# Preliminary Roost Assessment and Ecological Walkover

2 Seymour Road, Cheetham Hill Road

Reference: 81-384-R1-1

Date: October 2023

# PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT AND ECOLOGICAL WALKOVER

2 Seymour Road
Cheetham Hill

Prepared for:
**Minhaj-ul-Quran International UK**

**Report Ref: 81-384-R1-1**
**Date Issued: 24/10/2023**

## E3P

Taylor Road
Trafford Park
Urmston
Manchester
M41 7JQ

+ 44 (0) 161 707 9612
https://e3p.co.uk/

Registered in England
CRN: 08725262


## QUALITY ASSURANCE

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|---|---|---|---|
| **PROJECT NUMBER** | 81-384 | | |
| **VERSION** | Version 1 | | |
| **REMARKS** | Final | | |
| **DATE** | October 2023 | | |
| **PREPARED BY** | C. Evans | | |
| **QUALIFICATIONS** | BSc (Hons), MRes, QCIEEM, Consultant Ecologist | | |
| **CHECKED BY** | H. Morgan | | |
| **QUALIFICATIONS** | BSc (Hons), MIEnvSc, CEnv, MCIEEM, Senior Ecologist | | |
| **AUTHORISED BY** | C. Barlow | | |
| **QUALIFICATIONS** | BSc (Hons), MSc, MIEnvSc, CEnv, MCIEEM, Associate Director | | |

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

| | |
|---|---|
| **Site Address** | 2 Seymour Road, Manchester, M8 5BG |
| **Coordinates** | E 383775, N 402022 |
| **Site Area** | Approximately 0.14 ha |
| **Current Site Use** | The site comprised two disused buildings, an active mechanics and associated hardstanding. |
| **Proposed Development** | The proposed scheme includes the development of a community hall and associated parking. The buildings on-site will be demolished in order for the development to proceed. |
| **Results** | B1 was assessed as having **Moderate** bat roost potential on a precautionary basis as an internal inspection of the building was not possible, the multiple access points into the building and the multiple features that may support roosting bats. B2 and B3 were assessed as having **Negligible** bat roost potential.<br><br>The scattered scrub along the eastern boundary and the flat roof of B1 was assessed as having potential to support nesting birds. |
| **Conclusions and Recommendations** | Two Nocturnal Bat Surveys are required on B1 between May and September (inclusive), with at least one survey between May and August (inclusive).<br><br>It is recommended that works or the removal of vegetation take place outside of the breeding bird season (March to September inclusive). If this is not possible, a nesting bird check should be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist up to 24 hrs before works commence. If a nest, or nest in construction, is located, then a stand-off distance should be maintained until the young have fledged. |

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. BACKGROUND

E3P has been instructed by Minhaj-ul-Quran International UK to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment at 2 Seymour Road, Cheetham Hill, hereafter referred to as "the site". An Ecological Walkover was also undertaken to assess the site for any additional protected species constraints.

The report was produced by Conor Evans BSc (Hons) MRes QCIEEM Consultant Ecologist, who has experience in completing PRAs and Nocturnal Bat Surveys at many sites across the UK.

## 1.2. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Detailed proposals include the development of a community hall and associated parking. The buildings on-site will be demolished in order for the development to proceed.

## 1.3. SITE LOCATION

The site is located within north Manchester, in the urban area of Cheetham Hill. The site is accessed via Seymour Road from the north. A series of commercial buildings are situated to the west, south and north-east of the site. A large hardstanding car park and associated landscaping border the site to the south-east. The wider landscape comprises commercial buildings, residential buildings, hardstanding car parks, roads, amenity grassland, scattered trees, and tree lines. A railway line is located approximately 390 m east of the site. Clowes Park and Crumpsall Park are located approximately 590 m west of the site and approximately 740 m east of the site respectively. Please refer to Figure 1.1. for the approximate site location.

