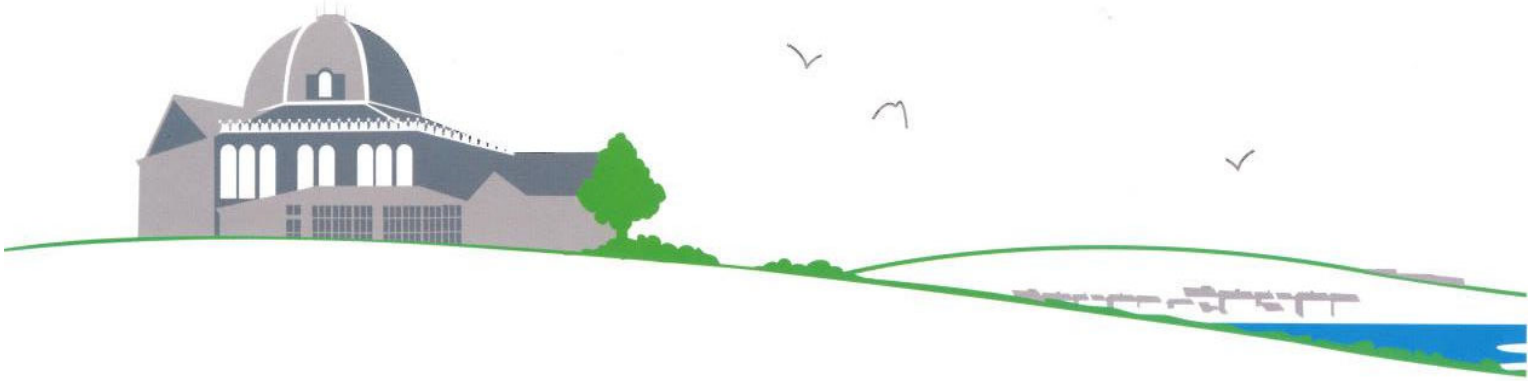
Penny Anderson Associates Ltd
CONSULTANT ECOLOGISTS

PROPERTY ALLIANCE GROUP (PAG) AND STARWOOD CAPITAL GROUP (SCG)

PREMIER HOUSE, RENAISSANCE

EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY AND INSPECTION OF BUILDING FOR BATS



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This project has been undertaken in accordance with PAA policies and procedures on quality assurance.

Signed:_____

Penny Anderson Associates Ltd
CONSULTANT ECOLOGISTS

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Penny Anderson Associates Ltd (PAA) was commissioned by Property Alliance Group and Starwood Capital Group on behalf of Deansgate SOF Alliance LeaseCo Limited to carry out an extended Phase 1 habitat survey and building inspection for roosting bats at a site referred to as Premier House, Renaissance in Manchester (hereafter referred to as the 'site').

1.2 This report describes the methods and results of an extended Phase 1 habitat survey carried out in March 2021 and a review of desk study data obtained in March 2021 from Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) local record centre. A detailed assessment of the potential for the built structure on the site to support roosting bats was also undertaken and is presented in this report.

Site Location

1.3 The site is located between Deansgate, Manchester and the River Irwell, at postcode M3 2EQ.

1.4 The Renaissance complex currently comprises a vacant 15-storey, 203 bedroom hotel building, a multi-storey car park, a restaurant and a dilapidated former office building (Premier House) which has been vacant for a significant number of years. This particular application relates to/proposes the redevelopment of Premier House. Separate planning applications have already been submitted for the new 4* Treehouse hotel and the partial demolition of Premier House.

1.5 The majority of the site comprises a large built structure comprising a multi-storey hotel to twelve floors, as well as a multi-storey NCP car park. A paved frontage adjacent to the River Irwell is present to the west of the building, largely comprising hardstanding along with scattered trees and introduced ornamental shrubs.

1.6 The setting of the site is highly urbanised, in the high-rise surroundings of Deansgate. The adjacent River Irwell is immediately adjacent to the west, while recreational parks such as Parsonage Gardens and Cathedral Gardens are present in the wider landscape.

Bat Biology

1.7 There are 17 species of native bats known to be resident (i.e. breed) in the British Isles. British bats feed entirely on insects and have developed a complex sonar system, known as echolocation, which enables them to find prey and navigate around their environment at night.

1.8 Habitat requirements vary widely, both on an individual and species level, although certain features, such as woodland, parkland, traditional pasture, marshes and areas of freshwater, are often focal points for foraging, as insects are plentiful in these areas (Mitchell-Jones 2004). Bats use linear features, such as rivers, hedgerows, smaller roads and woodland edges, as landmarks in order to commute from one location to another (Schofield and Mitchell-Jones 2003).

