

NXQ

Lever Street, Manchester

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

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Howells

SOLLER



Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report

The NXQ Building, Manchester

Reference: 81-633-R1-2

Date: February 2024



PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL REPORT

The NXQ Building
Manchester

Prepared for:
Soller Nine

Report Ref: 81-633-R1-2
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Site Address	Land Bound by Lever Street, Great Ancoats Street, Little Lever Street and Houldsworth Street, Manchester
Coordinates	E 384725, N 398587
Site Area	Approximately 0.16 ha
Current Site Use and Adjacent Site Use	The site is located in Ancoats, north-east Manchester, and comprises a total of 7 buildings, 5 of which are in use as commercial dwellings, and 2 of which are currently unoccupied. Little Ancoats Street runs through the centre of the site. The wider area largely comprises commercial and residential buildings, hardstanding roads, some small areas of green space and occasional scattered trees.
Designated Sites	<p>There are no statutory designated sites located within 1 km of the site boundary.</p> <p>The site is located within the Impact Risk Zone of a Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Rochdale Canal SAC and SSSI is located approximately 5.8 km north-east of the site boundary. Due to the small footprint of the proposed development and the distance between the site and Rochdale Canal SSSI, no detrimental impacts (on the SSSI) are anticipated as a result of the development. Furthermore, as per the criteria listed on MAGIC (accessed February 2024), the proposed works will not require further consultation with Natural England concerning potential impacts on the SSSI.</p> <p>Rochdale Canal SAC is designated for its significant population of floating water-plantain, which would be impacted by an increase in air pollution. An increase in air pollution can be caused by an increase in traffic. A Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) screening assessment will not be required to assess whether the proposed development will have any 'likely significant effects' on the SAC, as the site is located approximately 4.8 km from the SAC, and is separated by several anthropogenic barriers within north-east Greater Manchester. Relative to the already built up urban nature of the surrounding areas, the development is small in scale. As the site is also in close proximity to public transport, it is unlikely that the development will significantly increase air pollution via increased car numbers in the area.</p> <p>Rochdale Canal: Stott's Lane – Ducie Street Basin Site of Biological Importance (SBI) is located approximately 240 m south-east of the site boundary at its closest point. Rochdale Canal: Stott's Lane – Ducie Street Basin SBI is designated for its nationally important population of floating water-plantain and assemblage of pondweed species, of which nine species have been recorded. Due to the proximity of the site to the SBI, dust suppression and pollution prevention methods will be required.</p>
Survey Results	<p>The site comprised hardstanding and buildings.</p> <p>The site was found to have the following potential ecological constraints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Building 1 (B1), Building 3 (B3), Building 5 (B5) and Building 6 (B6) were assessed as having High bat roosting potential.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Building 2 (B2), Building 4 (B4) and Building 7 (B7) were assessed as having Low bat roosting potential. ✦ Potential presence of nesting birds within the on-site buildings.
Conclusions	<p>The following further surveys are required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Three Nocturnal Bat Surveys on B1, B3, B5 and B6 between May and September (inclusive), with at least two surveys taking place between May and August (inclusive). The surveys are to be carried out at least three weeks apart. ✦ One Nocturnal Bat Survey on B2, B4 and B7 between May and August (inclusive). <p>The following mitigation is recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Due to the presence of a large number of feral pigeons, a pre-commencement check of all on-site buildings is required at any time of year by a suitably qualified ecologist no more than 24 hours prior to works commencing. If buildings are deemed clear of nesting birds by the ecologist, it is recommended that netting is placed over any potential access points to prevent any birds gaining egress into the building. Should any nests, or nests in construction be located, a suitable stand-off distance should be maintained until the young have fledged. ✦ It is recommended that bird boxes and a green roof are integrated into the proposed building to enhance the site for black redstart and mitigate against the loss of potential nesting habitat for the species. <p>The site will be exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) as no habitats are present on-site.</p>



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

E3P were commissioned by Soller Nine to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal at The NXQ Building, Manchester, hereafter referred to as “the site”.

This report has been produced by Conor Evans BSc (Hons), MRes, QCIEEM, Consultant Ecologist at E3P. Conor has experience undertaking Preliminary Ecological Appraisals and ecological mitigation for a variety of projects across the UK. Conor also holds a Class 1 Great Crested Newt Natural England licence.