FIGURE 1.1 APPROXIMATE SITE LOCATION



## 1.4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Preliminary Roost Assessment are as follows:

- Determine if bats currently, or could potentially, utilise the building for roosting.
- Determine whether further surveys (e.g. nocturnal bat surveys) and/or further mitigation is necessary for development to proceed.

The objectives of the Ecological Walkover are as follows:

- Identify the major habitats present.
- Ascertain the presence or potential presence of any legally protected species and habitats.
- Recommend any further surveys or mitigation that may be required.

The survey findings are detailed in this report, as well as any recommendations.

# 2. METHODOLOGY

## 2.1. DESK STUDY

The following sources of information and ecological records were consulted:

- MAGIC – A government web-based interactive mapping system, demonstrating European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) and Natural England Licences which have been previously granted within England.
- Information and species records from South Lancashire Bat Group.

A search via MAGIC was undertaken in October 2023 to identify EPSL within 1 km of the site boundary. This search area is considered suitable for the size of the development and the surrounding habitat.

## 2.2. PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT

The Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was undertaken on 12th October 2023 by Conor Evans who has undertaken multiple PRA's on buildings and trees across the UK. The weather was cool, dry and clear.

The survey involved undertaking a systematic search of the buildings, searching for signs of bats, or spaces where bats would be able to access. The methodology followed that described in *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists, 4th Edition* (Collins, 2023).

The buildings were categorised for their bat roosting potential as described in Table 2.1 in accordance with Collins (2023).

The survey was undertaken utilising suitable binoculars and ladders to access all areas where safe to do so.

TABLE 2.1 BAT ROOSTING POTENTIAL CLASSIFICATION OF BUILDINGS

| CATEGORY | 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** | 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 and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by a large number 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). |
| **MODERATE** | A structure 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. |

| CATEGORY | DESCRIPTION |
|---|---|
| **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 and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site. |

## 2.3. ECOLOGICAL WALKOVER

A site walkover was undertaken by Conor Evans on 12th October 2023 to assess the site for any protected or notable species.

The walkover survey was undertaken to the standard methodology as detailed by the JNCC Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey (2010). The assessment follows the methodology as per "Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal" (CIEEM, 2017).

Searches were made for uncommon, rare and statutorily protected plant species, those species listed as protected in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and species which are indicators of important and uncommon plant communities. All plant nomenclature follows Stace (2019).

Searches were carried out for the presence of invasive species, including those listed on the revised (April 2010) Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) including but not limited to Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*).

## 2.4. LIMITATIONS

Access to all areas within 30 m of the site was not possible due to commercial units bordering the site, however, due to the urban nature of the site, this is not considered to be a major constraint.

Internal access into the building was not possible, as such the assessment has been made on a precautionary basis.

An area along the eastern boundary could not be accessed due to vegetation overgrowth, and therefore some species may have been missed. This is not considered to be a major constraint due to the quality of habitat that could be identified.

# 3. RESULTS

## 3.1. LOCAL BAT GROUP RECORDS

Based on information from South Lancashire Bat Group, species present within the local area include; Brandt's bat (*Myotis brandtii*) brown long-eared (*Plecotus uildin*), common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Daubenton's bat (*Myotis uildingiid*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), Nathusius' pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*), Natterer's bat (*Myotis nattereri*), noctule (*Nyctalus uildin*), and whiskered bat (*Myotis mystacinus*).

## 3.2. MAGIC REVIEW

A MAGIC review did not find any European Protected Species Licences located within the 1 km search area. The nearest such licence was located approximately 1.6 km north of the site boundary. The licence was active from 2014 to 2015 for the destruction of a common pipistrelle breeding roost.

## 3.3. SITE CONTEXT

The site comprised two disused buildings (B1 and B2), an active mechanics (B3) and associated hardstanding. Multiple broken-down cars were located on site. A large hardstanding car park and associated landscaping border the site to the south-east. The wider landscape comprises commercial buildings, residential buildings, hardstanding car parks, roads, amenity grassland, scattered trees and tree lines.

