

EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY & DAYTIME BAT SURVEY AT PHOENIX WORKS, ELLESMERE STREET, MANCHESTER

2020



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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	2
2. METHODOLOGY	3
3. RESULTS	
HABITATS	4
PROTECTED SPECIES	7
DAYTIME BAT SURVEY	7
INVASIVE SPECIES	12
PROTECTED SITES	12
4. ASSESSMENT	13
5. RECOMMENDATIONS	15
6. REFERENCES	16
PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP	

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2020 by DeTrafford to undertake an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and a daytime bat survey of a building and associated land at Phoenix Works, Ellesmere Street, Manchester. The site will be the subject of a planning application for the demolition of the existing building on site to make way for a newly constructed apartment building. As part of the planning application, an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey is required to provide an overview of the habitats present within the site and to assess any potential protected species issues. A daytime bat survey is required to search any structures and trees to be affected for evidence of bat activity.

Site Description

1.2 Phoenix Works is located on the south side of Ellesmere Street, at the point Bentinck Street joins in Castlefield, Manchester (O.S. grid reference: SJ 82703 97224 – see Figure 1). The development site comprises a three-storey linear building surrounded by bare ground which is currently used for the storage space for building materials and equipment. Numerous portable cabins are located across the site. The site is located in a metropolitan environment with commercial and residential buildings present in all directions.

Aims of Survey

1.3 The aims of the survey were to:

- Describe and map the habitats present on the site,
- Assess the potential for protected species to be present on the site or just outside the immediate site boundary,
- Identify where further survey may be necessary.