1.9 Bats utilise different roosts at different times of the year. Between late October and March, bats hibernate; this requires an unexposed roost with a stable temperature, typically a cave, cellar or tunnel. Around March, the bats emerge and gradually move to their summer roosts, typically within man-made structures or suitable crevices in trees. During the spring and summer female bats gather together at maternity roosts to give birth and rear their young. Most births occur between late June and mid-July, with the young able to fly within three to five weeks (Altringham 2003; Waters and Warren 2003). By the end of August, most of the young bats are independent and the colony begins to break up (Schofield and Mitchell-Jones 2003). Mating takes place between August and December, either at the winter hibernation site or at autumn breeding sites. The numbers of bats utilising these roosts can vary from single bats to hundreds in a nursery colony or hibernation site (Altringham 2003).

Legislative Context

1.10 A range of international and national legislation has been established in the UK to protect important nature conservation sites and priority species. At the international level, European Union (EU) Directives require individual member states to implement their conservation provisions nationally for the benefit of Europe as a whole. These Directives have been transposed into UK law by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (amended); further details can be obtained from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) web site at www.jncc.defra.gov.uk.

1.11 Other international conventions include: the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979), which requires the maintenance of populations of wild flora and fauna, giving particular protection to endangered and vulnerable species; and the Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979), which requires the protection of migratory species throughout their entire range. The above conventions are implemented in England and Wales via the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) (1981) (as amended) and Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000. This legislation also protects important habitats and sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

1.12 At the national level, the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework published in 2012 is the Government's response to the Convention on Biological Diversity (2010). It describes the UK's biological resources, commits a detailed plan for the protection of these resources within the UK's devolved framework across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The document identifies future priorities for nature conservation and adopts a more strategic approach, including ecosystem services and sustainability alongside biodiversity. Despite administrative changes following devolution, there is still an underlying objective of protecting and enhancing a range of priority species and habitats, often still based on the objectives and classifications of the original UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). *Biodiversity 2020* is England's national biodiversity strategy. Building on the *Natural Environment White Paper* published in 2011, this provides a means of delivering the international and EU commitments to biodiversity. Under Biodiversity 2020, Priority Species and Habitats referred to are those of 'Principal Importance' for the conservation of biodiversity in England listed on Section 41 (England) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

1.13 Finally, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) provides guidance for local authorities on the content of the Local Plans and is a material consideration in determining planning applications. Briefly, with an overall focus on sustainable development, the NPPF states that developments should aim to engender positive outcomes for habitats and biodiversity, with a particular focus on the maintenance and creation of ecological networks. Furthermore, the NPPF also states that any planning proposals for which significant negative impacts on biodiversity cannot be avoided, mitigated or compensated for should be refused. The NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural environment through a range of actions, including:

- protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils;
- recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services; and
- minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains for biodiversity including establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.

1.14 To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of

importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and

- promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

1.15 Relevant protected species legislation summaries are presented as Appendix 1.

Invasive Species

1.16 Certain non-native species that have been introduced into the UK are regarded as being a threat to native biodiversity. Legislative measures have, therefore, been put in place to prevent the spread of these invasive species in the wild.

1.17 Under section 14 of the WCA, 1981 (as amended), it is illegal to introduce plants listed under Part II of Schedule 9 of the WCA into the wild or sell these species. Offences include causing the spread of viable plant material or neglecting to contain or appropriately manage non-native species.

1.18 Commonly introduced Schedule 9 species include non-native cotoneaster species, specifically, small-leaved cotoneaster[1] (*Cotoneaster microphylla*) and wall cotoneaster (*C. horizontalis*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*).

[1] *Plant names follow Stace 2019*

2. METHODS

Desk Study

2.1 A request for details of protected and notable species and locally designated sites within 1km of the centre of the site was made to GMEU, with data returned in March 2021. Additionally, the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC[2]) website was consulted for details of statutory designated sites and Priority Habitats within a 1km search area from the centre of the site.

2.2 It is important to note that the desk study results provide an indication of the species present in and around the site, and do not confirm current presence or absence of any species. Protected species are often under-recorded in county wildlife databases.

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

2.3 An extended Phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken by Ecologist Rob Lamb ACIEEM[3] and Assistant Ecologist Connie Webb on 12th March 2021.

2.4 The survey was carried out in accordance with the methodology in the *Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey* (JNCC 2010). This entailed mapping, describing and collating plant species lists for habitats within the site boundary. The broad habitat types were mapped, with each habitat type coded according to the standard JNCC Phase 1 habitat survey procedure.

2.5 Each plant species was assigned abundance codes within each habitat. This was done using the 'DAFOR' scale (where: d = dominant; a = abundant; f = frequent; o = occasional; r = rare), which provides an indication of the relative abundance of each plant species present within a particular habitat. Common names and scientific names according to Stace (2019) are provided in the species list (Appendix 2) but common names only are referred to in the text.

