

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment

Survey site:

Premier inn Horsham North (Horsham Station) hotel, 57 North Street, Horsham RH12 1RB

Client:

Premier inn hotels / Whitbread Group PLC

Survey date:

2nd October 2024

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application for the demolition of 1no structure (B2) and the construction of an additional hotel building, and the refitting of 1no building (B1).

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 Charlie Moore (accredited agent on Natural England Protected Species Licence – details will be provided on request)					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (mph)	Rain
2-10-24	15	85	100	12	Light rain

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).	
Summary of Survey Findings (UKHab codes used)	The survey site is centred on National Grid Reference TQ 17854 31060 and has an area of approximately 0.4ha. The site is characterised by a hotel complex comprising a large multi storey hotel building with an adjacent pub and associated hard standing car parking areas and landscaping. The site is located in central Horsham, adjacent to the railway bisecting the town. Horsham Park is located approximately 340m west of the site, with dwellings and amenity gardens enclosing the north, west and south of the site, and the aforementioned railway and main road (B2195) enclosing the east. Habitats present onsite consist of:

	<u>Introduced shrubs [u1b6-847]</u> Several areas of introduced shrubs are present, in a generally managed state. Large areas are present on the boundaries of site, where the car park meets the site boundary, along with large sections of shrub present adjacent to the building and in more unmanaged sections in rarely utilised sections of site. the heights of these shrub areas range between 300mm and 2m in height, and have species including viburnum (d), pyracantha (f), privet, bramble, blackthorn and holly (o). <u>Scattered trees [u1-32]</u> Several scattered trees are present onsite, along the site boundaries. The majority of the trees present are classed as small (<300mm diameter at breast height), with 3no medium sized trees present on the western extent of the site. Species include sycamore (d), yew and cabbage trees (r). <u>Buildings and developed land, sealed surface [u1b, u1b5]</u> Present on the majority of site is tarmacked hard standing with 2no buildings present, a hotel and an associated pub. <u>Lines of trees [u1-33]</u> Along the western boundary of site is a large line of mature trees, with a dense scrub layer present underneath. No gaps in the canopy are present and the trees appear in good physiological condition. The trees present are almost wholly made up from sycamore (d), with the scrub layer comprised of laurel, ivy, privet, holly and mahonia.
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	<u>Ornamental hedge [h2b]</u> Several ornamental hedges are present onsite, with species including privet (a), yew (o) and ivy (r). the hedges usually measure 2.5m in height, and have no visible gaps present. <u>Local notable habitats</u> Priority habitats within 2km include: Deciduous woodland, located ~100m southwest Lowland Meadows, located ~1,100m south Ancient woodland, located ~1,400m east Woodpasture and parkland, located ~1,900m south and west
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No habitats on site are consistent with priority habitat types listed on S41 of the NERC Act. Furthermore, the habitats observed onsite are common and widespread. Small areas of shrub and <5 individual trees may be removed to facilitate the proposed.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution affecting the nearby deciduous woodland must be implemented during construction. A biodiversity net gain (BNG) report will be required for the proposal, as 25m² of habitat is affected by the proposal. The majority of habitats onsite are expected to be retained.

Locality and Designated Sites	
Summary of Survey Findings	The site is not subject to any statutory designation. The site is located within and impact risk zone for the St Leonards Park Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), although the proposed development type is not listed as a high risk to this designation. No Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) with bat qualifying features are present within 10km of site. Designated sites, along with their reason for designation within 2km are listed below: <u>High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), located ~1.400m east.</u> <u>Warnham Local Nature Reserve (LNR), located ~1.500m north</u> <i>The 17 acre Warnham Millpond with its reedbeds, islands and marginal vegetation dominates the reserve. Millpond Plantation and Walnut Tree Plantation are a mix of ancient woodland, conifer plantation and mixed broadleaved plantation. Boldings Brook runs through the middle of the reserve in a floodplain and floods the wet grassland and the willow carr in winter.</i> <i>The diverse habitats have a wealth of plants and animals with 10 species of amphibians and reptiles, 162 birds, 23 dragonflies and damselflies, 28 mammals including 7 bats, 366 plant species including grasses, sedges, rushes and ferns, as well as 523 species of moths. The reedbeds are good for warblers including Cetti's warbler and water rails. The woodlands are home to owls, sparrowhawks and roe deer and winter flocks of siskin and redwing. The grassland is particularly good for insects such as the migrant clouded yellow butterfly and six spot burnet moth. The water habitats from the large Millpond to the smaller dipping ponds and brooks have a wealth of wildlife from dragonflies to cormorants, teal, herons and fish.</i>

