Alexie Jenkins **BSc (Hons), MRes, AMRSB**
Graduate Ecologist
Email: alexiejenkins@arbtech.co.uk
Arbtech Consulting Ltd
arbtech.co.uk

Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site:

76-81 Bridge Street, Newport, NP20 4AQ

Client:

Tredegar Chambers Limited, Howard Bowes & Margaretha Beltman

Survey date:

3rd June 2024

Project:

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

The conversion of vacant offices into 15 flats.

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: **PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.**

The site survey was undertaken by Alexie Jenkins Accredited agent under Resources Wales Bat Licence number S092694/1.					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (mph)	Rain
03/06/2024	17°C	77	60	7	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 PRA plan in Appendix 1, location plan in Appendix 2, proposed plans in Appendix 3 and photos in Appendix 4.	
Background and Site Location	
Summary of site and desk Study	Site description The survey site is centred on National Grid Reference ST30978815 and has an area of approximately 0.04 ha. The proposed development is the conversion of vacant offices into 15 flats. Tredegar Chambers, the survey site, is a grade II listed building situated on a highly prominent corner within the Town Centre Conservation Area. It consists of four storeys with ground floor shopfronts. The site is situated in the town of Newport and is ~280 m from the River Usk/Afon Wysg to the east. As the site comprises of hardstanding and a building, there is limited ecological significance and the habitat shows low suitability for roosting bats, though the river could provide an important route for passing and foraging activities. The site is very urban in the town centre, and the surrounding is also dominated by urban infrastructure. There are a few small pockets of priority habitat, traditional orchards within the town, the closest being ~1 km southwest. Beyond Newport to the far north are fields and pockets of woodland, and far south is the Severn Estuary leading to the Bristol Channel. Other notable priority habitats within 2 km include lowland

	meadows and purple moor grass and rush pastures, both ~1.5 km northwest, wood pasture ~1.6 km northwest, and lowland fens and reedbeds ~1.9 km south. The site is not subject to any statutory designation. The Severn Estuary (~4 km south) and River Usk/Afon Wysg (~280 m east) are the only european site within 10 km – they are both a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and the Severn Estuary is additionally both a Ramsar site and Special Protected Area (SPA). The River Usk/Afon Wysg is additionally a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and comprises a large, linear ecosystem which acts as an important wildlife corridor, an essential migration route and key breeding area for many nationally and internationally important species. The river and bankside trees support large populations of flying insects which provide an important food source for bats, including Daubenton's bat, *Myotis daubentoniid*, and the rare lesser horseshoe bat, *Rhinolophus hipposideros*.
Field survey results	
Summary of Survey Findings	<u>Exterior</u> Limitations: a small area of the south elevation roof tiles could not be viewed suitably from the ground due to the height of the building. Therefore, any bat roosting features or bird nesting evidence may have been missed. B1 is a multipitch three storey building of brick and stone construction. The roof tiles are slate. The bay window sections on the south elevation are bath stone, and there are three dormer windows on this elevation. Windows are timber framed.

	There are several extensions on this building, with a small hardstanding courtyard within. The extensions include two and three storey pitched/ gambrel roofs and single-storey bitumen flat roof structures, detailed below. There is a two-storey extension to the building on the east elevation, which is a pitched roof and then a three-storey gambrel style roof connected. The gambrel roof section has a single storey pitched and flat roof extension on the west elevation. There is a single storey pitch extension on the northwest of the main pitch section of B1. Overall, the building appears in generally good condition and well-sealed externally, with few potential features which could be utilised by roosting bats. There is one missing tile on the west field tiles of the pitched roof. In addition to this there are raised and missing tiles on the north elevation and the west elevation of the gambrel roof section. There are loose areas of lead flashing along these elevations – along the west elevation of the gambrel roof and the chimney sections on the north elevation of the pitched section. These features can provide roosting habitat for crevice dwelling species, such as pipistrelles. No evidence of roosting bats was found externally during the PRA. <u>Interior</u> The main interior sections of the building were recorded to be damp, with mould dominating the walls of the building, predominantly within the second and third stories of the building. Windows appear well sealed from the inside and there is no access into the main interior levels (floors 1-3), in addition to high lux levels, bats are unlikely to be utilising these areas for roosting. There were four loft sections accessible during the survey. These are referred to as lofts 1 – 4 for ease.