A railway line, which is bordered by treelines, is located approximately 390 m east of the site. The River Irwell is located approximately 1.4 km south-west of the site. Clowes Park and Crumpsall Park are located approximately 590 m west of the site and approximately 740 m east of the site respectively. These habitats are anticipated to provide foraging and commuting opportunities for local bat species.

Several areas of isolated woodland deciduous woodland are present within 1 km of the site, the nearest of which is located approximately 360 m east of the site. These areas of woodland are anticipated to form foraging, commuting and roosting habitats within the trees present.

## 3.4. PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT

A PRA was undertaken on the on-site buildings. No trees were present within the site boundary. Please see Appendix I for descriptions of each potential roost feature, and Appendix II for the locations of each potential roost feature, building reference and associated description.

### 3.4.1. BUILDING 1

Building 1 (B1) was a disused single-storey auto care centre, and comprised brick walls with a pitched roof made out of corrugated sheeting. Internal access to the building was not possible. An extension comprising plasterboard walls and a wooden flat roof with felt sheet covering was present on the western portion of the building. The external brickwork of the main building was in poor condition, with multiple cracks and crevices which could be utilised by crevice-dwelling bat species on an occasional basis (F1, F2, F3). Multiple gaps were present at the top of the wall plate between the brickwork and corrugated roof on the eastern aspect of the building which may potentially provide access for bat species into the building (As seen in the photos for F2 and F3).

The northern aspect of the building was covered in a single layer of render which was mostly in good condition. There was a damaged section of render surrounding the shutter door on the northern aspect of the building, and a crack above one of the window frames (F4). All windows of the main building were sealed shut with sheet metal. These features are unlikely to support roosting bats due to being adjacent to a busy road and temperature fluctuations as a result of being shaded during the day. There was a missing roof cap on the northern end of the building which may potentially provide access for bat species into the building (A1).

The extension on the eastern aspect of the building was in poor condition, with multiple access points between the plaster board and flat roof (A2). Various crevices were present on the ceiling within the extension that could be utilised by crevice-dwelling bat species (F5). It was unknown whether access into the main building for bat species was possible through the extension. A large gap was present above the shutter doors on the western aspect of the building which may potentially provide access for bat species into the building (A3). Due to the flat roof on the extension, the building has the potential to support nesting birds. The eastern aspect of the building could not be accessed due to dense vegetation.

The uildingg was assessed as having **MODERATE** bat roosting potential on a precautionary basis as an internal access was not possible, the multiple access points into the building and the potential roost features listed above which may be used by bat species.

PLATE 1 SHOWING NORTHERN ASPECT OF B1




### 3.4.2. BUILDING 2

Building 2 (B2) was a disused single-storey structure approximately 3 m tall. The building comprised brick walls with a coating of render on all aspects. The render was mostly in good condition; however it was damaged above the lintel of the doorway into the building (F7). The brickwork was mostly in good condition; however, a large gap was present above a window frame on the western aspect (F6). The flat roof was in poor condition. The access into the building was open as no door was present (A4). These features are likely to be unsuitable for bats as the building was directly adjacent to the active mechanics (B3) which exhibited a high level of noise disturbance. The building has previously been used as an office, as evidenced by the multiple filing-cabinets, but was currently in a state of disrepair and full of rubbish.

The building was assessed as having **NEGLIBLE** bat roosting potential due to a lack of suitable surrounding habitats, the level of noise disturbance and a lack of suitable features to support roosting bats.

| PLATE 2 | SHOWING WESTERN ASPECT OF B2 |
|---|---|



### 3.4.3. BUILDING 3

Building 3 (B3) was an active mechanics. The building comprised brick walls with a corrugated iron roof. The brickwork was mostly in good condition; however, there was a crack in the brickwork adjacent to a shutter door on the northern aspect (F8). The corrugated iron roof was mostly in good condition; however, there were signs of damage on the western aspect of the building resulting in the corrugated iron lifting up from the rest of the roof (F9). Due to the nature of the building, a high level of noise disturbance was exhibited. Both F8 and F9 are unsuitable to support bats as a result of the level of noise disturbance and fluctuations in daytime temperature.