	<u>St Leonards Park SSSI, located ~2km east</u> <i>These species-rich ponds lie along a wooded stream, located 1km east of Horsham on the Hastings Beds (Upper Grinstead Clay and Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand). The broad fringe of fen and marginal vegetation surrounding the ponds support diverse botanical communities and a number of uncommon species occur at Dry Pond. The ponds and adjacent woodland provide habitat for a diverse range of Odonata (dragonflies and damselflies), including several rare species.</i>
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Impacts to these designated sites are not likely, due to the distance of the site from these designations and the urban setting.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None.
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 assemblages of invertebrates is found on site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	None foreseen.
<i>Recommendations</i>	No further surveys - The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for invertebrates: • The planting of native species of grasses into wildflower meadows • Pollinator friendly planting • Construction of insect boxes

Bats	
Summary of Survey Findings	There are 2no buildings present onsite. A large, 3no storey hotel building, B1, and a 3no storey associated pub building (B2). Habitats recorded on site are assessed to provide foraging and commuting opportunities for bats in the form of scattered trees, introduced shrubs, and hedgerows. These habitats will provide attract invertebrate prey species to the site whilst the trees and hedgerow enhance connectivity across the site for commuting bats. However, habitats are limited in extent and the site is not assessed to represent a significant resource in the context of the wider landscape. <u>B1</u> B1 is a 3no storey hotel building split into two distinct sections with an adjoining corridor, with rendered walls, and a pitched, gabled roof with a flat centre, and soffit boxing present on the eaves. Many of the upper gables are also clad in hanging clay tiles. Generally, the doors, windows and walls of B1 are in fair condition, however several suitable features for bats are present on the roof space, including several hanging or missing tiles on the wall cladding, along with several slipped or missing roof tiles. Furthermore, a window on the upper floor on the eastern extent of the building was noted to be loose, with several gaps present that bats could utilise. A large gap in the soffits was also identified. These features are likely to be suitable to support crevice dwelling species of bats. B1 has 2no loft spaces for the 2no parts of the building respectively. The westernmost loft space was not accessible at the time of survey, however, is likely constructed in a similar fashion to the accessible loft space in the easternmost building portion. The loft is constructed with wooden beams and is lined with bitumen felt, with an internal height of approximately 3m. Generally, the loft space appears in good

	condition, with tightly fitting beams, and no large tears or sags in the lining. Furthermore, the loft space was split into 4no sections with a fire retardant wall. This is likely to restrict movement of void dwelling bats, and as such, the loft space is likely suboptimal for these species. Bats could utilise any gaps in the hanging wall tiles and the gaps in the soffits to access the loft space. No evidence of bats including droppings, feeding remains or urine staining is present in the internal areas of B1. Furthermore, cobwebs are present throughout the internal areas of B1's lost space indicate a lack of recent use by bats. <u>B2</u> B2 is a 3no storey pub building constructed in a similar fashion to B1, although has several different roof areas present including sheltered smoking areas with pitched roofs and flat lean-to roofs constructed from plastic. Generally however, most of the roofs are pitched with gable ends and constructed from slate tiles. Several of the upper gables feature similar hanging tile cladding to B1, although no soffit boxes are present. Several suitable roosting features are present on B2, including missing mortar around ridge tiles, missing and slipped tiles, collapsed or waned roof trusses resulting in lifted areas of tiles, along with windows in poor condition on the eastern extent of the site. These features can all be utilised by crevice dwelling species. B2 had no accessible loft space at the time of survey.
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	There are 4no bat European Protected Species License (EPSL) within the last 10no years located within 2km, covering the destruction of resting places for common pipistrelles and brown long-eared bats, with the closest being located ~600m east of site. In summary, an established population of bats is present in the local area, denoted by both the designated sites mentioned previously, and several granted EPSL within 2km. B1 and B2 both have suitable features for utilisation by crevice dwelling bats, with B2 potentially having a suitable loft void for void dwelling bats. B1 has moderate value for bats, due to several individual high value features, whereas B2 has high value for bats due to the same features occurring more frequently in addition to potential access into the loft void.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposals include the demolition of B2 and may include works to the exterior of B1. These works could disrupt, destroy or damage any bat roosts present within these buildings. Tree lines and a large percentage of flora is expected to be retained, so affects to foraging habitat from the development is not likely.
<i>Recommendations</i>	B1 has moderate value for roosting bats, and will require 2no Bat Emergence Surveys (BERS). In line with current guidelines, it is recommended that two dusk emergence surveys supplemented using infra-red cameras are completed for B1. Dusk emergence surveys must be undertaken during the active bat season between May and September where at least one of the surveys are completed during the

