

55 Spring Gardens, Manchester M2 2BY

DAYLIGHT LICENSED BAT SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT

June 2025

ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd Reference: 2025-197

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Document Control

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Reporting	Personnel	Date
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SUMMARY

Introduction and Scope

- i. ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd was commissioned by Melcotton Ltd. c/o OBI Property Ltd to carry out a daylight licensed bat survey and assessment of the property at 55 Spring Gardens, Manchester. The assessment was requested to inform a planning application proposing the renovation of the façade of the building and the demolition of sections of a rooftop structure and the extension of the rooftop terrace.
- ii. This report presents the results of a desktop study, data search and a daytime licensed bat walkover survey and assessment carried out in June 2025. The survey was carried out by an appropriately licensed, qualified and experienced ecologist and is in accordance with standard, recognised survey guidelines. The scope of survey undertaken is appropriate to identify potential ecological constraints, the remit of mitigation required and opportunities for biodiversity associated with the proposals.

Results of Survey and Assessment

- iii. The approximately 0.09 hectare (ha) site is located in the urban area of Manchester city centre and comprises a 9-storey office building with a rooftop area. Spring Gardens road lies to the south-west, West Mosley Street lies to the south-east and Fountain Street lies to the north-west. An adjoining building known as Barnett House is present to the north-east.
- iv. No Priority Habitat, semi-natural habitats or irreplaceable habitats are present in the site or will be affected by the proposals. No Japanese Knotweed or other invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) were detected at the site.
- v. No evidence of current or previous use of the building by roosting bats was detected during the daylight licensed survey carried out in June 2025. The building is well-sealed and is assessed to meet the suitability criteria for use by roosting bats of 'none'. In accordance with the results of the survey and assessment it is considered that appropriate and proportionate survey effort has been carried out to determine the absence of roosting bats and to demonstrate compliance with the survey guidelines. No further bat surveys are required to inform the planning application.
- vi. No evidence of the current or previous use of the building by nesting birds was found. Mandatory measures to be applied to ensure the protection of nesting birds during and prior to the site preparation works are described at **Section 5.2**.
- vii. Appropriate and proportionate survey effort and / or assessment, in accordance with standard survey guidelines has been applied to discount adverse effects on other relevant protected species. No further surveys for other protected species are necessary to inform a planning application.

Recommendations and Conclusion

- viii. It is concluded that the renovation proposals at 55 Spring Gardens are feasible and acceptable in accordance with relevant planning policy in relation to nature conservation.
- ix. The renovation proposals can be achieved with no adverse effect on designated sites for nature conservation, Priority Habitat and irreplaceable habitat. Appropriate survey and assessment has been carried out to reasonably discount adverse effects on roosting bats and other protected species.
- x. Enhancement measures that aim to maximise the benefits for biodiversity as part of the proposals and comply with the *National Planning Policy Framework* and *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development* (CIEEM, 2016) are outlined in **Section 5.3**.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Rationale

- 1.1.1 ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd was commissioned by Melcotton Ltd. c/o OBI Property Ltd to carry out a daylight licensed bat survey and assessment of the property at 55 Spring Gardens, Manchester M2 2BY (hereafter referred to as the 'site'). The Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference at the centre of the site is SJ 84091 98187. An aerial image of the site and its surrounding habitats is appended at **Figure 1** (source image: ESRI World Imagery).
- 1.1.2 The assessment was requested to inform a planning application proposing the renovation of the façade of the building and the demolition of sections of a rooftop structure and the extension of the rooftop terrace.

1.2 Scope of Works

- 1.2.1 The scope of ecological works undertaken in June 2025 comprised:
- A desktop study and data search for known ecological information at the site and the local area;
 - A daytime bat walkover survey for bats, which has comprised a licensed preliminary roost assessment of the building and an assessment of the suitability of the habitats within the site and the surrounding area for foraging and commuting bats;
 - Survey and assessment of all habitats for relevant statutorily protected species¹;
 - The identification of any potential ecological constraints on the proposals and the specification of the scope of mitigation and ecological enhancement required in accordance with wildlife legislation, planning policy guidance and other relevant guidance; and
 - The identification of any further surveys or precautionary actions that may be required to inform the progression of the site through the planning process or prior to the commencement of activities.

