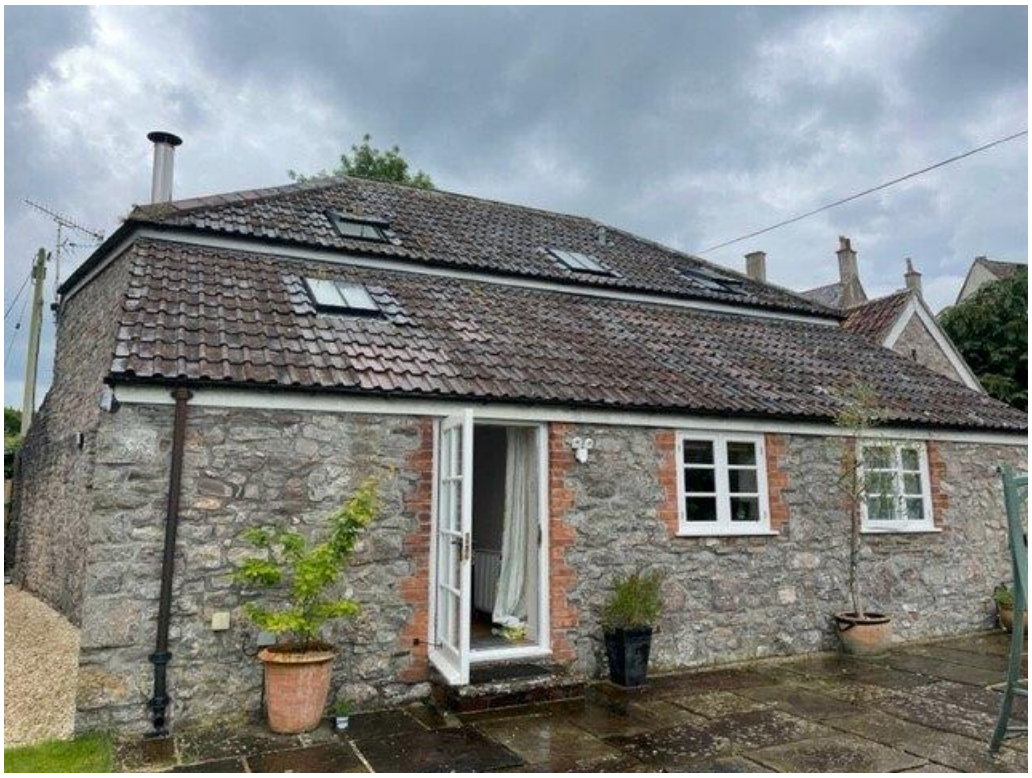
PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT

OF

The Old Cider Mill, Brockley



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Site Address	The Old Cider Mill, Main Road, Brockley, BS48 3AH
Report type	Preliminary Roost Assessment
Client	Mr and Mrs Bainbridge
Project number	001BAIN100

The material and data in this report were prepared under the supervision and direction of the undersigned.

	Name	**Position**
Prepared by	Lara Moore QualCIEEM	Assistant Ecologist
Checked and Approved by	Jana Prapotnikova MCIEEM	Principal Ecologist

DISCLAIMER

Abricon has used reasonable skill and care in completing this work and preparing this report, within the terms of its brief and contract, and taking account of the resources devoted to it by agreement with the client. We disclaim any responsibility to the client and others in respect of any matters outside the stated scope. This report is confidential to the client and we accept no responsibility to third parties to whom this report, or any part thereof, is made known. The opinions and interpretations presented in this report represent our reasonable technical interpretation of the information made available to us. Abricon accepts no responsibility for information or data provided by other bodies, and accepts no legal liability arising from the use by other persons of data, information or opinions in this report.

Except for the provision of professional services on a fee basis, Abricon does not have a commercial arrangement with any other person or company involved in the interests that are subject of this report.

VALIDITY

Due to the dynamic nature of ecological conditions the results of the survey(s) and related conclusions and recommendations as contained within this report should only be considered valid for up to 12 months from the date the last survey was undertaken.

Any alterations to the site proposals may invalidate the recommendations contained within this report.

1 Introduction

1.1 Survey Background, Aims & Objectives

1.1.1 Abricon Ltd. was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Bainbridge to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment in order to establish the likely impacts of the proposed development at The Old Cider Mill, Main Road, Brockley, BS48 3AH.

