
Showcase Cinema (Hyde Road School)

Daytime Bat Survey (Preliminary Roost Assessment)

Status: Draft
Revision: 01
Date: December 2020

Issue Status

Rev	Status	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Date
01	Draft Issue	AN	KR	11/12/2020

Contents

1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	Methodology	5
3.0	Results	8
4.0	Conclusion and Recommendations	11
	Appendix A - Planning Policies.....	13
	Appendix B - Data Search	14
	Appendix C - Photograph Plates.....	15

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 This Showcase Cinema bat survey (preliminary roost assessment) report has been prepared by BDP on behalf of Manchester City Council (the owner of the property and the applicant for the works). The report will accompany a prior notification of demolition for the former Showcase Cinema building and associated electricity substation (hereinafter referred to as the "Site").
- 1.1.2 The Site (ref. figure 1) is located on Hyde Road, Manchester (grid ref: SJ87619621). The former 14-screen Showcase Cinema first opened in October 1989 on the site of the famous Belle Vue entertainment complex. At present the cinema and substation buildings are set within car park with amenity lawns, scattered trees and introduced shrub beds. There are broad-leaved tree belts along the boundary of the site.



Figure 1. Site Location

1.2 Legislation

- 1.2.1 All British bat species and their roosts are protected under European Law (Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017) and UK Law (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended). As such it is an offence to undertake the following acts;
- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat
 - Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats
 - Damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
 - Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost

1.3 Planning Policy

- 1.3.1 Biodiversity is a material consideration to the planning process and consideration must be given to the protection, retention and improvement, of existing biodiversity features. The proposed demolition of the existing buildings will impact a built structure which could potentially support protected species and particular consideration should be given to roosting bats, roof-nesting birds and other protected and notable species which are supported by built structures.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Desktop Study

- 2.1.1 A review of ecological information held by the local record centre was undertaken, Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU), the local record centre for Manchester were asked to provide bat records for the site a 2km radius thereof.
- 2.1.2 In addition to the consultation process a review was carried out of the local and national planning framework, including;

National Policy

- National Planning Policy Framework, February 2019

Local Policy

- Core Strategy (Manchester's Local Development Framework), Adopted 11 July 2012

2.2 Site Survey

Habitat Suitability

- 2.2.1 The habitats present adjacent to the Site and within the surrounding area were identified by undertaking a site walkover and by reviewing publically accessible online maps. The habitats' suitability to support and provide connectivity for commuting and foraging bats was then determined.

Table 1. Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape

Suitability	Commuting and foraging habitats
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats.
Low	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats such as a gappy hedgerow or un-vegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. 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 a 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. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.

Preliminary Roost Survey

- 2.2.2 A preliminary roost assessment of the former Showcase Cinema and substation buildings was then undertaken. An external and internal (where accessible) inspection of the buildings was undertaken to search for, and to assess the potential for, a bat roost to be present.
- 2.2.3 External searches included, for example, looking for gaps between any soffit boards and walls, gaps between window frames and the walls, and looking for bat droppings on the walls and window ledges. Following the external survey, an internal survey of accessible loft spaces was also carried out to search for evidence of a bat roost. This included looking for the following signs:
- live or dead bats
 - bat droppings
 - bat entry/exit points
 - bat urine staining
 - grease marks on any timbers
 - feeding remains such as insect wings
 - areas clear of cobwebs
- 2.2.4 The buildings were then assessed in accordance with the guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats (BCT, 2016).

Table 2. Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats based on the presence of suitable roosting features within a structure

Suitability	Commuting and foraging 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). A tree of sufficient size and age to contain PRFs but with none seen from the ground or features seen with only very limited roosting potential.
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 of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only – the assessments in this table are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).
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.

- 2.2.5 A pair of close focussing binoculars, a high-powered torch and an endoscope were used (where required) to search for evidence of bats, externally and internally.
- 2.2.6 The daytime bat survey was carried out on the 23 November 2020, a sub-optimal time of the year to survey for bats and signs of bats; as it is outside the period when bats are most active.
- 2.2.7 Anthony Nickson carried out the daytime bat survey; Anthony is an active bat worker and holds a Natural England Class 2 survey licence (2015-16233-CLS-CLS) for bats; he is also a full member the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.

