

JAH JIREH CARE HOMES

INSTALLATION OF NEW SKYLIGHTS/VELUX WINDOWS

JAH-JIREH CARE HOME, A465 MERTHYR

BUILDING INSPECTION REPORT (PROTECTED SPECIES)

September 2025



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Document Ref: E25136001 Doc 01 September 2025

Issue	Revision	Stage	Date	Prepared by	Approved by	Signed
1	-	Draft for Review	04 September 2025	Katie Godfrey (Associate Ecologist)	Dr. M Watts (Director)	M. WATTS

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SUMMARY

Soltys Brewster Ecology were commissioned by Lapidar on behalf of Mr Mark Donnelly at Jar Jireh Care Homes (the client) to undertake a building inspection at Jah-Jireh Care Home, Merthyr to inform any ecological constraints associated with the proposed installation of skylights/ Velux windows, light tubes and installation of false ceiling to facilitate the development of 5 additional rooms.

Consultation with SEWBRc confirmed that the site does not fall within or adjacent to a site designated for nature conservation in relation to bats. No records of bats were specifically associated with the site. The data search returned 5 records of bats within the 2km search area. The nearest records, a Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and *Myotis* sp. was recorded 141m from the site in 2008. Sixteen records of roof nesting birds were returned with the data search. The nearest bird record was 76m from the site, A Barn Owl *Tyto alba* (the record is from 1990). Other records from within 200m of the site include Lesser Black Backed Gull *Larus fuscus*, Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*, Great Tit *Parus major* and Swallow *Hirundo rustica*, Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*, Swift *Apus apus*, Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*, House Martin *Delichon urbicum* and Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*.

The daytime external inspection of the site found limited features on the building suitable for use by bats. A single potential entry point was noted on the north eastern corner of the building and 2 security lights were present next to the damaged rendered wall. Fascia's and associated coverings are well sealed and in a good state of repair. There was some fallen cement from the main ridge tiles (away from the location of the proposed works) however there were no obvious entry points in or immediately adjacent to the area of the proposed works.

The surrounding habitats i.e. coniferous woodland, heathland, acid grassland are likely to provide potential suitable roosting and foraging features. However, It is considered that the potential roosting feature on the building is so small and insignificant it is unlikely bats would use this due to the presence of the security lights.

The location of the proposed works is considered to have **negligible potential** for roosting bats.

Under best practice guidelines (BCT 2023), structures of negligible potential do not require further surveys however a precautionary approach of the roofing works are proposed. This includes delivery of a toolbox talk, hand removal of roofing tiles and felt covering and the retention of an on call ecologist in the unlikely event a bat is discovered during the roofing works.

Although no nesting birds were identified during the time of the survey, in the event that the roofing works are programmed between March and August, a follow up inspection (by an ecologist or appointed contractor) for nesting birds would be recommended to establish if any active bird nests were present prior to the start of works.

Under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) all wild birds are protected against killing or injury and their nests against damage or destruction whilst they are in use or being built. If an active nest was identified, it would have to remain in place until such time as it was no longer in use.

This report details the methodology and results of the building inspection conducted. It draws conclusions and makes recommendations for enhancements for biodiversity that could be implemented as part of the proposed roofing works..

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Soltys Brewster Ecology were commissioned by Lapidar on behalf of Mr Mark Donnelly at Jar Jireh Care Homes (the client) to undertake a building inspection at Jah-Jireh Care Home, Merthyr (Appendix I) to inform any ecological constraints associated with the proposed installation of skylights/ Velux windows to facilitate the development of 5 additional rooms. The building is located adjacent to the A465 in the western side of the county of Merthyr Tydfil. Bannau Brycheiniog National Park is located approximately 500m north of the site. Surrounding habitats include coniferous plantation, heathland and upland acid grassland.
- 1.2. The proposed works would involve removal of a small section of roof tiles and felt to install light tubes and Velux Windows/skylights. Internally the roof will be sealed by means of a false ceiling. In order to inform the installation of skylight/Velux windows and associated works (see Appendix II for proposed works detail) a preliminary survey to establish any implications for protected species is required. The current report presents the findings of an ecological data search and external/internal building inspection survey to identify any evidence of use by bats or nesting birds and advise on any required further survey, mitigation or licensing associated with the roof replacement works.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1. In order to establish the baseline ecological conditions on site, a combination of desk-based consultation, and external/internal building inspection survey were undertaken in August 2025. The scope of survey work was based on best practice guidelines (BCT, 2023)

Desk study

- 2.2. The desk study primarily involved consultation with the South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRc)¹ to identify any existing ecological records of bats or roof nesting birds in the surrounding area (2km radius for bats, 150m for birds). Given the localised extent of the proposed works (i.e. installation of skylights/Velux window), a wider search for designated sites and other species was not considered of benefit.