2.6 The survey was 'extended' (Institute of Environmental Assessment 1995) to include notes on fauna and habitats which could potentially support protected or notable species. The presence of, or potential for, protected or notable species was noted on the field map and in the written target notes (TN) during the survey.

Bat Building Inspection

2.7 The built structure on site comprising the existing hotel, car park and Premier House was subject to a detailed inspection to assess potential to support roosting bats. This element of the survey was carried out by Ecologist Rob Lamb ACIEEM (Natural England Bat Survey Class 1 Licence Registration Number 2020-44441-CLS-CLS) and Assistant Ecologist Connie Webb on 12th March 2021 following standard methodologies. This entailed using a high-powered torch and binoculars, making detailed notes, taking photographs (Appendix 3) and following survey guidance (Collins 2016).

2.8 During the inspection, the exterior of the building was walked around and examined for any signs (such as staining or droppings on surfaces, including walls and window ledges) or features suitable for roosting bats. Features of interest would include gaps around door frames, beneath felt/lead flashing, at the wall plates and eaves of pitched roofs, and any crevices beneath fascia

[2] *https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx (last accessed 16/02/2021)*

[3] *Associate Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environ mental Management (CIEEM)*

boards, barge boards, within soffits or created by missing mortar within any brickwork. The structure was then assessed internally, as well as again externally using vantage points on accessible roof spaces.

2.9 The bat inspection assigned an overall roost potential category, based on its suitability for supporting roosting bats and any evidence found, using criteria in Table 1 adapted from the *Bat Mitigation Guidelines* (Mitchell-Jones 2004) and *Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines* (Collins 2016).

2.10 During the survey any evidence of the buildings being used by nesting birds (e.g. old nest material) was also noted.

Table 1 Building Assessment Criteria

Suitability	Description of Roosting Habitats
Negligible	No features 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, but does 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. A tree of sufficient size to contain potential roost features but none seen from the ground or only those with very limited suitability.
Moderate	A structure or tree 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 type of high conservation significance (i.e. suitable for day roosting but unsuitable for maternity or hibernation roost.)
High	A structure or tree 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. (i.e. suitable for maternity and/or hibernation roost.)
Confirmed Roost	A structure or tree with evidence of bat presence, i.e. droppings, feeding remains, audible bat calls heard during daytime survey or sightings of the animals themselves, existing (reliable) record of bats roosting at the location.

Limitations

2.11 The Phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken outside of the optimum timeframe for surveys of this type, as during the winter months plant species can die back or be difficult to identify resulting in some plant species being potentially missed. The survey was, however, considered sufficient for the types of habitats present and the urban setting, and the evaluation is considered robust.

2.12 The building inspection survey for bats was undertaken at an appropriate time of year for these types of survey under suitable weather conditions. The building was multiple stories tall and sufficient access to assess all possible crevice features on the structure was not possible. The structure was, however, considered to be surveyed sufficiently both internally and externally, with vantage points and binoculars used as necessary. These limitations have been considered when assessing the need for further activity survey.

3. RESULTS

Desk Study

3.1 The desk study utilised data obtained from GMEU in March 2021, searching within a 1km radius of the site centre. The MAGIC search engine was also used to obtain additional data on European Protected Species (EPS) licences, as well as designated and non-designated sites.

Statutory Protected Sites

European Sites

3.2 European protected sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), RAMSAR wetland sites, possible SAC, potential SPA and proposed RAMSAR sites.

3.3 Consultation with the search engine MAGIC revealed that there are no European Protected Sites within the 1km search area.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

3.4 SSSI represent a selection of this country's best wildlife and geological sites, and cover approximately 7% of the terrestrial area of the country (with over 4,000 separate sites in England).

3.5 During consultation with the search engine MAGIC, no SSSI sites were identified in the 1km search area.

3.6 The site does however fall within the Impact Risk Zone[4] (IRZ) of

- Rochdale Canal SSSI; and
- Hollinwood Branch Canal SSSI;

3.7 Further investigation revealed that within these SSSI IRZ, Natural England should be consulted on:

- Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals;
- Any industrial/agricultural development that could cause air pollution (incl: industrial processes, livestock and poultry units with floorspace > 500m², slurry lagoons > 750m² and manure stores > 3500t); and
- General combustion processes > 50MW energy input. Incl: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/ combustion.

National and Local Nature Reserves

3.8 No National Nature Reserves or Local Nature Reserves were identified within the 1km search area.

[4] *The Impact Risk Zones are a GIS tool developed by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks to SSSIs posed by development proposals. They define zones around each SSSI which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts.*

Priority Habitats

3.9 No Priority Habitats were noted within the 1km search area.

Non-Statutory Protected Sites

3.10 No non-statutory protected sites were returned within the 1km data search area.

Protected and Notable Species

Granted European Protected Species Application

3.11 Nine granted EPS applications for bats were returned within the 1km search area. Eight EPS licenses were granted for common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), one for soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and one for brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*). Table 2 shows the location and date of each license granted.

