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An Efficient & Professional Development Focused Approach

PRELIMINARY BAT SURVEY REPORT

Restoration / Conversion Proposal

The Junction Hotel
Rolls Crescent
Hulme
Manchester
M15 5JZ

Document Information

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The information and advice contained in this report has been issued in accordance with bat survey and mitigation best practice guidelines. I, Thomas Braithwaite, confirm that the statements in this report are legitimate and unbiased opinions.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This report has been prepared on behalf of Roost Architects Ltd., by Thomas Braithwaite (BSc. Hons) in order to provide the results of Preliminary Bat Survey conducted on the 28th May 2020 associated with the proposed development at The Junction Hotel, Hulme outlined in section 1.3.

1.2 Objectives

This report is required to:

- Confirm the presence or likely absence of roosting bats. A negative result to be reinforced by what is considered suitable survey effort and in accordance with accepted standards.
- Identify the requirements for any further survey.
- Where required, to present mitigation/compensation recommendations. Including, avoidance measures where possible.
- To inform if it is likely that any licencing will be required for proposed development.
- Identify any opportunities for ecological enhancement to better the habitat for bats in the locality.

This report only takes into account habitat and roosting potential for bats and not any other protected species that may be present or affected.

1.3 Proposals

Provisionally, it is understood that the proposed development will include:

1. Construction of 2no. four-storey residential buildings to car park area adjacent and to the south of the existing Junction Hotel structure.
2. Remodelling of the existing Junction Hotel structure. Which will include:
    - Demolition of adjoining single storey structure to the south of the original two-storey structure.
    - Restoration and reinstatement of ground floor former public house. Refurbishment of internal features where possible.
    - Remodelling of basement to become live music venue.
    - Restoration of external features of heritage significance where possible.
    - Conversion of upper storey rooms into accommodation.
    - Re-instatement of previously removed third floor. New upper-storey design to be modern/contemporary. The new storey is proposed to be two new apartments.

*In order to provide an impact assessment relative to bats, full development details will be required.

It is understood by the surveyor that the proposals do not affect any trees or other structures not mentioned in the above.

Planning application number: Currently Unknown

1.4 Site Description

The structure is a detached two storey building constructed in the late Victorian period. A flat roof single storey structure has since been built adjoining the south corner of the original structure.

Immediately adjacent to the south of the structure within the plot boundary is an area of flat hardstanding land currently used as a carpark.

The original structure was a three storey. The former upper-storey suffered fire damaged and was subsequently removed I the 1960's and is now two-storey.

Beneath the ground floor is a large cellar occupying almost the entire footprint of the original building.

The outer elevations of the structure are comprised of ornate stone features which have been painted cream.

The outer elevations of the adjoining single storey are brick with a timber and corrugated metal cladding to the upper part of the elevation.

A small timber clad canopy overhangs an access door to the west of the structure.

Several window openings have damaged/missing glazing and have been tightly boarded up for security.

The roof area of the upper-storey is a flat bitumen felt roof with a low parapet surrounding the edge. The roof of the adjoining single storey building is also bitumen felt.

The structure has fallen into disrepair and areas of dilapidation are evident throughout. The structure appears to have also suffered vandalism and subsequently is now derelict.

The area surrounding the plot is considered urban.

1.5 Site Location

The property sits at the stated address within the area of Hulme; an inner city area within the Metropolitan Borough of Greater Manchester in Lancashire.

Grid Ref.: SJ 83555 96575

Elevation above sea level: 35 metres

1.6 Legislation Protecting Bats

All British bat species are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). They are also listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and are protected by Parts 4(b), 4(c) and 5 of Section 9 of that Act. In net effect, it is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill bats;

- Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats in a place of shelter (roost);

- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obscure access to a breeding site or resting place (roost); and/or

• Possess, control, transport, sell or exchange a bat or any part of a bat, unless acquired legally.

Because bats use roosts at different times of year and typically return to the same roosts annually, it is the legal opinion that a roost is protected whether bats are in occupancy at the time or not.

2 Methodology

2.1 Preliminary Assessment for Bats

In order to undertake a preliminary scoping survey at The Junction Hotel, Hulme a daytime site visit was carried out on the 28th May 2020 at 16:00 and lasted approximately one hour.

The survey was completed by Natural England Level 2 Bat Survey Licence holder; Thomas Braithwaite (BSc. Hons).

2.2 Site Visit

During stated site visit the building and surrounding area was assessed for;

- Suitability of potential roosting features (PRF's) and characterisation of features.
- Suitability of bat foraging habitats.
- Requirement for further survey (if applicable).
- Visible indication of bat usage and/or presence.