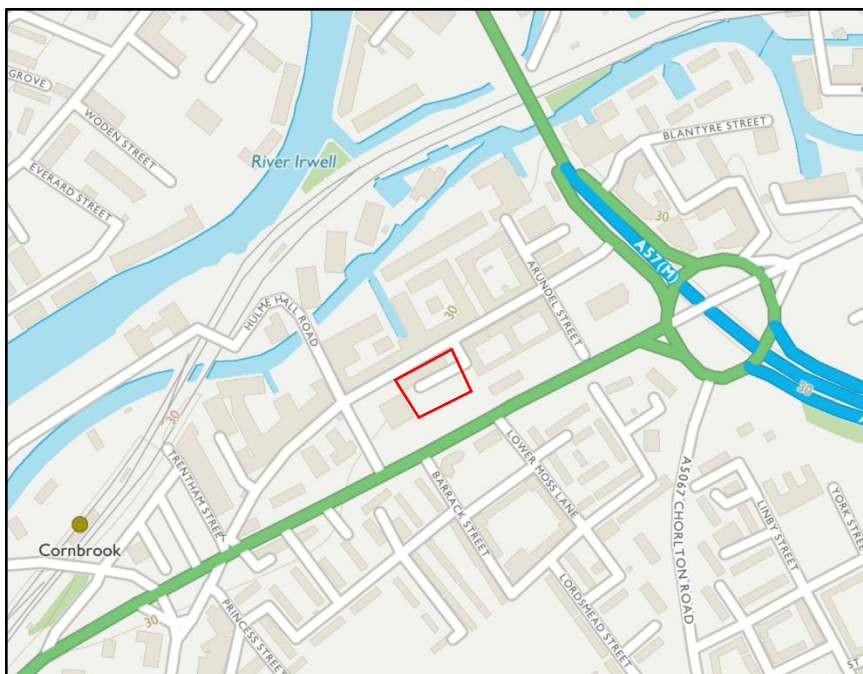


Figure 1 showing the red line boundary of the site

2.0 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 A Phase 1 Habitat survey was undertaken to JNCC standards (JNCC, 2017). The site was walked, and each habitat was assigned a Phase 1 habitat category. The habitats surrounding the site were also mapped. Species lists were taken at locations of botanical interest. All botanical nomenclature follows Stace, 2019. A Phase 1 map was produced showing habitat boundaries.
- 2.2 During the Phase 1 Habitat survey, the habitats were assessed for their potential to support protected species. This included, for example, looking for signs of Badger activity (e.g. setts, paths, latrines and hairs on fences), assessing any waterbodies on site or near the site for their potential to support Great Crested Newt and assessing the potential for any buildings or mature trees to be used by bats.
- 2.3 The site was also surveyed for invasive, non-native plant species such as Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed.
- 2.4 The daytime bat survey involved an external survey of the building to be affected by the proposals, which 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. The building was also searched internally for evidence of a bat roost, which 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.
- 2.5 A pair of close-focussing binoculars and a high-powered torch were used to search for evidence of bats externally and internally. In addition, the trees on site were assessed from the ground using binoculars and ladders to search for bat potential roost features, such as cavities or peeling bark.
- 2.6 Ben Crossthwaite (Senior Ecologist) undertook the survey on 5th October 2020. The weather was cool, dry and clear. Ben is experienced and fully trained in protected species surveys and holds a Natural England Level 2 Class Survey Licence for bats (Licence Ref: 2020-48541-CLS-CLS). October is a sub-optimal time of the year for botanical work, however due to the type of habitats present on site, a thorough assessment could be undertaken. The site was fully accessible and there were no constraints to the survey.

3.0 RESULTS

HABITATS

- 3.1 The Phase 1 Habitat Map of the site can be found at the back of this report. The habitats found within the site are described below.

Bare Ground

- 3.2 This habitat is the most abundant on site and consists of tarmac and compact crush-and-run (see Photograph 1). These areas are used for vehicular access and footpaths. Ephemeral/short perennial species have established in a few small areas between cracks and at the peripheries of the bare ground habitats. These areas are minor and consist Mugwort *Artemisia vulgaris*, Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg., Horsetail species *Equisetum* sp., Annual Meadow-grass *Poa annua*, Common Mouse-ear *Cerastium fontanum* and Smoot Sow-thistle *Sonchus oleraceus*.



Photograph 1 showing an area of bare ground on site

Scattered Trees

- 3.3 Three scattered trees are located on site (see Photograph 2). Tree species present are Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*, Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and Swedish Whitebeam *Sorbus intermedia* agg. These trees are young to semi-mature in age.



Photograph 2 showing the Swedish Whitebeam on site

Bare Ground/Building Materials and Equipment

- 3.4 This habitat has been assigned separately to bare ground due to the amount and density of building materials and equipment present (see Photograph 1 above and Photograph 3 below).



Photograph 3 showing an area of bare ground/building materials and equipment

Tall, Ruderal Herb

- 3.5 A narrow strip of tall, ruderal vegetation exists along the western boundary of the site, between the boundary fencing and a stretch of netted heras fencing that runs parallel (see Photograph 4). Dominant species include Stinging Nettle *Urtica dioica*, Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. and Hedge Bindweed *Calystegia sepium*.



Photograph 4 showing the tall, ruderal herb between the boundary fence and the heras fencing

Scattered Scrub

- 3.6 This habitat is located across the site along fencing and the peripheries of the site (see Photograph 5). Species present are Butterfly Bush *Buddleja davidii*, Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* and Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*.



Photograph 5 showing some of the scattered scrub on site

Existing Structures

- 3.7 A large three storey, brick-built building is located along the northern boundary of the site. Numerous portable cabin type structures and two silos are also present on site (see Photographs 6 and 7).



Photograph 6 showing some of the portable cabins on site



Photograph 7 showing the silos on site

Boundaries

- 3.8 Some of the boundaries of the site are marked by fencing. The fencing is a combination of heras and more permanent metal fencing.

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

- 3.9 Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* is a European Protected Species (EPS) under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 and the species is fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 3.10 No ponds exist on site or within 250 metres of the site boundaries. Great Crested Newt (GCN) terrestrial habitat does not exist on the site. The bare ground that dominates offers no cover or foraging habitat for GCN.

