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Ecological Surveyor
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Arbtech Consulting Ltd
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Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site:

57 River Road, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5BF

Client:

Jane Wood

Survey date:

29th April 2025

Project:

Partial demolition of the existing structure, and external and internal alterations to the remainder. Redevelopment into six apartments with amenity space, parking and cycle storage.

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

The site survey was undertaken by:			Licence number/Accreditation:		
Jon Kewell, Ecological Surveyor			Accredited on Bat Licence of Natalie Evans (licence number and details on request)		
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rainfall
29th April 2025	18	43	0	1	None

Executive summary

B1 has low habitat value for void-dwelling bat species due to overly large access points and light ingress, as well as drafty conditions within the building.

B1 has moderate habitat value for crevice-dwelling bat species, due to numerous suitable crevices on the external elevations of the building and its proximity to the river which provides excellent foraging and commuting habitat as well as a water source.

Though no evidence was found of bat occupation during the survey, the full extent of the roosting features (i.e. between slates and lining and gaps around lintels) could not be surveyed sufficiently to verify likely absence of bats.

Two emergence surveys are therefore required to determine likely absence of roosting bats. These surveys will be conducted as follows:

Number of visits	Number of surveyors and night vision aids (NVAs)	Survey months	Any additional survey requirements
2	2 surveyors with 3 NVAs	Mid-May-August a minimum of 3 weeks apart.	Loft/internal inspection prior to at least one survey - Yes

PRA Survey Results

Detailed using desk study and site survey. 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 and location plan in Appendix 2

Background and Site Location				
Background				
A PRA was conducted by Arbtech in June 2021 during which no internal or external evidence of bats was observed. At the time (following industry best practice and the surveyors individual assessment) the risks to bats as a result of the proposed works was deemed negligible, and no further surveys were recommended. Due to time elapsed this assessment can no longer be relied upon.				
Grid ref (8 figure):	**Size of survey area (ha):**	**Size of overall site (ha):**	**Number of buildings on site/within site ownership:**	**Number of buildings surveyed:**
TQ 02351 02140	0.05ha	0.05ha	1	1
If there are any other buildings on site that were not surveyed, what is the justification for this?		**N/A**		
Are there any previous works to any buildings on site in the past 5 years, or planned in the next 5 years?		**No**		
Details of on-site habitats:		The site is comprised of one building (B1) and an adjacent yard. B1 is a derelict three-storey semi-detached auto garage of mixed brick and stone construction, with areas constructed from wooden boards clad in corrugated sheeting. It has a single pitched roof covered with slate tiles and gables at each end.		

	There is a single-storey extension and attached car-port along the south-western elevation. The roof of B1 has many raised slates, leaving gaps and access to the space between tiles and felt and onto wall-tops suitable for crevice-dwelling bat species. The entire south-western elevation is clad in rusted corrugated metal which has also created gaps between sheets, between sheets and boards and wall-top access. The building has several broken windows and holes in the roof and masonry which can admit void-dwelling bat species and birds. Aside from a large buddleia bush in the yard at the north-east corner of the building, the ground of the entire site is sealed concrete. The south-western boundary of the site borders the River Arun.
Details of surrounding habitats:	The site sits on the western outskirts of the town of Littlehampton on the banks of the River Arun which is an important water resource for bats. There are areas of intertidal mudflats in the river very close to the site. Surrounding habitats in the immediate area consist of residential dwellings and gardens, along with industrial retail yards, two pubs, and a small yachting marina. The railway line out of Littlehampton station is located 100m to the north and heads west out of the town. Immediately to the north of this is a recreation ground. Further afield, Climping Beach Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies 835m to the south. The area between this and the property is made up of a mosaic of connected agricultural farming fields and a golf course.