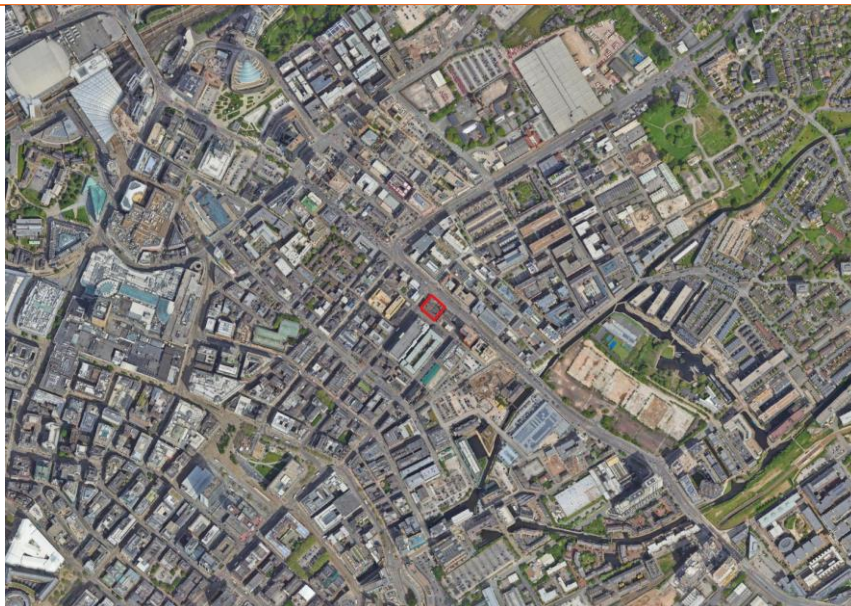
1.2. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Development proposals include the full planning application for part-retention, conversion and extension of existing buildings; selective demolition; the erection of a ground floor + 17 storey building comprising new office space (Use Class E) with ground floor reception area and ancillary uses; supporting infrastructure and ancillary facilities, roof top plant, and landscaping.

1.3. SITE LOCATION

The site is located in Ancoats, north-east Manchester. The site is bordered by Great Ancoats Street to the north-east, Little Lever Street to the south-east, Houldsworth Street to the south-west and Lever Street to the north-west. Little Ancoats Street runs through the centre of the site. Rochdale Canal is located approximately 240 m east of the site boundary. Cotton Field Park is located approximately 400 m south-east of the site boundary. New Islington Marina is located approximately 450 m south-east of the site boundary. An active railway is located approximately 740 m north of the site boundary, associated with Manchester Victoria Train Station, which is situated approximately 760 m north-west of the site boundary. The River Irwell is located approximately 890 m north-west of the site boundary. 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 Ecological Appraisal 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 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal comprises a desk study and site walkover. This survey has been completed as a baseline assessment of the site, and as such please see the end of the report for further surveys and mitigation proposed.



2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. DESKTOP STUDY

The following sources of information and ecological records were consulted:

- ✳ MAGIC – A web-based interactive mapping system, on which geographic information regarding key environmental schemes and designations are collated, including details of statutory conservation sites, accessed January 2024.
- ✳ Aerial mapping and ordnance survey maps.
- ✳ Local data records, including Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) (received 23rd January 2024).

A 1 km search area was utilised for the data search, with this being deemed an appropriate distance for the Zone of Influence of the site due to the small size and urban nature of the site. Records pre-dating 2014 were classified as historic records and were excluded from the desk study unless the records were of particular importance and relevance to the site.

The data search included the request for details of protected and notable species of flora and fauna within 1 km of the central grid reference of the site. In addition, a request was made for any non-statutory designated sites within 1 km of the site boundary.

Please note that a lack of up-to-date records does not confirm the absence of a species from the area. The lack of records may simply be a result of a lack of protected species surveys being undertaken within the local area.

2.2. VEGETATION AND HABITATS

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the proposed development site was undertaken by Conor Evans on 16th January 2024. Assistance was provided by Ciara Bass, Consultant Ecologist at E3P. Ciara holds a Level 3 Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC). The weather was cool, still and overcast with light snow cover.

The walkover survey was undertaken to the standard methodology as per the “Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal” (CIEEM, 2017). A vegetation and habitat plan has been produced for the proposed development site and the immediate surrounding area (please refer to Appendix I). The mapping is based on the UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (UKHab, 2023).

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 Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*).