¹ LERC reference (0256-339 DATED 04 August 2025)

Jah Jireh Care Homes

Installation of new skylights/Velux windows – Jah-Jireh Care Home, Merthyr

Building Inspection Report (Protected Species)

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Building Inspection Survey

- 2.3. The fieldwork was undertaken on 26 August 2025 by a suitably experienced ecologist² and comprised of an external check of all visible elevations of the existing care home building (including areas alongside the proposed works) to identify Potential Roost Features (PRF) and any direct evidence (e.g. droppings, nest material etc.) of bats or nesting birds. An internal inspection of all accessible areas where works are proposed was also undertaken. The survey aimed to establish the potential of the building to support roosting bats (or nesting birds) and identify any further survey requirements to inform the proposed works. Given the localised nature of the works an entire survey of the building was not considered necessary therefore only the area contained within the red line boundary (Appendix I) was included in the survey.
- 2.4 External survey at the site involved the use of binoculars to identify possible access/entry points into the building and aimed to identify any evidence of use by bats such as droppings, staining, prey remains etc. The survey was undertaken from ground-level around the exterior of the site building.
- 2.5 The surveyor searched for roost evidence (droppings, staining etc.) as described above and an assessment of the buildings potential to support nesting birds was also undertaken. The scope of the bat inspection survey, including timing, survey effort etc., was based on guidelines published by the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT, 2023). The potential for the building and any adjacent habitats to support roosting bats was determined based on the following categories (BCT 2023):
- **Known or confirmed roost**
 - **High** - A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat.
 - **Moderate** – A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.
 - **Low** – A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically, or, a tree of sufficient size and age to contain PRFs but with none seen from the ground or features with only very limited roost potential;
 - **Negligible** – Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.

² Full Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (MCIEEM) with experience of bat survey work (NRW bat licence no: S089154/1)

- **None** – No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year and no habitat features likely to be used for commuting or foraging.

Constraints

- 2.7. There were no constraints identified or encountered during the site visit. All areas of the building were visible with the exception of a small section of the internal roof space which was boarded.

3.0 RESULTS

Desk Study

- 3.1 The site is not located within an area designated for nature conservation and there are no statutory designations (e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest) relating to bats within the 2km search radius of the building. (Appendix III)
- 3.2 The data search³ returned 5 records of bats within the 2km search area. The nearest records, a Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and *Myotis sp.* was recorded 141m east from the site in 2008. No records of bats were specifically associated with the building. The remaining records include Lesser Horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros* and 2 x Common pipistrelle approximately 2km from the site.
- 3.3 Sixteen records of roof nesting birds were returned with the data search. The nearest bird record was 76m from the site, A Barn Owl *Tyto alba* (the record is from 1990). Other records from within 200m of the site include Lesser Black Backed Gull *Larus fuscus*, Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*, Great Tit *Parus major* and Swallow *Hirundo rustica*, Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*, Swift *Apus apus*, Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*, House Martin *Delichon urbicum* and Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*. Given the proposed nature of the works and the nesting requirements of several of the species listed – e.g. Barn Owl, Peregrine and gulls – these species were not considered of ecological relevance.

Building Inspection Survey

- 3.4 A summary of the site features and building inspection survey is provided in the following sections with further detail included in the notes and supporting photographs in Appendix IV. No external/internal evidence of bats was identified at the building. The features identified were considered to offer limited roosting opportunities for bats.
- 3.5 The building is 423 m² and its current primary use is a care home. The whole building consists of 4 pitched roofs, surrounding a central courtyard area with 4 flat roof extensions which include the location of the proposed development works (Appendix I). The proposed location of works i.e. installation of skylight/Velux windows is located where the pitched roof adjoins the flat roof in the north eastern part of the building.)

³ LERC Reference: 0256-339

Jah Jireh Care Homes

Installation of new skylights/Velux windows – Jah-Jireh Care Home, Merthyr

[Building Inspection Report \(Protected Species\)](#)

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The Care Home-external

- 3.6 The walls are a combination of red brick and render and are in a good state of repair i.e. no obvious cracks damage (with the exception of the one area identified in TN 5). The roof is well sealed and new fascia's and bargeboards have been installed recently (within last 12 months⁴). (Plate 1 and TN 10, 11, 12& 13).

Plate 1- View Looking Towards The North Eastern Side Of The Building.



- 3.7 There appeared to be some missing cement along the ridge of the main roof away from the proposed development area although it was not clear (from ground view with binoculars) if this created any access points(TN13).
- 3.8 There are two security lights and a street light present in the location with the damaged render was noted (red circle).