2.0 METHOD OF SURVEY

2.1 Desktop Study

- 2.1.1 The following sources of information and ecological records were consulted:
- MAGiC Maps: A web-based interactive map which brings together geographic information on key environmental schemes and designations, including details of statutory nature conservation sites; and
 - The Greater Manchester Local Record Centre (GMLRC) was consulted and a request was made for reported records of bat species.

¹ In accordance with *Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and Their Impact on the Planning System* (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2005) developers should not be required to undertake surveys for protected species unless there is reasonable likelihood of the species being present and affected by the development. Given the city centre location of this site and the absence of ponds and habitats such as a watercourse, the need for surveys for protected species such as badger, great crested newt, reptile species, otter and water vole is reasonably discounted.

2.2 Daytime Bat Walkover Survey

Survey Personnel

- 2.2.1 The site was assessed for its suitability to support foraging, commuting and roosting bats by Victoria Burrows, Natural England Class Survey Licence WML CL18 (Bat Survey Level 2), Registration Number 015-10390-CLS-CLS. The surveyor's qualifications and experience meet the criteria as defined in the *Technical Guidance Series Competencies for Species Survey: Bats* (CIEEM, 2013).

Habitat Assessment for Commuting / Foraging Bats

- 2.2.2 Habitats within and adjacent to the site were assessed for their value and suitability for commuting and foraging bats in accordance with Table 4.1 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)* (Collins, J. (ed), 2023). Reference has been made to the categories, descriptions and examples presented in **Table 2.1**.

Table 2.1: Consideration of Suitability of Foraging and Commuting Habitat for Bats

Suitability	Potential Flight Paths and Foraging Habitats
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade / protection for flight-lines, or generate / shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).
Negligible ^a	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
Low	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated 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 flight-paths 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 bats for flight-paths 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.
^a Negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant'. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute).	

Preliminary Roost Assessment: Building

- 2.2.3 The survey and assessment of the building was carried out in accordance with standard methodology including the *Bat Mitigation Guidelines* (Mitchell-Jones, 2004), the *Bat Workers' Manual 3rd Edition* (Mitchell-Jones & Mcleish, 2004) and *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)* (Collins, J. (ed), 2023).
- 2.2.4 An inspection of the external surfaces, walls and roof of the building was carried out to find potential bat roosting habitat or accesses into internal areas where roosts may be present. Searches for evidence of

bat presence in the form of droppings, urine stains, feeding signs, grease marks and other evidence were also carried out.

- 2.2.5 The internal survey involved an examination of the accessible internal areas, particularly at the rooftop, to search for roosting bats and evidence of previous use of the building by bats such as droppings and prey remains.
- 2.2.6 The suitability of the building for use by roosting bats has been assessed in accordance with Table 4.1 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)* (Collins, J. (ed), 2023), taking into account any presence of gaps suitable for access by bats, features suitable for use by roosting bats within the building (including crevice dwelling species and species which can roost in the open in roof voids), and the suitability of the surrounding habitats for use by foraging and commuting bats. The assessment of suitability the building for use by roosting bats has been informed by the categories as presented in **Table 2.2**.

Table 2.2: Suitability Categories for Roosting Habitats in Buildings

Suitability	Description
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices / suitable shelter at all ground / underground levels).
Negligible ^a	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions ^b 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 and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats ^c).
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions ^b and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).
High	A structure 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 ^b and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool / stable hibernation site.

^aNegligible is defined as ‘so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant’. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute).

^bFor example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance.

^cEvidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten *et al.*, 2016 and Jansen *et al.*, 2022). Common pipistrelle swarming has been observed in the UK (Bell, 2022 and Tomlinson, 2020) and winter hibernation of numbers of this species has been detected at Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland (National Trust, 2018). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK, but ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in prominent buildings in the landscape, urban or otherwise.