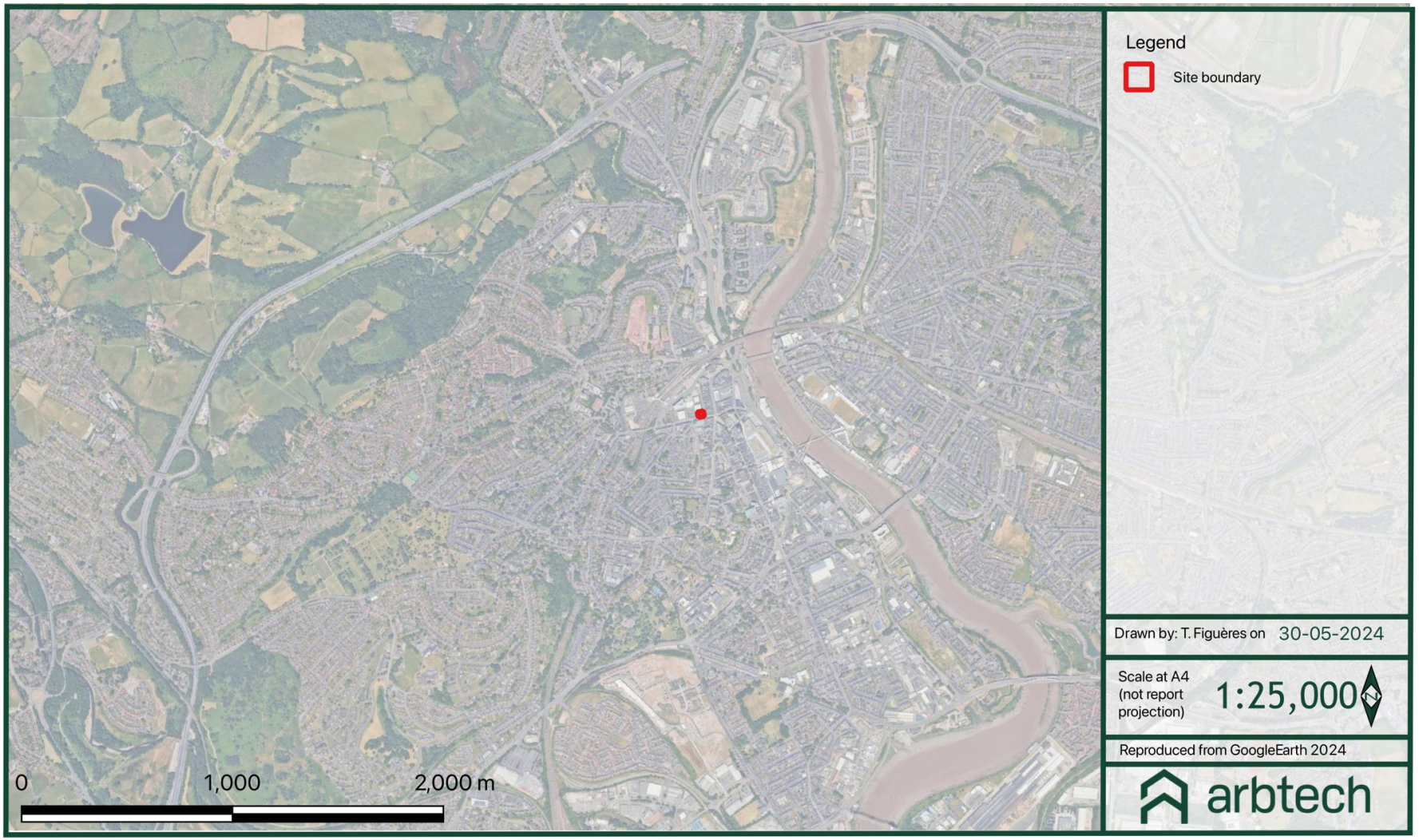
	Loft 1 occupies the main pitch roof section of B1. Its dimensions are approximately 8m x 10m and approximately 2.5m in height. The roof lining is bitumen and there is loose wool insulation. The roof lining is well sealed with no access into this loft void from the lining. There is one area in which daylight enters this loft – between the brick wall and timber on the west end of the loft. This can provide access into the loft. Loft 2 is the pitched end of the main roof section. Dimensions are approximately 5m x 10m and approximately 2.5m in height. The roof lining is bitumen and there is loose wool insulation. The roof lining is well sealed with no access into this loft void from the lining. No areas of daylight can be seen from inside this loft space. Loft 3 is the roof space of the three-storey pitch section of B1. Dimensions are approximately 5m x 10m and approximately 2.5m in height. The lining and roof structure appears in good condition and no areas of daylight can be seen from inside this loft space. Loft 4 is a smaller loft in the gambrel roof section. Dimensions are much smaller, at approximately 2m x 6m and a height of <1m. There was no insulation within this loft. The loft had thick layers of mould across the entirety, which would lower the suitability for roosting bats. No areas of daylight can be seen from inside this loft space. No evidence of roosting bats was found internally. Limitation: due to the high levels of mould observed in loft 4, the loft was viewed from the loft hatch only, evidence of roosting bats may have been missed. <u>Surrounding habitat</u>