⁴ Site Manager Confirmed

Jah Jireh Care Homes

Installation of new skylights/Velux windows – Jah-Jireh Care Home, Merthyr

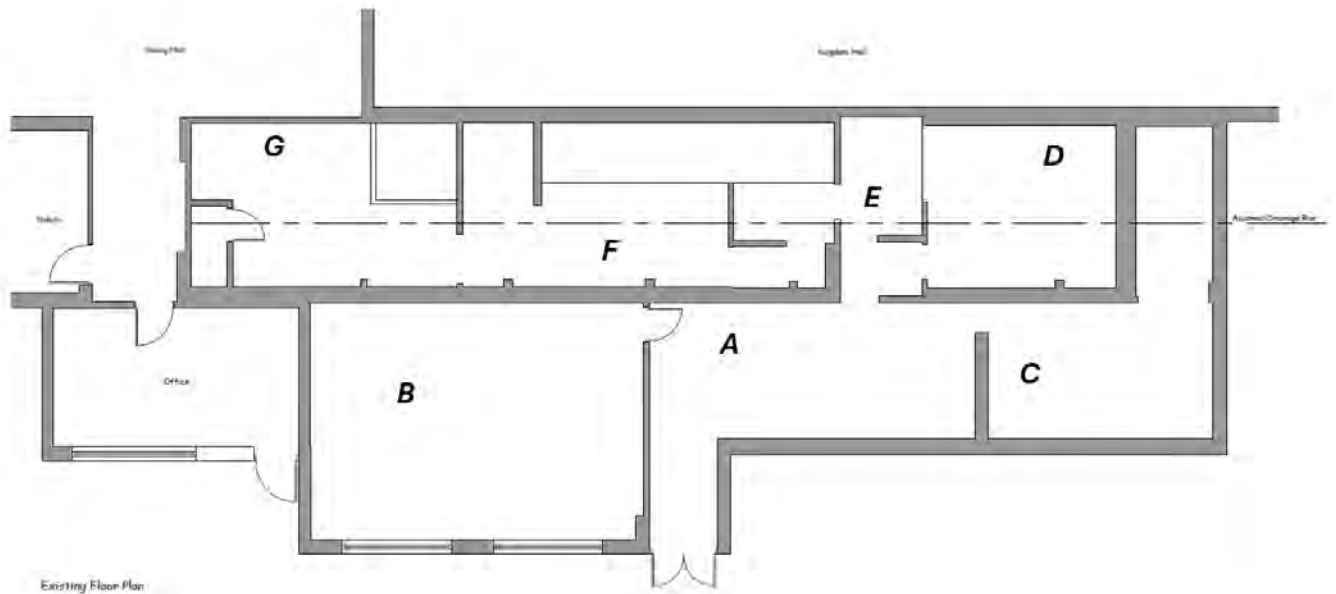
Building Inspection Report (Protected Species)

E25136001 /DOC 01

The Care Home -internal

3.9 The section of the building that is included in the proposed works area was previously used as toilets/bar area. Figure 1 illustrates the internal room layout of the surveyed area. There are 7 separate rooms (referred to as A-G).

Figure 1-Existing Internal Room Layout-Area Surveyed



3.10 The door was locked upon entry and the window located in room B was open. Rooms A-C are largely located within the flat roof area and no accessible roof space is present (Room C is partially located in the pitched roof section of the building). Recent works include the installation of ceiling insulation boards in room A,B and C. There were no signs of bat droppings on any surfaces within these rooms.

Plate 3-Room B-View of Recently Installed Ceiling Insulation Boards



3.11 The remaining rooms (E-G) are located within the pitched roof section and where the proposed Velux window/skylights are to be installed. The ceiling has largely been removed and the roofing felt, battens and joists visible from most of the rooms. There is a brick wall present separating the roof space from the remainder of the building/roof. There is a small section of roof that was boarded up and inaccessible (Plate 4)

Plate 4-View Looking Up at Ceiling From Room G-Exposed Roofing Felt/ Battens and Joists



- 3.12 The roofing felt appeared to be Bitumen 1F and was in a good state of repair i.e. no rips/tears. Rooms D-G were completely dark with no external light ingress noted. There was a small area of light ingress noted in room C (TN5) which corresponds with the damaged render noted in the north eastern corner. This was the only potential entry point observed during the daytime inspection.

Care Home Grounds -other species/features noted

- 3.13 There is a car park immediately adjacent to the building with some ornamental planting present and a single Willow *Salix sp.* noted. There is a small area of grassland with trees bordering the north/eastern part of the site. Species include Oak *Quercus robur*, Scots Pine *Pinus sylvestris*, Alder *Alder glutinosa* and Willow *Salix*. (Plate 5).

There is a large conifer plantation 50m to the west of the site.

Plate 5-View Looking North Eastwards Towards Boundary Vegetation



- 3.14 The habitats contained within the care home grounds would be suitable for common reptiles and amphibians - although these areas would not be directly impacted by the roofing works consideration of site compound or storage areas would be appropriate to minimise any risk to these groups.

4.0 LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND PLANS

- 4.1 The following legislation relating to bats and nesting birds is considered of relevance to the area surveyed and to the proposed roof replacement works at the Care Home.

Environment (Wales) Act, 2016

- 4.2 Part 1 of the Environment Act Wales came into force in May 2016 and sets out the approach to planning and managing natural resources at a national and local level with a general purpose linked to statutory 'principles of sustainable management of natural resources' defined within the Act.

Section 6 - Biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty

- 4.3 Section 6 of the Act places a duty on public authorities to 'seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity' so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions. In so doing, public authorities must also seek to 'promote the resilience of ecosystems'.

Section 7 - Biodiversity lists and duty to take steps to maintain and enhance biodiversity

- 4.4 This section lists living organisms and types of habitat in Wales which are considered of key significance to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in relation to Wales. The Welsh Ministers are required to take all reasonable steps to maintain and enhance the living organisms and types of habitat included in any list published under this section, and encourage others to take such steps.