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>The landscape to the north, east, and south-east is dominated by the seaside town of Littlehampton.
To the south-west, west and north-west are further large stretches of farmland and connected riparian habitats following the River Arun, providing excellent commuting, foraging and roosting opportunities for bats.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Have bat records been obtained? If not why?</td><td>No. Bat records for within 2km of the site from Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SxBRC) are not considered necessary at this time. These records will be obtained following the emergence surveys if any roosts are identified.</td></tr>
<tr><td>EPSL and bat roost records (2km radius)</td><td>Magic EPSL records 2km radius:
<table>
<tr><th>Bat Species Effected</th><th>Approx. distance from site</th><th>Impacts allowed by licence</th></tr>
<tr><td>Common Pipistrelle</td><td>805m east</td><td>Destruction of a resting place</td></tr>
<tr><td>Brown long-eared bat, common pipistrelle, Natterer’s bat</td><td>1714m north-east</td><td>Destruction of a resting place</td></tr>
<tr><td>Brown long-eared bat, common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle</td><td>1789m north-east</td><td>Destruction of a breeding site, destruction of a resting place</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
<tr><td>Designated sites</td><td>On site – The site is not located on any designated site.</td></tr>
</table>

	2km radius – Climping Beach Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located 835m to the south. 12km radius - No bat Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) recorded within 12km
Any known roosts in the local area from the surveyor's local knowledge	No
Were bat droppings collected and retained for DNA analysis?	No
Limitations	A thorough inspection of the north-western roof structure was not possible due to its attachment to the neighbouring property. Internal inspection however revealed this roof elevation to be in a similar state of disrepair to the south-eastern elevations, and it can therefore be reasonably assumed that the habitat is similar to that roof pitch.

Survey Results	
Building Ref: B1	
Building current use	Derelict auto garage
Building proposed use (if different to above)	6x apartments with parking and cycle storage
Building type	Three-storey semi-detached building
Roof type and shape	Single-pitched and gabled
Roof covering	Slate tiles

Lofts/Internal voids
All three floors are in a state of disrepair with gaps, holes and broken windows leading in from the outside. They are also all connected by open stairwells and therefore all floors need to be considered as being able to be used by bats.

The ground floor is comprised of a large L-shaped room with a separate sealed room in the crook of the “L”. A door on the south-west elevation leads out into the extension and car port. There are large cross-beams supporting the structure and a stone floor. No evidence of bat or rodent usage was found.
The extension is made from bricks to a height of approximately 3 feet, and the remainder is made from single wood panels and corrugated sheeting. There is a large open door on the south-east side allowing light ingress and access. The attached car port is made from steel sheeting and wood with a largely missing wooden panel roof. It is completely open on two sides. No evidence of bat usage was found within the extension or the car port.

The middle floor is one large open space. There are light-coloured dusty carpets and sheeting on the floors which would show any evidence of bat or rodent usage for example droppings and feeding remains, however no such evidence was present (which indicates a lack of void dwelling bat presence but does not indicate an absence of crevice dwelling). This floor was very bright, having several uncovered windows. There are many gaps, primarily along the south-western elevation, and a portion of the window on that elevation is broken.

The top floor (approximately 12m(L) x 7.5m(W) x 6m(H)) is also one large open space. There is a broken window on the south-western elevation, and a large portion of the roof slates are missing above it at the western corner of the building, allowing light into the floor. The second storey of the entire south-western wall is made from wooden boards clad in corrugated iron, and the third storey just single sheet corrugated iron. The ridge and gables are well sealed and the bitumen lining is in good condition apart from the holes mentioned. No bat droppings or feeding remains were observed, nor any rodent droppings. There were large amounts of bird droppings under each gable end. Remains of a dead pigeon was found in the centre of the floor, and there were cat and fox footprints in the dust throughout the entire floor suggesting frequent use by predatory animals.
A pigeon was observed nesting high in the stonework on the north-eastern corner.

Loft photos	
Bottom floor	
Bottom floor surfaces	

Inside of extension	
Inside of car port	

Middle floor	
Middle floor gaps and missing portion of window	

Top floor	
Top floor gable	

Top floor ridge and lining	

Top floor open window	
Top floor missing roof slates/damage	

Evidence of usage by predatory animals	
Bird droppings	

Pigeon remains	
Nesting pigeon	

External roof and wall features
Roof and eaves features
The roof is covered with slate tiles. There are several raised slates which provide gaps and access to space between the tiles and lining which could be used by crevice dwelling bats, and any droppings would trapped within and not visible. There are large open portions of roof at the western corner allowing access into the loft and into the roof between the slates and lining. The ridge-line is well sealed and there is no mortar missing along the length. There are no eaves along the north-western elevation as it is attached to the wall of the neighbouring property. There are gaps at eaves level along the south-eastern elevation leading into the top floor space and onto the wall-tops. The verges and gable of the north-eastern elevation are well sealed apart from an area of raised tiles at the northern corner which could allow access to the roosting space between the slates and lining. The verges of the south-western elevation are missing large sections of mortar, allowing access to the space between the tiles and lining.

