Bat Survey Report

Methodist Central Hall, Manchester
Reference: 81-658-R2-1
Date: June 24



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Site Address	Methodist Central Hall, Central Buildings, Oldham Street, Manchester, M1 1JW
Coordinates	E 384451, N 398422
Site Area	Approximately 0.1 ha
Current Site Use	The site comprised a four-storey community centre, offering commercial shops on the ground floor. Church and office spaces were located within the basement and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd floors.
Proposed Development	Development proposals include the renovation of the loft voids to be turned into office spaces.
Results	No bats were observed emerging from the building and no bats were observed within proximity to any potential roost features.
Conclusions and Recommendations	No further surveys, or a Natural England Bat Licence, are required for the renovation works to proceed. Due to the reduced survey effort, it is recommended that a tool box talk is given to contractors prior to the start of works. In the unlikely instance that any bats are located within the building during the works, works should cease, and a suitably qualified ecologist should be contacted. It is recommended that works be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season (March to September inclusive). However, if this is not possible, a nesting bird check should be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist up to 24 hours 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.

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 3

1. INTRODUCTION 5
   - 1.1. Background 5
   - 1.2. Proposed Development 5
   - 1.3. Site Description 5
   - 1.4. Previous Surveys 6
     - 1.4.1. E3P, 2024 6
   - 1.5. Objectives 6

2. METHODOLOGY 7
   - 2.1. Nocturnal Surveys 7
   - 2.2. Data Analysis 8
   - 2.3. Survey Limitations 8

3. SURVEY RESULTS 9
   - 3.1. Dusk Emergence Survey 16th May 9

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 10
   - 4.1. Conclusions 10
   - 4.2. Recommendations 10

5. REFERENCES 11

APPENDIX I SURVEY FORMS AND CAMERA STILLS 12

APPENDIX II VANTAGE POINT LOCATIONS 15

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

E3P has been instructed by Methodist Central Hall to undertake Nocturnal Bat Surveys at Methodist Central Hall, Manchester; hereafter referred to as "the site".

This report was produced by Graduate Ecologist Max McCormick, BSc (Hons) who holds qualifying CIEEM membership and has experience undertaking Nocturnal Bat Surveys at many sites across the UK.

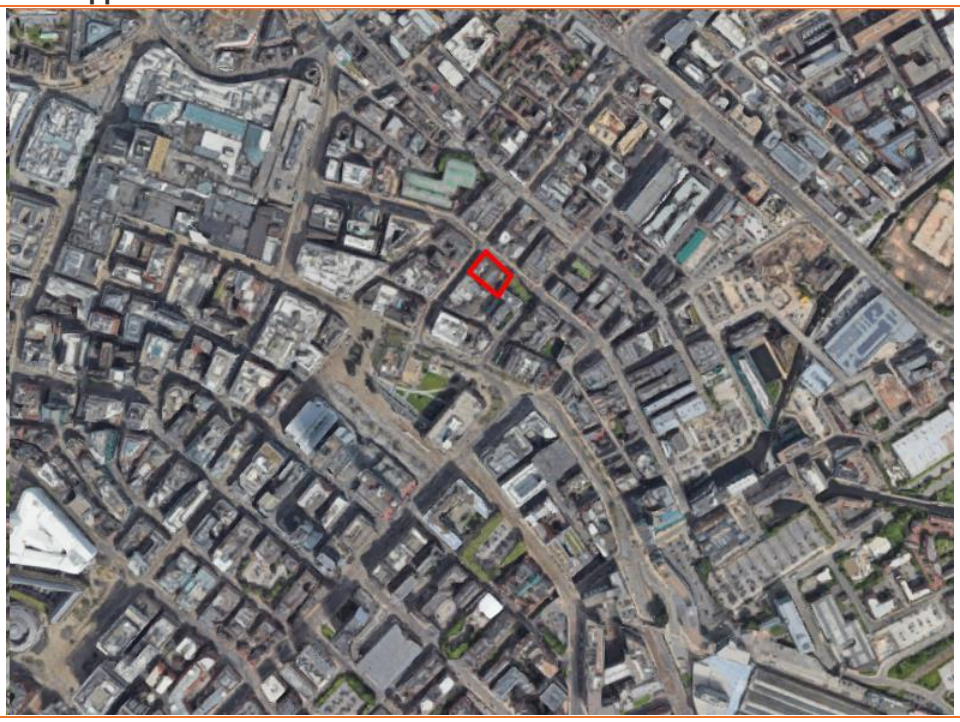
1.2. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Development proposals include the renovation of the loft voids to office spaces.

