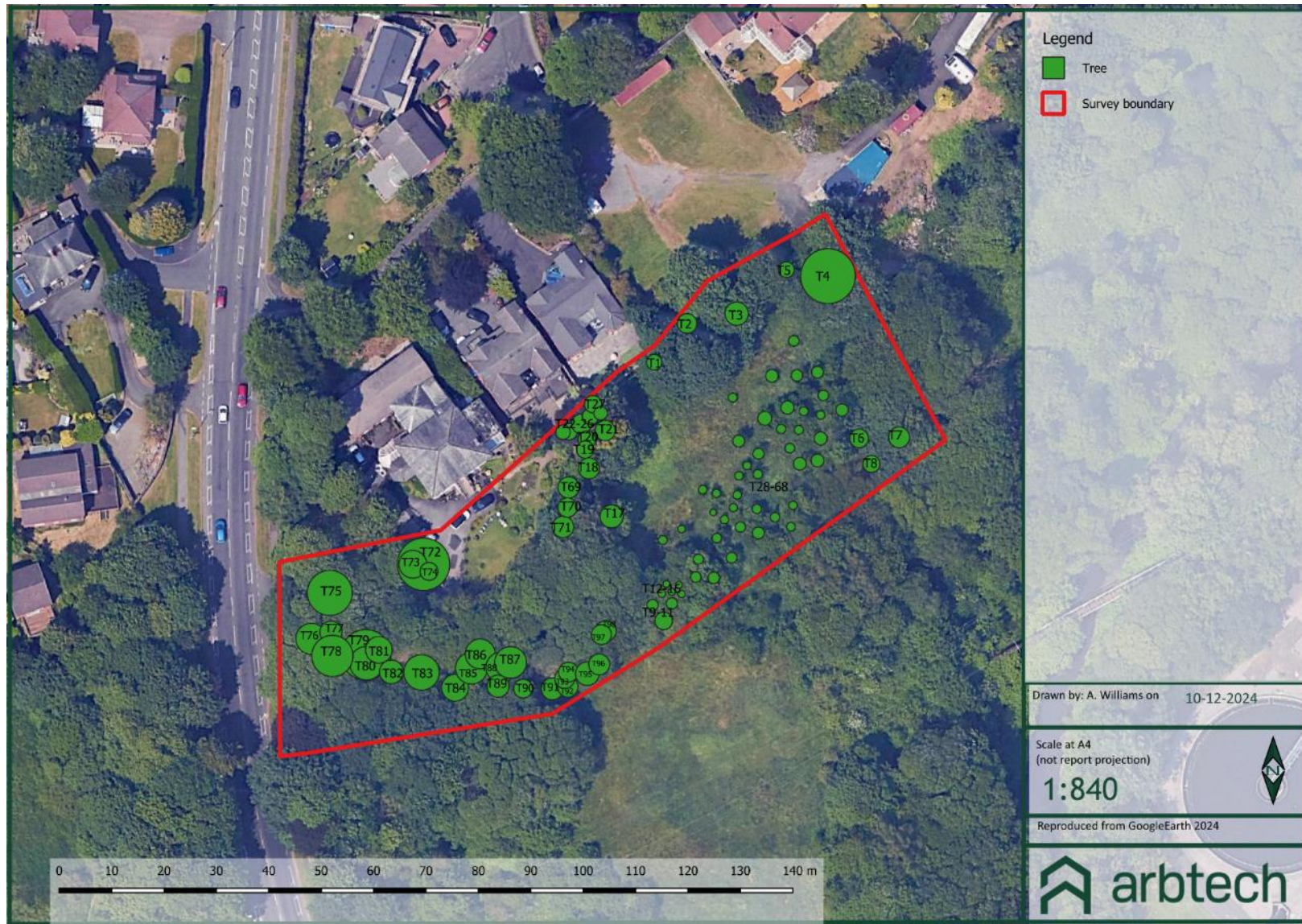
	T4 is a mature Goats willow tree (<i>Salix caprea</i>) situated to the eastern site boundary. T72 and T77 is situated to the northwestern site boundary. T97 is situated immediately south of T98. T82, T85-87 are situated to the southwestern site boundary. All trees had multiple stems of which the largest had a DBH range of 27 – 96cm. None of these mature goats willow appear to have wounds or features which could support roosting bats and thus are assessed as NONE (Fig.10). <u>Early mature elder (T5) – no features</u> T5 is an early mature elder tree (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>) situated to the northeastern site boundary with a DBH of 17cm. The tree appears to have no wounds or features which could support roosting bats. T5 is assessed as NONE (Fig.11). <u>Early mature hazel (T8) – no features</u> T8 is an early mature hazel tree (<i>Corylus avellana</i>) situated south of T7 to the southeastern site boundary with a DBH of 33cm. The tree appears to have no wounds or features which could support roosting bats. T8 is assessed as NONE (Fig.12). <u>Mature silver birch (T17) – no features</u> T17 is a mature silver birch tree (<i>Betula pendula</i>) situated at the centre of the western site boundary with a DBH of 38cm. The tree appears to have no wounds or features which could support roosting bats. T17 is assessed as NONE (Fig.13). <u>Mature Lawsons cypress (T22-26) – no features</u> T22-26 are mature Lawsons cypress trees (<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>) clustered at the northwestern site boundary to the north of T12-16. The DBH of these trees range from 28cm – 80cm. None of these trees appear to have wounds or features which could support roosting bats and thus are assessed as NONE (Fig.14). <u>Small and early mature alder (T28-68, T83-84) – no features</u> T28-68 are small, early mature alder trees (<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>) clustered at the centre site boundary. T83-84 are situated at the southwestern site boundary. The DBH of these trees range from 15cm – 