2.3 Survey constraints

- 2.3.1 A full survey of the buildings was undertaken, the buildings both have flat roofs and there are no loft spaces to survey.
- 2.3.2 November is a sub-optimal time of the year to survey for bats and signs of bats; as it is outside the period when bats are most active.

2.4 Other protected species

- 2.4.1 In addition to surveying for bats, during the survey any direct observations or signs of other protected or notable species, in particular nesting birds, were also to be recorded.

3.0 Results

3.1 Desktop Study

- 3.1.1 GMEU, the local record centre for Manchester, provided the following records from the site and within a 2km radius of the site:

Table 3. Summary of bat records

Bat Species	Roost Records	Non-Roost Records	Closest Record
Brown long-eared (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>)	1	0	The roost record is of a probable small roost in a warehouse in West Gorton, approximately 700m north-west of the Site.
Common pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>)	4	28	The closest roost record is a roost of 5 bats in the main building at Stanley Grove Primary School, approximately 710m south-west of the Site.
			The closest records are from a nocturnal survey at Belle Vue stadium where low levels of bat activity were recorded. Belle Vue stadium is approximately 150m south-east of the Site.
Pipistrelle bat (<i>Pipistrellus</i> sp.)	3	6	The closest roost record is a roost at the Crown Hotel (Openshaw), 750m north-east of the Site.
			The closest record is Nutsford Vale Park, approximately 910m south of the Site.
Bats (<i>Chiroptera</i>)	0	1	The record is of a dead bat at the Abbey Hey Pub site, approximately 1800m north-east of the Site.
Daubenton's bat (<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>)	0	2	The closest record is from Fairfield (Manchester), approximately 1750m north-east of the Site.
Mouse-eared bat (<i>Myotis</i> sp.)	0	1	The record is from Birchfields Park, approximately 1880m south-west of the Site.
Noctule bat (<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>)	0	1	The record is from Varna Street Primary School Park, approximately 1280m north-east of the Site.
Soprano pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>)	0	1	The record is from Gorton Lower Reservoir, approximately 1700m east of the Site.

3.2 Site Survey

Habitat Suitability

- 3.2.1 The Site is positioned on the south-east of Manchester city centre, set within a large car park comprising hard standing, amenity lawns, scattered trees and introduced shrub beds. There are broad-leaved tree belts along the boundary of the site.
- 3.2.2 The Site is bound by Hyde Road (A57) to the north, Kirkmanshulme Lane to the south, residential dwellings associated with Ellen Wilkinson Crescent and the British Car Auctions site to the west and the Gala Bingo site to the east. The wider landscape is dominated by large residential developments, commercial developments and urban green space.