Legislation Pertaining to the Protection of Bats

- 4.5 Under Annex II of the *Council Directive 92/43/EEC 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora* (EC Habitats Directive) some bat species are listed as of Community Interest, the conservation of which requires designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs); Under Annex IV of the EC Habitats Directive all bat species are listed as of Community Interest, in need of strict protection. In England and Wales, the EC Habitats Directive has been transposed into law in 1994 and, following recent amendments is set out in the *Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulation 2017* to give bats, their breeding sites and resting places a high level of strict protection making it an offence (subject to certain specific exceptions) to deliberately capture or kill/injure a bat, to damage or destroy a place used for shelter or protection or to deliberately disturb a bat in such a place. Case Law has placed an onus on local planning authorities to satisfy 'three tests' under the Habitats Directive when determining applications

that could affect European Protected Species. Essentially, these three tests are: i) that there is no satisfactory alternative; ii) that the proposed development is in the over-riding public interest (including those of a social or economic nature) and iii) the proposed development would not adversely affect the Favourable Conservation Status of the species locally

- 4.6 Bats are also afforded protection within England and Wales under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended); Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Legislation Pertaining to Birds

- 4.7 Under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) all wild birds are protected against killing or injury and their nests against damage or destruction whilst they are being built or contain eggs/dependent young.

Planning Policy Wales

- 4.8 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) details the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. Following a consultation period the 12th Edition of PPW was issued in 2024. The following section is considered relevant to this proposal:

Section 6.4.5. -A net benefit for biodiversity is the concept that development should leave biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems in a significantly better state than before, through securing immediate and long-term, measurable and demonstrable benefit, primarily on or immediately adjacent to the site.

Local Planning Policy

- 4.9 The Replacement Local Development Plan (2016-2031) underwent examination in Public in 2019 and was adopted by Council on 29th January 2020. Policies relevant to the proposed works are outlined below:

Policy EnW2: Internationally and Nationally Protected Sites and Species

Development proposals likely to affect protected species will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that:

- 1. The population size, range, distribution and long-term prospects of the species will not be significantly adversely impacted;*
- 2. There is no suitable alternative to the proposed development;*
- 3. The benefits of the development clearly outweigh the adverse impacts on the protected species; and*

4. *Appropriate, avoidance, minimisation, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures are provided.*

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The combination of desk study & site inspection surveys have established that there was no evidence of current or historic use by bats at the building. There are no records of bats or birds associated with the building and no other birds were observed associated with the building itself during the time of the survey.
- 5.2 The proposed works will involve removal of a small section of roof tiles and felt to install light tubes and Velux Windows/skylights. Internally the roof will be sealed by means of a false ceiling. It is considered that this section of the building has **negligible potential** to support roosting bats. Under best practice guidelines (BCT 2023), structures of Negligible potential do not require further surveys.
- 5.3 A precautionary approach to the proposed works would be recommended to include the following:
- Contractors briefed prior to the start of roofing works on the low likelihood that birds or bats could be present and the action to take if a bat were discovered. In the unlikely event that a bat were discovered at any point during removal of existing roof tiles, all work will stop immediately and an ecologist contacted for advice on how to proceed;
 - Removal of roof tiles, ridge sections and (if required) fascia boards to be undertaken using hand-held tools (crowbars, claw hammers etc.) with an ecologist retained 'on call'.
- 5.4 In the event that the roofing works would be proposed during March-August, a follow up inspection for nesting birds would be recommended to establish if any active bird nests were present. Under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) all wild birds are protected against killing or injury and their nests against damage or destruction whilst they are in use or being built. If an active nest was identified, it would have to remain in place until such time as it was no longer in use.

Bird and Bat boxes-enhancement

- 5.5 Consideration should be given to providing 3 dedicated bat boxes to provide a localised enhancement as part of the works. Bat boxes could be installed on the retained trees adjacent to the car park. A range of designs are available that can be surface mounted and require little – if any – maintenance or cleaning. Examples of boxes are as follows:

- Beaumaris Woodstone Bat box: <https://www.nhbs.com/beaumaris-woodstone-bat-box>
- Low-profile Woodstone Bat box: <https://www.nhbs.com/low-profile-woodstone-bat-box>

5.6 Three bird boxes could be installed on the retained trees around the site or attached to any suitable walls.

Example boxes could include:

- <https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-seville-32mm-woodstone-nest-box>
- <https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-seville-28mm-woodstone-nest-box>
- <https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-woodstone-house-sparrow-nest-box>