	optimal survey period between mid-May and August. The surveys should be separated by a minimum of three weeks. B2 has high value for roosting bats, and will require 3no BERS. In line with current guidelines, it is recommended that three dusk emergence surveys supplemented using infra-red cameras are completed for B2. Dusk emergence surveys must be undertaken during the active bat season between May and September where at least two of the surveys are completed during the optimal survey period between mid-May and August. Given the high value of B1, at least one survey should be undertaken during the typical maternity period (between June and July). The surveys should be separated by a minimum of three weeks. 11no surveyors are required to provide full coverage of the building's elevations to look for emerging/re-entering bats. An infrared camera should also be employed as part of the survey to see where any specific roost locations (or likely roost locations) are located. 5no surveyors are required for B1 and 6no for B2. Lighting mitigation may be required based on the outcome of the night bat survey(s). If any bat roosts are confirmed from this survey schedule, An EPSL application to Natural England will be required. The EPSL application requires that surveys have been undertaken within the most recent active bat season. Please note that a Material Changes Check will be required within three months of the EPSL submission if no survey work has been undertaken within that period to inform the EPSL application.
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	Furthermore, a review of Biological Records Data from the local Environmental Records Centre will be required , which will need to be added to this report prior to the EPSL application. 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, scattered trees and scrub 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, tree and shrub 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>	The boundary scrub presents suitability for reptiles, however the site being located in a dense urban area is likely to limit the connectivity of the site to the wider area due to urban barriers such as main roads and dwellings, and as such, renders the site suboptimal for reptiles.

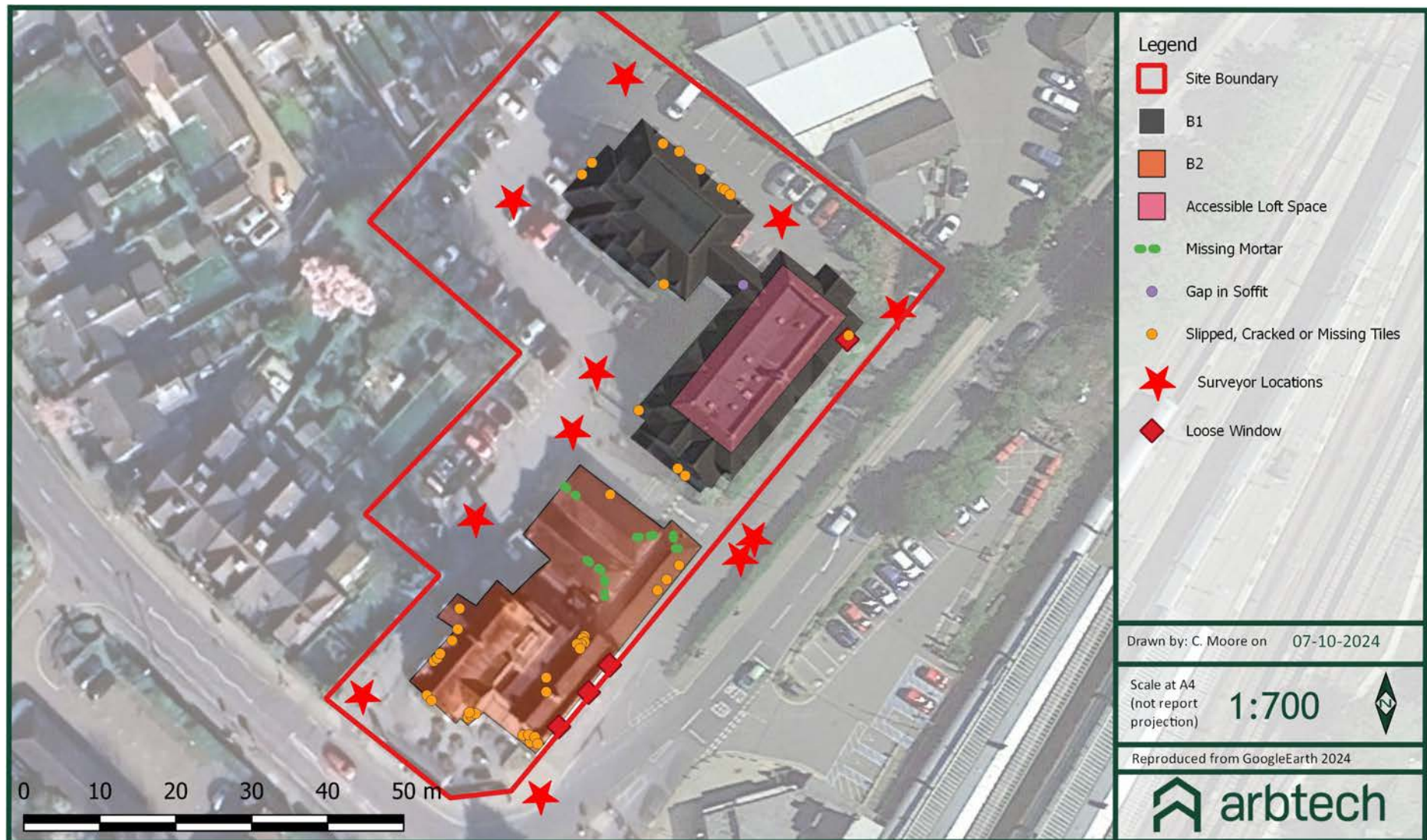
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The development is not likely to result in the removal or large portions of shrubs, however indirect impacts such as pollution may occur.
<i>Recommendations</i>	A precautionary working method will be implemented for widespread reptiles during construction, including the following measures: • Heras fencing will be erected around the working area to prevent encroachment towards shrubs where reptiles could be present. • A staged approach will be adopted for vegetation clearance, whereby the vegetation will be strimmed to 15cm and left overnight to allow any amphibians to disperse. The vegetation can then be cleared to ground level and must be maintained at this level for the duration of construction to deter amphibians from the working area. • Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. • Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby habitats. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. • If any reptiles 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. The site could be enhanced for reptiles post development with the inclusion of log piles and a compost heap.