Wall features
The walls are of mixed stone and red brick construction apart from the south-western elevation. The stone wall on this elevation stops at the top of the ground floor and continues as wooden boards clad in corrugated sheeting, however crevice-dwelling bats could crawl down inside the cladding and access the wall tops. There are numerous gaps between the sheeting and wooden boards suitable for roosting crevice-dwelling bats. The brick and stone walls of the south-eastern elevation are well sealed, however there are gaps suitable for roosting crevice-dwelling bats around the window lintels. The wall of the north-east elevation itself is well sealed, however there are multiple gaps around the first and second floor doors, in particular above the wooden lintel that separates them where several bricks are missing.

No droppings were found on or underneath the walls, however this evidence can quickly and easily be weathered away, and it is very early in the active season so bats may not have returned yet.

External photos	
Yard	

Full elevations (north-east)	

Full elevations (north-west)	

Full elevations (south-east)	
Full elevations (south-west)	

Example of raised roof slates	
Corrugated cladding	

Roof of car port	
Example of gaps around SE windows	

Gaps in lintels between NE doors	
Access under slates at northern corner	

NE gable	

Conclusions and Recommendations
B1 has low habitat value for void-dwelling bat species due to overly large access points and light ingress, as well as drafty conditions within the building. Predatory animals such as cats and foxes have frequent access to the building and the nesting pigeons may also deter void-dwelling bats. B1 has moderate to high habitat value for crevice-dwelling bat species, as there are numerous suitable crevices on the external elevations of the building. Crevice-dwelling bats could crawl between the corrugated sheeting and the wooden boards and roost in that space, or gain access to the wall tops. They could get into any of the gaps under the tiles between the slates and the lining, and potentially crawl anywhere under the roof within this space. On the north-east and south-east facing elevations there are gaps around the window and door lintels that are suitable for these bat species. Its locale on the river bank also increases the site's habitat value as bats will use the river as a water source, with the insects drawn towards the riparian habitat providing food for foraging. In addition the river provides a commuting corridor to the high value habitats of the agricultural fields and nature reserve beyond to the south. Though no evidence was found during the survey, bat presence on site cannot be ruled out due to the number of variables included above.

B1 Impacts

The proposed works involve demolition and remodelling of large areas of B1. Any bats roosting in the aforementioned crevices could be killed or injured during the work.

Recommendations

B1
Two dusk emergence surveys will be required to identify and characterise any roosts within this building. These surveys will be conducted in the optimal bat season (Mid-May to August) with a minimum of three weeks between them. If the two visits indicate that bats are roosting on site, or if a higher level of activity than expected is recorded, a third survey will be required.