Table 2 Bat European Protected Species Licenses

Species	License to Allow	Date License Granted	Date License Expires	Distance from Site Boundary
Common pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place	2017	June 2023	343m NE
Common pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place	2016	Jan 2021	944m SW
Common pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place	2014	2020	120m N
Common pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place	2017	2019	150m N
Common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place	2014	2017	864m SE
Common pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place	2013	2015	985m E
Brown long-eared	Destruction of a resting place and breeding site	2012	2015	568m SW
Common pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place	2014	2014	840m W
Common pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place	2012	2013	568m SW

Badger

3.12 One record for badger (*Meles meles*) was returned within the 1km search area. The record is located 600m from the site boundary. Due to the sensitive nature of this data the precise location is not published in this report.

Otter

3.13 A single record for otter (*Lutra lutra*) was returned within the 1km search area. The record is located 705m of the site boundary. Due to the sensitive nature of this data the precise location is not published in this report.

Water Vole

3.14 No records of water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) were returned within the 1km search area.

Bats

3.15 A total of 14 bat roosts were recorded in the 1km search area; the roosts were recorded for common pipistrelle, pipistrelle species (*Pipistrellus* sp.) and soprano pipistrelle. The closest roost to the site is for a common pipistrelle, located 153m north-east of the site boundary.

3.16 In addition, numerous records were returned for signs of bats within the 1km search area. Table 3 shows the number of records of each bat species recorded in the 1km search zone (excluding roost data) and the proximity to the site of the closest record for each species.

Table 3 Bat Records

Common Name	Scientific Name	No. of Records	Closest Record (approximate distance and direction from site boundary)
Bat species	Bat sp.	1	405m SW
Brown long-eared bat	*Plecotus auritusis*	1	470m W
Common pipistrelle	*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*	40	**On site**
Daubenton's bat	*Myotis daubentoni*	1	120m NE
Pipistrelle species	*Pipistrelle* sp.	8	166m E
Soprano pipistrelle	*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*	3	684m S

Other Mammals

3.17 A single record for hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) was identified within the 1km search area, located 605m north-west of the site boundary.

Birds

3.18 All nesting birds, their nests and eggs are protected from harm under the WCA, 1981 (as amended). In addition, species listed under Schedule 1 of the WCA are further protected against disturbance when breeding.

3.19 A number of bird species are listed under Section 41 in the NERC Act (2006) as species 'of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity'. These species are often known as the 'S41 species'. There is a legal requirement for a public body to 'have regard to' these species in relation to maintaining biodiversity. The S41 list overlaps somewhat with the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species, with national or local targets to maintain and enhance populations.

3.20 Furthermore, the Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) report lists those bird species that are classed as being of High (Red listed) and Medium (Amber Listed) conservation concern based on population monitoring (Eaton *et al*. 2015). This Red and Amber classification helps guide the assessment of bird species of conservation interest on or near to a site, alongside legislative and policy requirements.

3.21 A few Schedule 1 species were recorded within the 1km search area but due to the confidentiality of this data the species is not published in this report. All protected and notable bird species recorded within the 1km search area are listed in Table 4, along with their conservation status.

Table 4 Bird Species of Principal Importance

Common Name	Scientific Name	Amber[5] Listed	Red Listed	Section 41 Priority Species[6]
Bullfinch	*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*	x		x
Cuckoo	*Cuculus canorus*		x	x
Dunnock	*Prunella modularis*	x		x
House sparrow	*Passer domesticus*		x	x
Lapwing	*Vanellus vanellus*		x	x
Lesser redpoll	*Acanthis caberet*		x	x
Song thrush	*Turdus philomelos*		x	x
Spotted flycatcher	*Muscicapa striata*		x	x
Starling	*Sturnus vulgaris*		x	x
Yellow wagtail	*Motacilla flava*		x	x

Amphibians

3.22 No great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus,* GCN*)* records were returned within the 1km search area. Consultation with Natural England's GCN Geoportal revealed no known locations with confirmed presence of GCN within 1km of the central grid reference.

3.23 An Ordnance Survey map search revealed one ditch and a single pond located within 500m of the site boundary.

3.24 No records for amphibians were returned in the 1km search area.

3.25 Reptiles

3.26 No reptile records were returned from the 1km search area.

Invertebrates

3.27 One Section 41 moth species was returned from the 1km data search; the record is located approximately 760m west of the site boundary.

White-clawed Crayfish

3.28 No records of white-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) or notable fish were returned from the 1km search area.