Amphibians	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	Great crested newts exist in metapopulations and are known to utilise ponds and their connecting terrestrial habitat during their life cycle; great crested newts are typically found within terrestrial habitats up to 500m from breeding ponds (Langton et al. 2001). A review of aerial imagery indicates the presence of 3no ponds, with the closest being located ~360m east. The intervening habitat of these ponds and the site are comprised wholly of urban dwellings with amenity gardens, main roads with kerbs and industrial areas. As such, any great crested newts using these ponds are not likely to be able to access the site. The areas of scrub present onsite could support amphibians, as they provide foraging and commuting habitat, although, in a similar way to the great crested newts, the site is not suitably connected to a wider array of suitable habitat, meaning that any populations of common amphibians are likely to be absent from site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No direct impacts foreseen. The majority of boundary scrub and tree lines are set to be retained. Indirect impacts such as pollution could occur however.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Precautionary working methods for reptiles will assist amphibians.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	None foreseen
<i>Recommendations</i>	None.

Riparian animals	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	There are no watercourses on or suitably connected to the site. Off-site ditches are found to the east along the road and north beyond the tree line.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None.
Hazel dormouse	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	There are no suitable habitats onsite suitable for hazel dormice as the tree lines and scrub lack the suitable properties including a 3-dimensional structure, and is not suitably connected to a wider landscape. There are no dormouse European Protected Species License (EPSL) within 2km.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No impacts are anticipated on hazel dormice as a result of the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None.
Other e.g. hedgehog	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The scrub and lines of trees provide suitable foraging habitat for common mammals such as hedgehogs.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The majority of scrub will be retained during construction. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of hedgehogs, if present.
<i>Recommendations</i>	██████████, 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.
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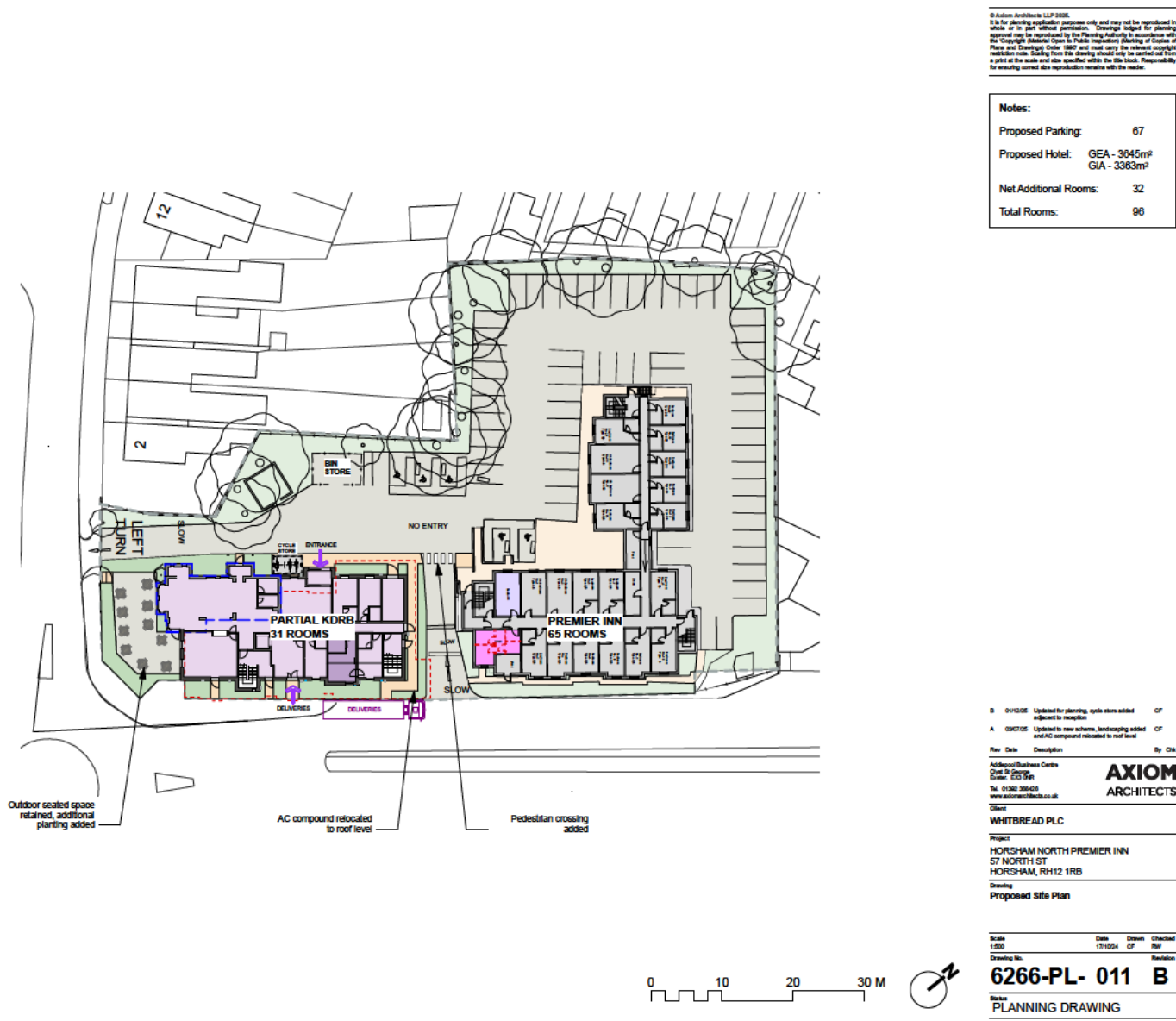
Appendix 1: Habitat map

Appendix 2: PRA map

Appendix 3: Location map



Appendix 4: Proposed plan





Appendix 5: Photos



1. Site overview, B1 right of frame, B2 left of frame

2. B1 in situ



3. B2 in situ



4. Slipped and missing hanging tiles on B1



5. Large gap in soffit on B1



6. Windows in poor condition on B2



7. Lifted, slipped and missing tiles on B2



8. Loft space of B1



9. Hard standing and scattered trees with scrub



10. Lines of trees and buildings



11. Ornamental hedges and medium sized trees

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Version control			
Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	Charlie Moore BSc (Hons) MArborA AMRSB, Arboricultural and Ecological Consultant	07/10/2024
Review	0.2	Jonathan Stuttard BSc (Hons) MSc, Principal Consultant	22/10/2024
Final	1.0	Charlie Moore BSc (Hons) MArborA AMRSB, Arboricultural and Ecological Consultant	22/10/2024
Update	1.1	Katie Belbin BA (Hons), Consultant Ecologist	09/01/2026