1.3. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located in the centre of Manchester, within a predominantly commercial area. A series of commercial units surrounded the site on all aspects. Dale Street defined the northern boundary, with Spear Street bordered the eastern boundary and Oldham Street bordered the western boundary. The entrance to the building was accessed from Oldham Street. Piccadilly Gardens is located approximately 110 m south of the site. Manchester Piccadilly Train Station is located approximately 540 m south-east of the site. Please refer to Figure 1 for the approximate site location.

Figure 1 Approximate Site Location



1.4. PREVIOUS SURVEYS

1.4.1. E3P, 2024

PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT

In February 2024, E3P conducted a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA), following guidance set out in Collins (2023) (report reference: 81-658-R1). The building comprised an active community centre, with commercial shops on the ground floor and office and church spaces within the rest of the building. The walls of the building largely comprised stone blocks, with smaller areas of brickwork with a rendered finish. Two clay-tiled hipped roofs (roof 2 and roof 4) were located along the western side and the centre of the building. Two sections of flat roofs (roof 1 and roof 3) were present, both areas had a rubber finish.

The building was assessed as having Moderate bat roosting potential due to the access points into the stairwell and the loft of one of the roofs leading to multiple brickwork crevices and areas of ripped felt that could be used by a small number of crevices dwelling bats on a regular basis. Crevices, vents, and missing brickwork were also identified on the external walls of the building that would provide roosting opportunities to a small number of bats on an occasional basis. It was determined that the building was unlikely to support a large number of bats or a roost of high conservation status, such as a maternity or hibernation roost, due to the lack of space within the features identified to support such roosts and lack of suitable foraging and commuting habitat within close proximity to the building.

The building was also assessed as having nesting bird potential on the roof and within the damaged soffit box.

The habitats present on-site comprised developed land; sealed surface which included the building and paved area that was well-sealed throughout. No natural habitat was identified within the site boundary.

Two Nocturnal Bat Surveys were recommended following the PRA to confirm the presence/absence of roosting bats and to inform relevant mitigation.

1.5. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the nocturnal bat surveys were to identify:

- Any existing roosts within the site.
- Potential impacts of the proposed development on bats.
- The need for mitigation.

The survey findings are detailed in this report, along with any recommendations.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. NOCTURNAL SURVEYS

One Bat Emergence Survey was undertaken following guidance set out in Collins (2023). The survey was conducted using Canon XA60 4K Camcorders, one Echo Meter Touch 2, and Titley Scientific Chorus recorders (Set to Continuous mode) and was undertaken by competent and suitably trained bat surveyors. See Table 1 for details of the survey.