Visual inspection of the structure was made, which included external and internal areas. In order to aid with inspection of individual features of the property equipment such as ladders, step-ups, binoculars, torches and endoscopes were used where required.

Any potential roost features, such as crevices and/or voids that could be used by roosting bats, were recorded and photographed. If possible, these features including the surrounding areas where inspected in more detail to determine evidence of any current or previous usage such as; droppings, feeding remains, urine staining, fur staining, smell and live or dead bats visible.

2.3 Assessment Criteria

Where direct evidence of a bat roost was found the structure would be categorised as a confirmed roost. Otherwise the structures potential for bat usage was based on a number of factors, notably the number, location and type of roost features available throughout. Where no evidence was found directly confirming the structure as a bat roost, the structure could be categorised as having either negligible, low, moderate or high potential. Further survey will be required. if the property falls into one of these categories.

Low Roost Suitability:

One survey visit; Either one dusk emergence survey or one dawn re-entry survey.

Moderate Roost Suitability:

Two separate survey visits; One dusk emergence and one separate dawn re-entry.

High Roost Suitability:

> Three separate survey visits. One dusk emergence and a separate dawn re-entry. Followed by a third dawn re-entry or dusk emergence survey.

Surveys to be undertaken within bat activity season (May – September inclusive). Spaced at least 2 weeks apart. A moderate potential site should have at least one survey before the end of August, a high potential site should have at least two surveys before the end of August.

A structure with a high potential categorisation could have only one good roost feature or it could have many. Equally, a structure with low to negligible could have many poor features or just one.

2.4 Data Search

A data search is undertaken in order to identify bat species are present in the locality. Although relatively uncommon, also if a bat roost has previously been recorded at structures location.

A data search is recommended to be carried out in addition to any further surveys recommended utilising Greater Manchester Local Records Centre (GMLC), which included data collected by South Lancashire Bat Group. *

Aerial imagery and other online sources were consulted in order to give an appraisal of the surrounding landscape regarding its suitability for bats.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (DEFRA), Magic Maps website was consulted as to any land-based designations and protected/notable species within 2km of the site.

*It is should be noted that any lack of records does not denote an absence of a species from an area surveyed.

2.5 Survey Method

Preliminary surveys/scoping surveys are only considered a means of identifying if or what further survey may be necessary for the structure in question. It is not always possible for a surveyor to determine whether the presence of bats can be completely ruled out.

Signs of regular bat occupancy within a roost are not always present and can be removed by factors such as weather. Furthermore, a thorough inspection of features that may support a bat roost is often not possible due to difficulty of access and intricacy of features where bats can roost without being identified.

A surveyor may however, be able to confirm the presence of bats by observing signs of usage. It is however, likely to lead onto further survey; roost characterisation surveys, to better understand the particularities of a site, the species and how they are using it in order to provide adequate recommendations of mitigation during and prior to project progress.

2.6 Data Lifespan

It is considered, under best practice guidelines, that data and recommendations provided within an ecological bat survey report are valid for up to two years from date of survey, depending on local planning authority. If the proposed development has not been undertaken, following that period, the

provided survey results and recommendations will/are likely to need re-evaluating prior to progression.

3 Findings

3.1 Data Search

Ten species of bat have been recorded in Lancashire, including Brandt's, Daubenton's¸ Whiskered, Natterer's, Leisler's, Noctule, Nathusius' Pipistrelle, Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle and Brown Long-eared (Couzens D. 2017).

DEFRA (2019) holds one record of granted European Protected Species Licenses within 1km of the site.

No bat roosts have been previously recorded at the property's address.

Records from Greater Manchester Local Records Centre (GMLRC), predominantly recorded by South Lancashire Bat Group (SLBG) revealed a low level of bat activity in the area immediately surrounding the site (<1km) and a moderate level of activity and numerous known roost sites within the 2km area surrounding the site. No bat activity has been recorded within 1km of the site.

Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Brown Long-eared, Noctule, and multiple records of unspecified Pipistrelle and vesper bat species have previously been recorded in the area.

The majority of records within the 2km buffer zone are Common Pipistrelles.

The majority of foraging activity recorded is within the extremely urban area of Manchester city centre to the north of the site.

A further notable concentration of bat activity has been highlight within Alexandra Park, an area of inner city green space, approximately 1km to the south.

There are numerous known roost sites within a 2 km radius of the site. The nearest confirmed roost is a small roost approximately 500 metres to the north of the development site and is a Common Pipistrelle roost site. A EPSL has been previously issued for this roost site as highlighted and discussed above.

The data search suggests the habitat immediately surrounding the site is suitable for low numbers of foraging bats.

