BAT SURVEY AT THE MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY, MANCHESTER

AUGUST 2013

FOR THE MOSI GATE PROJECT

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned by Walker Simpson Architects Limited in August 2013 to undertake a daytime bat survey of part of the Museum of Science and Industry building, Manchester. The survey concentrated on the Visitor Services block, an annex to the main part of the museum, which is known as the 'Power Hall' (see Figure 1).

1.2 The Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI) is located off Manchester Road, Manchester (O.S. grid reference SJ832978). The museum was established within the former Liverpool Road Railway Station, an 1800's red brick building. The Visitor Services block was constructed in the 1980's.

1.3 A planning application will be submitted for the MOSI Gate project, which will include the demolition of the Visitor Services block and the construction in its place of a new entrance to the museum. Due to the proposed works to the building, a bat survey is required to determine if bats are roosting within the building.

1.4 All bat species are European Protected Species under the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 1994. This is implemented in the UK through the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. Bats are also fully 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 2006. It is illegal to disturb or damage a bat roost whether or not there are bats present. The presence of a protected species is a material consideration in planning.

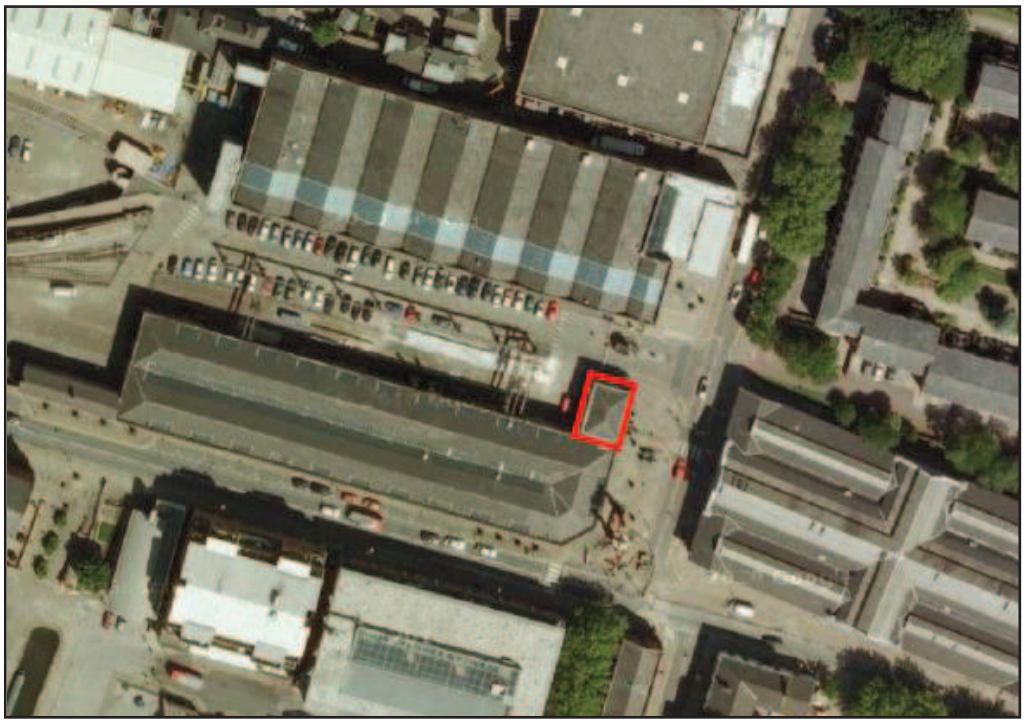

Figure 1 showing the Visitor Services block, outlined in red

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 A daytime bat survey of the Visitor Services block was undertaken to search for, and to assess the potential for, a bat roost to be present within the building.

2.2 An external survey was carried out, which included, for example, looking for gaps between any soffit boards and walls, gaps within mortar, gaps between window frames and the walls and looking for bat droppings on the walls and any window ledges.

2.3 It was not possible to access the roof void within the Visitor Services block. Therefore, a thorough inspection of the external roof was carried out.

2.4 A heterodyne bat detector was carried throughout the survey to detect echo-locating bats, a high-powered torch and close focusing binoculars were also used where required.

2.5 Anthony Nickson carried out the daytime bat survey on the 30th August 2013. August is an optimum time of year to survey for bats. Anthony is an experienced bat surveyor and holds a Natural England Bat Survey Licence (WML-CL18).

3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 The Visitor Services block is attached to the main part of the MOSI building; known as the 'Power Hall'. The block is a double-height single storey brick-built building with a slate pitched roof bound by parapet walls (see Photograph 1).

3.2 The Visitor Services block is constructed of brick with a rendered finish to the external walls. The render is in a poor state of repair. The roof construction is corrugated asbestos with roof lights, which provide natural daylight to the interior of the building. The roof is in a good state of repair. There are no barge boards on the building. Lead flashing occurs as part of the roof construction, along the gable end.

3.3 Internally, the ground floor contains a number of workshops, one of which is currently being used. The other workshop spaces are mainly used for storage.



Photograph 1 showing the Visitor Services block

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 The building was inspected externally using close-focusing binoculars. The brick external walls, which extend to the top of the parapet, exhibit no gaps, cracks or crevices that would provide roosting opportunities for crevice dwelling bats. The walls are in a good state of repair. No mortar is missing.

4.2 Access to the external roof was available. The slates were thoroughly inspected throughout the roof. No slates are missing and there are no gaps or cracks in the slates that would provide access for roosting bats. The roof is in a good state of repair (see Photograph 2).



Photograph 2 showing the slate roof

4.3 Internally, the Visitor Services block is frequently used and well-lit. No evidence of bat activity could be located.

4.4 In summary, no evidence of the presence of roosting bats was found during the daytime inspection. No potential entry and exit points for bats could be located in any part of the building.

5.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 No evidence of bat activity could be located during the daytime survey of the Visitor Services block. The building is modern and well maintained. Despite no survey access being available to the internal roof void, the external roof was thoroughly searched and no potential entry or exit points for bats could be located. The building exhibits extremely low potential for a bat roost to be present.

5.2 It should be noted that bat absence is very difficult to prove definitively due to their mobility and size. However, it is the opinion of the author of the report that no further bat survey is necessary. No bat mitigation is necessary, based on the findings of the report. **It must be noted that during construction works, if any bats are found then, work must stop immediately and an ecologist be contacted.**

REFERENCES

Bat Mitigation Guidelines, English Nature, A J Mitchell-Jones A J, 2004

Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines, 2nd Edition, Bat Conservation Trust, L Hundt, 2012