Notable Plant Species

3.29 One notable plant species was returned within the 1km search area; Grasswrack pondweed (*Potamogeton compressus*) is a nationally scarce and endangered plant, a species of Principal Importance. A single record was returned, located 910m south of the site boundary.

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[5] *The UK's birds can be split in to three categories of conservation importance - red, amber and green. Red is the highest conservation priority, with species needing urgent action. Amber is the next most critical group, followed by green.*

[6] *Species of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.*

Phase 1 Habitat Survey

3.30 Figure 1 presents the habitat map. Botanical species lists for the habitats encountered are presented in Appendix 2.

3.31 The majority of the site comprised the built structure. A paved frontage facing onto the River Irwell is present in the west of the site. This area comprised mostly of hardstanding, along with scattered young to semi-mature street trees and small introduced shrub planting compartments (Photos 1 and 2). Some ephemeral/short perennial plant species were present within cracks in paving and at the foot of the building. Self-seeded butterfly-bush stands were present occasionally around the paved area, and along the boundary with the river. Accumulations of moss species were present at TN1.

3.32 The small patches of habitat present comprised typical ornamental shrubs, trees, and early successional urban plant communities, with all botanical species identified being common and widespread.

Invasive Non-Native Species

3.33 No plants listed as Schedule 9 Invasive Non-native Species (INNS) in the WCA, 1981 (as amended) were recorded within the site boundary.

Bat Building Inspection

Habitat Suitability

3.34 The immediate surrounding habitat was assessed as having moderate suitability for bats. Most of the immediate surroundings comprise highly urbanised landscapes and street lit roads, with nearby greenspaces being largely of amenity value.

3.35 Much of the localised value for bats is due to its location directly adjacent to the River Irwell, which is likely an important foraging resource for local bat populations. A small number of scattered trees and shrubbery adjacent to the river are present within the site boundary.

3.36 Despite the overall poorly vegetated aspect of the site and its immediate surroundings, as well as the presence of street and security lighting, bats, in particular pipistrelle species, are often recorded using this type of urban landscape within Manchester city centre.

3.37 Overall, the habitat within the site boundary has been assessed as being of low to moderate suitability for commuting and foraging bats.

Building

External Survey

3.38 The structure on-site is large and of mixed use. This includes:

- The non-operational Renaissance Hotel, which includes the twelve-storey tower;
- An active NCP multi-storey car park accessed from the south of the site and continuing into the west of the overall structure;
- The non-operational Premier House at the south and east of the structure;
- Mixed retail frontages and office spaces along the lower floors on the eastern face of the structure; and
- A service yard on the underside of the northern end of the structure.

3.39 Externally the building is well-lit with security and street lighting, and the eastern elevation borders onto Deansgate and Harvey Nichols shopping centre across the road.

3.40 The building is largely of concrete construction (Photo 3). These concrete aspects were largely solid and did not create suitable gaps useable by bats.

3.41 Where windows were present, these were PVC, fixed with thin lintels to the concrete (Photo 4), and did not form potential roost features (PRF). This included all easily observable aspects of the twelve-storey hotel tower (Photo 4). However, due to the height of the tower, higher aspects were viewable only with binoculars from the flat roof of the second floor. Therefore, it was not possible to demonstrate absence of external PRF on the upper levels of the hotel tower entirely.

3.42 Premier House on the south of the structure was also of largely concrete construction. Woodchip boardings were positioned at the upper level of the structure (Photo 5). These were generally flush with the building. Thin gaps in the concrete construction were present in this area (Photo 6). The frontage of Premier House and the line of retail units to the south and east were absent of PRF.

3.43 At the entrance to the NCP car park at the south west of the structure, and along the lower level of the eastern face, brick and mortar construction was present (Photos 7 and 8). These aspects were generally solid and devoid of PRF.

3.44 A large wooden board fixed on the northern end of the eastern elevation was sufficiently gappy and identified as a low potential PRF (Photo 9). No evidence of bats was observed upon inspection with a clulite.

3.45 The multistorey car park and service yard were open and faced onto the River Irwell (Photo 10 and 11). A small number of cracks in the concrete blocks were visible, identified as potential crevice features for pipistrelles.

3.46 Internally the hotel was poorly suitable and not accessible to bats (Photo 12). No pitched roofs or loft spaces were present on the structure.

Overall Assessment

3.47 In summary, a small number of low potential PRF have been identified on the structure and some upper level aspects of the building were not able to be observed closely. The structure is overall assessed as having **low potential to support roosting bats**. With the findings of this assessment, and following good practice guidelines (Collins 2016), **a further survey recommendation is made in Section 4**.