30cm. None of these trees appear to have wounds or features which could support roosting bats and thus are assessed as NONE (Fig.15). <u>Mature crack willow (T76, T78-79) – no features</u> T76, T78-79 are mature crack willow trees (<i>Salix fragilis</i>) clustered at the southwestern site boundary. The DBH of these trees range from 27 – 38cm. None of these trees appear to have wounds or features which could support roosting bats and thus are assessed as NONE (Fig.16).
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	<u>Early mature oak (T80-81) – no features</u> T80-81 are early mature oak trees (<i>Quercus petraea</i>) situated to the southwestern site boundary. The DBH of these trees range from 10cm-15cm. None of these trees appear to have wounds or features which could support roosting bats and thus are assessed as NONE (Fig.17). <u>Alder saplings (T91-96) – no features</u> T91-96 are small alder saplings (<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>) clustered at the southwestern site boundary. None of the saplings had a DBH <7.5cm or features which could support roosting bats. As such, these trees are assessed as NONE (Fig. 18). <u>Overhanging branches – no features</u> None of the ash tree (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>) branches overhanging from the eastern site boundary were assessed to have wounds or features which could support roosting bats and thus are assessed as NONE (Fig.19).
Foreseen Impacts	<u>T28, T71, T98</u> As features were identified on T28, T71, T98, the felling of these trees could result in destruction of any bat roosts present within the identified features (stem cavity) and could cause disturbance, death or injury to bats. <u>T1-2, T5-20, T27, T29-70, T72-98 are assumed to be felled to facilitate the works.</u> T1-2, T5-20, T27-98 will be felled to facilitate the development. No features were identified on the aforementioned trees or any of the branches overhanging onto the site which will likely be pruned to facilitate the development, and as such there are unlikely to be any impact to bats as a result of felling.

