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Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site:

The Horns, Crazies Hill, Berkshire, RG10 8LY

Client:

Horns Hospitality Ltd

Survey date:

10 May 2024

Project:

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

Remove internal walls and chimney breasts from both ground and upper floors to open up the bar area and allow for bedroom accommodation upstairs.

[Unsubmitted]

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.](#)

The site survey was undertaken by Jamie-Lee Anderson BSc (Hons) (Accredited Agent on Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2019-41480-CLS-CLS).					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (mph)	Rain
10/05/2024	16.6	75	0	2	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		The site is located at National Grid Reference SU 80001 80937 and has an area of approximately 0.3ha. The site is comprised of a single storey brick-built building clad in timber, with a two-storey brick-built extension. The building is utilised as a pub and restaurant. The roof structure is complex. The majority of the roof is clad in clay tiles, and the lower half of the eastern extension is clad in slate tiles. There are numerous chimneys on the building. There are two dormer windows on the southeast elevation. The site is located in a semi-rural part of Reading and is surrounded by large arable fields and woodland pockets. Onsite habitat value for bats is assessed as optimal, owing to the surrounding mature trees and the proximity of a water body to the southwest of the site. To the author's knowledge, no previous ecology reports have been produced for this site. There are six European Protected Species Licence ESPL listed on Magic Maps within 2km of site.			

	Reference	Approximate distance from site	Species affected	License allows
	EPSM2013-6116	400m southeast	Brown long-eared bat	Destruction of a resting place
	2019-41331-EPS-MIT	635m southeast	Common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place
	2014-2875-EPS-MIT	1060m east	Brown long-eared bat	Destruction of a resting place
	2015-7300-EPS-MIT	1070m southwest	Brown long-eared bat, common pipistrelle, and soprano pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place
	EPSM2011-2958	1650m northwest	Common pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place
	EPSM2011-2915	1900m west	Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared bat, and whiskered bat	Destruction of a resting place
The site is not subject to any designation, and there are no known statutory sites nearby.				
Field survey results				
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	B1 is a restaurant and pub. Single storey brick-built building clad in timber, with a two-storey brick-built extension. The building is utilised as a pub and restaurant. The roof structure is complex. The majority of the roof is clad in clay tiles, and the lower half of the eastern extension is clad in slate tiles. There are numerous chimneys on the building. There are two dormer windows on the southeast elevation. In line with Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J. (Ed) 2023) B1 is assessed to have 'high' habitat value for roosting bats due to the presence of suitable roost features and the location of the site. Missing and broken tiles provide suitable roosting features for crevice dwelling bats, such as common pipistrelle. There were four loft spaces within B1, all of which were surveyed. Two loft spaces were large and two were small (see Appendix 4 for more).			

	Limitation: the southwestern elevation could not be assessed thoroughly owing to the proximity of the adjacent property.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development will result in the renovation and repair of this building. This could result in modification or destruction of any bat roosts present and could cause disturbance, death or injury to bats.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Three bat emergence surveys are required during the active bat season (optimal May to August, suboptimal September) to confirm presence or likely absence of a bat roost in the building. Both surveys should be completed during the optimal survey period mid-May to August inclusive. Infra-red cameras should be used as an aid. Surveys should be a minimum of three weeks apart. Four surveyors are required to provide full coverage of the building. If bat roosts are confirmed in the building one additional survey will be required to characterise the roost and to inform an EPSL application to Natural England. The EPSL application requires that surveys have been undertaken within the most recent active bat season and planning permission must have been granted and all relevant wildlife-related conditions have been discharged prior to submission. A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during post-development which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors. Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting-2 Habitat creation could be considered to enhance opportunities at the site for foraging and commuting bats post development: (list out nice things for bats, night scented flowers, native trees and native flowering

	shrubs, relaxed mowing regimes along lawn edges, meadow mat, pond creation; remember that small sites benefit most from things that don't require management)
Nesting Birds	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The building could be used by nesting birds. Areas around the timber soffits and the chimneys could be used by nesting birds.
<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 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 two bird boxes on mature trees around the site boundaries or on retained buildings will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. Schwegler No 17 Swift Nest Box (buildings), Bark Boxes Blue Tit 25mm (trees), Woodstone Nest Box (buildings or trees), or a similar alternative brand.

