

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment



**Tyler
Grange**

**The Hut Group:
King Street Town House
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Summary

- S.1. This report has been prepared by Tyler Grange Group Limited on behalf of The Hut Group in relation to the King Street Town House building on Booth Street in Manchester, which is proposed for re-development. The proposals are for reconfiguration of the upper levels of the building and these changes are subject to a full planning application.
- S.2. This report outlines the findings of a preliminary bat roost assessment of the building at the site and the habitats adjacent.
- S.3. The building at the site contained features that may be suitable to support roosting bats. However, due to the lack of any suitable habitat surrounding the site and concentrated urban surrounds, these buildings are considered very unlikely to be used by bats.
- S.4. The proposed development at the site is therefore unlikely to result in any impact on individual bats or local bat populations and no further surveys to support this assessment are considered necessary.
- S.5. To mitigate against the unlikely event that bats are discovered during site works, a toolbox talk will be given for onsite contractors and a manual soft strip of the slate covered areas but only if these areas will be removed as part of the works at the site.
- S.6. By following the recommendations outlined in this document the proposed development would be compliant with legislation and planning policy with regard to bat species.



Section 1: Introduction

Background

- 1.1. This report has been prepared by Tyler Grange Group Limited on behalf of The Hut Group.
- 1.2. The King Street Town House building in Manchester is proposed for re-development. The proposals are for the reconfiguration and renovation of the upper floors. These changes are subject to a full planning application.
- 1.3. The proposed development boundary is shown in **Figure 3.1** and is centred on Ordnance Survey British National Grid reference SJ 83967 98145.

Purpose

- 1.4. The purpose of this report is to:
 - assess the site for the potential use by bats;
 - assess the potential impacts of the proposals on bat species;
 - outline any additional surveys that may be required to support the assessment; and
 - outline any mitigation or compensation that may be required.

Legislative Context

- 1.5. UK bat species are protected through European and National legislation together with national and local planning policy.
- 1.6. As European protected species, all UK bats receive legal protection in England under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017(HabRegs) (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended).
- 1.7. In addition, planning policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) requires planning authorities to consider bats (alongside other protected species) when determining planning applications and to ensure that development proposals do not lead to an adverse effect on the conservation status of bats or other protected species.
- 1.8. Four species of bat barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein's *Myotis bechsteinii*, greater horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros* are designated as Annex 2 species which under the HabRegs, important sites for these species can be designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- 1.9. Several species of bats barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein's *Myotis bechsteinii*, brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*, greater horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula* and soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* are listed as species of principal importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. These are the species found in England which were identified as



requiring action under the UK BAP and which continue to be regarded as conservation priorities under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.

- 1.10. All British species of bat are listed on Schedule 2 of the HabRegs as a European protected species (EPS) of animal. Regulation 41 (1) makes it an offence to:
- Deliberately capture or injure a bat;
 - Deliberately disturb a bat; or
 - Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat.
- 1.11. The definition of disturbance of animals within the HabRegs relates to disturbance which is likely to:
- impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young,
 - impair their ability to hibernate or migrate
 - affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species
- 1.12. All British bats are listed in Schedule 5 of the WCA and in England and Wales are protected under Section 9 subsections 4b, 4c and 5 which makes it an offence to:
- Disturb any bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or
 - Obstruct access to any structure or place which any such animal uses for shelter or protection;
- 1.13. All British bats are also listed under Schedule 6, Section 11 of the WCA 1981 (as amended), which states that bats cannot be killed or taken by certain methods, such as traps and nets, poisons, automatic weapons, electrical devices, smoke / gases etc.
- 1.14. Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006, which states that decision-makers such as Local Planning Authorities must have regard to Species of Principal Importance (SoPI) in all their activities, including when making decisions on planning applications.
- 1.15. The following bat species are SoPIs: barbastelle; Bechstein's; noctule; soprano pipistrelle; brown long-eared; greater horseshoe bat; and lesser horseshoe bat. These are the species found in England which were identified as requiring action under the UK BAP and which continue to be regarded as conservation priorities under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.
- 1.16. All bat species are included in the Greater Manchester Local Biodiversity Action Plan.



Section 2: Methods

Inspection of Structures

- 2.1 A detailed external inspection of the buildings within the proposed development boundary at the site was undertaken to determine the presence of features that may support bat roosting directly or allow access to features further within the structure of the buildings.
- 2.2 No internal roof spaces were present and therefore no internal search was undertaken.
- 2.3 This survey followed standard methodologies outlined within Bat Survey for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines (Collins 2016), Bat Workers' Manual (3rd Edition) (Mitchell-Jones, A.J. and McLeish, A.P., 2004) and Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Mitchell-Jones, A.J., 2004).
- 2.4 The inspection was undertaken on 24th August 2020 by Steven Coyne (Natural England Bat Survey Level 2 (CL18) Class Licence – Registration Number 2015-14981-CLS-CLS).
- 2.5 The weather conditions during this surveys were, 19°C, wind 3 (Beaufort), light to moderate rain showers and 80% cloud cover.
- 2.6 The potential of the buildings to support roosting bats was categorised against the criteria described in **Table 2.1**.

Table 2.1: Roost assessment criteria (adapted from Collins, 2016)

Suitability	Roosting Habitats
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on-site likely to be used by roosting bats.
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 conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation).
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 unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.
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 long periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection conditions and surrounding habitat.

Assessment of Habitats

- 2.7 An assessment of the habitats within the development boundary and immediately adjacent was assessed initially from aerial imagery and then during the site visit.
- 2.8 The potential of the habitats to commuting and foraging bats was categorised against the criteria described in **Table 2.2**.