1.1.2 The survey was undertaken in May 2022, with the aim of identifying whether the site has evidence of, or potential for, bats and/or nesting birds to be present. The survey results will inform recommendations for mitigation, and/or further survey work, as appropriate.

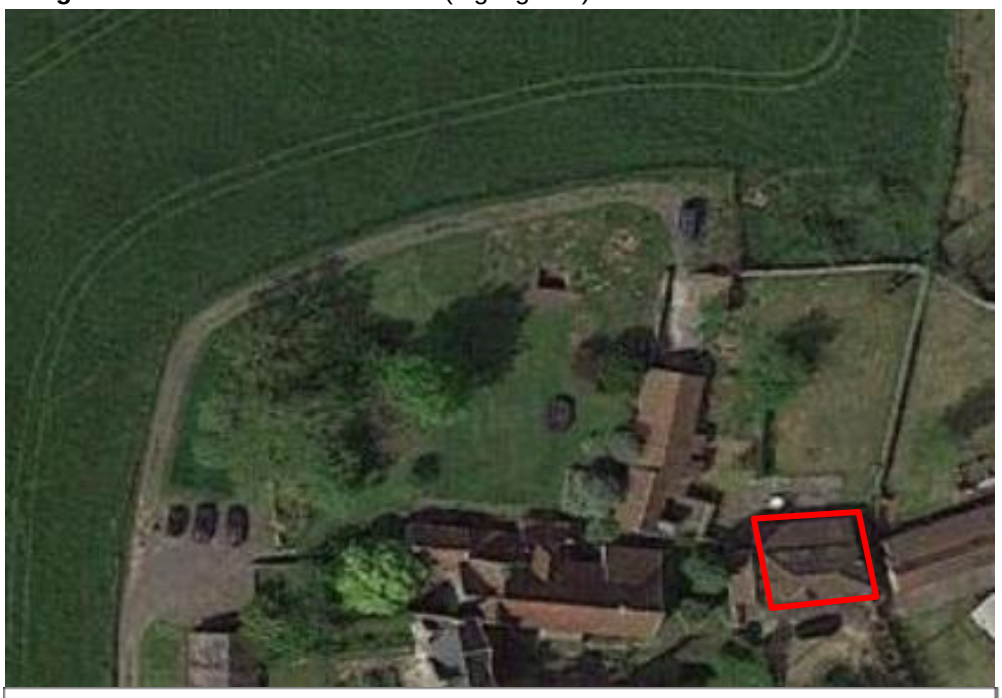
1.2 Site location and Description

1.2.1 The site is located 300m to the north of the A370 main road in the village of Brockley and is located within Consultation Zone A of the North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (Burrows, 2017). The site is centred on National Grid Reference: ST 46636 67030.

1.2.2 The site consists of a two-storey dwelling with a hipped roof with double Roman clay tiles built with pennant stone and surrounded by a residential garden.

1.2.3 Within the wider landscape, the site is surrounded by residential properties and open fields (agricultural or grazing). Goblin Combe (SSSI) is located to the south of the site and Chelvey Wood is located 1.4km to the east of the site and 0.4km to the south of the site is Brockley Wood. Yorkhouse Cave is located 1.1km to the south-east of the site within Goblin Combe.

Figure 1 - Location of the house (highlighted) - accessed 28/06/2022



1.3 Proposed Development

1.3.1 It is understood that the proposed plans for the site comprise the construction of a single-storey extension at the rear of the property and the implementation of dormer windows. This will involve the removal of tiles on the northern elevation roof. Site plans are provided in Appendix C at the end of this document.

1.3.2 The methodology of the survey work completed to inform this report is provided in Appendix A at the end of this document.

2 Summary of Ecological Constraints

Feature	Summary of Results	Potential Impacts	Recommendations – Further Surveys, Mitigation & Enhancement Measures
Designated Sites			
Statutory Designated Sites	Four statutory sites are within 2km of the site. The closest is Brockley Halls SSSI, which lies 0.4km to the east of the site. Goblin Combe is approximately 1.4km to south of the site and 1.8km to south of the site Kings Wood and Urchin Wood.	Given the nature and small scale of development proposals, no significant impacts on designated sites anticipated.	No mitigation is deemed to be required.
Buildings			
House	The house is a two-storey pennant stone building with a hipped clay tile roof. During the external inspection, several tiles were lifted, and gaps are present. Wooden fascia boarding spans the perimeter of the building and displays several gaps. The building has a single-storey lean-to extension with the same tile and stone composition on the northern elevation (rear) of the property. Two windows and a door are present on this elevation. A small roof void is located on the north-western end of the property and features an air extractor,		Please refer to 'Roosting Bats' section below for recommendations for further survey.