Other Protected Species

3.48 Feral pigeon[7] (*Columba livia*) nest debris and feathers were observed on plant infrastructure on the underside of the roofed service area. No active nests were observed. However, as the timing of the survey was undertaken early in the bird nesting season (March to August inclusive), it is considered that feral pigeon, and potentially other urban bird species, will likely continue to nest this year and in future years on the structure.

3.49 The site has the potential to be used by black redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*) as a song post, although the roof appears unlikely to hold suitable sheltered ledges for nesting. Peregrin (*Falco peregrinus*) records were also returned in the desk study.

3.50 The site was generally considered unsuitable for other protected and notable species due to a lack of suitable habitat within or nearby the site.

[7] *Bird names follow British Ornithologists' Union 2017*

4. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The desk study identified that the site is within the IRZ of Rochdale Canal SSSI and Hollinwood Branch Canal SSSI. Natural England should be consulted if development proposals are to include any of the following:

- Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals;
- Any industrial/agricultural development that could cause air pollution (incl. industrial processes, livestock and poultry units with floorspace > 500m², slurry lagoons > 750m² and manure stores > 3500t); and
- General combustion processes > 50MW energy input. Incl. energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/combustion.

4.2 The nearest priority habitat is 1.3km from the site boundary. This is considered to be sufficiently distant not to be impacted by any development within the site boundary.

4.3 The extended Phase 1 habitat survey highlighted no features of significant nature conservation interest within the site. The plant species list was limited to species that are common and typical of early successional communities of urban sites. No INNS plants were noted.

Bats

4.4 Habitats within the site were of low to moderate value for foraging and commuting bats. The desk study found nine EPS bat licences within a 1km radius of the site boundary. One of these was for brown-long eared bat, one for common and soprano pipistrelle and a further seven for common pipistrelle only. The closest two lie 120m and 150m north of the site boundary respectively, both for common pipistrelle.

4.5 A further 19 bat roost records were found, with the closest 153m from the site boundary, for common pipistrelle. A number of other bat records are located within 1km of the site boundary, for at least four species. This includes a common pipistrelle record within the site boundary and a Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*) record 120m north east.

4.6 These records indicate that bats historically use the immediate urban landscape and support the recommendation for activity survey.

4.7 Overall, the building inspection survey identified **low potential** to support roosting bats.

4.8 In line with current good practice guidelines, the features identified on the building should be subject to a **single evening bat activity survey to confirm absence of roosting bats**. It is recommended to position surveyors at a number of vantage points around the structure where PRF are present or where close inspection was not possible. The survey should be completed in the May to August period, under suitable weather conditions.

4.9 If bat roosts are identified on the structure during the above recommended presence/absence survey then further roost categorisation surveys would be required to support the preparation of suitable mitigation, along with advice on potential licensing requirements.

Breeding Birds

4.10 There is evidence that feral pigeon, and potentially other urban bird species, nest on the built structure during the active nesting season (March to August inclusive). There is also some limited potential for birds to nest in the semi-mature trees in the western area of the site.

4.11 The nests and eggs of breeding birds are protected. Therefore, works should occur outside of the key nesting period of March to August inclusive. If site clearance occurs during March to August then a suitably experienced and qualified Ecologist should undertake an inspection of the building no more than 48 hours prior to demolition starting, to confirm the absence of active nests.

Biodiversity Enhancement Opportunities

4.12 The site is currently of limited ecological value and development presents an opportunity to increase biodiversity. Potential enhancement measures which could be considered comprise:

- Use of native or wildlife friendly tree, shrub and herbaceous species in any landscape planting, for example, inclusion of species which provide nectar for invertebrates or berries to provide a food source for birds;
- Inclusion of bird boxes to accommodate typical urban bird species;
- Designs that offer similarly higher level areas to what are currently present on the building would retaining opportunities for breeding black redstart to use these as song posts.
- Including a green/brown roof design would enhance forage opportunities for local populations of black redstart, if the design allows.
- Inclusion of integrated or external bat roost features such as bat slates, tiles and bricks or bat boxes to increase opportunities for roosting bats, coupled with a suitable lighting strategy to avoid unnecessary lighting of roost features; and
- Limiting exterior lighting to maintain links to the wider area for local bat populations.