Ground Level Tree Assessment

- 2.2.7 There are no trees within the site.

Equipment

2.2.8 A list of equipment used is detailed in **Table 2.3**.

Table 2.3: Survey Equipment used during Daytime Bat Survey

Ladders
LED Lenser P14 torch
Canon Ixus digital camera
8x20 binoculars
Ridgid Micro Inspection Camera Borescope CA-300

2.3 Other Relevant Protected Species and Animal Life

Bird Species

- 2.3.1 Bird species observed and heard during the survey were recorded.
- 2.3.2 The building was searched for evidence of previous use by nesting birds and the building was assessed for its suitability for use by nesting birds, particularly species typically associated with the built environment such as black redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), swallow (*Hirundo rustica*), house martin (*Delichon urbicum*), swift (*Apus apus*) and gull species.

2.4 Survey and Reporting Limitations

- 2.4.1 It is recognised that, owing to the height of the building, close up inspections of the higher elevations was not feasible. Binoculars were used to assist observations and the upper sections of the building with a sloping façade were viewed from above from the rooftop. Due to the fabrication of the building and the condition of the areas that could be inspected closely this is not considered to be a significant limitation that would affect the accuracy of the assessment.
- 2.4.2 No other limitations on the intended scope of survey were experienced.
- 2.4.3 All measurements within this report are approximate only, and have been either estimated whilst on site or calculated using mapping software (QGIS) or internet-based mapping services such as MAGiC Maps and Google Earth.

2.5 Evaluation Methods

- 2.5.1 Habitats have been assessed to determine whether they meet those described in *UK Biodiversity Action Plan: Priority Habitat Descriptions* (Maddock, A (ed), 2008); these lists are used to help draw up the statutory lists of Priority Habitats, as required under Section 41 of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006*. Where suitable, the ecological value of the habitats present has been assessed using the terms outlined in *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine* (CIEEM, 2018). Each habitat and individual trees have been assessed to determine whether they are ‘irreplaceable habitat’, defined in *National Planning Policy Framework* (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2024)² as ‘Habitats which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen’.

²Hereafter the NPPF

The further detail presented in *The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024* (GOV.UK, 2024) has also been referred to.

- 2.5.2 Government advice on wildlife, as set out in the NPPF and associated government circulars has been taken into consideration. Legislation relating to protected species, such as those listed under Schedules 1, 5, 6 and 8 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) and *The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019*, is referenced where applicable, and any impacts to protected species are evaluated in accordance with current guidance.
- 2.5.3 The presence of any Priority Species, as listed under Section 41 of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006* is noted, and habitats are assessed in terms of their suitability and value for these species. The presence of habitats and / or species listed by the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plans has been taken into account in the evaluation of the site.

3.0 SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 Desktop Study and Data Search

Statutory Designated Sites for Nature Conservation and SSSI Impact Risk Zones

- 3.1.1 The site and adjoining land have no statutory designation for nature conservation.
- 3.1.2 The site lies within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zone for the overlapping Rochdale Canal SSSI and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The Rochdale Canal SSSI and SAC are located 5.61 kilometres north-east of the site and are designated for important habitat for submerged aquatic plants and emergent vegetation, including Floating Water-plantain (*Luronium natans*).
- 3.1.3 The SSSI Impact Risk Zone requires the Local Planning Authority to consult with Natural England on likely risks from the following development categories (Natural England, 2025):

Air pollution: Livestock and poultry units with floorspace greater than 500m², slurry lagoons and digestate stores greater than 4000m².

Combustion: General combustion processes greater than 50 megawatt energy input including energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis / gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration / combustion.

- 3.1.4 Based on the proposals at the site the impact risk zone states:

'You do not need to consult Natural England on the proposed development at this location.

The Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI IRZs) indicate that at the location selected, the proposed development is unlikely to have a harmful effect on terrestrial Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and the Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or Ramsar sites that they underpin.