2.3. FAUNA

A thorough search of the site for signs of protected species of fauna was undertaken during the site walkover. These searches considered the following:

- ✳ Suitability of any ponds to support notable amphibians, and the suitability of the site's terrestrial habitats to support amphibians.
- ✳ Suitability of the site to support reptiles by way of habitat structure and refuge piles, as well as links to the wider landscape.
- ✳ Signs of badgers (*Meles meles*), by way of setts, mammal paths, foraging signs or latrines to indicate usage of the site by the species.
- ✳ Search of any watercourses for signs or suitability for water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) and otter (*Lutra lutra*) by way of burrows, resting places, holts and foraging signs.
- ✳ Suitability of the site to support roosting, foraging and commuting bats.
- ✳ Suitability of the site to support notable bird species.
- ✳ Suitability of the site to support notable invertebrates.
- ✳ Search of the site for any invasive species.

2.4. PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT

A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was undertaken by Conor Evans on 16th January 2024. Assistance was provided by Ciara Bass.

The survey involved undertaking a systematic search of the buildings on-site, searching for signs of bats, or spaces where bats would be able to access. No trees were located within or adjacent to the site boundary. The survey was undertaken utilising suitable binoculars and ladders to access all areas where safe to do so. The methodology followed that described in *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists, 4th Edition* (Collins, 2023). Please refer to Figure 2.1 for building locations and references.

FIGURE 2.1 BUILDING LOCATIONS AND REFERENCES



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

TABLE 2.1 BAT ROOSTING POTENTIAL CLASSIFICATION OF BUILDINGS AND WALLS

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.
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.
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.

2.5. SURVEY LIMITATIONS

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal does not constitute a full botanical survey. Instead, key species are identified to give a representative description of each habitat type.

B1, B5 and B6 could not be accessed internally during the survey; B1 could not be accessed due to health and safety concerns, tenants were not available to allow access into B5, and the metal roller door for B6 had seized, preventing internal access. This is not considered to be a major constraint, as both buildings require subsequent summer bat roost surveys.

Due to the height of the buildings and snow on roofs, some features may have been missed, such as lifted roof tiles or potential access points into loft voids; excluding buildings where the loft void was inspected internally, as access points could be observed from within. This is not considered to be a major constraint, as buildings without loft access were assessed on a precautionary basis.

These constraints have been taken into consideration during the assessment



3. SURVEY RESULTS

3.1. SITE CONTEXT

The site is located in Ancoats, north-east Manchester. The site comprises hardstanding and buildings. These habitats are anticipated to have limited ecological value. However, the buildings may provide suitability for nesting birds, such as black redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*), which are known to nest on buildings in Manchester City Centre.

The wider area comprises hardstanding, buildings, some small areas of green space and occasional scattered trees, associated with Manchester City Centre.

Rochdale Canal, which is a Greater Manchester Biodiversity Priority Habitat, and New Islington Marina are located approximately 240 m and 450 m south-east of the site boundary respectively. These areas are anticipated to act as valuable foraging, commuting and resting resources for aquatic specialists, including Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*), fish, aquatic invertebrates and a variety of waterfowl and gull species (*Larus* sp.).

Multiple areas of open mosaic habitat on previously developed land are located within 1 km of the site boundary. The closest such area is located approximately 300 m north-west of the site boundary. Open mosaic habitat is known to offer resources for local wildlife, particularly for birds and invertebrates.

Cotton Field Park is located approximately 400 m south-east of the site boundary. Cotton Field Park is located directly adjacent to New Islington Marina, and comprises amenity grassland, hardstanding footpaths, an astroturf football pitch and scattered trees. The amenity grassland and hardstanding are expected to have limited ecological value. The scattered trees are anticipated to form foraging, commuting and resting habitats for a variety of local wildlife, including nesting and roosting opportunities for birds and bats.

An area of isolated deciduous woodland is located approximately 900 m north of the site boundary. This area of woodland is listed as Priority Habitat, and is anticipated to provide valuable habitat for a range of protected species including nesting birds, roosting and foraging bats, badgers, hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*) and common amphibians. The site is separated from this area of isolated deciduous woodland by hardstanding roads, buildings and an active railway line.

No waterbodies which would provide suitable breeding habitat for great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) are located on-site or within 250 m of the site boundary.

3.2. DESIGNATED SITES

There are no statutory designated sites located within 1 km of the site boundary.