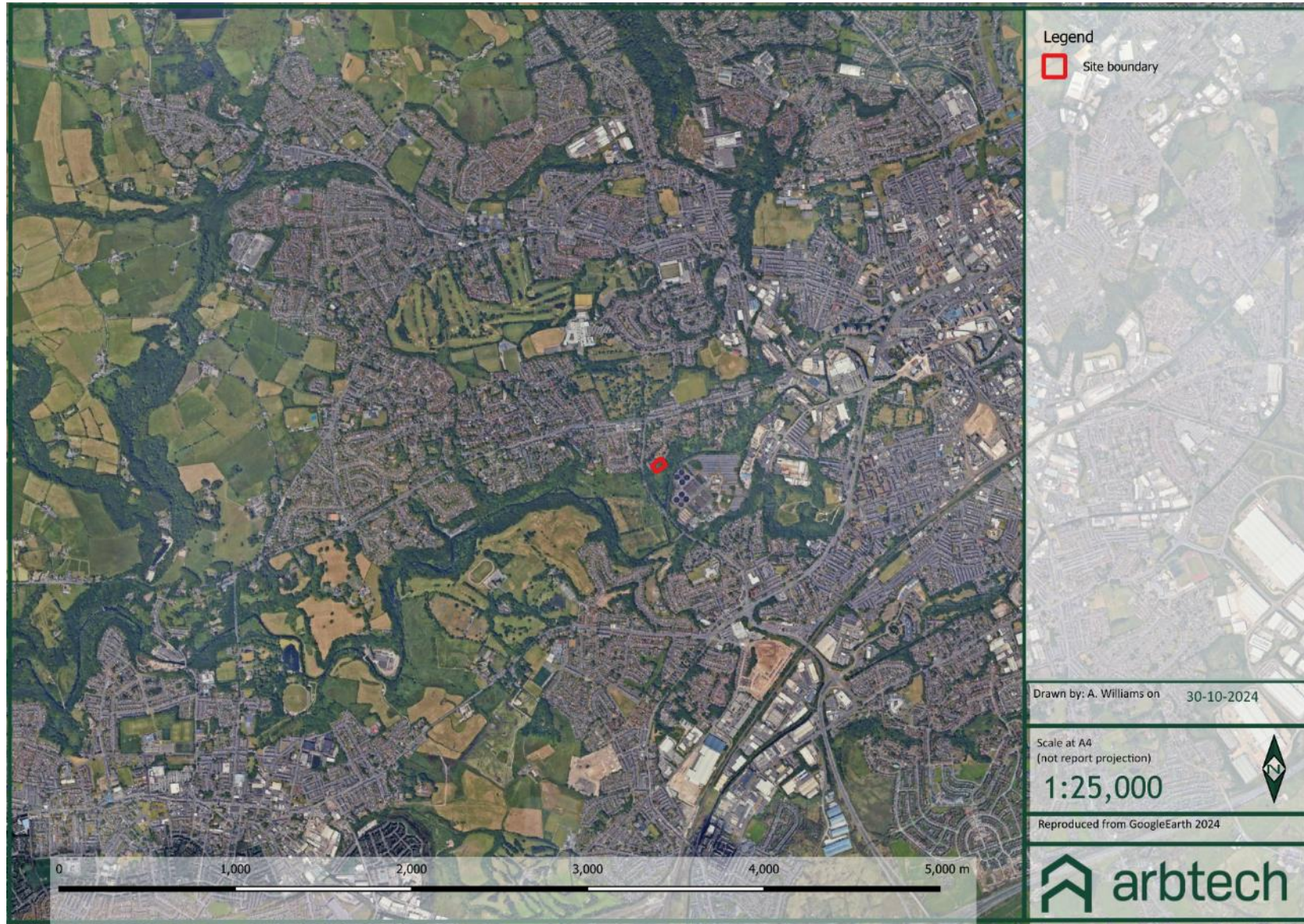
<i>Recommendations</i>	<u>T28, T71, T98</u> A close-up inspection of the PRFs identified from ground-level on T28, T71 and T98 will be required to determine their suitability for bats (i.e. PRF-I or PRF-M). This will involve a tree climbing team or MEWP to access the features and should be carried out by a class 2 licenced ecologist. The inspection will involve a detailed inspection of all features using a torch and endoscope. Following this inspection, the features will then be re-classified based on their suitability for roosting bats. Depending on the results of the close-up inspection further surveys may be required to determine bat presence/likely-absence or a recommendation to remove the trees under a precautionary working method statement <u>T1-2, T5-20, T27, T29-70, T72-98</u> In the unlikely event that a bat or evidence of bats is discovered during the development all work must stop, and a bat licensed ecologist contacted for further advice. Suggested biodiversity enhancements The installation of five bat boxes at the site will provide additional roosting habitat for bats. The bat boxes will be incorporated into the fabric of the new dwellings. They will be suitable for pipistrelles (which have been identified locally through EPSL data). 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	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<u>Trees:</u> A single bird's nest was identified within T71 (Fig.20). Additionally, all on site trees provide foraging opportunities and nest-building resources for birds. No habitat for schedule 1 birds was observed. <u>Barn owls:</u> The site does not appear to provide any suitable nesting sites for barn owls. <u>Overwintering birds:</u> 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.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Buildings/trees