Therefore, you do not need to consult Natural England on the likely impacts of development on terrestrial SSSIs and the SACs, SPAs or Ramsar sites that they underpin.'

Non-statutory Designated Sites for Nature Conservation

3.1.5 The site and adjoining land have no non-statutory designation for nature conservation.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

3.1.6 The site does not lie within an LNRS.

Priority Habitats Inventory

3.1.7 The Priority Habitats Inventory³ was checked via MAGiC Maps. No Priority Habitats are identified at the site by the inventory.

GMLRC Bat Records

3.1.8 Greater Manchester Local Record Centre does not hold any records of bat species for the site.

3.1.9 Reported records of bat species for a 1 kilometre radius from the centre of the site are summarised in **Table 3.1**.

Table 3.1: Records of Protected Species Within a 1 Kilometre Radius from the Centre of the Site

Taxon Group	Species Name and Designations ¹ and Notes
Soprano pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>)	EPS, WCAs5, PS and GMBAP. 3 records, dated between 2006 and 2019. The closest record is 320 metres to the south-west of the site, and from 2019.
Bat sp. (<i>Chiroptera</i> sp.)	EPS, WCAs5 and GMBAP. 1 record from 2014, located 275 metres to the west of the site.
Brown long-eared bat (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>)	EPS, WCAs5, PS and GMBAP. 1 record from 2013, located 860 metres to the west of the site.
Common pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>)	EPS, WCAs5 and GMBAP. 63 records, dated between 1994 and 2023. The closest record is 65 metres to the south of the site, and from 2000.
Noctule bat (<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>)	EPS, WCAs5, PS and GMBAP. 1 record from 2020, located 900 metres to the east of the site.
Pipistrelle sp. (<i>Pipistrellus</i> sp.)	EPS, WCAs5 and GMBAP. 21 records, dated between 1994 and 2023. The closest record is 65 metres to the south of the site, and from 2003.
¹ Key to Designation Codes: EPS = European Protected Species under The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. WCAs5 = Species receives full protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). PS = Priority Species listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. GMBAP = Species listed on the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan.	

3.2 General Description

3.2.1 The approximately 0.09 hectare (ha) site is located in the urban area of Manchester city centre and comprises a 9-storey office building with a rooftop area. Spring Gardens road lies to the south-west, West Mosley Street lies to the south-east and Fountain Street lies to the north-west. An adjoining building known as Barnett House is present to the north-east.

3.2.2 There is no vegetation at the site. The floor of parts of the roof terrace area is covered with artificial grass.

³ A spatial dataset that describes the geographic extent and location of Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41 habitats of principal importance.

3.3 Daytime Bat Walkover Survey

Habitat Assessment for Commuting and Foraging Bats

- 3.3.1 The closest area of urban green space is at Piccadilly Gardens located over 100 metres to the north-east. Due to the location of the building within the city centre environment, the presence of artificial lighting bordering the site and negligible vegetation cover the site is assessed to be of 'negligible' suitability for use by foraging and commuting bats.

Preliminary Roost Assessment: Building

- 3.3.2 Refer to **Photos 1 to 18**. The building façade is clad with panels or is glass covered. Inspection of the window frames and recesses confirmed that these features are sealed; no missing sections or damage that may create gaps, potential roost features or opportunities for bat access were found.
- 3.3.3 No gaps or opportunities for bat access were found beneath or around the site entrance canopy at the south-western elevation. No bat droppings were found on the ground or the inspected sections of elevations around the perimeter of the building.
- 3.3.4 The rooftop was accessed. The sections to be demolished / removed comprise the PVC framed glass 'conservatory' plant room structures. Inspection of these features confirmed that all areas are sealed; no bats or evidence of use by bats or potential roost features were found. Inspection of the interior of these areas did not detect any bat droppings.
- 3.3.5 A section at the north-eastern end of the rooftop area to the rear with a pitched felt covered roof (near Barnett House) will also be removed to create space for air conditioning units. The concrete block wall is mortared and painted; no gaps / cracks or opportunities for bat access were found. A timber fascia is present at the roofline, this feature has no warping or lifted sections that are suitable for use by roosting bats.
- 3.3.6 The existing vents and other features on the roof were inspected for completeness. It is confirmed that all vents and intakes have a mesh cover that would prevent access by bats (and birds).
- 3.3.7 Inspection of the interior of the plant room area / roof void did not detect any bats or bat droppings.
- 3.3.8 Due to the absence of any potential roost features and the city centre location the property at 55 Spring Gardens is assessed to meet the suitability criteria for use by roosting bats of 'none'.