The site is located within the Impact Risk Zone of a Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Rochdale Canal SAC and SSSI is located approximately 4.8 km north-east of the site boundary. Rochdale Canal SAC is designated for its significant population of floating water-plantain (*Luronium natans*). Rochdale Canal SSSI is designated for its important habitats of emergent vegetation and submerged aquatic plants, which includes extensive colonies of nationally scarce floating water-plantain. The site also supports a diverse range of aquatic vegetation, most notably its assemblage of pondweeds (*Potamogeton* sp.). The canal also provides habitat for a variety of birds, including coot (*Fulica atra*), mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*), kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) and grey wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*).



Due to the small footprint of the proposed development and the distance between the site and Rochdale Canal SSSI, no detrimental impacts on the SSSI are anticipated as a result of the development. Furthermore, as per the criteria listed on MAGIC (accessed February 2024), the proposed works will not require further consultation with Natural England concerning potential impacts on the SSSI.

Rochdale Canal SAC is designated for its significant population of floating water-plantain, which would be impacted by an increase in air pollution. An increase in air pollution can be caused by an increase in traffic. A Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) screening assessment will not be required to assess whether the proposed development will have any 'likely significant effects' on the SAC, as the site is located approximately 4.8 km from the SAC, and is separated by several anthropogenic barriers within north-east Greater Manchester. Relative to the already built up urban nature of the surrounding areas, the development is small in scale. As the site is also in close proximity to public transport, it is unlikely that the development will significantly increase air pollution via increased car numbers in the area.

Rochdale Canal: Stott's Lane – Ducie Street Basin Site of Biological Importance (SBI) is located approximately 240 m south-east of the site boundary at its closest point. Rochdale Canal: Stott's Lane – Ducie Street Basin SBI is designated for its nationally important population of floating water-plantain and assemblage of pondweed species, of which nine species have been recorded. Emergent, marginal and floating vegetation occur along the Manchester section of the canal, including great reedmace (*Typha latifolia*), common reed (*Phragmites australis*), yellow flag-iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), purple-loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), hard rush (*Juncus inflexus*), great willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), hoary willowherb (*Epilobium parviflorum*), gypsywort (*Lycopus europaeus*) and water forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*). Due to the proximity of the site to the SBI, dust suppression and pollution prevention methods will be required.

3.3. HABITATS

The main habitats encountered during the survey are described in the following subsections. Please refer to Appendix I for the UKHab Habitat Plan.

3.3.1. BUILDINGS (U1B5)

The majority of the site comprised a series of occupied and unoccupied commercial buildings. Some buildings had been colonised in part by butterfly-bush (*Buddleja davidii*).

PLATE 1 SHOWING BUILDING



3.3.2. DEVELOPED LAND; SEALED SURFACE (U1B)

Little Ancoats Street was present in the centre of the site allowing access between Lever Street and Little Lever Street to the north-west and south-east, respectively. Little Ancoats Street comprised tarmac and cobble hardstanding. The hardstanding had been colonised in part by moss species.

PLATE 2 SHOWING HARDSTANDING



3.4. PROTECTED AND NOTABLE SPECIES

3.4.1. AMPHIBIANS

Consultation with GMEU did not identify any records of great crested newt within the 1 km search area.

Consultation with MAGIC did not identify any great crested newt European Protected Species Licences within 1 km of the site boundary. The closest such licence was located approximately 5.0 km west of the site boundary. The licence was active between 2010 and 2011 for the destruction of a great crested newt resting place.

Great crested newts' upper dispersal limit is generally considered to be up to 250 m from a waterbody (though occurrence of greater distances does exist where habitat connectivity is of high quality) (English Nature, 2001). Considering that no waterbodies are located on-site or within 250 m of the site boundary, the presence of great crested newts on site is reasonably discounted.

Consultation with GMEU did not identify any records of common amphibian within the 1 km search area.

The site was assessed as being unsuitable to support common amphibians during their breeding or terrestrial phase due to a lack of suitable aquatic or terrestrial habitat on-site. As such, common amphibians are not anticipated to be present on-site.



3.4.2. BATS

Consultation with GMEU identified 28 records of common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), pipistrelle species (*Pipistrellus* sp.), myotis species (*Myotis* sp.), noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*) and unidentified bat species within the 1 km search area. The closest such record was for *Pipistrelle* sp., located approximately 90 m north-east of the site associated with commercial buildings.