Bats

- 3.11 All bat species are European Protected Species. This is implemented in the UK through the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Bats are also protected under The Wildlife and Countryside

Act 1981 (as amended), the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC, 2006).

- 3.12 The building on site was surveyed internally and externally. There were no constraints to the survey.

External Survey

- 3.13 The three-storey building onsite is constructed from brick (see cover page above). The brickwork and associated mortar are in good condition with no holes, gaps or missing sections present (see Photograph 8). The wood window frames across the building are showing signs of aesthetic degradation. However, the wood and uPVC window and door frames and are well-sealed to the surrounding masonry with no gaps or crevices bats may exploit (see Photograph 9).



Photograph 8 showing the exterior of the building



Photograph 9 showing some of the windows across the building

- 3.14 Some of the windows have been smashed and subsequently boarded up. The boards are fixed flush to the frames with no gaps or holes present. Metal roller-shutter doors are also located across the ground floor of the building (see Photograph 8 above). The metal frames are in excellent condition and well-sealed to the surrounding brickwork.

- 3.15 The shallow pitched roof is covered with metal corrugated roofing sheets. The sheets appear to be in good condition as there are no signs of water ingress internally. The roofs edges are finished with metal roof capping providing no internal access points.
- 3.16 Small ground floor extensions are located on the eastern and western elevations of the three-storey building. The extension located on the eastern elevation is in poor condition with a damaged roller-shutter door offering open access into the internal space (see Photograph 10).

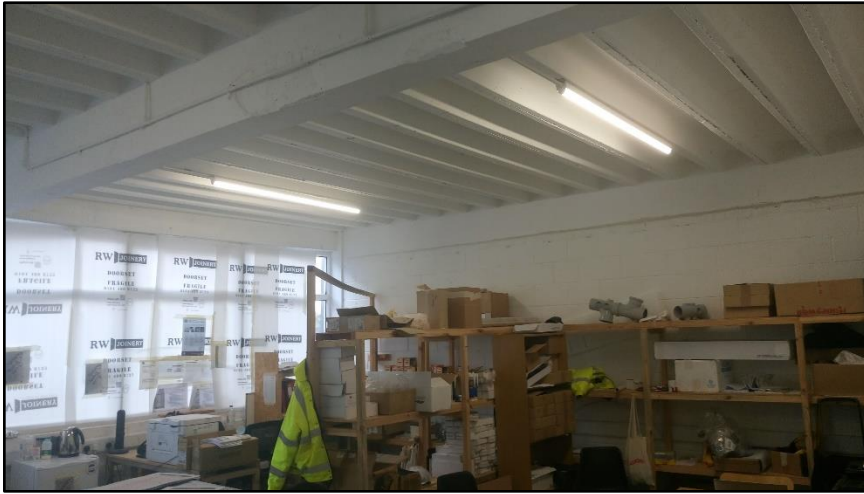


Photograph 10 showing the eastern extension on the three-storey building

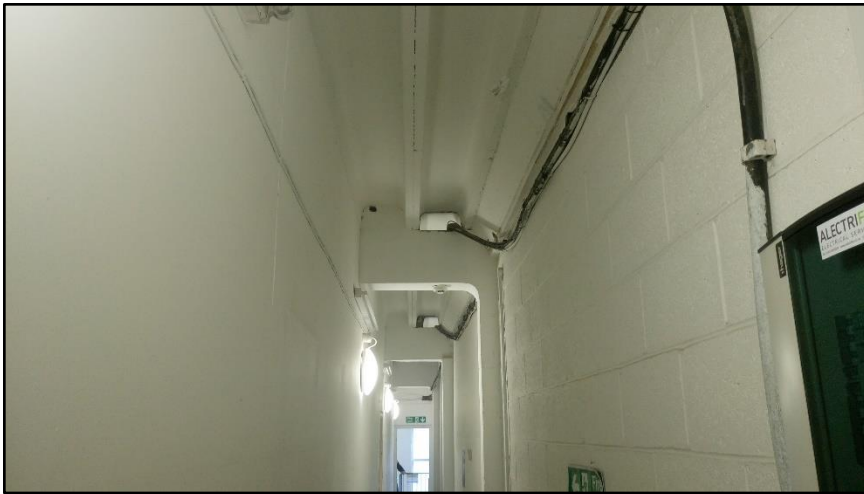
- 3.17 The external brickwork is in good condition and well-sealed with mortar. The sloped roof is covered with corrugated metal sheets. The sheets are in reasonable condition and fitted flush to one another. The extension to the western elevation is in good condition with no entry points found