3.4 Other Relevant Protected Species and Animal Life

Bird Species

- 3.4.1 No evidence of the current or previous use of the building, including the roof of 55 Spring Gardens and the adjacent Barnett House, by roosting or nesting birds was detected. The sealed condition of the building has excluded entry by bird species, including feral pigeon.
- 3.4.2 None of the other habitats at the site are suitable for use by breeding birds.

4.0 EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

4.1 Introduction and Description of Proposals

4.1.1 As detailed in the Design and Access Statement (PRP, 2025) the proposals comprise improvements to the appearance of the main entrance and the thermal performance of the building as a whole and will involve:

- Replacement of the existing curtain walling with a new double-glazed capless curtain walling system.
- Clean and restore the existing precast concrete panels.
- Improve the ventilation strategy of the current office suites with MVHR system.
- Provide a new communal terrace and amenity space at 9th floor level.

4.1.2 **Section 4.2** provides an assessment of any impacts of the proposed development on the designated sites for nature conservation present in the wider area. The ecological value of habitats within the site is evaluated at **Section 4.3**, and protected and notable species are considered at **Section 4.4**.

4.2 Designated Sites for Nature Conservation

4.2.1 In consideration of the distance between the site and any statutory and non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation it is advised that the renovation works will have no direct or indirect effect on any other designated sites for nature conservation.

4.3 Vegetation and Habitats

4.3.1 No Priority Habitat, semi-natural habitats or irreplaceable habitats are present in the site or will be affected by the proposals.

4.3.2 No rare plant species were detected. No invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) were detected in the site.

4.3.3 In terms of each habitat's importance in a geographical context⁴, the building and associated hardstanding curtilage are not considered to hold any importance on a geographical scale.

4.4 Protected Species and Other Wildlife

Bat Species

4.4.1 No evidence of current or previous use of the building by roosting bats was detected during the daylight licensed survey carried out in June 2025. The building is well-sealed and is assessed to meet the suitability criteria for use by roosting bats of 'none'.

4.4.2 In accordance with the results of the surveys and assessment it is considered that appropriate and proportionate survey effort has been carried out to determine the absence of roosting bats and to

⁴ Using the terms presented at Section 4.7 of *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine* (CIEEM, 2018), i.e. International and European, National, Regional, Local Authority-wide area, River Basin District, Estuarine system / Coastal cell or Local. The term 'site' value is additionally used to highlight ecological features considered to be of importance in the context of the wider site habitats, but which are of negligible value in the context of the local area.

demonstrate compliance with the survey guidelines. No further bat surveys are required to inform the planning application.

Other Relevant Protected Species and Animal Life

- 4.4.3 No evidence of the current or previous use of the building by nesting birds was found. Mandatory measures to be applied to ensure the protection of nesting birds during and prior to the site preparation works are described at **Section 5.2**.
- 4.4.4 Appropriate and proportionate survey effort and / or assessment, in accordance with standard survey guidelines has been applied to discount adverse effects on other relevant protected species. No further surveys for other protected species are necessary to inform a planning application.