	Situated in Newport town centre, the site and immediate surroundings is dominated by urban infrastructure, with few scattered trees which are not well connected to more suitable habitats within the wider landscape. Given the above information, B1 is assessed to have low habitat value for roosting bats.
Foreseen Impacts	The proposals include the renovation of B1 to convert the empty office spaces into flats. This does not include any works to the roof or loft voids. Therefore, **no impacts** are anticipated on any roosting features, or roosting bats.
Recommendations	It is anticipated that any risk to bats can be reduced to an acceptably low level though the implementation of a Bat Mitigation Plan. The installation of a minimum of two bat boxes at the site will provide additional roosting habitat for bats. The bat boxes will be installed on the building. 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. Suitable boxes include the Beaumaris Bat Box or a similar alternative brand.
Nesting Birds	
Summary of Survey Findings	No evidence of nesting birds was found on site during the surveys; however, birds could use the building for nesting. There were many pigeons perched upon the roof structures and droppings were found externally on the buildings.
Foreseen Impacts	The proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests.
Recommendations	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.

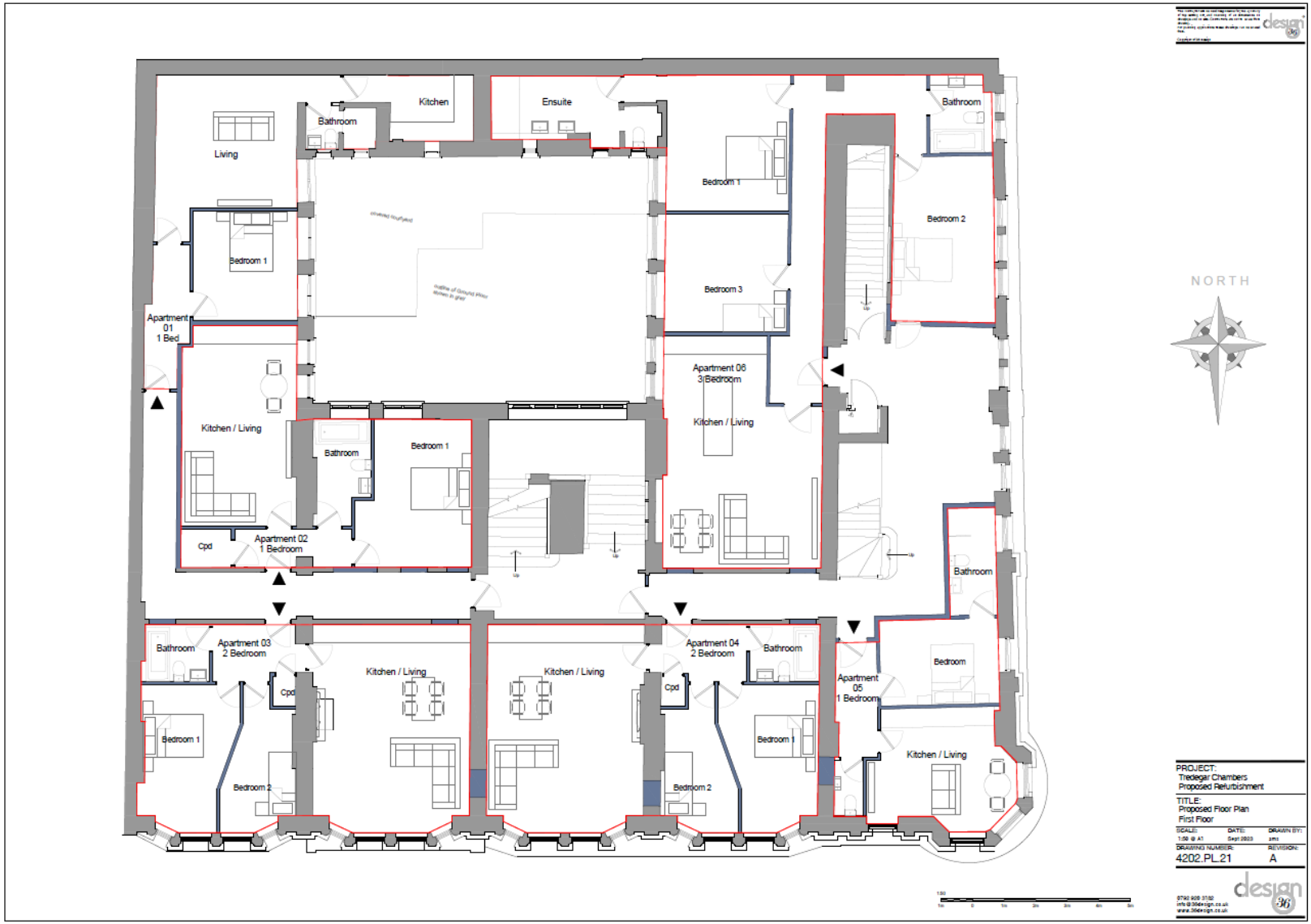
	Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests until the young have fledged. The installation of a minimum of two bird boxes on B1 will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. Schwegler No 17 Swift Nest Box, Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace, Woodstone Nest Box, or a similar alternative brand.

Appendix 1: PRA plan