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6. ABBREVIATIONS

BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan(s)
BoCC	Birds of Conservation Concern
CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
CRoW	Countryside and Rights of Way
EPS	European Protected Species
EU	European Union
GCN	Great Crested Newt(s)
GMEU	Greater Manchester Ecology Unit
INNS	Invasive Non-Native Species
IRZ	Impact Risk Zone(s)
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
MAGIC	Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside
NERC	National Environment and Rural Communities
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PAA	Penny Anderson Associates Ltd
PRF	Potential Roost Feature(s)
SAC	Special Area(s) of Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Area(s)
SSSI	Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest
TN	Target Note(s)
WCA	Wildlife and Countryside Act

FIGURE

Legend

- Site boundary
- Habitat
  - Ephemeral/short perennial
  - Introduced shrub
  - Building*
  - Hardstanding
  - Scattered trees
  - Introduced shrub
  - Self-seeded butterfly bush
  - Target notes

** Building B1 - Low bat roosting potential*

N

British National Grid
Projection: Transverse Mercator
False Easting: 400000.000000
False Northing: -100000.000000
Central Meridian: -2.000000
Scale Factor: 0.999601
Latitude Of Origin: 49.000000

ISO A3

Metres
0 5 10 15 20

Property Alliance Group Ltd
Alliance House
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Project Name: Renaissance, Manchester

Discipline: Ecology

Title:

Phase 1 Habitats & Bat Building Inspection

Scale: 1:600		Drawing No.: Figure 1	
Drawn By: CC	Originator: RL	Date: 19/03/2021	
PAA Ref.		Revision: 1.0	

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Figure 1 - Phase 1 and Bat Building Inspection - PRAG23 CC 180321.mxd

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Relevant Protected Species Legislation Summaries

SUMMARY OF THE LEGISLATION RELATING TO BATS

All wild species of bat are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981, which has also been amended by later legislation, including the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (amended), and this legislation is applicable to England and Wales. Bats are listed on Schedule 5 of the WCA and are therefore subject to some the provisions of Section 9 which, with the amendments, make it an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection (S9:4b).
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection by a bat (S9:4c).

There are additional offences in relation to buying and selling (S9:5) any live or dead animal of this species or anything derived from them.

Bat species are also listed under Annexes IIa and IVa of the EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, also known as the 'Habitats Directive'. Inclusion on Annex IVa means they are consequently identified as European Protected Species (EPS) and protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (amended).

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (amended) state that a person commits an offence if they:

(a) deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild animal of a European protected species,

(b) deliberately disturb wild animals of any such species, in such a way as –

  (i) to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear their young, or

  (ii) in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate, or

  (iii) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong;

(c) deliberately take or destroy the eggs of such an animal, or

(d) damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal.

Under these Regulations it is an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place whether the animal is in occupation or not, and protection extends to all life stages of the animal in question. There are additional offences relating to possession, control and sale of a live or dead bat or part of such an animal.

In addition, seven native British bat species, including the soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and the brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*), that are frequently found in buildings, are listed as a 'Priority Species' under the under the 2011 biodiversity strategy for England, *Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services,* under the 2012 UK Post-2010 UK Biodiversity Framework. These Priority Species are also referred to as 'species of principal importance' for the conservation of biodiversity in England and Wales within Section 74 of the CRoW Act 2000, and Sections 41 (England) and 42 (Wales) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) has an overall focus on sustainable development, and states that developments should aim to engender positive outcomes for habitats and biodiversity, with a particular focus on the maintenance and creation of ecological networks. Furthermore, the NPPF also states that any planning proposals for which significant negative impacts on biodiversity cannot be avoided, mitigated or compensated for should be refused. Reference is made to Circular 06/2005 *Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact within the Planning System* in respect of statutory obligations for biodiversity and geodiversity conservation.

The commitment to preserving, restoring or enhancing biodiversity is further emphasised for England and Wales in Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006.

Please note: the above text provides a brief summary of the legislation in relation to bats in England and Wales and the original Acts, Regulations and any amendments should be referred to for the precise wording.

SUMMARY OF THE LEGISLATION RELATING TO BREEDING BIRDS

All wild species of breeding birds and their nests are protected under Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981, as amended by later legislation including the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000. This legislation applies in England and Wales.

Part 1 (Section 1:1) of the WCA states that:

> 'If any person intentionally,
>
> (a) kills, injures or takes any wild bird;
>
> (b) takes, damages or destroys the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or
>
> (c) takes or destroys an egg of any wild bird,
>
> he shall be guilty of an offence.'

Part 1 (Section 1:5) of the WCA (amended by the CRoW Act 2000) refers to specific birds listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA, and states that:

> 'If any person intentionally <u>or recklessly</u>,
>
> (a) 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
>
> (b) disturbs dependent young of such a bird,
>
> he shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a special penalty.'

Schedule 1 includes birds such as Western barn owl (*Tyto alba*), black redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*), woodlark (*Lullula arborea*) and Cetti's warbler (*Cettia cetti*). Please refer to the WCA for a complete list of Schedule 1 species.