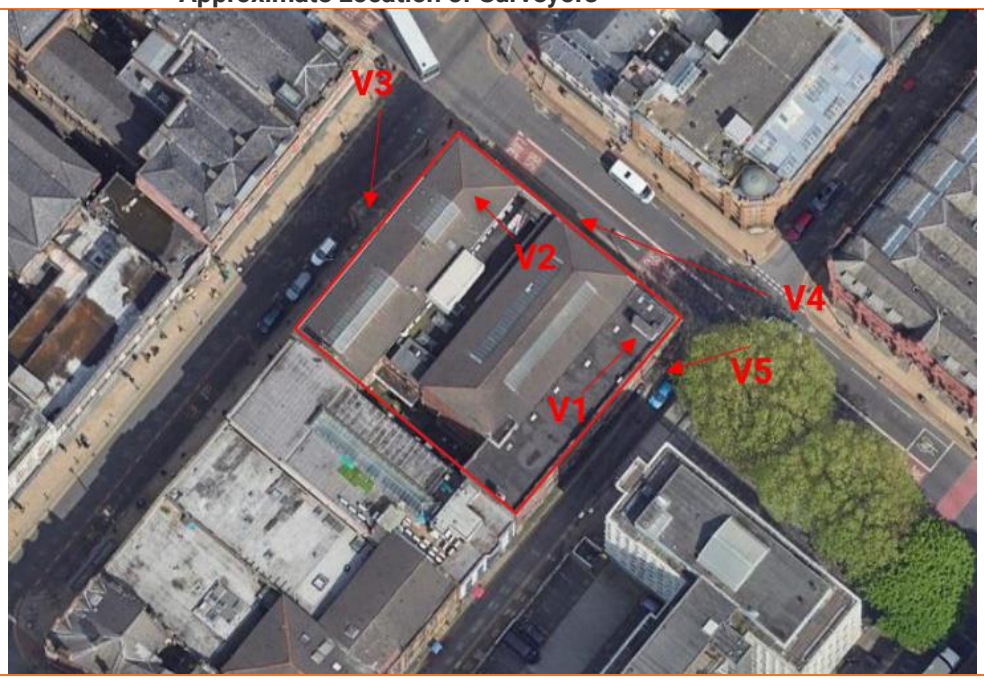
Table 1 Emergence Survey Details

SURVEY	DATE	SUNSET	SURVEY TIMINGS	WEATHER CONDITIONS
DUSK SURVEY 1	16/05/2024	21:05	20:50-22:35	Dry, 15°C, 100 % cloud cover, moderate breeze

Five camcorders were positioned around the building to observe the areas of bat-roosting potential during the nocturnal surveys (see Appendix II). Four camcorders were monitored by suitably qualified bat surveyors, with the aid of either an Echo Meter Touch 2 or a Titley Scientific Chorus Recorder. One camcorder (V1) was monitored by a Chorus recorder. Licensed ecologists present during the surveys included Carlin Jones (2023-11074-CL17-BAT). Stills from the cameras at the darkest point of the survey can be found in Appendix II.

Please refer to Figure 2 for the approximate location of the surveyors/ cameras.

Figure 2 Approximate Location of Surveyors



2.2. DATA ANALYSIS

One Echo Meter Touch 2 and three Chorus recorders were used to record bat calls during the survey. Data from these instruments was converted from WAV to ZCA using Wildlife Acoustics Kaleidoscope Software and was analysed using AnalookW. The recordings from the camcorders were analysed by Max McCormick between the 21st and 29th May 2024. This involved reviewing the footage for any emergences.

2.3. SURVEY LIMITATIONS

Nocturnal Bat Surveys are completed following guidance set out in Collins (2023) and are carried out by competent and trained surveyors. No surveyors were visually constrained during the survey, other than that of the low light conditions which were aided by the cameras, and all potential roosting features were observed throughout the survey time period. All surveys were conducted in optimum weather conditions, following guidance set out in Collins (2023).

Due to a technical error, the Chorus that was being used to monitor bat calls at V3 failed to record. This was considered during post-analysis and instead, the Echo Meter that was recording at V2 was used in tandem with the camera recording of V3 as this was the closest recording device to V3 to assist in determining whether any bat activity was recorded at this vantage point.

Due to the site's proximity to Manchester City Centre, during the nocturnal survey, there was unwelcome interest from members of the public which created unsafe working conditions for the surveyors. As such, E3P concluded that a second survey would put the surveyor's health and safety in jeopardy. E3P consulted with the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) and as no bats were recorded emerging and very little bat activity was recorded, it was agreed that only one dusk emergence survey would be necessary for this site. GMEU agreed that the approach was justified.

3. SURVEY RESULTS

The following subsection provides a summary of bat activity noted on the dusk emergence survey. Please refer to Appendix I for the full survey forms.

3.1. DUSK EMERGENCE SURVEY 16TH MAY

During the dusk emergence survey, there was no activity of any bat species recorded by the surveyors. After analysis of the camcorders and recorders was complete, the unmanned V1 position was confirmed to have a low level of bat activity, with a single bat being observed on the camera. Analysis of Chorus data confirmed this individual to be a common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*). It was observed passing the camera from the north west direction to the north east at 21:23, approximately 18 minutes after sunset. It can be assumed that this individual is commuting/foraging around the site, as no bats were observed emerging from the features of the building at any point during the survey and post-analysis. Camera stills of this bat activity can be found in Appendix I, Figure 3.

No bats were observed emerging from the surveyed building in relation to the potential roost features.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. CONCLUSIONS

As no bats were observed emerging from the surveyed building it can be concluded with reasonable certainty that no bats are located within the building. Therefore, no further assessment, mitigation or Natural England Bat licencing is required for works to proceed.