Appendix 2: Location map



Appendix 3: Proposed plan



Appendix 4: Photos

< Image 1: the front of B1 (south elevation).

> Image 2: The west elevations of B1.

< Image 3: the southeast corner of B1.

> Image 4: southwest corner of B1

	< Image 5: the pitched 2 storey extension. > Image 6: The pitch 2 storey extension and single-storey flat roof extension, viewed from the fourth storey window.	
	< Image 7: west elevation of the fourth storey gambrel roof. > Image 8: the north elevation of the fourth storey pitch main build of B1.	

	< Image 9: inside of loft 1. > Image 10: inside of loft 2.	
	< Image 11: inside of loft 3. > Image 12: loft 4.	

	< Images 14 and 15 > : image looking at the west and north elevations from the courtyard.	

Limitations and Copyright

Legal

Arbtech Consulting Limited has prepared this report for the sole use of the above-named client or their agents in accordance with our General Terms and Conditions, under which our services are performed. It is expressly stated that no other warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to the professional advice included in this report or any other services provided by us. This report may not be relied upon by any other party without the prior and express written agreement of Arbtech Consulting Limited. The conclusions and recommendations contained in this report are based upon information provided by third parties. Information obtained from third parties has not been independently verified by Arbtech Consulting Limited.

Version control			
Status	**Issue**	**Name**	**Date**
Draft	0.1	Alexie Jenkins BSc (Hons), MRes, AMRSB, Graduate Ecologist	04/06/2024
Proof	0.2	Nicole Gullan BSc (Hons) MRSB TechArborA, Senior Ecologist and Arboriculturalist	11/06/2024
Final	1.0	Alexie Jenkins BSc (Hons), MRes, AMRSB, Graduate Ecologist	12/06/2024