

PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT

MAY 2021

Unit 1,
New Street,
Manchester,
M40 8AW

U R B A N
G R E E N



QUALITY MANAGEMENT

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Prepared By:	Mark Blacker	Signature:		Qualifications: Ecologist, MSc, ACIEEM
Checked By:	Jake Matthews	Signature:		Qualifications: Assistant Ecologist MSc, Qualifying CIEEM
Authorised By:	Katie Bird	Signature:		Qualifications: Senior Ecologist, MEnvSci, ACIEEM
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NON-TECHNICAL EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Square One Manchester Ltd are proposing to develop an industrial unit on New Street, Manchester (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). The proposals include the conversion of the existing building into a cultural event space.

Urban Green have been appointed to complete a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the site to determine the suitability of the site to support roosting bats.

One building was identified on site which was assessed internally and externally where possible. Due to the proximity of surrounding buildings, it was not possible to fully view the building and roof externally.

This building was assessed as proving negligible bat roosting potential, therefore no further survey work relating to bats is required to facilitate this development. Precautionary working methods have been provided to be followed when carrying out any works to the roof.

The roof of the building may provide some value to nesting birds. It is therefore recommended that any works to the roof are completed outside of the nesting bird season (March – September inclusive). If this is not possible then a check for the presence of nesting birds should be made no more than 48 hours prior to the commencement of works to the roof by a suitably qualified ecologist.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the Scheme

Square One Manchester Ltd are proposing to develop an industrial unit on New Street, Manchester (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). The proposals include the conversion of the existing unit into a cultural events space.

Urban Green have been appointed to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the site.

The author of the report is Mark Blacker, MSc, ACIEEM, Ecologist at Urban Green. Mark has experience providing ecological consulting services for a range of development schemes across the UK, including residential, commercial, and large infrastructure schemes.

1.2 Site Context

The site is located at National Grid Reference SJ 86281 99921 and comprises a total area of approximately 80m² (see Figure 1).



Figure 1 – Site Extent

The site is located in a largely industrial area of Manchester. The site is located approximately 3km north east of Manchester city centre. Industrial units are present around the site on all sides. The A6010 is present 110m south east of the site and a railway line is present 50m north east of the site.

1.3 Purpose of this Report

This report has been produced to document the methods, results and conclusions of a PRA. The objectives of the assessment comprise a field survey of the features of interest and to assess its suitability for roosting bats, following guidance set out in Collins (2016). The assessment will determine whether further nocturnal bat surveys are required to confirm likely absence or presence of roosting bats.

Relevant UK legislation of the protection of all UK bats are detailed in Appendix 1.

2 Methods

2.1 Desk Study

Sources of information used in the desk study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 – Desk Study Sources of Information

Source	Date Consulted	Information Sought
Online aerial imagery	21/05/2021	Review of satellite imagery.
MAGIC website (www.magic.gov.uk)	21/05/2021	Locations of granted EPSL within 5km of the site.

2.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment

A PRA was carried out on site on 21st May 2021. It was completed by Mark Blacker, Ecologist at Urban Green.

The PRA methodology is based on information contained within the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidelines, 3rd edition (Collins, 2016). The categorisation within this report is based on that set out in Table 2, which is used as a basis for determining the requirement for further surveys.

The building was inspected internally and externally (where possible, see Section 2.3) using binoculars and a high-powered torch.

Table 2 – Suitability of Buildings for Roosting Bats (adapted from Collins, 2016)

Category of Suitability	Typical Characteristics	Further Survey Requirements
High	A structure 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.	A minimum of three separate survey visits. At least one dusk emergence and a separate dawn re-entry survey. Surveys can be undertaken between May and September, with at least two surveys between May and August.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but are unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.	A minimum of two separate survey visits. One dusk emergence and a separate dawn re-entry survey. Surveys can be undertaken between May and September with at least one survey between May and August.

Category of Suitability	Typical Characteristics	Further Survey Requirements
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate condition and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis by larger numbers of bats.	A minimum of one emergence/re-entry survey between May and August.
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.	No further work required.

2.3 Constraints to the Survey

It was not possible to fully inspect the exterior of the building due to lack of access and the proximity of other buildings. The south western face of the building was fully visible, however it was not possible to view the north eastern face. Other industrial units are joined to the building to both the north west and south east. The lack of full visibility of the exterior of the building has been considered within this report and is not judged to be a significant constraint on the assessment provided within this report

It was not possible to fully inspect the exterior of the roof of the building due to a lack of visibility and proximity of surrounding buildings. However, it was possible to view this roof internally. This is not judged to be a significant constraint on the assessment provided within this report.