	The felling of trees could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests if present during the time of works. Barn owls None foreseen. Overwintering birds None foreseen.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Tree felling or pruning 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. <u>Suggested biodiversity enhancements:</u> The installation of a minimum of five bird boxes on the new buildings will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. ▪ Vivara Pro WoodStone Swift Nest Box (buildings) ▪ House Sparrow Terrace FSC Nest Box (buildings) ▪ Swallow Nest Bowl (buildings) (Or a similar alternative brand). Swift and sparrow boxes should be positioned at the eaves of a building and can be incorporated into the fabric of the building during construction.

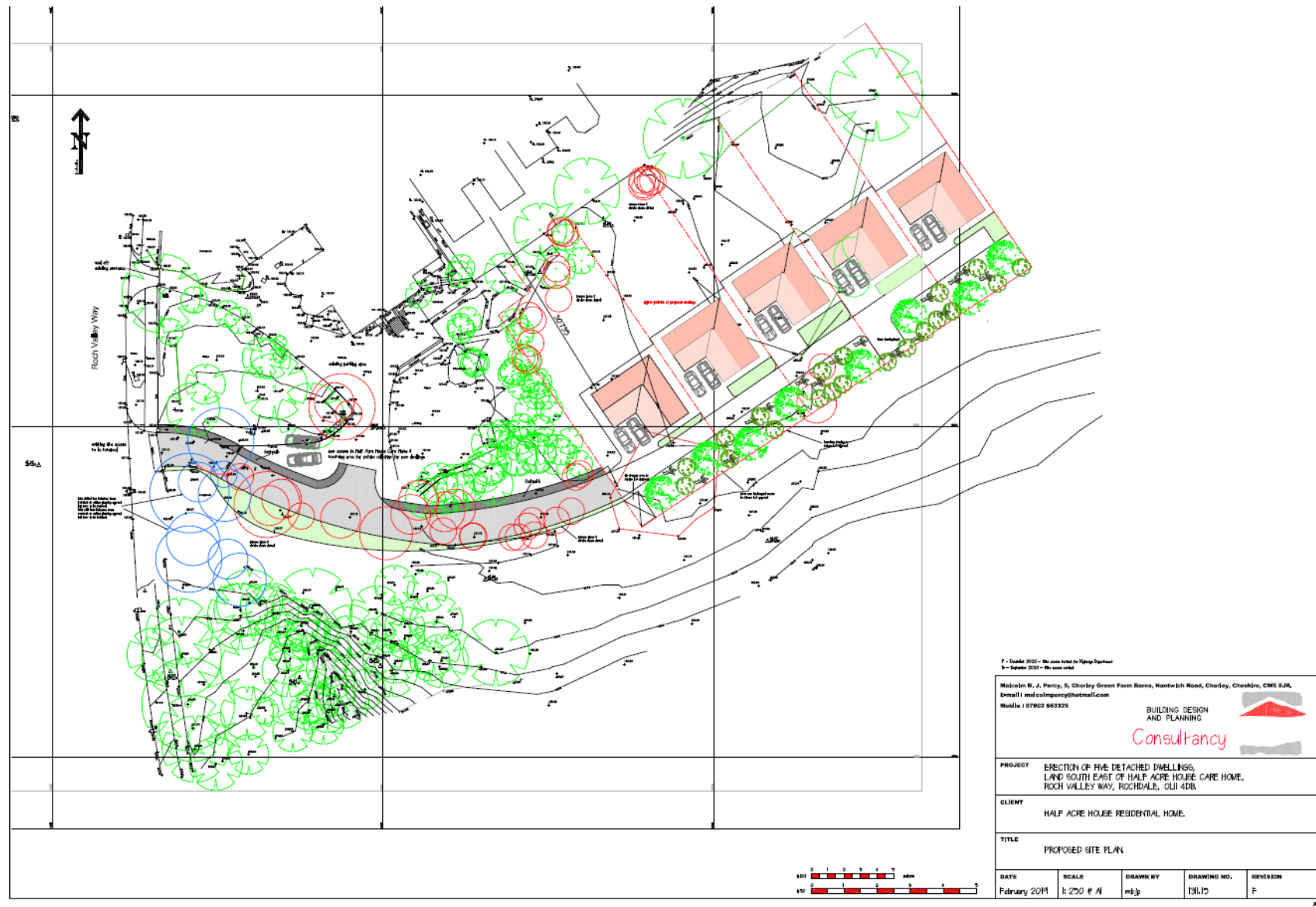
Appendix 1: Tree map



Appendix 2: Location map



Appendix 3: Proposed plan



Appendix 4: Photos



Figure 1: Mature sycamore with features (T27)



Figure 2: Cavity wound on mature sycamore



Figure 3: Mature beech tree with features (T71)



Figure 4: Cavity wound on mature beech



Figure 5: Mature goats willow with features (T98)



Figure 6: Feature one and two on mature goat willow



Figure 7: Feature three on mature goat willow



Figure 8: An example of the mature beech trees on site