Internal Survey

- 3.18 The interior of the three-storey building consists a series of office spaces, as well as storage, kitchen and mess room facilities. Most of the rooms across the top floor are open to the underside of the roof with no roof void spaces present (see Photographs 11 and 12).



Photograph 11 showing one of the office spaces and the underside of the roof



Photograph 12 showing one of the corridors and the underside of the roof above

3.19 A few of the rooms on the top floor have suspended ceilings with a small void space located between the suspended ceiling and the underside of the roof above (see Photograph 13). These were easily accessed by moving one of the ceiling tiles. The voids consist small amounts of wiring and other services. The voids are well-sealed with no daylight seen at any point.



Photograph 13 showing one of the small void spaces between the suspended ceiling and the underside of the roof

- 3.20 The interior of the eastern, ground floor extension is damp. The brick internal walls are painted white. The walls are in good condition and well-sealed with mortar. No roof void spaces are present as the space is open to the underside of the roof (see Photograph 14). The roof timbers are in good condition with no cracks or gaps bats may exploit.



Photograph 14 showing the underside of the roof

- 3.21 No evidence of bat activity or occupancy was found during the external or internal surveys of the building.

Other Structures

- 3.22 Numerous portable cabins and two silos are located on site (see Photographs 6 and 7 above). All these structures are well-sealed, are heavily disturbed and offer no suitable roosting habitat for bats. Therefore, these structures are considered to offer **negligible bat roost suitability** and are discounted.
- 3.23 The trees on site were surveyed from the ground for potential bat roosting features, such as cavities, knot holes or peeling bark. No suitable features were found. Therefore, it is considered the trees on site offer **negligible bat roost suitability**.

- 3.24 The site lacks any suitable landscape features bats may use for foraging or commuting.

Badger

- 3.25 Badgers *Meles meles* are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). These Acts, for example, make it illegal to disturb a Badger whilst it is in a sett, to kill, injure or take a Badger and to obstruct the entrance to a Badger sett.
- 3.26 No evidence of Badger activity was found at the site. No Badger setts were located within the site or on the immediate boundaries of the site.

Nesting Birds

- 3.27 All bird species are protected at their nest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 3.28 The scattered trees provide suitable nesting habitat for birds. No evidence of nesting bird was found in or on the building.

INVASIVE SPECIES

- 3.29 No invasive, non-native species and is listed on Schedule 9 Part II (plants) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were found on site or immediately adjacent to the site boundary.

PROTECTED SITES

- 3.30 No statutorily protected sites lie within the proposed development or within 5km of the site.
- 3.31 The site lies within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zone for the Rochdale Canal SSSI and Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which lies approximately 7km to the north-east of the site. The proposed development is not listed in the criteria as a concern.
- 3.32 The River Irwell Site of Biological Importance (SBI) is located approximately 1.2km to the north of the site, and Salford Quays (North) and Salford Quays (South) SBIs are located approximately 1.8 kilometres to the west of the site.