Consultation with MAGIC identified eight Natural England Bat Mitigation Licences within 1 km of the site. Please refer to Table 3.1 for details of all bat licences within 1 km of the site boundary.

TABLE 3.1 BAT LICENCES WITHIN 1 KM OF THE SITE BOUNDARY

REFERENCE NUMBER	SPECIES	YEARS ACTIVE	DESCRIPTION	DISTANCE FROM SITE
EPSM2013-5644	Common pipistrelle	2013 – 2015	Destruction of a resting place.	100 m north-east
2016-24504-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	2016 – 2018	Destruction of a resting place.	200 m north-east
2016-24504-EPS-MIT-1	Common pipistrelle	2016	Destruction of a resting place.	200 m north-east
2014-3531-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	2014 – 2019	Destruction of a resting place.	350 m east
2014-3531-EPS-MIT-1	Common pipistrelle	2015 – 2020	Destruction of a resting place.	350 m east
2014-3531-EPS-MIT-2	Common pipistrelle	2016	Destruction of a resting place.	350 m east
2014-3531-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	2014 – 2019	Destruction of a resting place.	550 m north-west
2014-3531-EPS-MIT-1	Common pipistrelle	2015 – 2020	Destruction of a resting place.	550 m north-west
2014-3531-EPS-MIT-2	Common pipistrelle	2016	Destruction of a resting place.	550 m north-west
2014-490-EPS-MIT	Common, soprano pipistrelle	2014 – 2017	Destruction of a resting place.	620 m south-west
2018-33674-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	2018 – 2040	Damage and destruction of a resting place.	720 m south-west
2019-41924-EPS-MIT-1	Common pipistrelle	2020 – 2031	Destruction of a breeding site and resting place.	970 m east
2019-38955-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	2019 – 2021	Damage and destruction of a resting place.	970 m south

All buildings on-site (B1 – B7) were assessed for their suitability to support roosting bats, as detailed in Collins (2023). B1, B2, B3 and B4 are all attached externally, located to the south-west of Little Ancoats Street. B5, B6 and B7 are all attached externally, located to the north-east of Little Ancoats Street.



Buildings were separated to allow for ease of reference based on the Lever Street Manchester Briefing Pack (Glenn Howells Architects, 2023). 25 Houldsworth Street, 56 Lever Street and 58 Lever Street were grouped together as B1, as all buildings were in a similar condition externally, and could not be accessed internally.

B1, B3, B5 and B6 were assessed as having High bat roosting potential, and B2, B4 and B7 were assessed as having Low bat roosting potential. Please refer to Appendix II for the full Preliminary Roost Assessments and Appendix III for the Potential Roost Feature Plan.

Artificial street lighting was noted directly adjacent to the site boundary on the south-west, north-west and north-east aspects. Due to the levels of artificial lighting directly adjacent to site, it is anticipated that local bat species are more likely to utilise darker areas away from the site. The site was therefore assessed as having limited potential for foraging bats due to the majority of the site comprising buildings and hardstanding, and the already present levels of artificial lighting.

3.4.3. BADGER

Consultation with GMEU did not identify any records of badger within the 1 km search area. No badger setts or field signs of badger were located on-site or within 30 m of the site boundary where access was possible.

Due to the urban nature of the site and surrounding areas, it is not anticipated that badgers will utilise the site.

3.4.4. OTHER TERRESTRIAL MAMMALS

Consultation with GMEU identified records of European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) within the 1 km search area. The closest such record of hedgehog was located approximately 450 m south of the site boundary. The record was associated with a series of residential blocks.

The site was assessed as being unsuitable for hedgehog due to the site entirely comprising buildings and hardstanding, resulting in a lack of suitable habitat on-site which can provide foraging, shelter and hibernation habitat for the species.

3.4.5. OTTER AND WATER VOLE

Consultation with GMEU did not identify any records of otter or water vole within the 1 km search area.

No watercourses are present on-site or adjacent to the site boundary. The closest watercourse, the Rochdale Canal, is located approximately 240 m south-east of the site boundary at its closest point. The site is separated from the Rochdale Canal by multiple anthropogenic barriers, including a series of large buildings and hardstanding roads. As no suitable aquatic habitats are situated on-site or adjacent to the site boundary, both otter and water vole are reasonably discounted from further assessment.

3.4.6. BREEDING BIRDS

Consultation with GMEU identified records of kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*), bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), dunnoek (*Prunella modularis*), herring gull (*Larus argentatus*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), yellow wagtail (*Motacilla flava*), black redstart and peregrine within the 1 km search area.