		timber beams and Thermawrap insulation.		
Protected and Notable Species				
Bats	**Roosting Bats**	The roof tiles and lead flashing on the northern elevation where the extension is proposed had suitable gaps that may provide potential roosting features for bats. The gaps underneath the fascia boarding may allow crevice dwellings bats to roost. No evidence of roosting bats was found during the internal roof void inspection in the house. The house was assessed as being of 'moderate' suitability for roosting bats based on the number and type of roosting features, the building's location and the surrounding environment.	Potential for bats to be killed/injured, and roosts damaged/destroyed during the construction of the extension and removal of tiles on the northern elevation of the house (if bats are found to be present).	It is recommended that the building is subject to two activity surveys (comprising one emergence survey and one re-entry survey) between May and August (September) when bats are most active. If bats are found to be roosting on site, then Bat Mitigation License (BML) will also be required from Natural England (NE) to allow development activities that would otherwise be illegal to commence. The need for the NE BML would be informed by the results of the further surveys. A BML can only be applied for providing Full Planning Permission has been achieved from the Local Planning Authority. A mitigation (if required) and enhancement plan will be compiled following the completion of the activity surveys.

	Foraging/Commuting Bats	The site is located southwest of Bristol off the A370 in the village of Brockley and is located within Consultation Zone A of the North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (Burrows, 2017). Brockley Hall Stables SSSI is present approximately 440m south east from the site and Goblin Combe SSSI and other connected woodlands like Brockley Wood known to support population of horseshoe bats linked to North Somerset and Mendip Bat SAC are present 400m south from the site. There are numerous agricultural and grazing fields, hedgerows and patches of woodland in the local environment surrounding the building and village, all of which are favourable habitats for foraging and commuting bats. However, the immediate surroundings of the building are suburban (site is surrounded by other residential properties and gardens). A370 is present 390m south of the property.	The garden spaces on site will continue to be available for bats after development and all boundary features are proposed to be retained, therefore the proposed development will have **no direct impact** on those features. The new larger northern extension is likely to cause increased light levels on site. However, the amount of glazing proposed for the northern extension is considered to be marginal as similar amount is already present on the northern elevation of the main house. The glazing will only affect the hardstanding or well-managed amenity area of the garden in the vicinity of the main house. No new glazing is proposed for eastern or western elevations (and therefore affecting any of the neighbouring gardens), and therefore it is considered that there will be **no impact** on horseshoe bats using the SAC.	No further surveys are considered necessary. External lighting plans were not drafted at the time of writing this report. Any new lighting plans (if applicable) should ensure that exterior lighting is kept to a minimum.

		The garden space on the development site is mostly formed of hardstanding, amenity grassland and ornamental planting. These habitats are suboptimal for foraging and commuting bats and are unlikely to be utilised by horseshoe bats frequently. Overall, the site (mostly the trees/shrubs within the sites boundaries) is considered to be of local value to bats.		
Birds		No evidence of nesting birds was found during the survey. Readily available habitat suitable for nesting birds is found nearby (residential gardens, trees, hedgerows, farmland).	Without mitigation, the proposed works may result in the destruction of nests and possible killing, injury, and disturbance of birds and/or dependant young. This could constitute a long-term adverse impact. With mitigation, it is anticipated that there can be a negligible impact on these species.	If the development works are required to take place between March and August (inclusive), affected areas should be checked by an ecologist before works can take place, and if birds are found to be nesting, clearance and the development would have to be delayed until nesting had ceased.

Recommendations

2.1.1 The results of this preliminary ecological appraisal have highlighted the requirement for further actions. **Error! Reference source not found.** below provides a summary of the works required.

Table 1 – Table of Further Actions

Species/Groups	Phase	Action(s) Required
Bats	Prior to planning determination Design and Construction	Two bat activity surveys (dusk and dawn) as outlined in summary of ecological constraints. Consideration for foraging /commuting bats during external lighting design.
Birds	Construction	Development of extension following timescales as outlined in summary of ecological constraints.
Ecological Enhancements	Design and Construction	Ecological enhancements should be included within new developments and recommendations will be compiled following completion of the further survey work recommended on the site.