REFERENCES

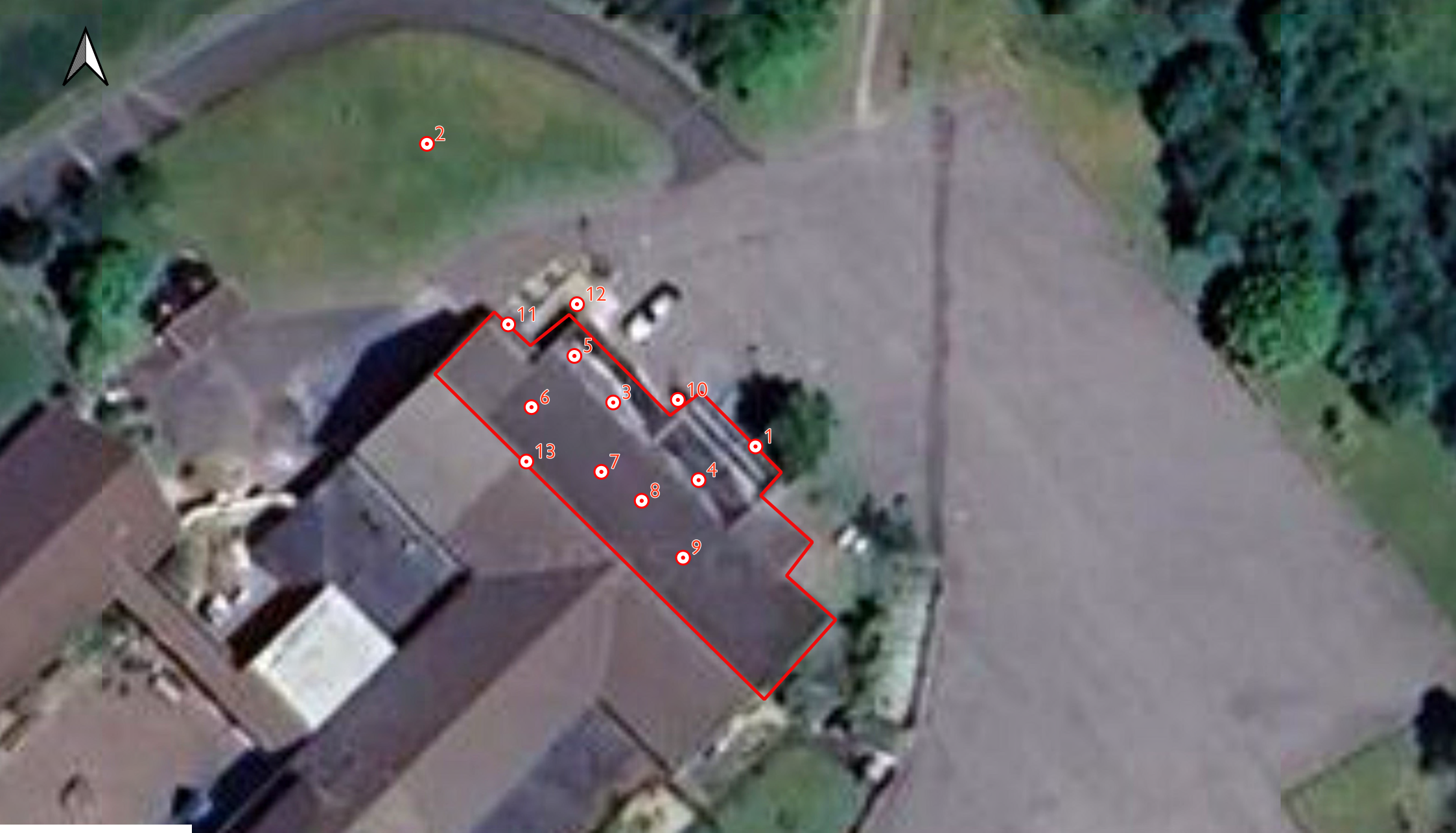
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APPENDIX I Site Location Plan (with target notes)



- Target Notes
- Site Boundary

Google Satellite

PRELIMINARY	PLANNING	DESIGN	TENDER	CONSTRUCTION
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Mark Donnelly		Location Plan and Target Notes Jah-Jireh Merthyr Tydfil		
E25136001	KG	MW	03 September 2025	