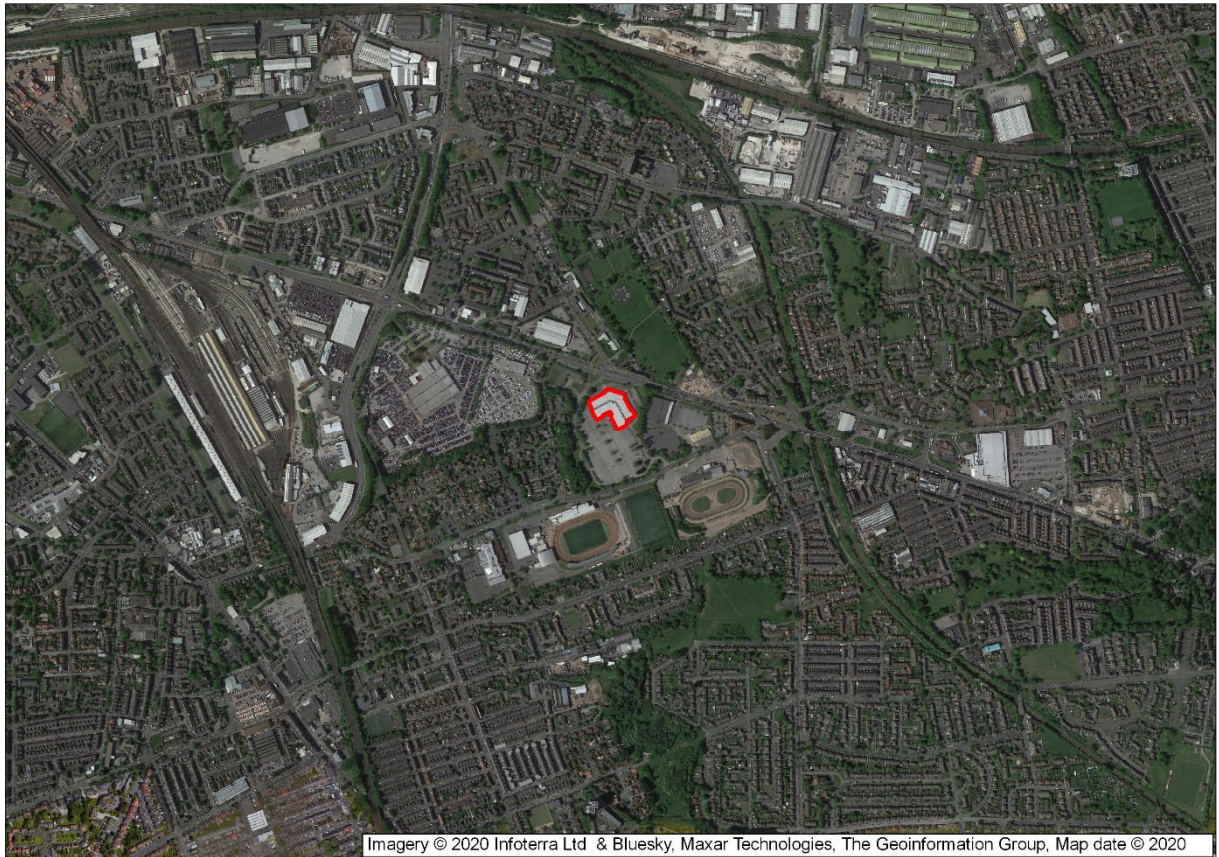


Figure 2. Landscape surrounding the Site

Preliminary Roost Survey

- 3.2.3 The existing Showcase Cinema (ref. plates 1-6) is a two storey concrete construction with a flat roof. The concrete walls of the building are predominantly wrapped in a tile covering with the main entrance comprising a rendered finish with glazed curtain walling.
- 3.2.4 The flat roof comprises a concrete slab with a rubber waterproof covering (ref. plates 7-8). The roof is well sealed and does not provide any access / roosting opportunities for bats.
- 3.2.5 There is metal gutter-boxing where the external walls abuts the roof (ref. plates 9-12). The metal gutter-boxing is flush to the external wall and does not provide any access / roosting opportunities for bats.
- 3.2.6 There is a gap in the external wall to the southern elevation (grid reference: SJ8760696269) (ref. plates 13-14) of the building where electrical services feed into the building. The gap is approximately 2.5m high. The flight line to the feature is obstructed by 2 no. air conditioning units. The gap was inspected and no evidence of bats was identified. The area is lit by a security lighting. It is unlikely the features is being used by bats for accessing the building and/or roosting.
- 3.2.7 The internal inspection of the building confirmed the building has a flat roof behind a suspended ceiling (ref. plates 15-18). No evidence of bats were identified during the internal inspection.
- 3.2.8 There is a small electricity substation to the rear of the existing Showcase Cinema building (grid reference: SJ8760696252). The single storey substation (ref. plates 19-20) is a concrete construction which has a tile external wall covering and a flat roof. The metal flashing which seals the external walls and the roof is well sealed.
- 3.2.9 No evidence of roosting bats was identified during the survey. The buildings are categorised as having negligible potential to support roosting bats.

3.3 Nesting birds

- 3.3.1 The former Showcase Cinema building does not provide suitable habitat for cavity nesting birds. Notwithstanding this, the building has a substantial flat roof which provides favourable nesting habitat for gull species (*Larus* sp.) during the nesting season (01 March and 31 August inclusive).