Where a lack of records is found during the desk search for a defined geographical area, it does not necessarily mean that there is a lack of ecological interest; the area may be simply under-recorded.

The conclusions and recommendations detailed in this report are based upon the site redline boundary and the development proposals as outlined by the client at the time of writing. Should there be any changes to the site redline boundary or development proposals at a later stage, this assessment should be reviewed to determine whether any amendments or additional survey work is required.

2.4 Lifespan for Report

In accordance with CIEEM's Advice Note on the Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys (CIEEM, 2019), the details of this report will remain valid for a period of **18 months** from the date of the survey (i.e. until 21st November 2022). After this date, this assessment should be reviewed to determine whether any update surveys are required.

3 Results

3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1 Site Location

The site is located within an industrial estate approximately 3km north east of Manchester city centre. A railway line is present 50m north east of the site which is lined by trees on both sides within the vicinity of the site and is likely to provide a suitable commuting route to the site from nearby areas of suitable habitat. The A6010 is present approximately 110m south east of the site and the A62 is present approximately 80m north west of the site. In the wider environment, industrial units are present to the north east of the site and residential areas are present to the south west of the site. Isolated patches of woodland are present within the surrounding environment, mainly associated with Clayton Vale, the River Medlock valley, and the River Irk valley.

3.1.2 Granted EPSLs

A search of MAGIC revealed that there are 31 granted EPSLs within 5km of the site.

The closest of which was located approximately 1.2km west of the site. This licence was to allow destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*); licence reference: EPSM2010-1888. Other species for which a licence has been granted for within 5km of the site comprise brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*).

3.2 Field Survey

3.2.1 Internal

The building is separated into two floors. The top floor is currently disused but was previously used as an events space, with the ground floor used as a storage room and office.

The walls were constructed of brick throughout and were in good condition. Minor gaps (<1cm in diameter) were present in the south western face where the wall met the roof. These gaps were deemed too small to allow internal access to the building for bats but would likely have created a draughty, exposed space that would be unsuitable for use as a roost.

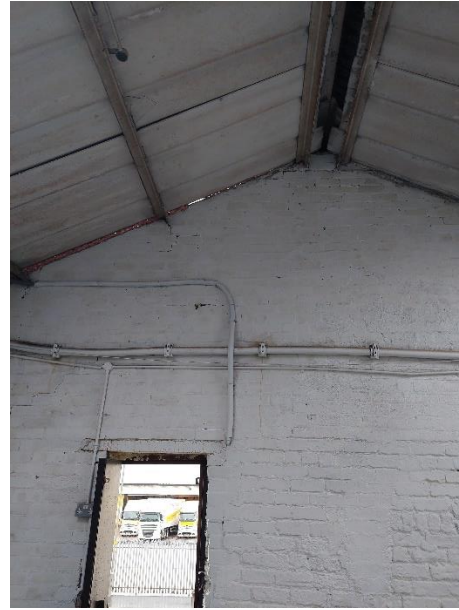
The roof was constructed of a mix of clear plastic corrugated sheets and opaque corrugated sheets that were supported upon metal beams. No gaps were present in the roof. An external ridge was visible internally, however it was not possible to see what it was constructed of.

The ground floor was in good condition, with no external access noted throughout. A single entrance door was present at the front of the building which was well sealed, with no windows or similar present through the ground floor. The ceiling was in good condition, with no gaps present connecting to the upper floor. No internal access between the ground and upper floor is currently present.

Access to the upper floor is via an external metal staircase. A door is present connecting to the adjacent building, however this was locked during the survey. No other doors or windows were present on the upper floor.



Photograph 1 – Internal view of the upper floor of the building.



Photograph 2 – Internal view of roof showing minor gaps between brickwork and roof material.



Photograph 3 – Access door connecting to adjacent building.



Photograph 4 – Rear of building.

3.2.2 External

It was not possible to fully inspect the external aspects of the building due to lack of access and the proximity of surrounding buildings.

An adjacent building partially covers the front aspect of the building. This building will not be affected by the proposed works. The edge of the roof that was visible appeared to be in good condition and did not offer bat roosting opportunities.