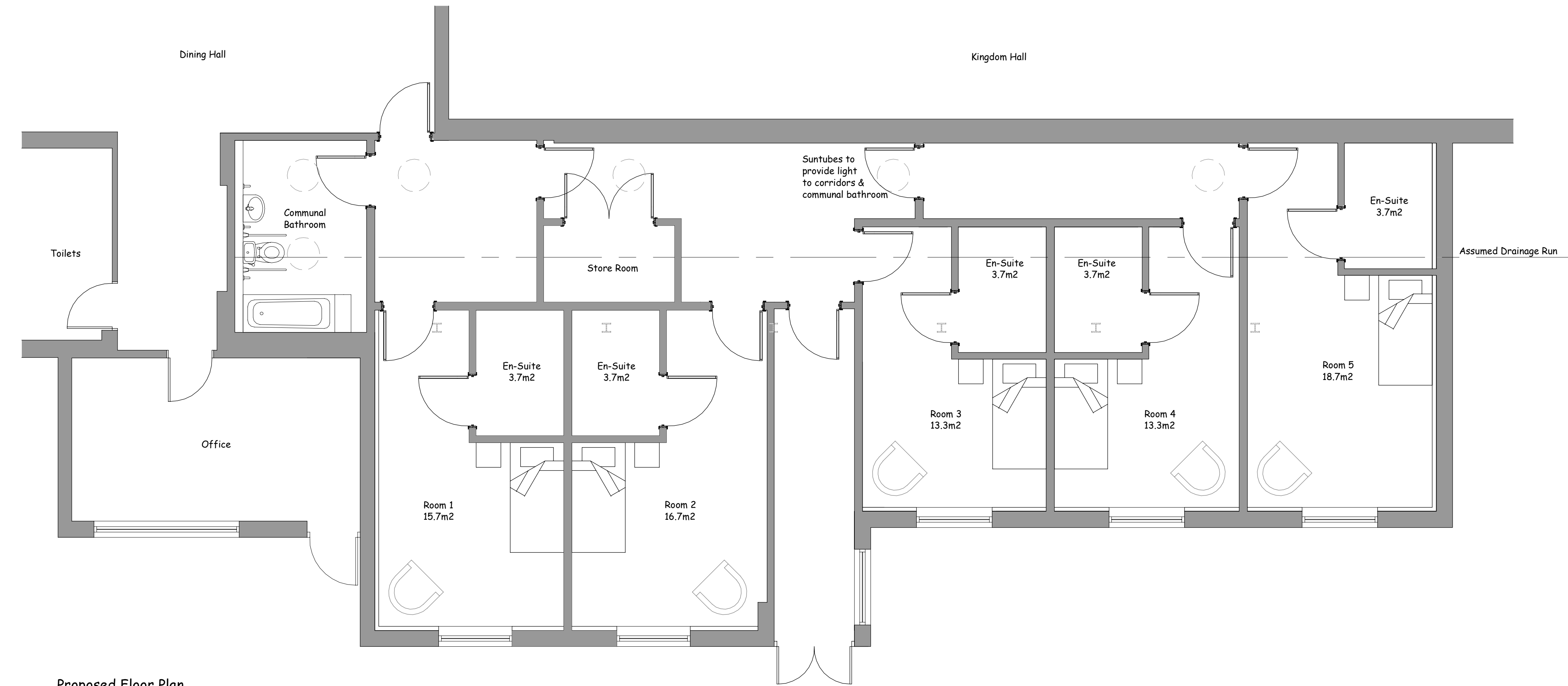


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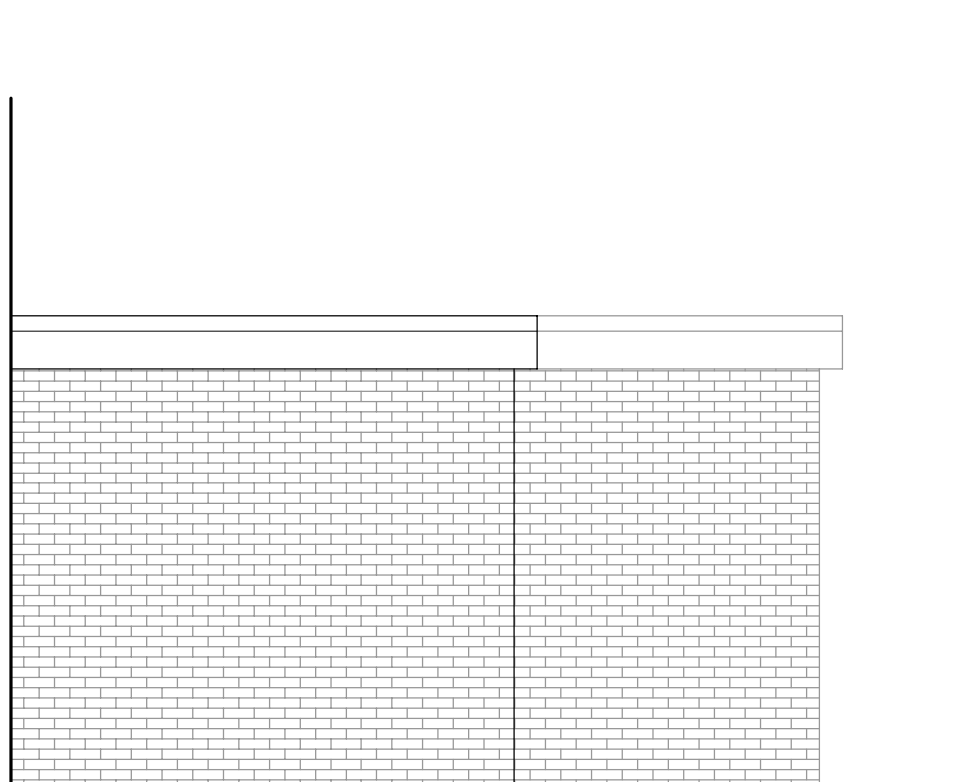
APPENDIX II Proposed Roofing Plan