Internal access was not possible due to ongoing works. The building was assessed as having **NEGLIBLE** bat roosting potential due to a lack of suitable surrounding habitat, the level of noise disturbance and a lack of suitable features to support roosting bats.

| PLATE 3 | SHOWING NORTHERN ASPECT OF B3 |
|---|---|



## 3.5. ECOLOGICAL WALKOVER

The habitats on-site comprised buildings, hardstanding and scattered scrub.

A hardstanding access road was present along the western boundary of the site, leading to a car park / junk yard in the south of the site. The hardstanding had been colonised in part by flora comprising smooth hawk's-beard (*Crepis vesicaria*), herb robert (*Geranium robertianum*), cat's-ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*), petty spurge (*Euphorbia peplus*), false oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum alatius*), smooth sow-thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*) and sycamore saplings (*Acer psuedoplatanus*).

| PLATE 4 | SHOWING HARDSTANDING |
|---|---|



An area of overgrown scattered scrub was present along the eastern boundary of the site. Species present comprised butterfly-bush and ash. The scattered scrub has the potential to support nesting birds.

| PLATE 5 | SHOWING SCATTERED SCRUB |
|---|---|



Butterfly-bush (*Buddleja davidii*) was present on the western aspect of B1, and B2 had been colonised by butterfly-bush and ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*).

| PLATE 6 | SHOWING COLONISATION OF B2 |
|---|---|



# 4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 4.1. BATS

B1 was assessed as having **MODERATE** bat roosting potential on a precautionary basis. As such, Two Nocturnal Bat Surveys are required on B1 between May and September (inclusive), with at least one survey between May and August (inclusive). The survey would be valid for up to two years to inform a planning application. If bats are identified roosting within the building, then one more survey to characterise the roost, and a European Protected Species Licence will be required and would require up to date surveys from the survey season prior to the application submission.

Alternatively, if internal access into B1 can be arranged and no potential roost features are identified within the building, then the building could potentially be downgraded to **LOW** bat roosting potential.

## 4.2. NESTING BIRDS

It is recommended that any demolition works, or the removal of vegetation take, place outside of the breeding bird season (March–September inclusive). However, if this is not possible, then a suitably qualified ecologist should inspect the area no more than 24 hours prior to the removal. Should any nests, or nests in construction be located, a suitable stand-off distance should be maintained until the young have fledged. The ecologist will advise on suitable stand off and provide a toolbox talk to all site contractors regarding their working limits and legal implications.

## 4.3. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

The proposed development will be exempt from a Biodiversity Metric calculation in line with the Environment Act (2021) due to the habitats on site being below the threshold of 25 m² of habitat, or 5 linear meters of water courses or hedgerows.

To further increase the site's value for wildlife, bat and bird boxes could be integrated into the proposed development.

# 5. REFERENCES

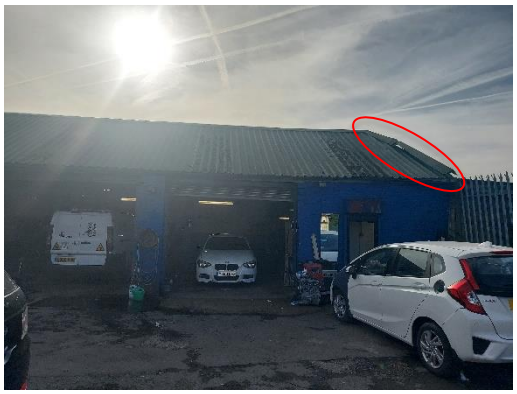
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## END OF REPORT