Table 2.2: Habitat assessment criteria (adapted from Collins, 2016)

Suitability	Commuting and foraging habitats
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting bats.
Low	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitats. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or patch of scrub.
Moderate	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for commuting such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by commuting bats such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland.

Section 3: Results and Evaluation

- 3.1. The site contained an eight-storey building constructed from a range of materials. The lower 4 levels were stone and with a steeply pitched slate roof. A modern extension above this level has been constructed from a mix of metal and glass.
- 3.2. The buildings were surveyed from ground level, the roof top of the opposite properties on Kennedy Street and from the roof top of the property itself.
- 3.3. Potential roosting locations or access points that were recorded were limited to the 4th storey where a steeply pitched slate roof was present on the north-east and south-west aspects.
- 3.4. Potential access points were present at the lower tile edge and also at the rear of the tile edge at the rear of the projecting dormer windows.
- 3.5. No internal roof void was present within this building.

Assessment of Habitats

- 3.6. The development boundary only contained the building King Street Town House Building and immediately adjacent was pavement, roads, and other buildings (see **Figure 3.1**).
- 3.7. The wider landscape was a dense urban city centre landscape with similar buildings, pavements and roads. Occasional street trees were present but in general the dense urban setting would be unsuitable for commuting or foraging bats.

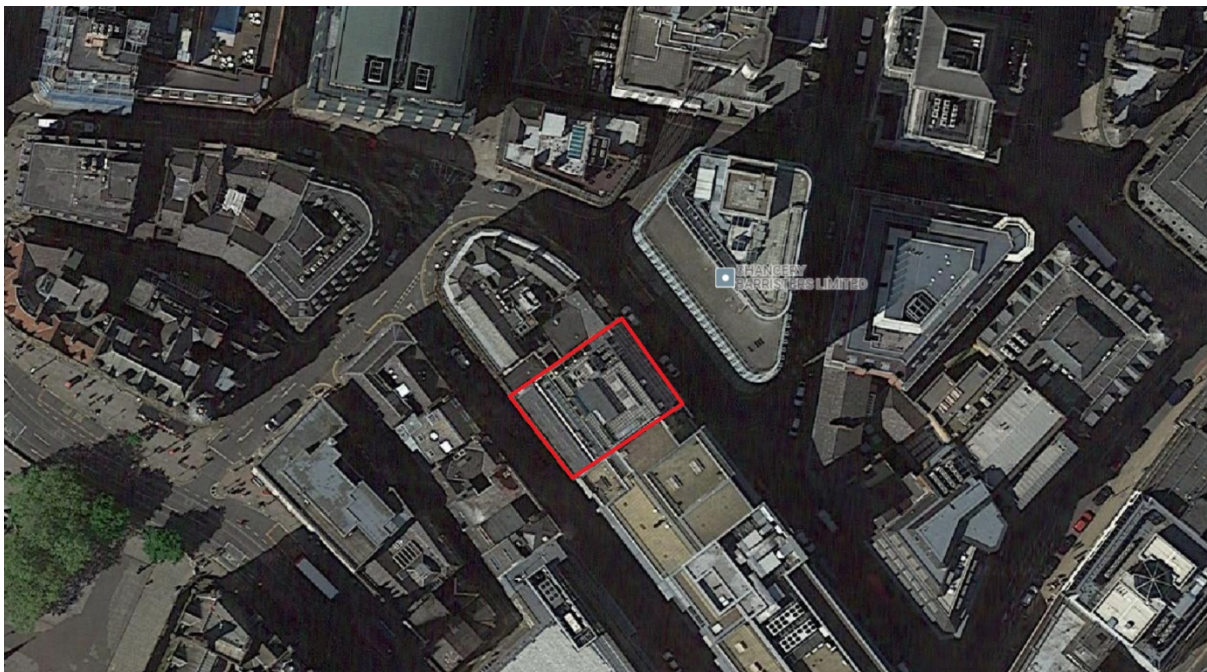


Figure 3.1: Site location highlighted by red square. ©Google Maps 2020

Summary of potential for bats

- 3.8. The building at the site had potential to support crevice dwelling species such as pipistrelle species bats.
- 3.9. However, due to the lack of any suitable habitat for commuting or foraging either within the site or in the general area, it is very unlikely that bats would use the buildings at the site for roosting.
- 3.10. The site and adjacent habitats are therefore considered of **negligible potential** to support roosting, commuting or foraging bats.

Requirements for further survey

- 3.11. As the buildings have been categorised as negligible potential to support bats, further surveys to support an assessment of presence or likely absence are not considered necessary.

Assessment of Impacts and requirements for mitigation

- 3.12. It is considered highly unlikely that bats would use the buildings at the site for roosting.
- 3.13. The current plans indicate that the only area that bats could use, i.e. the steeply pitched slate roof, will be retained within the proposed plans.
- 3.14. If direct works will be undertaken on the slate covered areas as part of the demolition and construction activities these works should be undertaken by hand. This will mitigate against the unlikely event that a bat may be present
- 3.15. A toolbox talk should be given to all contractors before any works are undertaken on the slate covered areas commence which should include details of the legal status of bats and instructions on what to do if a bat is discovered during works.

References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004). Bat Mitigation Guidelines. English Nature, Peterborough.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. and McLeish, A.P. (2004). Bat Workers' Manual. 3rd Edition. JNCC, Peterborough.



Appendix 1: Site Photographs





Photograph 1: The south-west aspect of King Street Town House showing the steep pitched slate covered section



Photograph 2: The north-east aspect King Street Town House





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