4.5 Consideration of Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 4.5.1 The development, as proposed, will not impact a Priority Habitat or an irreplaceable habitat and will impact less than:
 - 25 square metres (5m by 5m) of on-site habitat with a biodiversity value greater than zero⁵; and
 - 5 metres of on-site linear habitats such as hedgerows.
- 4.5.2 Based on the above it is understood that the proposals meet the *de minimis* exemption criteria in consideration of statutory 10% biodiversity net gain⁶.
- 4.5.3 Notwithstanding the above, the recommendations outlined below aim to secure measurable gains for biodiversity / ecological enhancement to satisfy the requirements of the NPPF, *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development* (CIEEM, 2016) and best practice.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The recommendations described below are appropriate and proportionate to the scale of the renovation proposals and aim to ensure that the proposals are implemented in accordance with relevant wildlife legislation, Natural England guidance, the principles of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2024), local planning policy and best practice.
- 5.1.2 The recommendations aim to ensure compliance with Chapter 15, paragraph 193(d) of the NPPF which states:

‘opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate’.

⁵ A development ‘impacts’ a habitat if it decreases the biodiversity value. If there is an impact on onsite habitat, that impact must be on less than 25 square metres (e.g. less than a 5m by 5m square) of onsite habitat with a biodiversity value greater than zero and on less than 5 metres of onsite linear habitat (such as a hedgerow)

⁶ As presented at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>

5.2 Protection of Wildlife During Works

Nesting Birds

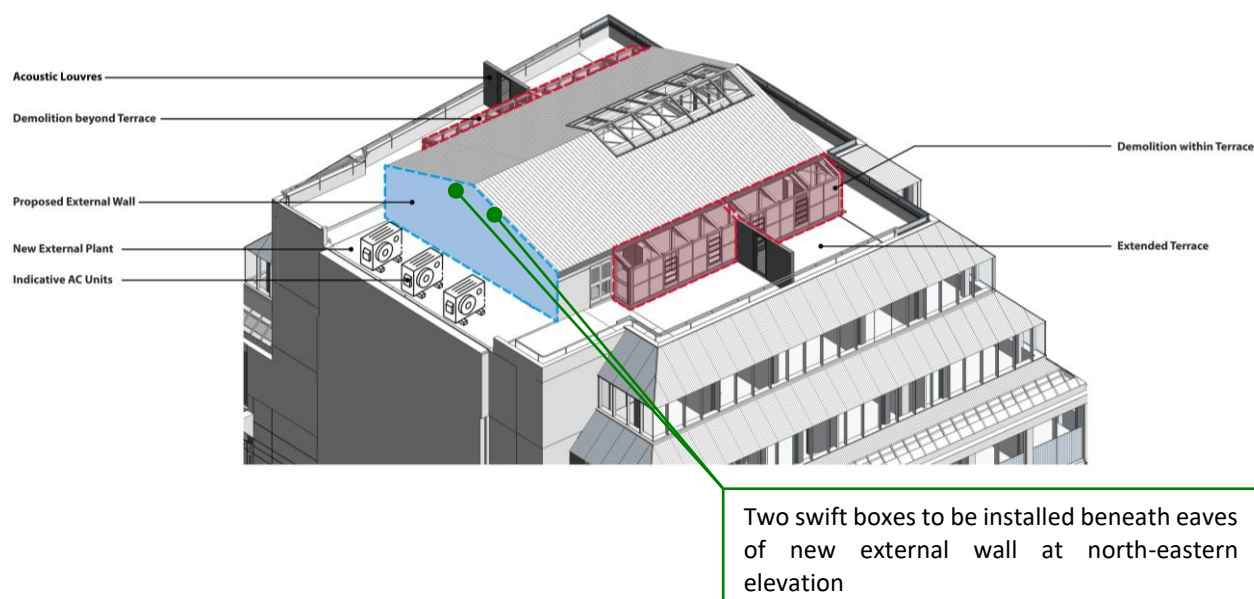
- 5.2.1 All wild birds are protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) while they are breeding. The bird breeding season is typically March to August inclusive. Based on the results of the ecological survey the risk of the presence of nesting birds is assessed to be low.
- 5.2.2 All contractors must be advised on the possible presence of nesting birds at the rooftop of the site and the adjacent Barnett House building during works between March and August inclusive. If nesting birds are detected the ecologist should be contacted and guidance in relation to the protection of the nesting birds in conjunction with the scheduled works will be issued. This may involve cordoning off an area of the site until the young birds have fledged (subject to bird species).