4.0 ASSESSMENT

HABITATS

- 4.1 The Phase 1 Habitats present on the site are common throughout the UK. No nationally rare or locally rare plant species were located during the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey.
- 4.2 The site is dominated by bare ground with small amounts of scattered scrub and three scattered trees. The bare ground offers negligible ecological value and is considered to be a hostile habitat for fauna species. The scattered scrub offers a small source of pollen and nectar for invertebrates. The trees offer potential nesting habitat for birds.

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

- 4.3 No ponds exist on site or within 250 metres of the site boundary. The site lacks any favourable GCN terrestrial habitat. Therefore, no further GCN survey is required, and Great Crested Newt is not considered to be a constraint on development.

Bats

- 4.4 The building on site was surveyed externally and internally. The brick-built building is in good condition and well-sealed with mortar. The roof is also in good condition. No potential entry points were found externally. The interior office spaces, mess rooms and kitchen facilities are in excellent condition with no bat roosting habitat present. No roof void spaces are present as the majority of the second-floor spaces are open to the underside of the roof. Small void spaces are located between the suspended ceilings and the underside of the roof. These were all inspected and found to be well-sealed with no entry points located.
- 4.5 The ground floor extension located on the eastern elevation of the building is poor condition with open access into the internal space via the damaged roller-shutter door. The internal space is in good condition with no void spaces present.
- 4.6 No evidence of bat activity or occupancy was found across the exterior or interior of the building on site. Due to this and the well-lit, inner-city location of the site offering sub-optimal bat foraging and commuting habitat, it is considered the building offers **negligible bat roost suitability**.

Badger

- 4.7 No Badger sett was located on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. No evidence of Badger activity was found. It is considered Badger is not to be a constraint on the development at this time.

Nesting Birds

- 4.8 The site supports suitable nesting habitats for birds within the scattered trees. However, no evidence of nesting birds was found in the trees or birds spotted during the survey.

- 4.9 Nesting birds can be mitigated for by allowing no works to potential nesting habitats to be carried out within the bird nesting season (which is generally March – August) unless a nesting bird survey is undertaken first.

INVASIVE SPECIES

- 4.10 No invasive, non-native species and is listed on Schedule 9 Part II (plants) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were found on site or immediately adjacent to the site boundaries.

PROTECTED SITES

- 4.11 No statutory protected sites lie within the site, adjacent to the site or within 5km of the site boundary. The nearest statutory protected site lies over 7km to the north-east.
- 4.12 The site lies within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone, which lists certain types of development that may have a deleterious impact on protected sites nearby. The proposals for the site are not listed as a concern.
- 4.13 The nearest non-statutory protected site, the River Irwell SBI, is located approximately 1.2km to the north of the site. It is considered, due to the size of the construction site and the buffer habitats separating the sites, such as inner-city development and major infrastructure, that there will be no deleterious affects on the local designations as a result of the development.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Protected species are a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a planning application. The presence of protected species, the effect of the proposed development and suitable mitigation, if required, must be established before planning permission can be granted. Following the findings from the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Daytime Bat Survey, the following may be required:

- **Nesting Birds** – It is recommended the removal of the trees on site is carried out outside the nesting bird season (generally March – August). If clearance work needs to be carried out within the bird nesting season, then a nesting bird survey will be required immediately prior to work commencing.

Habitat Enhancement and Creation

5.2 If landscaping is designed, the following measures are recommendations to enhance the biodiversity value of the site:

- Soft landscaping should include the provision of native and non-native flowering perennial species, to provide a pollen and nectar source for invertebrates.
- Native tree and shrub planting where possible.