The brickwork at the south western aspect of the building appeared to be in average condition, with minor defects noted in the brickwork but no potential roosting features present.



Photograph 5 – Exterior of the building, viewed from New Street

3.2.3 Summary

The building was assessed as providing negligible potential to support a bat roost, due to no obvious PRFs identified internally and externally. Whilst the surrounding habitat is considered to be of limited value for bats and is anticipated to be subject to disturbance via light and noise, limiting the sites value for bats.

3.3 Other Considerations

It was not possible to fully inspect the roof during the PRA. Therefore, it is possible that the roof provides value to nesting birds.

4 Recommendations

4.1 Proposed Development

Square One Manchester Ltd are proposing to develop an industrial unit on New Street, Manchester. The proposals include the conversion of the existing unit into a cultural events space.

4.2 Further Survey

No further surveys are deemed necessary to facilitate the development.

Due to the lack of visibility to the roof during the survey, it is recommended that any works to the roof are carried out carefully by hand, removing single roof tiles/corrugated sheets one at a time. In the unlikely chance a bat or bat field signs are identified, the bat should be carefully covered, all works must be halted, and an ecologist and/or Natural England consulted for guidance. A licence from Natural England may be required before works can proceed.

4.3 Nesting Birds

All nesting birds are protected from disturbance under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is therefore recommended that any works to the roof are completed outside of the nesting bird season (March – September inclusive). If this is not possible then a check for the presence of nesting birds should be made no more than 48 hours prior to the commencement of works to the roof. If nesting birds are found to be present, then the nests must be left *in situ* and works to the roof will be required to pause until the young have fledged.

5 Conclusion

The report has met the objectives of the report, by demonstrating the following:

- A PRA of the building on the site provided an assessment of its potential for roosting bats. The results of the PRA are included in Section 3.
- The building was assessed as having negligible potential for roosting bats. Therefore, no further surveys are recommended (see Section 4.2). However, as the roof structure could not be fully inspected, it is recommended that Precautionary Measures are followed.
- Nesting birds may use areas of the building that could not be assessed, and a nesting bird check is recommended if the works are to be completed during the nesting bird season.

6 References

Bat Conservation Trust / Institution of Lighting Professionals (2018). Guidance Note o8/18: Bats and artificial lighting in the UK. Bats and the Built Environment series.

CIEEM (2019). Advice Note on the Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys. CIEEM.

Collins (2016). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Third Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

English Nature (2004). Bat Mitigation Guidelines. English Nature, Peterborough.

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2004). Bat Workers Manual. JNCC, Peterborough.

Appendix 1 – Relevant Legislation

Legislation relating to European Protected Species (bats)

European Protected Species and their resting places (e.g. bat roosts) are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 transpose the European Union's 'Habitats Directive' (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (EC Habitats Directive) into UK law. The Regulations provide for the designation and protection of 'European Sites', the protection of 'European Protected Species' (EPS), and the adaptation of planning and other controls for the protection of European Sites. EPS are listed on Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) it is an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take certain animals listed in Schedule 5;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage or destroy any structure or place which any wild animal specified in Schedule 5 uses for shelter or protection;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any such animal while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which any such animal uses for shelter or protection.

In addition, under this legislation there are offences relating to sale, possession and control of wild animals listed in Schedule 5.

- Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 it is an offence to:
- Deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild animal listed as a European Protected Species;
- Deliberately disturb wild animals of any such species in such a way as to be likely:
- to impair their ability:
 - to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or;
 - in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate, or;
- to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.
- Deliberately take or destroy the eggs of such an animal, or;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal.

In addition, under this legislation there are offences relating to possession, control sale and exchange of an EPS.

Great crested newt, otter and several species of bat are listed as a Species of Principle Importance (SoPI) under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

Legislation relating to breeding birds

All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and it is an offence, with certain exceptions, to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird;
- Intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built;
- Intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird; and
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building or is in, on or near a nest with eggs or young; or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 provides further protection for selected species (including peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), barn owl (*Tyto alba*), little ringed plover (*Charadrius dubius*) and black redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*) during the breeding season. If any person intentionally or recklessly disturbs any wild bird included in Schedule 1 while it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young; or disturb dependent young of such a bird. That person shall be guilty of an offence.

A number of bird species are listed as SoPI under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.