Discovery of a Bat During Works

- 5.2.3 If at any time during the works a bat is discovered or suspected all contractors must withdraw from the area and ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd (01772 750502) or the Bat Conservation Trust must be contacted for further guidance.

5.3 Ecological Enhancement

- 5.3.1 The swift (*Apus apus*) has been added to *The Birds of Conservation Concern Red List* (Stanbury, et al., 2021) owing to the recorded recent declines and its identified status as a high conservation priority.
- 5.3.2 To secure compliance with the NPPF and to assist the conservation of swift in Greater Manchester it is recommended that, as part of the renovation proposals, the installation of two swift boxes beneath the eaves on the new north-east fencing elevation of the rooftop building is carried out. This is illustrated at **Insert 1** below.



Insert 1: Suggest location and examples of swift nest boxes⁷

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 It is concluded that the renovation proposals at 55 Spring Gardens are feasible and acceptable in accordance with relevant planning policy in relation to nature conservation.
- 6.2 The renovation proposals can be achieved with no adverse effect on designated sites for nature conservation, Priority Habitat and irreplaceable habitat. Appropriate survey and assessment has been carried out to reasonably discount adverse effects on roosting bats and other protected species.
- 6.3 Enhancement measures that aim to maximise the benefits for biodiversity as part of the proposals and comply with the National Planning Policy Framework and Biodiversity *Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development* (CIEEM, 2016) are outlined in **Section 5.3**.

⁷ Ibstock Eco-habitat for Swift (left) and Schwegler 17 Swift Box all available from NHBS (www.NHBS.com) and / or Wild Care (www.wildcare.co.uk).

7.0 REFERENCES

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8.0 APPENDIX 1: TABLES AND FIGURES

8.1 Photographs

Table 8.1: Photographs



Photo 1: South-western and south-eastern elevations of 55 Spring Gardens

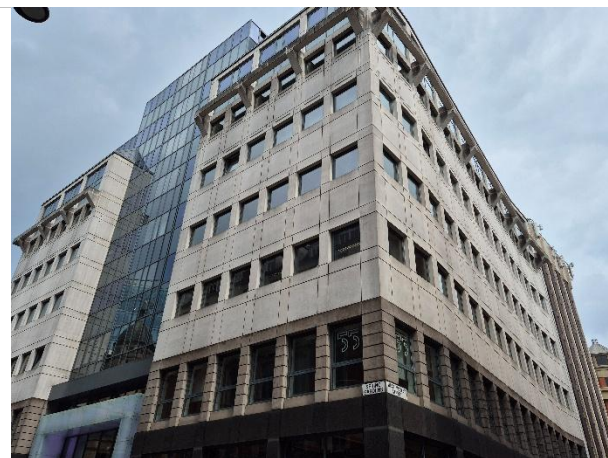


Photo 2: South-western and south-eastern elevations of 55 Spring Gardens



Photo 3: Ground floor elevation showing sealed cladding and window frames



Photo 4: No gaps or opportunities for bat access at recessed areas



Photo 5: No gaps or opportunities for bat access at recessed areas



Photo 6: Sealed windows and frames at upper floor levels

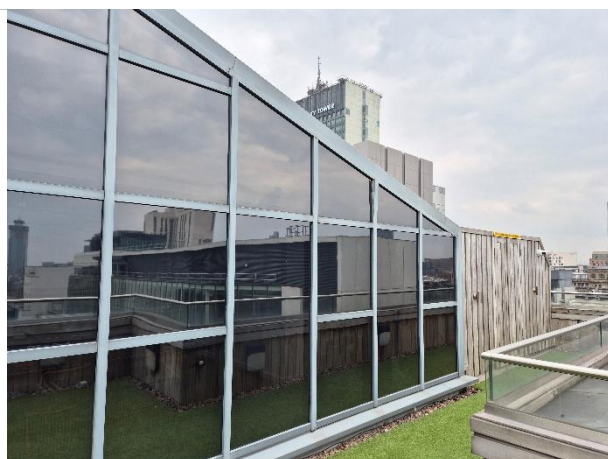


Photo 7: PVC and glass rooftop area (south-western elevation)