The number of roosts highlighted in the area appears to be proportionate to the level of bat activity recorded in the area.

Bat activity records in the area are of mostly crevice dwelling bats likely to be found in roof voids, wall cavities, tree holes and bat boxes.

Roost locations highlight are predominantly within the built environment, suggesting bats in the area have a strong reliance on man-made structures in the area for roosting.

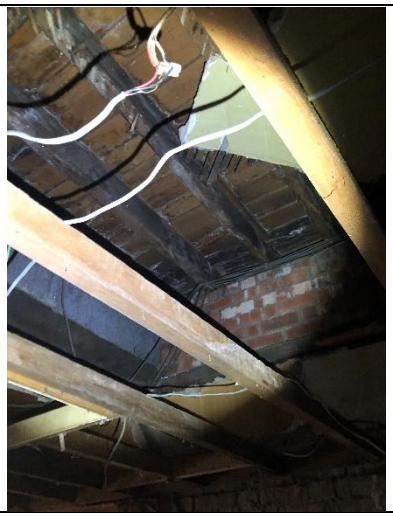
See Appendix 6.3 for ecological data search & Site Location Map at The Junction Hotel, Hulme.

3.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment

The following items have been highlighted as notable features in order to support the surveyor's conclusions.

3.2.1 East elevation – opening into cavity behind signage. Suitable roost potential feature.	**3.2.2** South-east elevation – potential roost feature due to opening in masonry above window. Depth of feature is unknown.
3.2.3 North face elevation – negligible roost potential throughout elevation.	**3.2.4** West facing elevation – crevice type features identified associated with canopy detail and cladding to adjoining single storey extension. See item 3.2.5 - 3.2.7 for further details.

3.2.5 South facing elevation – Opening to underside of cladding detail. Cladding is comprised of corrugated metal panel with timber board behind. Feature is considered suitable for roosting bats.	**3.2.6** East facing elevation – Opening allowing access behind displaced timber panel. Considered suitable for roosting bats. Feature is east/south facing and will receive direct sunlight further increasing the desirability for roosting bats.

	
3.2.7 East facing elevation – openings providing access behind timber panelling detail.	**3.2.8** Ground floor ceiling – structural timbers to the underside of upper-storey floor were inspected where possible. No evidence of roosting bats, such as droppings, were identified.

3.2.9 Upper-storey rooms – no evidence of roosting bats found. No access points considered suitable to provide access to roosting bats.	**3.2.10** Structural roofing timbers to flat roof area above upper storey – inspection of structural roofing timbers was significantly limited (See Section 3.5 – Limitations for further details). However, roof areas associated with the structure are considered to offer negligible roost potential.

3.2.11 Surrounding habitat – mature deciduous trees nearby. Area will offer some limited foraging potential for a limited number of bats, most likely Common and Soprano Pipistrelles.	

*It should be noted that external signs such as droppings can be removed by wind and rain and therefore a negative result does not necessarily equate to bat absence.

3.3 Foraging and Commuting Habitats

The environment surrounding the property is considered urban.

Areas of inner-city greenspace such as Hulme Park, Bold Street Sports Ground and various other small areas of vegetation are nearby the site.

Private garden areas of nearby residential properties surrounding the site will collectively provide some suitable foraging opportunities for bats in the area.

Numerous mature trees will also support some invertebrate prey for bat species in the area.

3.4 Nesting Birds

No birds' nests were identified during the survey undertaken.

3.5 Limitations

Visual inspection of the roof void and structural roofing timbers was limited. Extremely cramped access, possible structural instability and likely presence of hazardous materials, such as Asbestos, were factors contributing to the surveyor's requirement to limit survey to the access hatch entry.

4 Evaluation and Recommendations

4.1 Bat Roosts

No evidence of roosting bats was found during the preliminary survey undertaken. *

Internally the structure is considered to have negligible potential for roosting bats. However, externally the structures offered a number of potential bat roost features throughout. Features included:

- Openings behind timber cladding details.
- Openings into masonry due to missing areas of mortar.
- Openings allowing access behind signage.

See Section 3.2 for further details on listed details above.

The structure is not over-shadowed by large trees and/or other buildings and therefore will receive high levels of direct sunlight to its southerly facing elevations. This will promote the desirability of features suitable for roosting bats associated with elevations in a southerly facing orientation.

Inspection of the cellar concluded there was negligible potential for roost being present within this area.

The habitat surrounding the site will likely support a low level of bat activity.

The features identified are considered moderate potential bat roosting features. However, due to the sub-optimal habitat surrounding the site, the structure is considered to have collectively low potential for roosting bats.