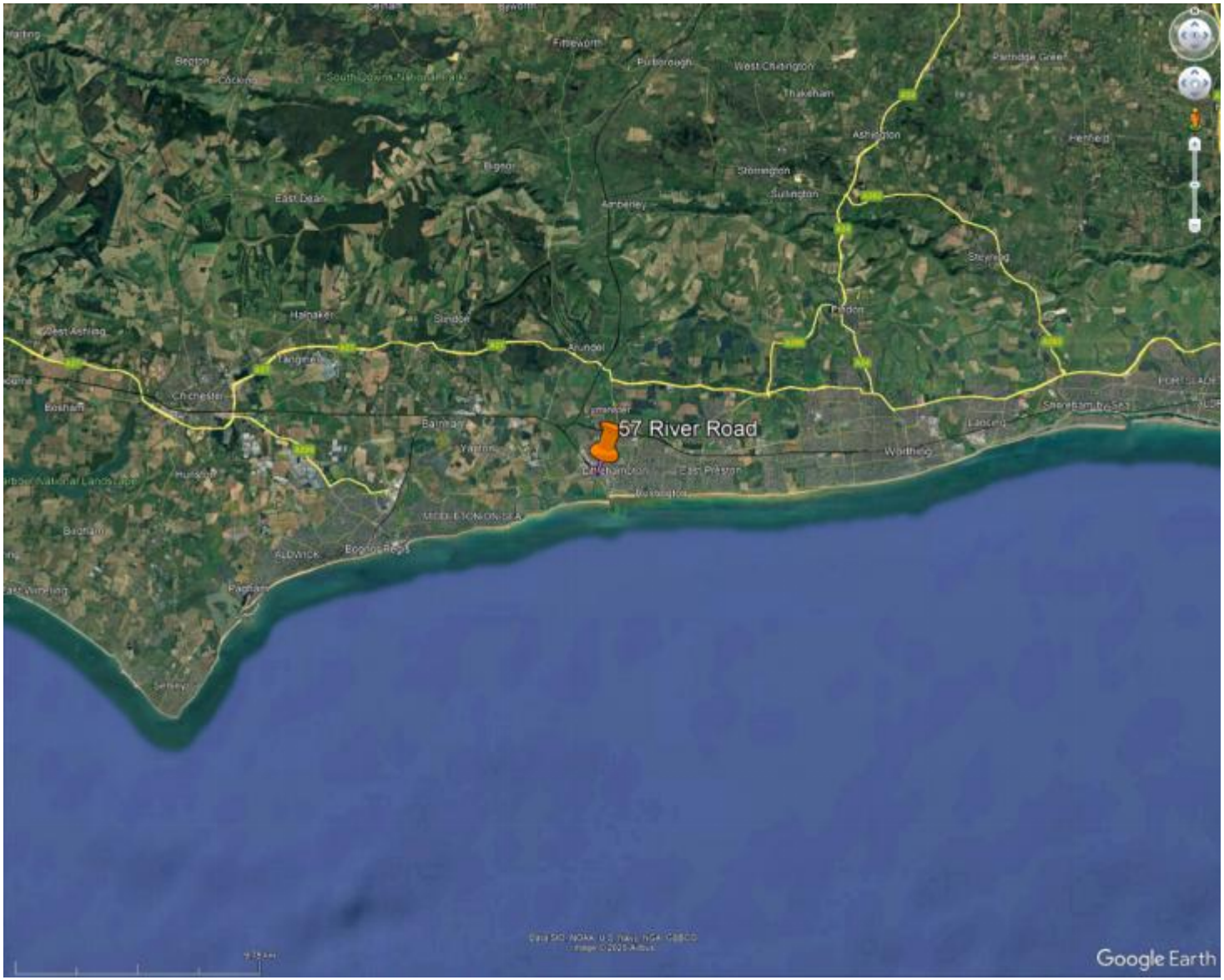
Number of visits	Number of surveyors and night vision aids (NVAs)	Survey months	Any additional survey requirements
2	2 surveyors with 3 NVAs	Mid-May-August a minimum of 3 weeks apart.	Loft/internal inspection prior to at least one survey - Yes
Enhancements	TBC following emergence surveys		

Nesting Birds	
Summary of Survey Findings	A nesting pigeon was observed in the inner stonework at the north-east gable. Bird droppings indicate pigeons have been nesting at both internal gables.
Foreseen Impacts	The proposed works will destroy the nests of any pigeons nesting within B1.
Recommendations	Any works to B1 should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. Regardless of the time of year, because pigeons can nest all year round a close inspection of the building should be undertaken immediately prior to the start of works by a qualified ecologist. All active nests will need to be retained with a 5m buffer until the young have fledged.

Enhancements	Wall mounted or integrated swift and house sparrow boxes/terraces will be included in the building design. These should be placed high up on/in the walls of the building and away from direct sunlight and windows. These species nest in groups, so groups of nesting chambers should be provided.