Photo 8: PVC and glass rooftop area (south-western elevation)



Photo 9: Roof of PVC framed areas at rooftop

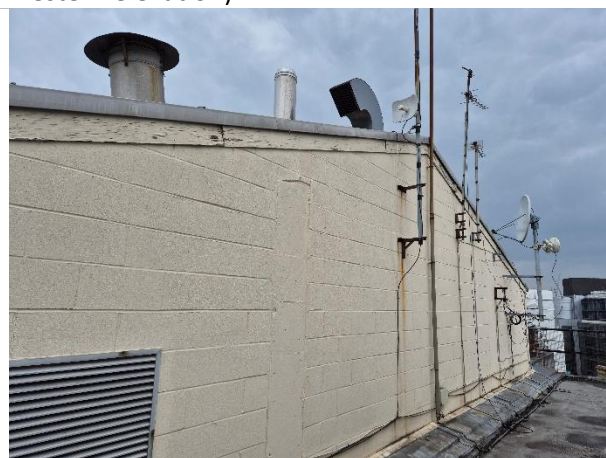


Photo 10: Concrete block gable at rooftop area (north-eastern elevation) to be removed



Photo 11: Sealed timber fascia at (north-eastern elevation) to be removed



Photo 12: Interior of PVC rooftop area

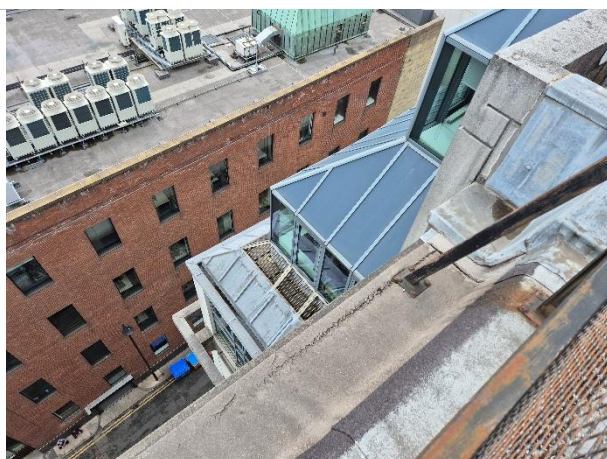


Photo 13: Sealed windows and frames at upper floor levels



Photo 14: Roof of PVC framed areas at rooftop (this north-eastern section will be removed)



Photo 15: Sealed flashing at rooftop structure



Photo 16: Mesh at louvered air vents

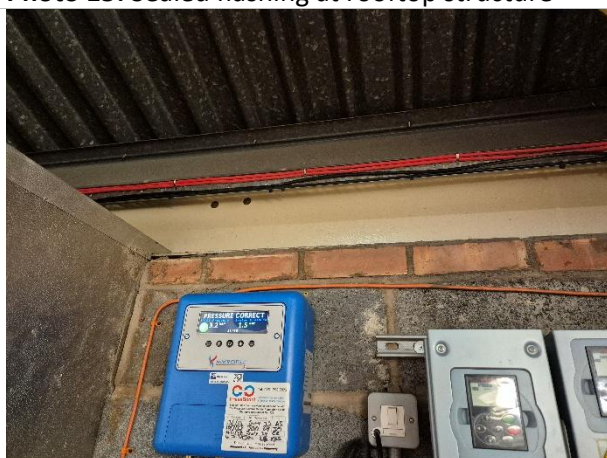


Photo 17: Sealed plant room area



Photo 18: Sealed plant room area

8.2 Figure

Figure 1: Aerial Image of the Site and its Surroundings