*It should be noted that external signs such as droppings can be removed by wind and rain and therefore a negative result does not necessarily equate to bat absence.

4.2 Foraging and Commuting Habitat

It is considered that the proposed development, detailed in Section 1.3 – Proposals, will have negligible effect on the surrounding habitat to bats.

However, removal of vegetation in the area should be minimised and replaced/included where possible within the proposed development. Mitigation and enhancement recommendations following further surveys will provide further details.

4.3 Further Surveys

Following the preliminary roost assessment, it was not possible confidently ascertain the status of bats utilising the structure.

In accordance with current best practice guidelines, further survey effort is recommended, shown in Section 2.3, specifying in brief that a structure with a low potential for bats roosting should undergo at least one dusk emergence or one dawn re-entry survey.

Further survey to be carried out during the bat activity season which runs from May to September inclusive.

*Further survey recommended should have provision to be upgraded to high potential dependant on level of bat activity during first surveys. Provision may also include hibernation site survey.

4.4 Licencing

At this stage there is no reason to assume the proposed development will require a European Protected Species Licence to proceed.

4.5 Mitigation

Mitigation recommendations to follow further surveys.

4.6 Nesting Birds

It is recommended that care is taken not to disturb nesting birds during their sensitive nesting season.

4.7 Methods of Precautionary Works

Recommendations for methods of precautionary work, if applicable, will follow further survey recommendations.

4.8 Enhancement

Enhancement recommendations will be advised following further survey recommendations.

5 References

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

Mitchell-Jones A. et al. (2004) Bat Worker's Manual 3rd edition. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterboroug

Couzens, D. (2017). Britain's mammals: A field guide to the mammals of Britain and Ireland. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