Appendix A - Methodology

2.2 Building Inspection

2.2.1 The building on the site was inspected internally and externally on the 30th May 2022 by Dan Flew (Natural England bat class 2 licenced surveyor) and Lara Moore in order to identify any evidence of use by bats and nesting birds.

2.2.2 To assist in a thorough search for bats and nesting birds the following equipment was available:

- Binoculars;
- Million candle power spotlight (Clulight CB2);
- Head torch;
- Ladder;
- Digital camera.

Bats

2.2.3 Signs of bats searched for included:

- Bats (alive or dead);
- Droppings;
- Staining;
- Feeding signs;
- Smell;
- Social calling.

2.2.4 The building was also inspected for its suitability to be used by roosting bats, with any potential features which could be utilised by roosting bats being recorded.

Nesting Birds

2.2.5 Signs of nesting birds searched for included::

- Birds (alive or dead);
- Nests (current or disused);
- Droppings;
- Eggs.

2.3 Personnel

2.3.1 Dan Flew has worked in the consultancy sector since 2011 with a focus on protected species, particularly bats. Dan holds Natural England and Natural Resources Wales Class 2 licence for bats as well as a NE Class 1 licence for great crested newts and a NE barn owl survey licence, and he holds an MSc in related subjects.

2.3.2 Lara Moore BSc QualCIEEM has been working in environmental consultancy since 2019. Her primary experience comprises technical report writing, the completion of bat emergence/re-entry surveys and analysis of bat sound files.

2.3.3 Jana Prapotnikova has worked in consultancy sector since 2006 with a focus on mammalian ecology, particularly bats and badgers. Jana runs Abricon's Ecology Department as well as being involved in project delivery. She has managed various ecological projects and has expertise in a range of ecological survey techniques including Phase 1 habitat assessments and a variety of protected species surveys (e.g. the aforementioned mammal species as well as reptiles and great crested newts). Jana also devises ecological mitigation schemes for a variety of protected species. She is well versed in producing preliminary ecological

appraisals, BREEAM/CSH Ecology Assessments, protected species licences, Ecological Impact Assessments (EcIA), Construction Environmental Management plans, Biodiversity Enhancement Schemes and Ecological Design Strategies. Jana holds Natural England and Natural Resources Wales Class 2 licence for bats as well as Natural England Class and Natural Resources Wales Class 1 licence for great crested newts. She is also a Registered Consultant of the Bat Low Impact Class Licence (BLIC) and holds a CSCS card. Jana is a full member of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM).

2.4 Bats – Ground Level Tree Assessment

2.4.1 The trees on site were subject to a ground level assessment by Dan Flew and Lara Moore on 30th May 2022. Binoculars and high-powered torches were used to inpect the trees for evidence of bat roosting features, as listed below:

- Natural holes
- Woodpecker holes
- Cracks/splits in major limbs
- Loose bark
- Hollows/cavities
- Dense epicormic growth
- Birds and bat boxes

2.4.2 Each tree was then assigned a value in terms of its suitability for roosting bats, in accordance with 'Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines 2nd edition (Hundt, 2012)'.

2.5 Limitations

General Ecological Constraints

2.5.1 This survey only offers a "snapshot" of the site conditions and takes no account of seasonal differences, or of any species which may take up residence subsequently.

Site Specific Constraints

2.5.2 No site-specific constraints were encountered during the survey.

References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* 3rd edition. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Hundt L. (2012). *Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines* 2nd Edition. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Mitchell-Jones A. J. & McLeish, (2004) *Bat Worker's Manual*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.

Mitchell-Jones A. J. (2004) *Bat Mitigation Guidelines.* English Nature, Peterborough.

Appendix A – Wildlife Legislation & Policy

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

Certain species are known as European Protected Species (EPS) and these are fully protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017). The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) is the transposition of the European Habitats Directive (1992) to UK legislation. Species protected under this legislation include (but is not limited to) bats, dormice Muscardinus avellanarius, great crested newts Triturus cristatus, otter Lutra lutra, sand lizard Lacerta agilis, and smooth snake Coronella austriaca.