4.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

4.1 Bats

- 4.1.1 The Showcase Cinema and substation buildings provide negligible suitability to support roosting bats.
- 4.1.2 No evidence of a bat roost was recorded within the buildings during the preliminary bat survey. The survey information suggests that the Site does not currently supporting roosting bats.
- 4.1.3 The survey suggests there should be no significant concerns or constraints in relation to roosting bats for the demolition works and there is currently no requirement for an EPS licence in respect of bats.
- 4.1.4 The bat survey is valid for 2 years.

4.2 Nesting birds

- 4.2.1 In relation to nesting birds. The demolition of the buildings should not take place between 01 March and 31 August inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check of the applicable areas of the buildings for active birds' nests. The check should be undertaken immediately before demolition works commences and confirmation provided that no birds/ active nests will be harmed and/or that there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting bird interest on site.

References

Bat Mitigation Guidelines, English Heritage, January 2004

Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd edition, Bat Conservation Trust, 2016

Core Strategy (Manchester's Local Development Framework), Manchester City Council, Adopted 11 July 2012

Countryside and Wildlife Act, 1981

EU Habitats Directive, 1994

Hyde Road (SJ8761396217) Biological Record Search, GMEU, 27 November 2020

National Planning Policy Framework, February 2019

Appendix A - Planning Policies

National Planning Policy Framework, 2019

Habitats and biodiversity

175. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:
- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
 - b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
 - c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons⁵⁸ and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
 - d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Core Strategy (Manchester's Local Development Framework), Adopted 11 July 2012

Policy EN 15

Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

The Council will seek to maintain or enhance sites of biodiversity and geological value throughout the City. Particular consideration will be given to:

- sites with international or national designations for their biodiversity value. Manchester contains one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (Cotteril Clough); there is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and an SSSI just over the border in Oldham (both on the Rochdale Canal within Oldham);
- other sites of biodiversity value, including Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs); Manchester currently has 35 SBIs (including the Rochdale and Ashton Canals) and 7 LNRs; priority habitats found within Manchester, as listed in the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy and included in the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GM BAP);
- protected and priority species, as listed in the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy and included in the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GM BAP);
- sites that are recognised for their geological importance;
- the Council's objective to protect and conserve the City's existing trees and woodlands and the aim for a net increase in trees across the City.

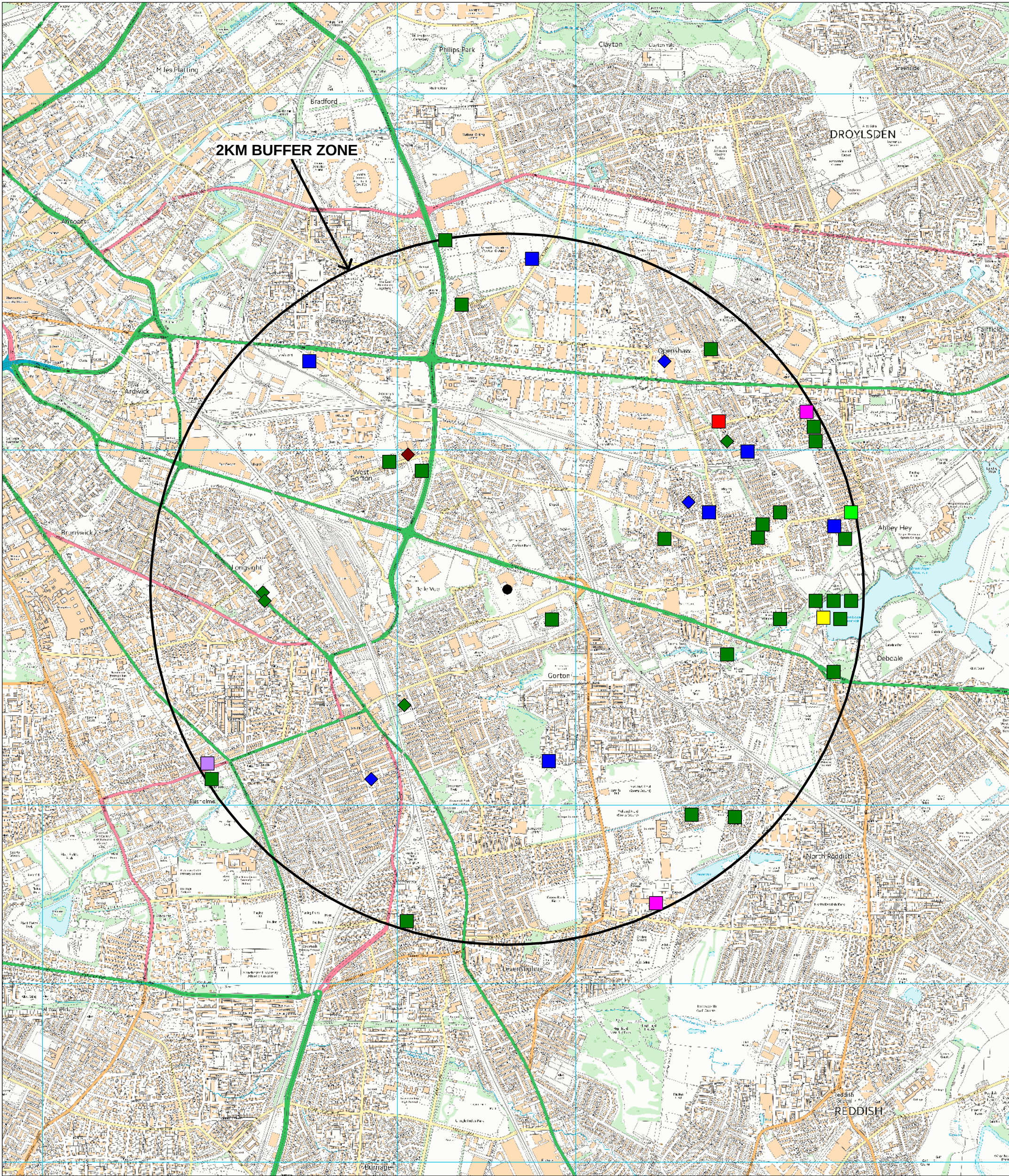
Developers will be expected to identify and implement reasonable opportunities to enhance, restore or create new biodiversity, either on-site or adjacent to the site, contributing to linkages between valuable or potentially valuable habitat areas where appropriate, with reference to:

- the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy, which provides further details of priority habitats within Manchester and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement including corridors such as the Mersey, Medlock and Irk river valleys, the canals and disused railway lines and areas of managed greenspace particularly in parks;
- the Green Infrastructure Framework for Greater Manchester, which encompasses an ecological framework that seeks to guide and inform habitat creation and repair, including identifying large 'biodiversity opportunity areas' including the Moston Brook Corridor and Nutsford Vale;
- the Open Space, Sport & Recreation Study, which identifies areas where there is a deficit of natural and semi-natural greenspace, opportunities for green corridors and other linkages;
- Manchester's Climate Change Action Plan;
- the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for Manchester;
- the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for Manchester, which gives detailed consideration to Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), including the Rochdale Canal SAC just outside the district boundary;
- the River Basin Management Plan for the North West;
- the Manchester Tree Strategy.

Any adverse impacts on biodiversity will need to be justified against the wider benefits of the proposal, assessed against other LDF policies. Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, developers will be required to provide appropriate mitigation and/or compensation.

Development should wherever possible seek to maintain, enhance or restore existing geology.

Appendix B - Data Search



KEY

BAT ROOSTS

- ◆ BROWN LONG-EARED BAT
- ◆ COMMON PIPISTRELLE
- ◆ PIPISTRELLE SP

BATS OTHER SIGNS

- BAT SP
- COMMON PIPISTRELLE
- DAUBENTON'S BAT
- MYOTIS SP
- NOCTULE BAT
- PIPISTRELLE SP
- SOPRANO PIPISTRELLE

GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
ECOLOGICAL SEARCH - SJ 87613 96217
HYDE ROAD - MAP 3

SCALE 1:20,000

BAT DATA COURTESY OF SOUTH LANCS BAT GROUP

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Date Produced: 27/11/2020

Appendix C - Photograph Plates



Plate 1. Showcase Cinema (northern elevation)



Plate 2. Showcase Cinema (north-west elevation)



Plate 3. Showcase Cinema (north-west elevation)



Plate 4. Showcase Cinema (south-west elevation)



Plate 5. Showcase Cinema (southern elevation)



Plate 6. Showcase Cinema (north-east elevation)