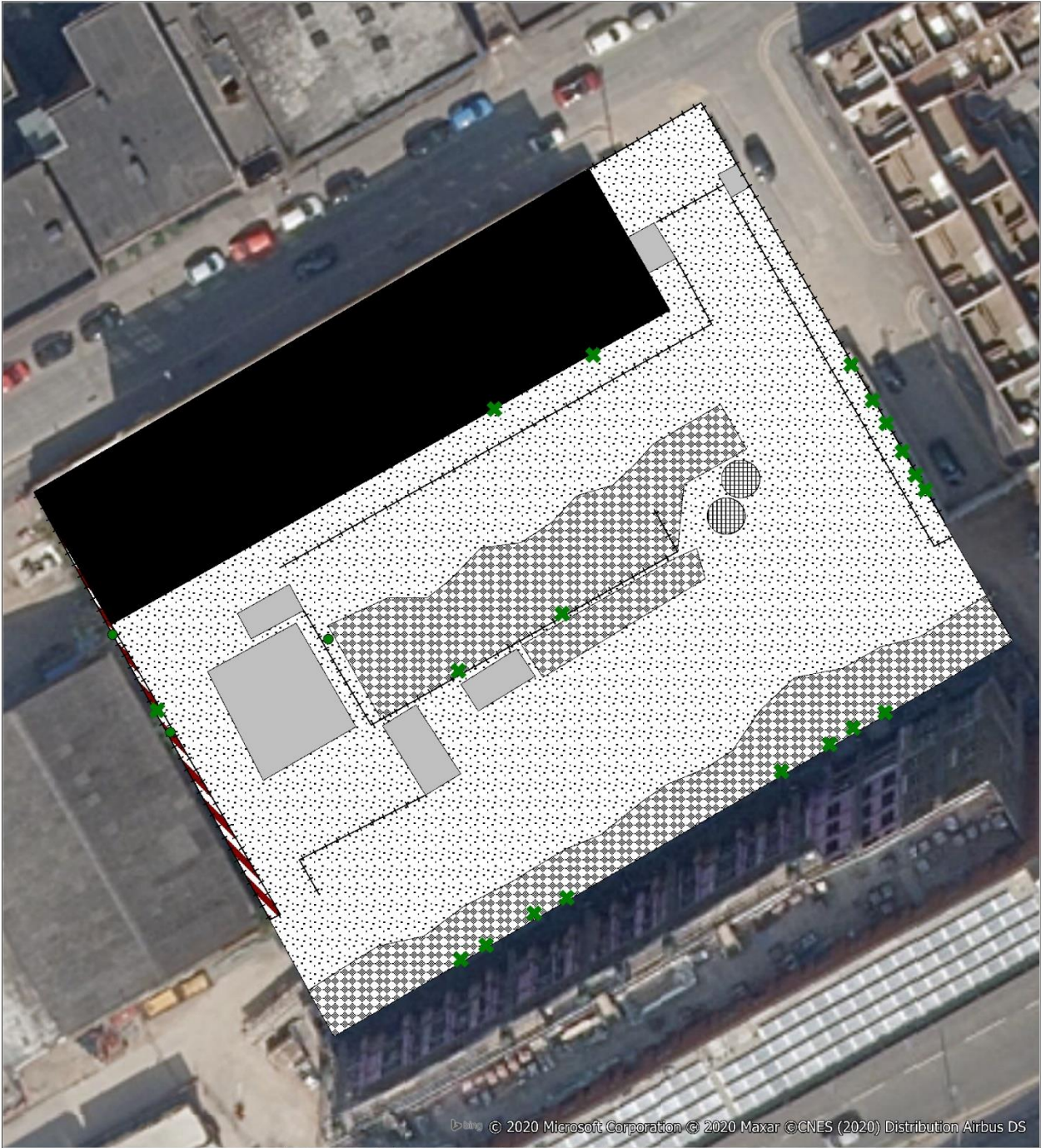
6.0 REFERENCES

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PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP



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Key

- Building
- Bare Ground
- Bare Ground/Building Materials/Equipment
- Portable Cabin
- Silo
- Tall, Ruderal Herb
- Fence
- Scattered Scrub
- Scattered Tree

PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP

Phoenix Works,
Ellesmere Street,
Manchester

NOT TO SCALE

Date: 06/10/2020
Drawn by: BC

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