For European Protected Species, it is a criminal offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill any such species;
- Deliberately disturb wild animals of any such animal;
- Deliberately take or destroy their eggs;
- Damage, destroy, or obstruct access to a breeding site or resting place, whether the animal is present or not;
- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange, any live or dead wild animal of a European Protected Species, or any part of, or anything derived from, such an animal.

Operations which will affect European Protected Species may require a development licence from the relevant national statutory body for nature conservation, which provides a derogation for an otherwise unlawful activity.

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) makes it a criminal offence to:

- Kill, injure, or take any wild bird (with exceptions to species listed in Schedule 2);
- Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while in use or being built;
- Take or destroy an egg of any wild bird;
- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild animal listed on Schedule 5;
- Interfere with places used for shelter or protection, or intentionally disturbing animals occupying such places.

Water voles *Arvicola amphibious* are protected under Section 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) against killing, injuring, taking, or selling a water vole; damaging or destroying a place of shelter (burrow), obstructing access to a place used for shelter, or disturbing a water vole whilst it is occupying a place of shelter or protection.

Operations which may affect water voles may require a licence from the relevant national statutory body for nature conservation, which provides derogation for an otherwise unlawful activity.

Certain non-native, invasive plant species have become established in Great Britain and pose a threat to native flora. Some species of cotoneaster are listed under Schedule 9, which makes it an offence to plant or allow this species to spread in the wild.

Protected Sites

Within the UK, certain sites are afforded protection measures based on their level of importance to wildlife. They fall into two categories; statutorily designated sites and non-statutorily designated sites.

Statutorily designated sites are typically of national or international importance and as such are afforded the greatest levels of protection under various pieces of legislation. Statutory sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), National Nature Reserves (NNR), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and RAMSAR sites.

Non-statutorily designated sites are normally designated by local authorities or nature organisations and are typically of local or county wide importance for their conservation interest. Non-statutory sites include Listed Wildlife Sites (LWS), Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS), Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI).

Properties of non-governmental organisations such as Wildlife Trusts may also be managed for their importance to biodiversity. These areas often have no statutory basis, but often comprise part of a designated site.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

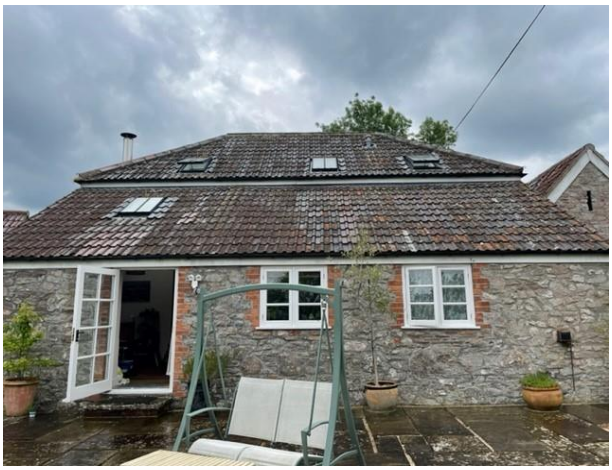
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) sets out Government Policy on Biodiversity and Nature Conservation and places a duty on planners to make material consideration to the effect of a development on legally protected species when considering planning applications. NPPF also promotes sustainable development by ensuring that developments take account of the role and value of biodiversity and that it is conserved and enhanced within the development.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)

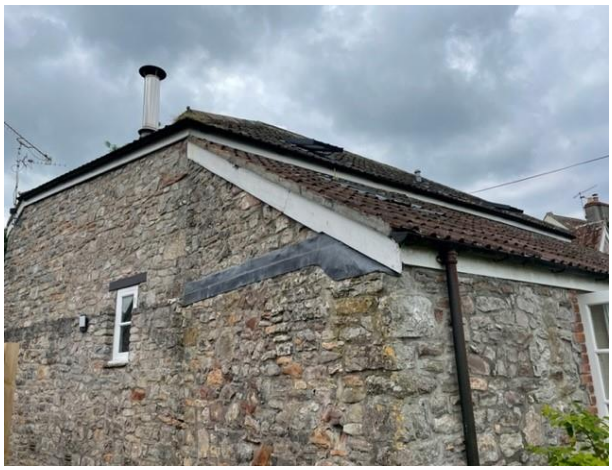
Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006) sets out a list of habitats and species that are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. The list (including 56 habitats and 943 species) drawn up in consultation with Natural England, provides a guide to local and regional authorities when implementing their duty as defined in Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006;

- “Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.” - Section 40(1).
- “Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat”. - Section 40(3).