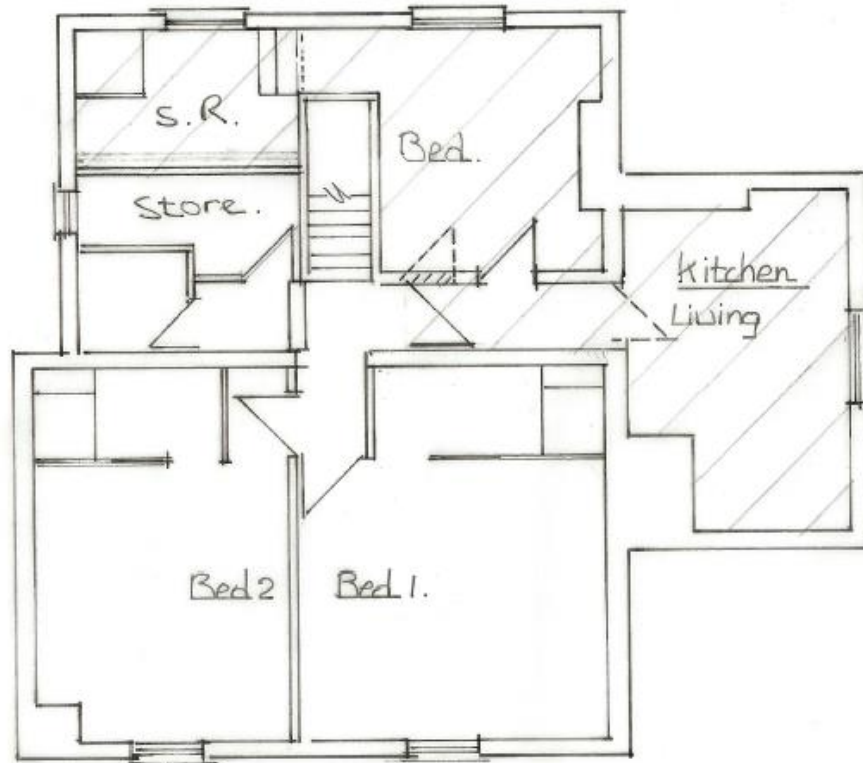
Appendix 1: PRA plan



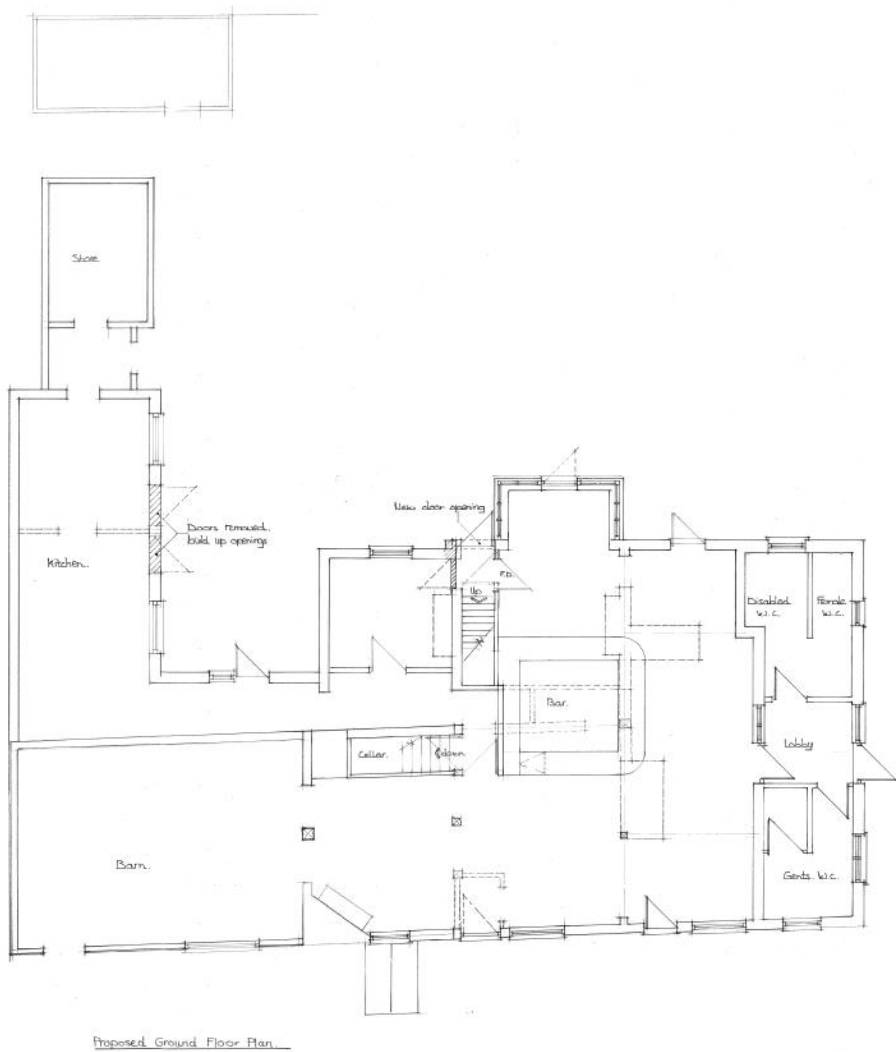
Appendix 2: Location map



Appendix 3: Proposed plan



Proposed First Floor Plan 'C'



Appendix 4: Photos

B1 – Southeast elevation
This elevation of B1 is clad in clay tiles. There are numerous tiles which are raised and/or missing. These gaps provide suitable roosting features of which crevice dwelling bats could exploit.



B1 – North elevation
The raised clay tiles provide opportunities for crevice dwelling bats to roost.

**B1 – Northeast elevation**

The sub roof on this elevation is clad in slate tiles. There are areas of cracked tiles on the slate roof, which provide roosting potential for crevice dwelling bats. The clay roof provides roosting features (as seen in the close-up photo above).

**B1 – Interior**

Abiotic recordings within loft space one: 21.1°C and 55.2% relative humidity at the time of the survey. The loft was unboarded and was viewed from the loft hatch, the floor of the loft was covered in mineral wool insulation and the interior of the roof was lined with bitumen. No evidence of bats was found within this loft space.

	B1 – Interior Abiotic recordings within loft space two: 21.2°C and 65.9% relative humidity at the time of the survey. The loft was unboarded and was viewed from the loft hatch, the floor of the loft was covered in mineral wool insulation and the interior of the roof was lined with bitumen. No evidence of bats was found within this loft space.
	B1 – Interior Abiotic recordings within loft space three (small loft space): 21°C and 67.9% relative humidity at the time of the survey. The loft was unboarded and was viewed from the loft hatch, the floor of the loft was covered in mineral wool insulation and the interior of the roof was lined with bitumen. No evidence of bats was found within this loft space.

**B1 – Interior**

Abiotic recordings within loft space four (small loft space): 21.7°C and 73.9% relative humidity at the time of the survey. The loft was unboarded and was viewed from the loft hatch, the floor of the loft was covered in mineral wool insulation and the interior of the roof was lined with bitumen. No evidence of bats was found within this loft space.

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Version control			
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Draft	0.1	Jamie-Lee Anderson BSc (Hons), Graduate Ecologist	11/05/2024
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