# APPENDIX I
# POTENTIAL ROOST FEATURE DESCRIPTIONS

| BUILDING | FEATURE | DESCRIPTION | PHOTOGRAPH |
|---|---|---|---|
| B1 | F1 | Damaged brickwork on the southern aspect, approximately 3 m high. Could provide roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling species on an occasional basis.<br><br>F1 was assessed as having **Low** bat roosting potential. |  |
| B1 | F2 | Gap between roof and gutter/brickwork on the western aspect, approximately 3 m high. Could provide roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling species on an occasional basis.<br><br>F2 was assessed as having **Low** bat roosting potential. |  |
| B1 | F3 | Gaps between roof and brickwork on the western aspect, approximately 3 m high. Could provide roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling species on an occasional basis.<br><br>F3 was assessed as having **Low** bat roosting potential. |  |
| B1 | F4 | There was damaged render surrounding the shutter door on the northern aspect of the building, and a crack above one of the window frames. These features were superficial/ exposed and wouldn't be suitable to support roosting bats.<br><br>F4 was assessed as having **Negligible** bat roosting potential. |  |

| BUILDING | FEATURE | DESCRIPTION | PHOTOGRAPH |
|---|---|---|---|
| B1 | F5 | Multiple crevices were present on the ceiling within the extension on the western aspect. These may provide roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling species on an occasional basis.<br><br>F5 was assessed as having **Low** bat roosting potential. |  |
| B2 | F6 | Gaps in brickwork around damaged window on western aspect, approximately 2 m high. Due to the exposed nature of the feature, it is unlikely to support bats.<br><br>F6 was assessed as having **Negligible** bat roosting potential. |  |
| B2 | F7 | Damaged render above the lintel of the doorway into the building, approximately 2 m high. Due to exposed nature it is unlikely to support bats.<br><br>F7 was assessed as having **Negligible** bat roosting potential. |  |
| B3 | F8 | Crack in brickwork adjacent to shutter door on northern aspect, approximately 3 m high. Unlikely to support bats due exposed/ superficial nature.<br><br>F8 was assessed as having **Negligible** bat roosting potential. |  |

| BUILDING | FEATURE | DESCRIPTION | PHOTOGRAPH |
|---|---|---|---|
| B3 | F9 | Damaged corrugated iron roof on northern aspect, approximately 4 m high. Unlikely to support bats due to temperature fluctuations and exposed narute of the crevice.<br><br>F9 was assessed as having **Negligible** bat roosting potential. |  |

# APPENDIX II
# ACCESS POINTS

| BUILDING | TARGET NOTE | DESCRIPTION | PHOTOGRAPH |
|---|---|---|---|
| B1 | A1 | Missing/damaged roof caps on the northern end of the building. May potentially allow access into the building for bat species. Would not provide opportunities for roosting. |  |
| B1 | A2 | Broken windows and gaps between walls and roof leading into the extension on the southern aspect. May potentially allow access into the building for bat species. Would not provide opportunities for roosting. |  |
| B1 | A3 | Gap between roof and shutter door on the western aspect, approximately 3 m high. May potentially allow access into the building for bat species. Would not provide opportunities for roosting. |  |
| B2 | A4 | Open access via doorway into B2, which is currently full of rubbish. Would not provide opportunities for roosting. |  |

# APPENDIX III
# POTENTIAL ROOST FEATURE AND ACCESS POINT LOCATIONS




Key:

- Boundary
- F1 Bat roost potential feature
- A1 Access point

Notes

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Issue: 1 | Revision: 1 | Date: 23/10/2023 | Drawn: CE | Authorised: CK |
| Client: Minhaj-ul-Quran International UK | | | Job No. 81-384 | Date: 23/10/2023 |
| | | | Drawing No. 001 | Scale: 1:500 @ A4 |
| Job title: 2 Seymour Road, Cheetham Hill | | | Drawing title: Bat Roost Potential Feature Plan | |

e3p
Environmental Engineering Partnership Ltd
Manchester Office
Taylor Road, Urmston M41 7JQ
Tel: 0161 707 9612
Email: info@e3p.co.uk
Website: www.e3p.co.uk

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