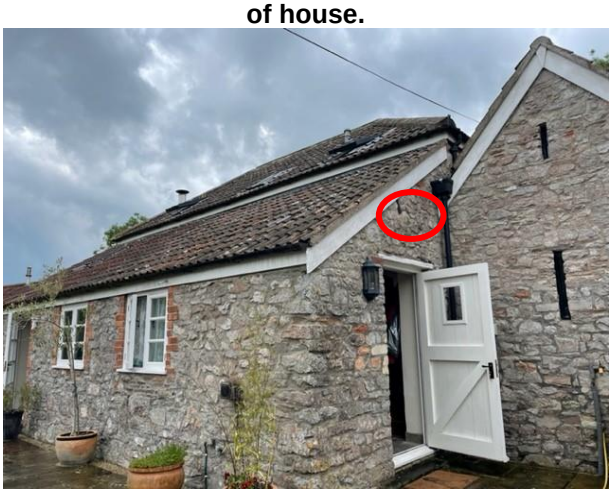
Appendix B – Site Photographs



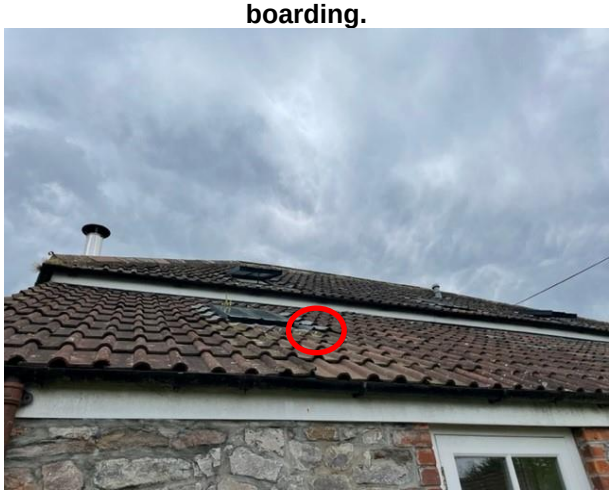
Photograph 1: View of northern elevation (rear) of house.



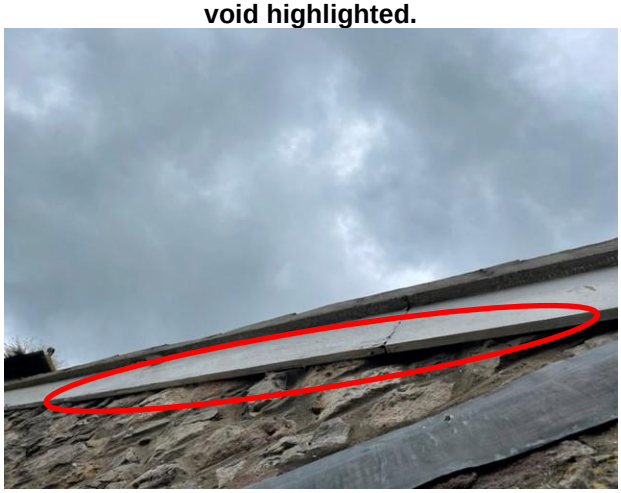
Photograph 2: East elevation with gaps in fascia boarding.



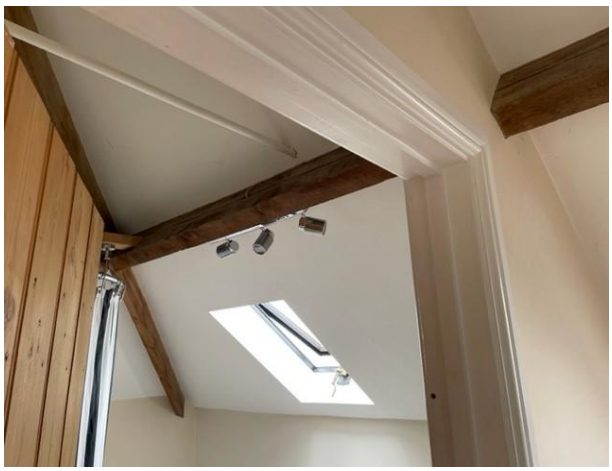
Photograph 3: Western elevation of house, roof void highlighted.