Some provisions are made to allow the killing and taking of certain species under certain circumstances, as follows:

- Birds listed on Schedule 2 (Part 1) of the Act may be taken or killed outside of the 'close season' for each individual species (the 'close season' is defined by the Act). This includes various wild duck and geese species.
- Birds listed on Schedule 2 (Part 2) of the Act may be killed or taken by <u>authorised</u> persons at all times. This includes species such as carrion crow (*Corvus corone*), Eurasian magpie (*Pica pica*), feral pigeon[1] (*Columba livia*) and greater Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*). An 'authorised person' is defined as a person who has written authorisation to undertake the act from the relevant statutory authority. The written authority is in the form of a licence, either a general licence which covers a number of the more typical 'pest' species, or an individual licence for other individual species. In England these licences are issued by Natural England and in Wales by the Welsh Assembly Government.

Please note: the above text provides a brief summary of the legislation in relation to breeding birds in England and Wales and the original Act and any amendments should be referred to for the precise wording.

[1] *Also known as rock dove*

APPENDIX 2

Botanical Species List

Appendix 2 Botanical Species List

Common Name	Scientific Name	Scattered Trees	Introduced Shrub	Ephemeral/ Short Perennial
Woody Species				
Beech	*Fagus sylvatica*	R	R	
Box-leaved honeysuckle	*Lonicera pileata*		R	
Butterfly-bush	*Buddleja davidii*		F-LA	
Cherry laurel	*Prunus laurocerasus*		O	
Conifer species			R	
Dog rose	*Rosa canina*		R	
Evergreen spindle	*Euonymus japonicus*		R	
Holly	*Ilex aquifolium*		O	
Sycamore	*Acer pseudoplatanus*	R	R	
Tree species		R		
Willow-leaved cotoneaster	*Cotoneaster salicifolius*	R	R	
Herbs, Grasses, Ferns, Mosses				
Broad-leaved dock	*Rumex obtusifolius*			R
Broad-leaved willowherb	*Epilobium montanum*			O
Daisy	*Bellis perennis*			R
Dandelion	*Taraxacum officinale* agg.			R
Evening-primrose species	*Oenothera* sp.			R
Ground-ivy	*Glechoma hederacea*			R
Ivy	*Hedera helix*	O	O-LA	F
Moss species				O-LD
Rosebay willowherb	*Chamaenerion angustifolium*			O
Smooth sow-thistle	*Sonchus oleraceus*			R
Wall lettuce	*Mycelis muralis*			R

KEY

D - Dominant
A - Abundant
F - Frequent
O - Occasional
R - Rare
L - Locally

APPENDIX 3

Photographs

Photo 1 **Introduced shrub and young trees within paved area adjacent to the River Irwell**

Photo 2 **Example of patchy introduced shrub compartments in west of site**

Photo 3 **Concrete construction of building**

Photo 4 **View of hotel 13-storey tower from second floor window**

Photo 5 **The back of Premier House (north face) with wooden boarding**

Photo 6 **Gaps within concrete present on Premier House**

Photo 7 **Southern face and entrance to NCP car park**

Photo 8 **Eastern face retail frontage and ramp**

Photo 9 Wooden boarding on east face

Photo 10 Open face multi-storey car park facing onto the River Irwell

Photo 11 Example of service yard construction

Photo 12 Example of internal aspect of the structure

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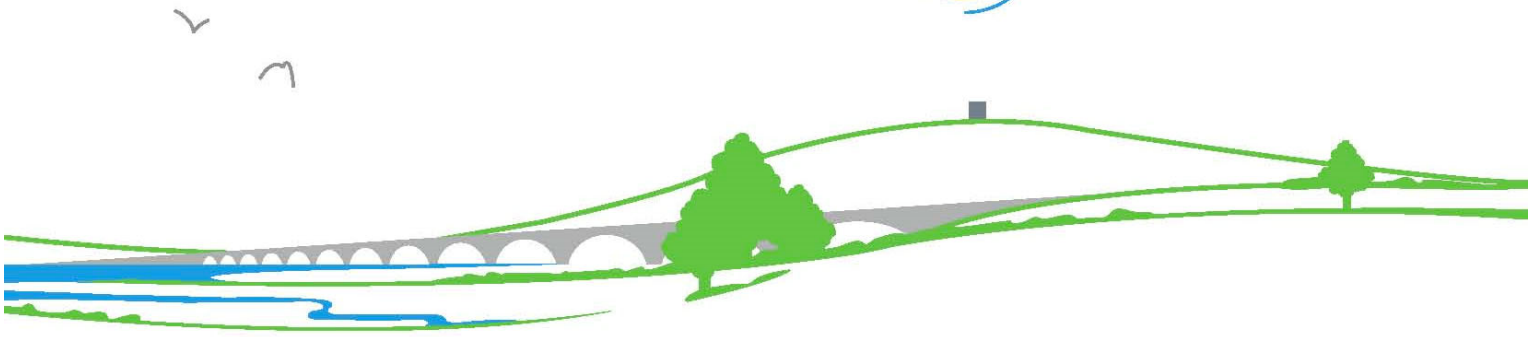

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