Plate 7. Showcase Cinema (roof)

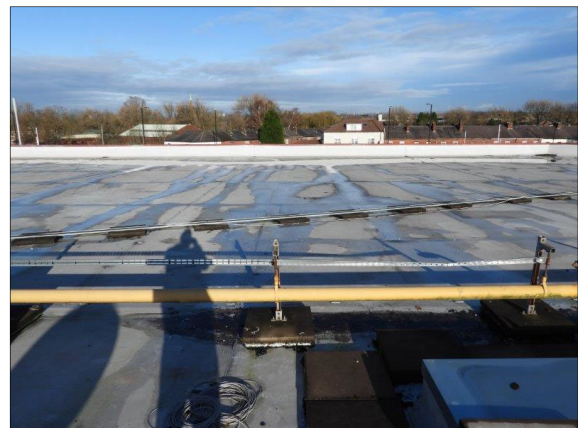


Plate 8. Showcase Cinema (roof)



Plate 9. Showcase Cinema (metal gutter-boxing)



Plate 10. Showcase Cinema (metal gutter-boxing)



Plate 11. Showcase Cinema (metal gutter-boxing)



Plate 12. Showcase Cinema (metal gutter-boxing)

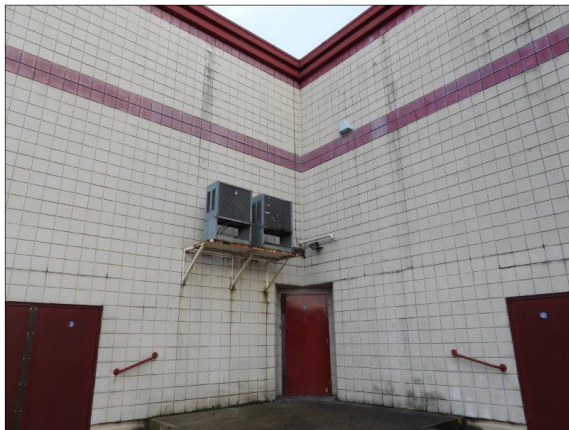


Plate 13. Showcase Cinema (gap in the external wall)

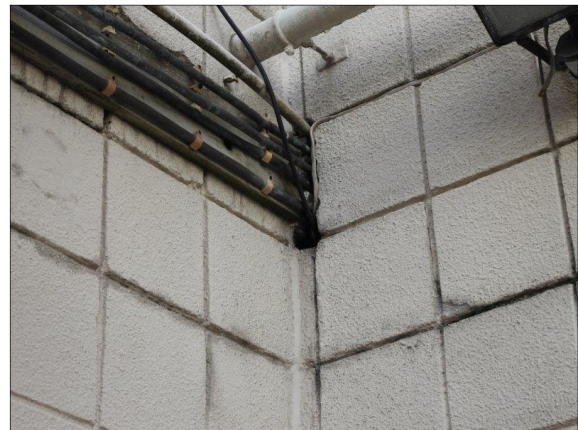


Plate 14. Showcase Cinema (gap in the external wall)



Plate 15. Showcase Cinema (atrium)

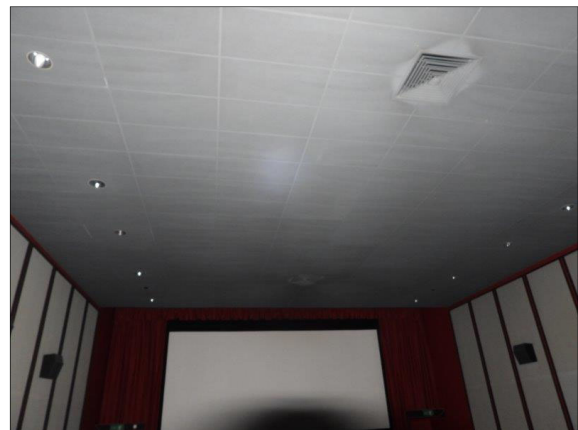


Plate 16. Showcase Cinema (Roof)



Plate 17. Showcase Cinema (Roof)



Plate 18. Showcase Cinema (Roof)



Plate 19. Showcase Cinema (Roof)



Plate 20. Showcase Cinema (Roof)