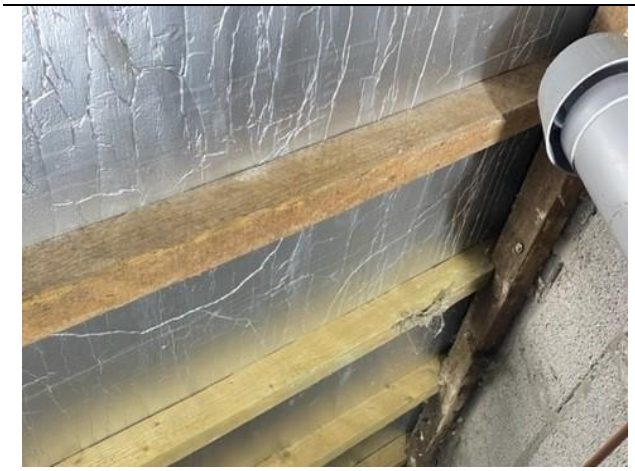
Photograph 4: Gaps under lead flashing.



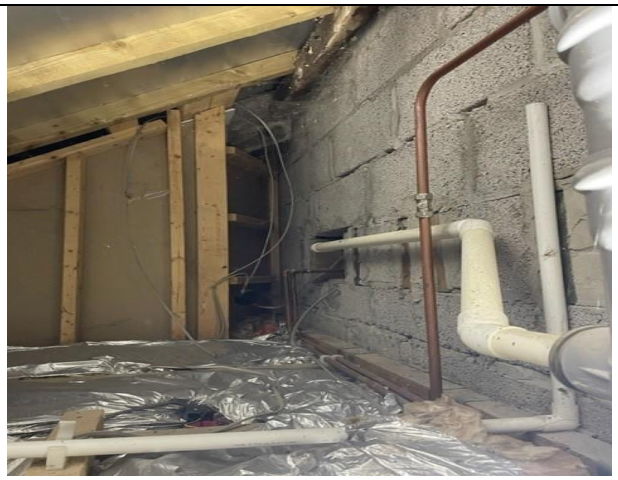
Photograph 5: Example of roosting feature under fascia boarding.



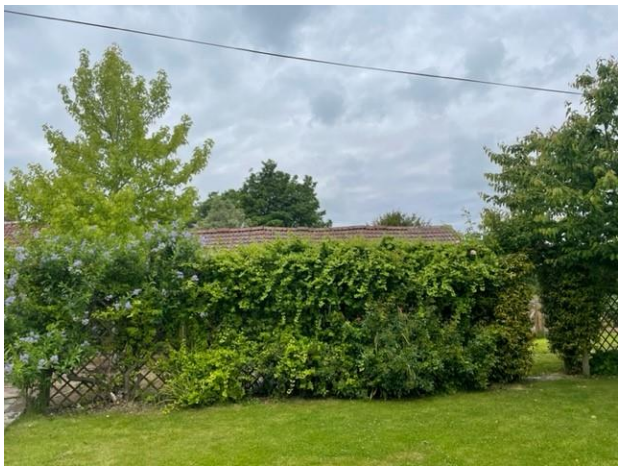
Photograph 6: Interior of house showing no roof void on extension.



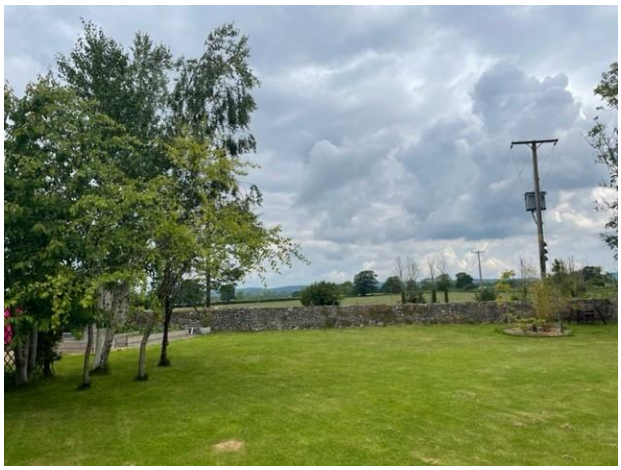
Photograph 7: Inside roof void on western end of the property with view of insulation.



Photograph 8: View of roof void.