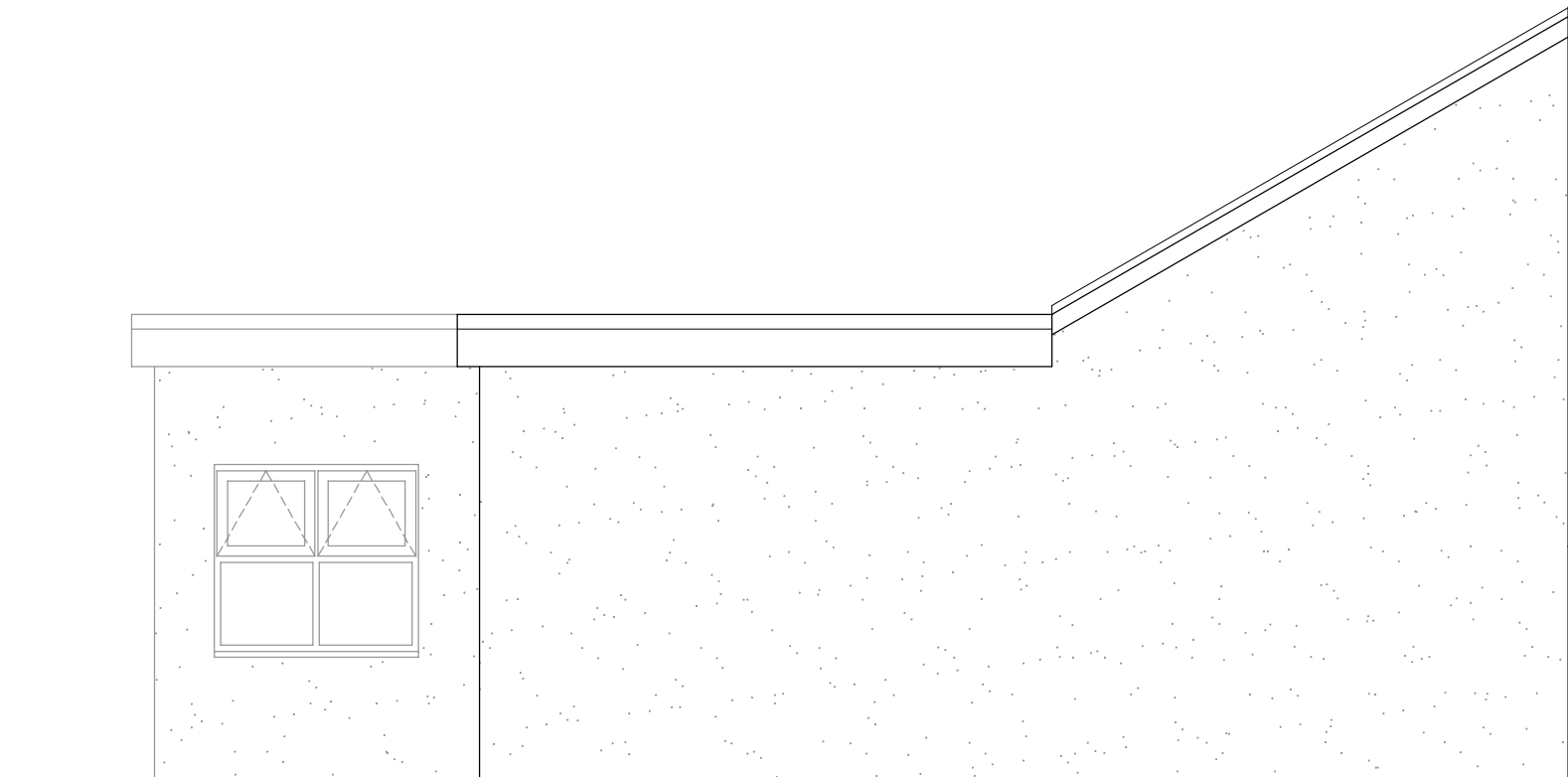
Proposed Floor Plan



Proposed Front Elevation



Proposed Side Elevation



Proposed Side Elevation



Notes:

Lapider

Chartered Surveyors

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Client
Jah-Jireh (Charity) Homes

Project
**Jah-Jireh (Charity) Homes
Heads of the Valley Road
Merthyr Tydfil
CF44 0LX**

Drawing Title
Proposed Plan & Elevations

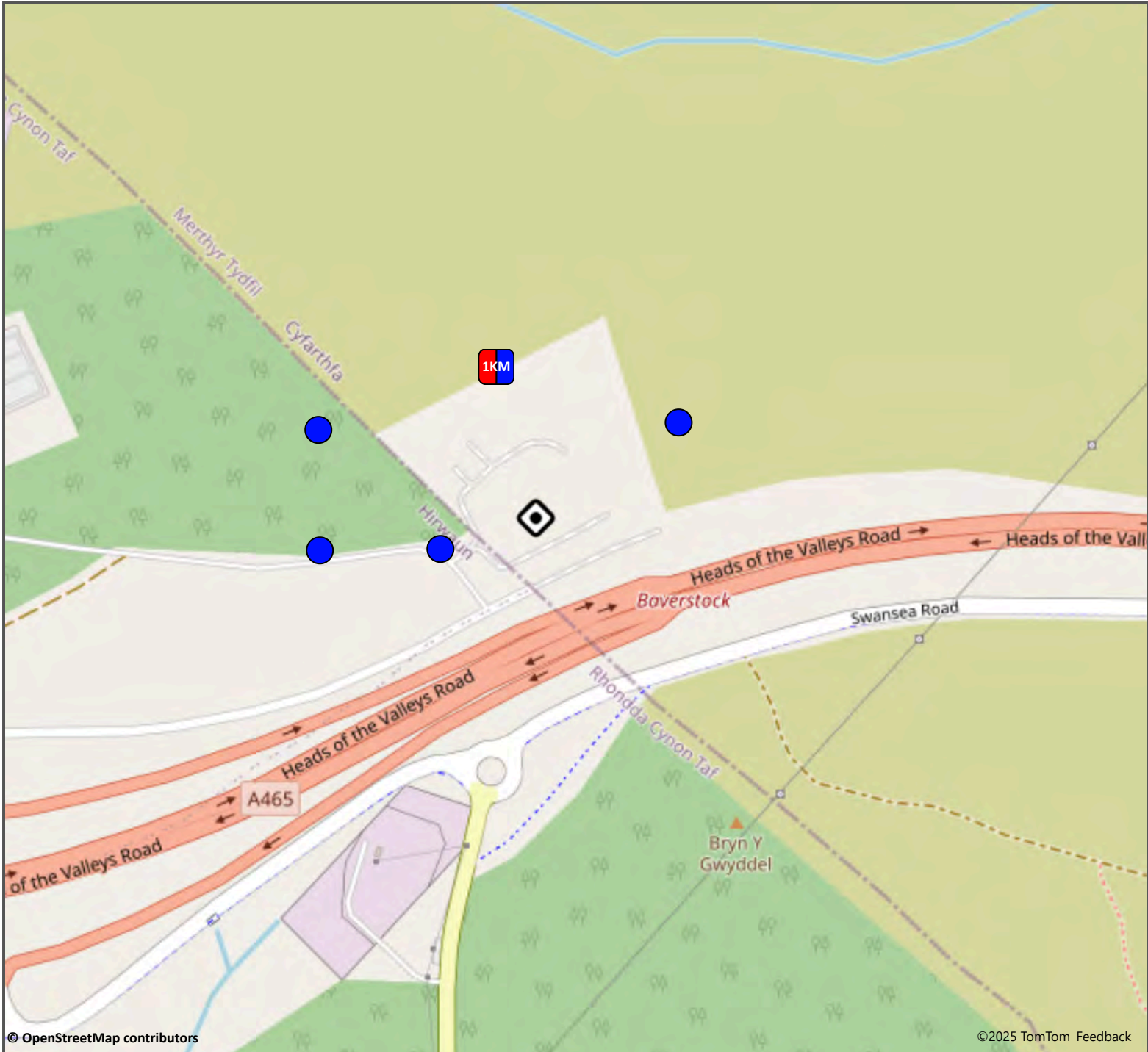
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1906/25