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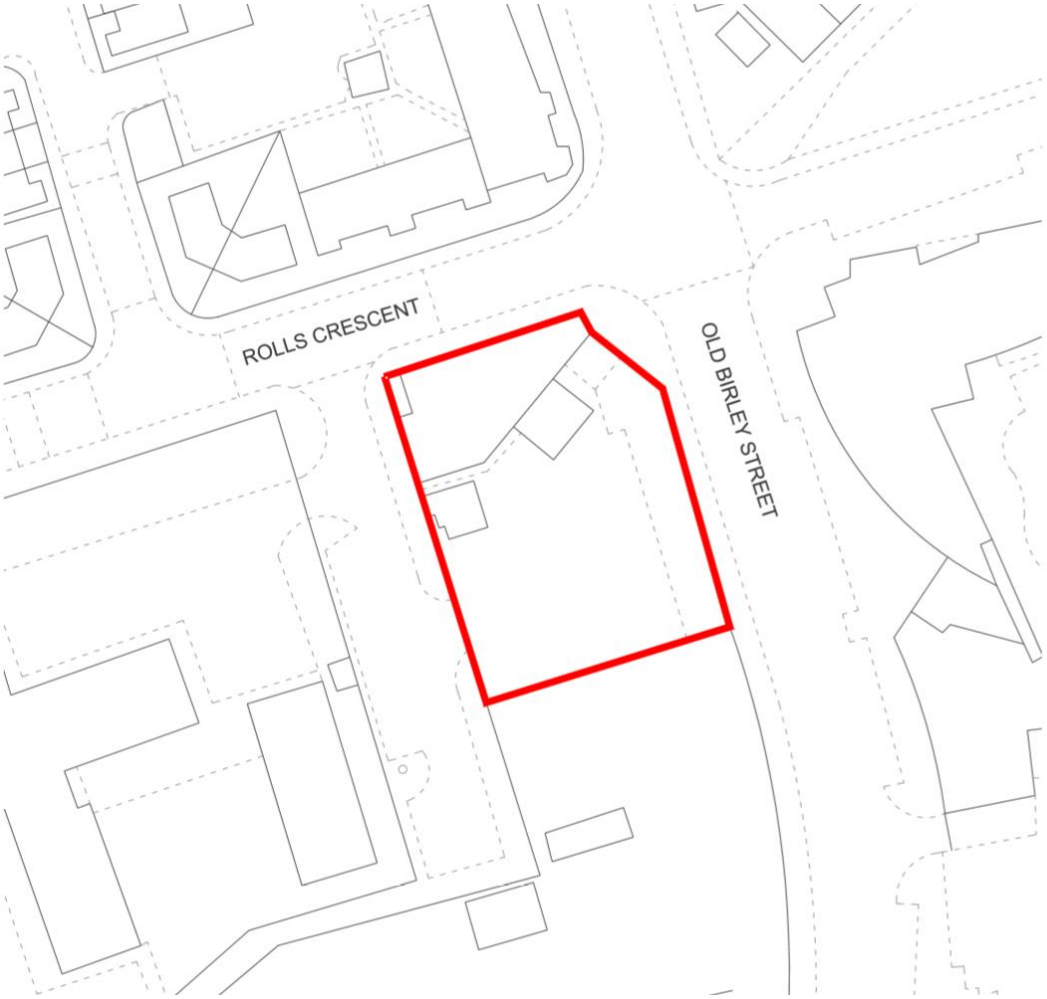
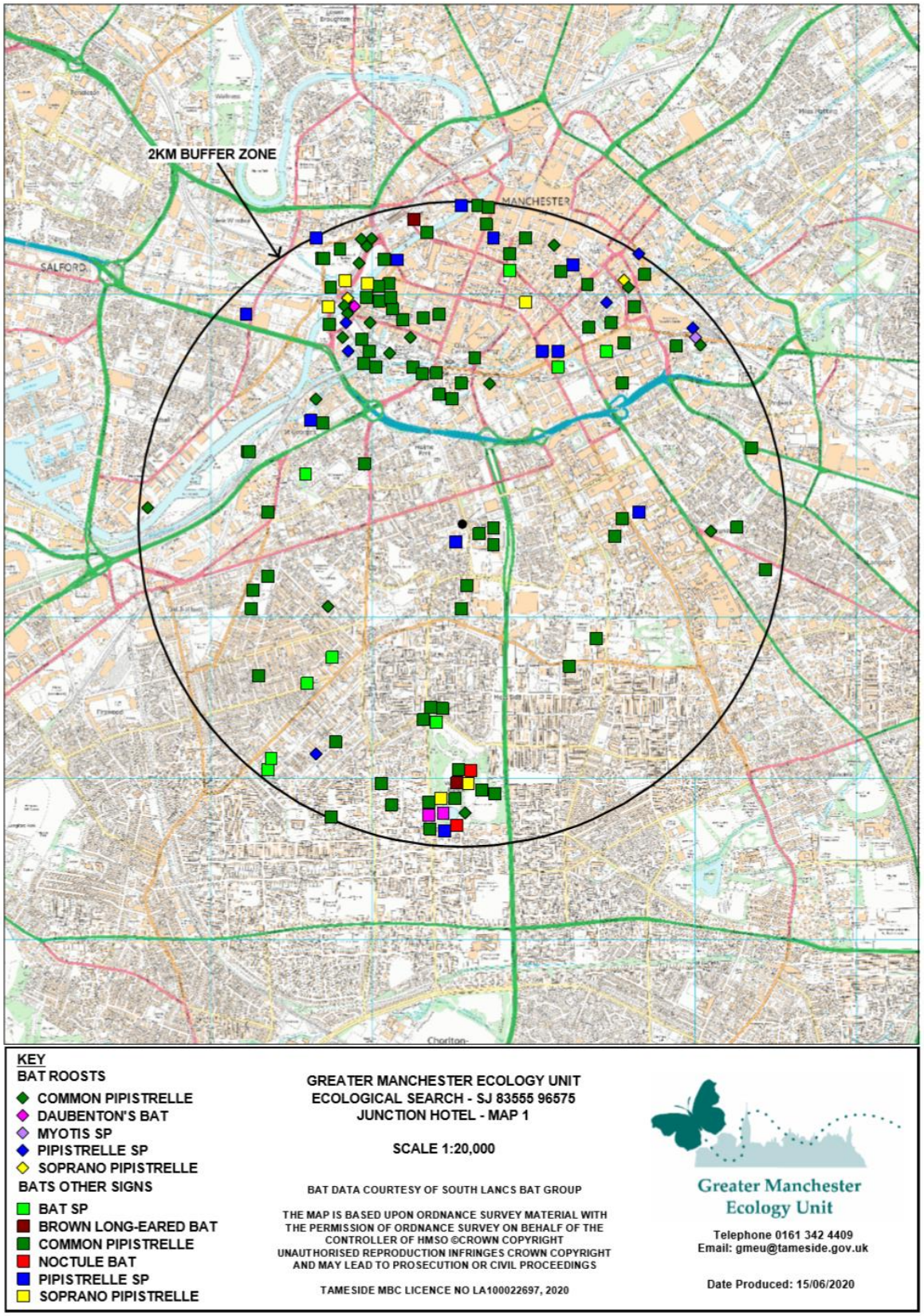
6 Appendix

6.1 3D Rendered Drawing of Proposed Development Site [Architect Drawing]

6.2 Site Location Plan – Junction Hotel, Rolls Crescent, Hulme



6.3 Ecological Search & Site Location Map