Figure 9: An example of the mature sycamore trees on site



Figure 10: Mature goats willow on site

	Figure 11: Early mature elder on site
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Figure 12: Early mature hazel on site



Figure 13: An example of the mature silver birch trees on site

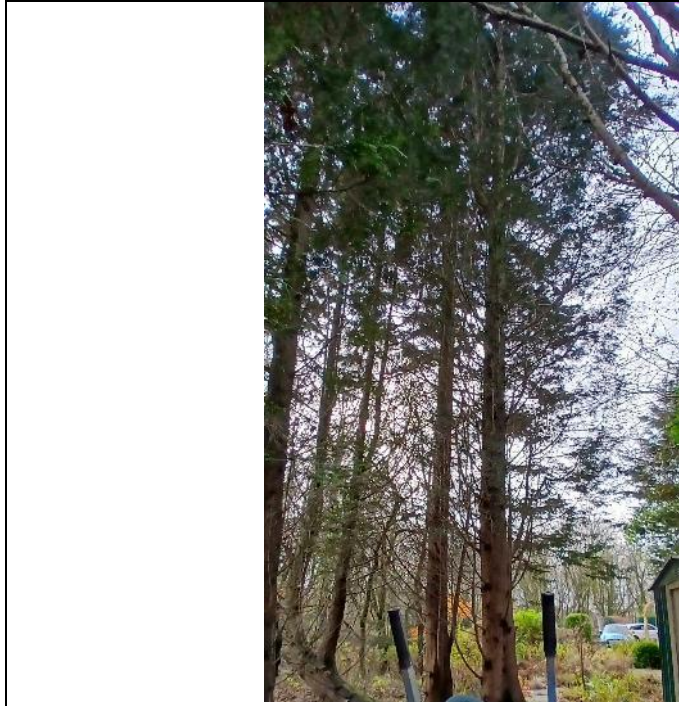


Figure 14: An example of the mature Lawsons cypress trees on site



Figure 15: An example of the early mature alder trees on site



Figure 16: Example of the mature crack willow trees on site



Figure 17: An example of the early mature oak trees on site



Figure 18: Alder saplings present on site



Figure 19: An example of the overhanging ash branches on site

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Land Southeast of Half Acre House, OL11 4DB

	Figure 20: Birds nest present within T71
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Proof 1	0.2	Kayleigh Davies, BSc (Hons), MSc, Graduate Ecologist	08/12/2024
Proof 2	0.3	Nicole Gullan BSc (Hons) MRSB TechArborA, Senior Ecologist and Arboriculturalist	09/12/2024
Draft 2	1.0	Amber Williams BSc (Hons), MSc, MPhil, Graduate Ecologist	11/12/2024
Proof	1.1	Mel Reid BSc (Hons) MRes MRSB, Senior Consultant	11/12/2024
Final	2	Amber Williams BSc (Hons), MSc, MPhil, Graduate Ecologist	12/12/2024