Appendix 1: PRA plans

Appendix 2: Location map



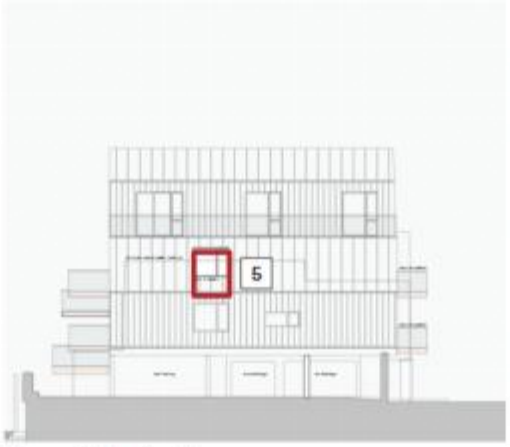
Appendix 3: Proposed Plans

Approved Front Road elevation

Approved Side elevation

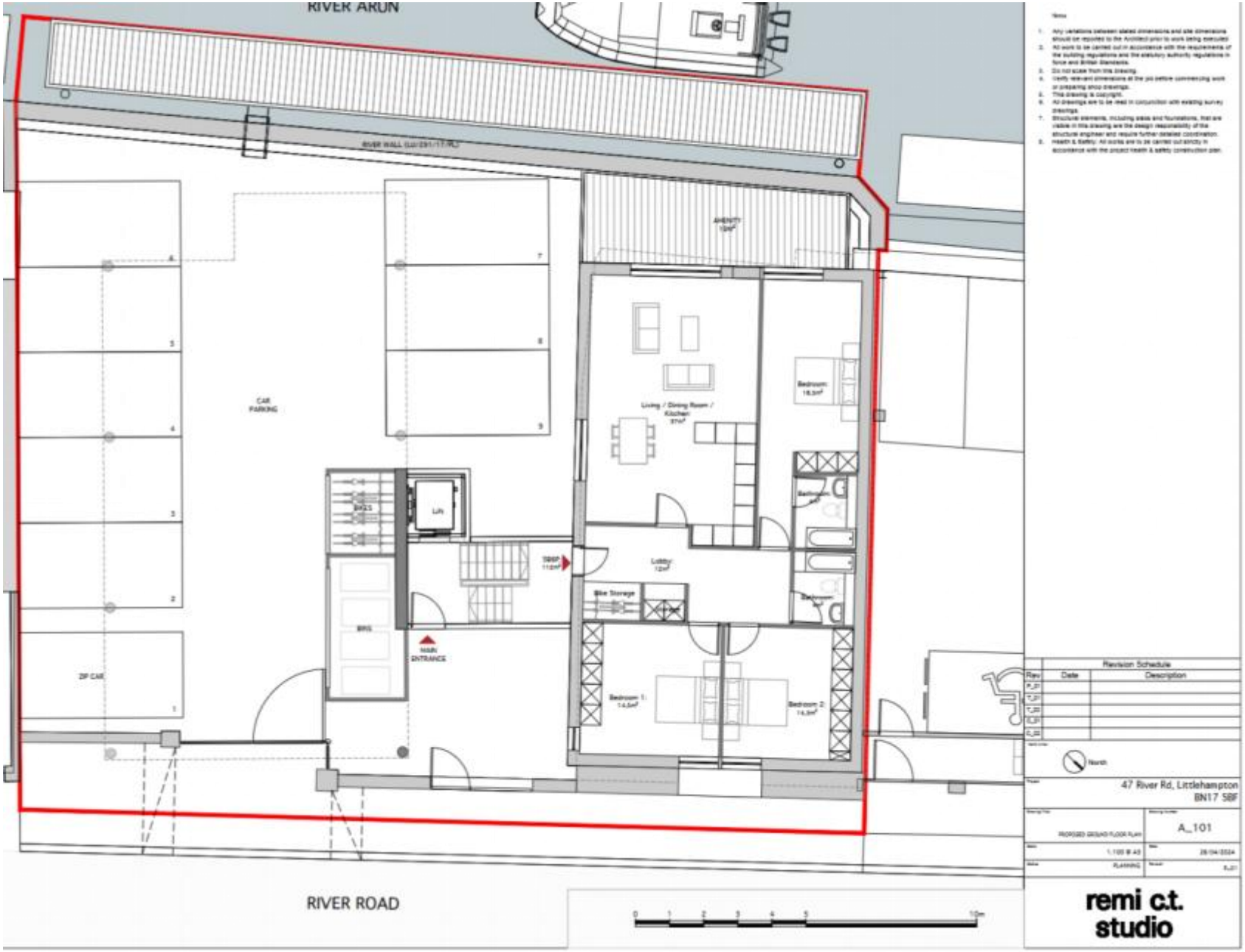
Approved River side elevation

Proposed Front Road elevation



Proposed Side elevation

Proposed River side elevation


RIVER ARUN
RIVER WALL
AMENITY
CAR PARKING
Living / Dining Room / Kitchen
Bedroom
Lobby
Bike Storage
LIN
BIKES
BINS
MAIN ENTRANCE
ZIP CAR
Bedroom 1
Bedroom 2
RIVER ROAD
Revision Schedule
Rev
Date
Description
North
47 River Rd, Littlehampton
BN17 5BF
A_101
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Version control			
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