Drawing Number
1906 / 110

Purpose of Issue
Information ☒ Tender ☐
Comment ☐ Construction ☐

Scale	1:50@A1	Date	May 25
Drawn By	SJ	Checked By	MN

APPENDIX III SEWBRc Data Search



Printed from eMapper for Aderyn on 03/09/2025
AD/E09792 | naomi-bloom_04/08/2025_jar-jireh-charity-homes
This map may be released into the public domain
Jah Jireh

- Search Location
- Search Buffer (0m)
- Search Buffer (2000m)
- Birds**
- Mammals**

APPENDIX IV Site Notes & Photographs (August 2025)

27 08 2025

Building Inspection site notes (bats & nesting birds)

Jah-Jireh Care Home, A465 Merthyr Tydfil

General Notes/observations:

No obvious signs of bat use was noted e.g. staining/droppings.

There is a section of flat roof above a single storey extension which appears to be in good condition with newly fitted ceiling insulation boards(within last 12 months pers. Comm. Site Manager). The pitched roof shows slight damage along the ridge tiles(outside the proposed development boundary) with only one potential entry point noted on the northern corner of the single storey extension.

TN1



2 windows (one open) present in the single story extension to the right of the entrance door.

TN2



View looking south towards the proposed location of works where the section of flat roof meets the pitched roof.

Car parking and hardstanding present around the site building.

TN3		Room A-within flat roof section of the building. Insulation boards on ceiling. No evidence of bat use e.g. droppings on surfaces etc.
TN4	 	Room B-within flat roof section of the building. Insultation boards on ceiling. No evidence of bat use e.g. droppings on windowsill/surfaces etc.

TN5



Roof C-partially within flat roof section of the building.

Insulation boards on ceiling.
Previous doorway has been blocked up.



Small area of light ingress in the corner.



Roofing felt and battens etc visible.

TN6



Room D-disused
toilets.

No signs of bat use e.g.
droppings noted on the
floor.



Roofing felt and batten
exposed with no
external light ingress
noted.

Roofing felt appears to
be bitumen 1f and
good condition.

TN7		Room E- Roofing felt and battens exposed with no external light ingress noted. Roofing felt appears to be bitumen 1f and good condition.
TN8		Room F-former toilet. Boarded section of roof space(right hand side of photograph) Roofing felt and batten exposed with no external light ingress noted. Roofing felt appears to be bitumen 1f and good condition.

TN9		Room G-former toilets. Roofing felt and batten exposed with no external light ingress noted. Roofing felt appears to be bitumen 1f and good condition.
TN10		Red bricked wall. Flat roof. Facias/barge boards appear relatively new and intact. No obvious entry points.

TN11	 A close-up photograph of the rear entrance of a building. The image shows a white downspout running vertically along the wall. Above the downspout, there is a white pipe and a lead flashing. The wall is a light beige color. The entrance is partially visible in the background.	Entrance to the rear of the building. Lead flashing intact. No obvious entry points.
TN12	 A photograph of the exterior wall of a building. The wall is a light beige color. There are two security lights mounted on the wall. Above the right security light, there is a small gap in the masonry. The roofline is visible at the top of the image.	Small gap in masonry above the security light corresponding to the light ingress noted from within the building.

TN13



Some raised/loose bit of cement present along the ridge of the roof.

No obvious raised/damaged tiles.