4.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to only one survey being undertaken it is recommended that a tool box talk is given to contractors prior to the commencement of works. In the unlikely event that a bat is found during works, all works is to cease immediately. Following this, a suitably qualified ecologist should be contacted, and further advice sought from Natural England.

It is recommended that works be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season (March to September inclusive). However, if this is not possible, a nesting bird check should be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist up to 24 hours 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.

5. REFERENCES

- Collins, J. (ed.) (2023). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th edition. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- E3P (2023) Preliminary Roost Assessment – Methodist Central Hall, Manchester (Report Reference: 81-658-R1).

END OF REPORT

APPENDIX I
SURVEY FORMS AND CAMERA STILLS



SURVEY FORMS

16TH MAY 2024

Date: 16/05/2024
Sunset: 21:05
Start time: 20:50
End time: 22:35

Weather conditions: Dry, 15°C, 100 % cloud cover, moderate breeze

Surveyor: Chorus recording (V1)

TIME	SPECIES	ACTIVITY
21:23	Common pipistrelle	Foraging/commuting from north west to north east

Surveyor: Benjamin Hartley (V2)

TIME	SPECIES	ACTIVITY
-	-	No activity recorded

Surveyor: Carlin Jones (V3)

TIME	SPECIES	ACTIVITY
-	-	No activity recorded

Surveyor: Anna White (V4)

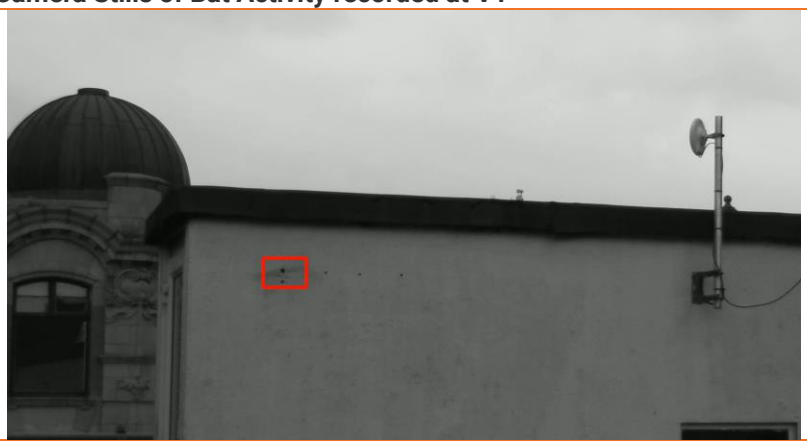
TIME	SPECIES	ACTIVITY
-	-	No activity recorded

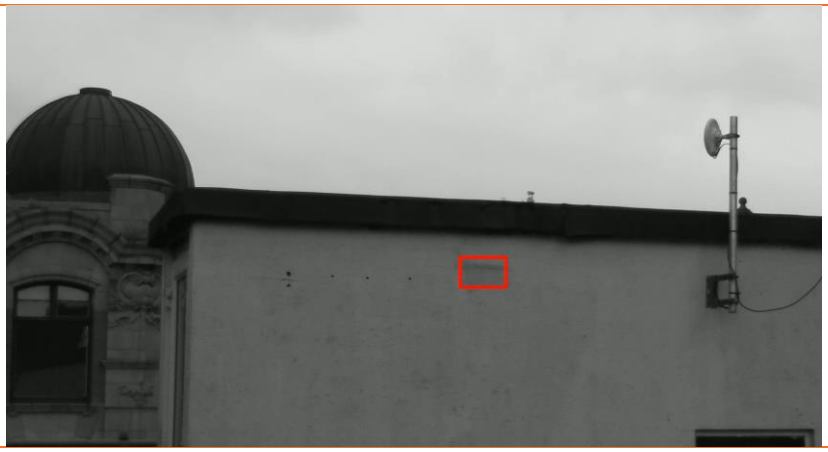
Surveyor: Rebecca Owens (V5)

TIME	SPECIES	ACTIVITY
-	-	No activity recorded

CAMERA STILLS

Figure 3 **Camera Stills of Bat Activity recorded at V1**





APPENDIX II
VANTAGE POINT LOCATIONS



Figure 3 Vantage Point 1 (V1)



Figure 4 Vantage Point 2 (V2)



Figure 5 Vantage Point 3 (V3)



Figure 6 Vantage Point 4 (V4)



Figure 7 Vantage Point 5 (V5)