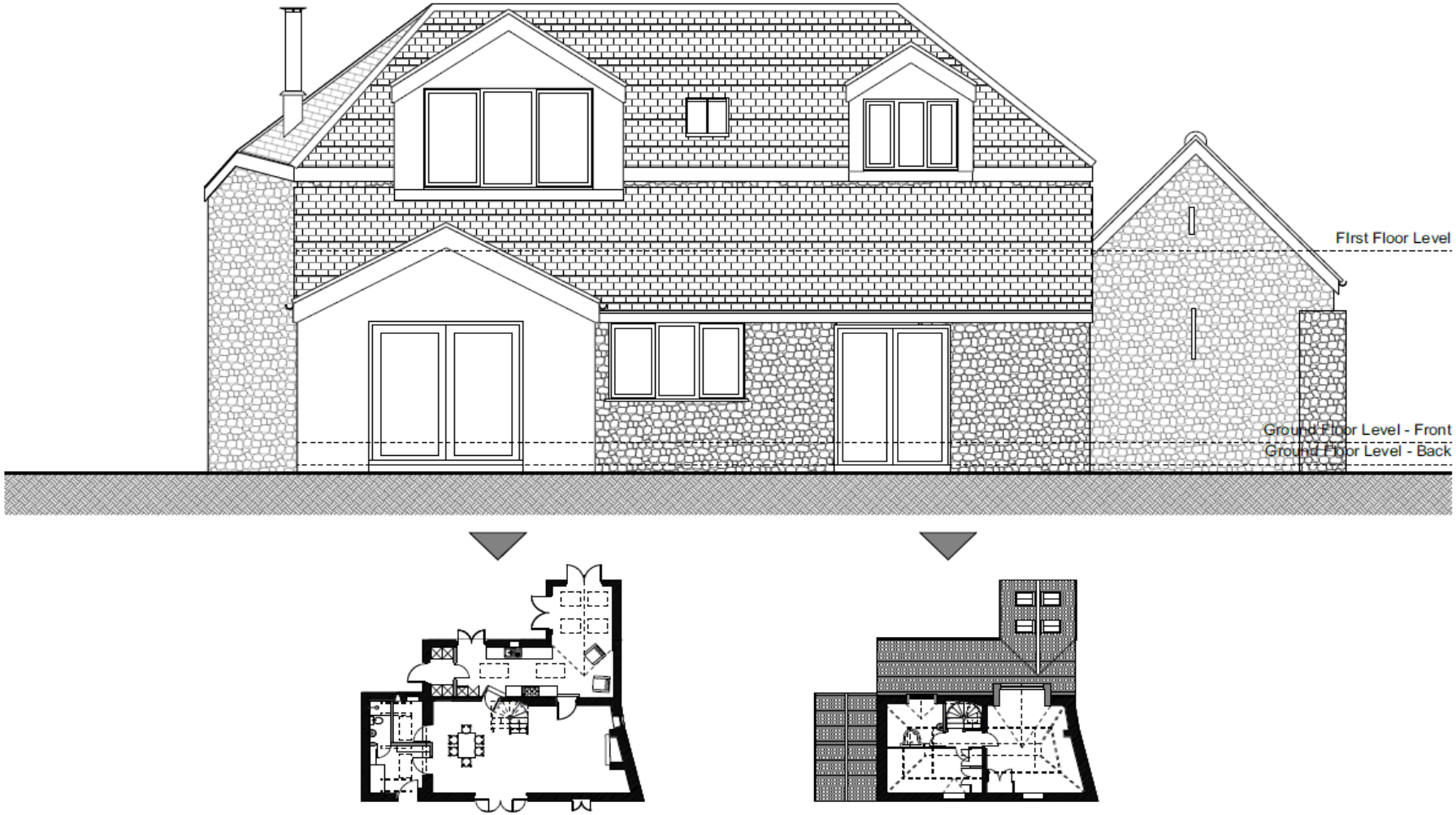


Photograph 9: Trees and bushes in garden on the north of site.



Photograph 10: View of trees and wider landscape facing north.

Appendix C - Excerpt from Proposed Site Plan (Chris Goodsall Architects, Drawing no: JIB-ED21, April 2022).



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Chris Goodsall Architects

The Cider Mill, Brockley • Proposed North Elevation • 1:50 at A3 • Apr 2022 • Drawing JIB-PD71