Feral pigeon (*Columba livia*) were noted on-site and within the general area. Common bird species are anticipated to be present on-site and there is potential for the on-site buildings to support nesting birds. The site was assessed as being unsuitable for ground nesting birds due to a lack of suitable vegetation and the urban nature of the site. Multiple records of black redstart and peregrine are located within 1 km of the site boundary. It was determined that the on-site buildings were not tall enough to support peregrine and are therefore the species is unlikely to be present on-site. Due to the multiple buildings located on-site, it has been determined that the site is suitable for black redstart and therefore the species may be present. Black redstart are listed as a Schedule 1 species on the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

3.4.7. REPTILES

Consultation with GMEU did not identify any records of reptile within the 1 km search area.

The site was found to be unsuitable for reptiles due to the site entirely comprising buildings and hardstanding. Due to the urban nature of the site and surrounding areas, and a lack of reptile records, it was determined that reptile are unlikely to be present on-site.

3.4.8. INVERTEBRATES

Consultation with GMEU identified records of cinnabar moth (*Tyria jacobaeae*) within the 1 km search area.

Overall, the presence of notable invertebrates is reasonably discounted due to a lack of good quality habitat on-site that would support such species.

3.5. INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES

Consultation with GMEU did not identify any records of non-native invasive plant species within the 1 km search area.

No invasive species were identified on-site during the survey.



4. ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS AND MITIGATION

4.1. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Development proposals include the full planning application for part-retention, conversion and extension of existing buildings; selective demolition; the erection of a ground floor + 17 storey building comprising new office space (Use Class E) with ground floor reception area and ancillary uses; supporting infrastructure and ancillary facilities, roof top plant, and landscaping.

4.2. DESIGNATED SITES

There are no statutory designated sites located within 1 km of the site boundary.

Rochdale Canal: Stott's Lane – Ducie Street Basin Site of Biological Importance (SBI) is located approximately 240 m south-east of the site boundary at its closest point. Rochdale Canal: Stott's Lane – Ducie Street Basin SBI is designated for its nationally important population of floating water-plantain and assemblage of pondweed species. Therefore, dust suppression and pollution control measures are to be followed during the full construction phase to minimise any potential indirect impacts on the SBI.

The following Precautionary Working Methods (PWMs) will be followed to protect this feature:

- ✳ All site operatives will undergo a site induction which will brief them as to their working limits and legal responsibilities.
- ✳ All best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented.
- ✳ All machinery used will be stored within the construction zone.
- ✳ Machinery will be turned off when not in use.
- ✳ Surface water run-off will be controlled to reduce water pollution.
- ✳ Regular clean ups of litter and debris should be completed to minimise pollution.
- ✳ Regular inspections of the working area and any incidence of litter, debris or other pollution are to be reported. Appropriate measures to be taken for the removal of litter/pollutant etc.

Site drainage will need to be considered and will be subject to the Environment Agency best practice guidelines to ensure that no highly silted or polluted run-off from the site workings will enter any waterway during and post construction.

Measures will also be taken throughout the construction to avoid dust pollution. Pollution prevention and control strategies will be adhered to at all times. Any dust incidents within proximity to the site will be reported to the site manager. Dust control measures will include the following:

- ✳ Where possible, use a vacuum rather than a sweeping brush.
- ✳ Select the appropriate means of extraction/suppression.
- ✳ If anyone is asked to carry out dust generating activities without suppression measure, the site team will be consulted for advice.
- ✳ Dust generating tasks will never be carried out without the required control measures in place.



- ✳ Stockpiles will be sealed and sheeted.
- ✳ Vehicles transporting materials to and from site will be sheeted.
- ✳ Ground will be damped down using hoses and mobile bowzers.
- ✳ Visual monitoring at sensitive locations will be undertaken.
- ✳ Plant and equipment will be regularly serviced, including cleaning/replacing of air filters.
- ✳ COSHH reports to identify any substances likely to cause odours will be issued.
- ✳ Risk Assessment and Method Statements (RAMS) which set out how effective control measures will prevent the release of odours will be issued.

Best practice protection measures detailed within PPG5 Pollution Prevention Guidelines (2007) will be put in place to protect adjacent waterways during site works.

4.3. PROTECTED AND NOTABLE SPECIES

4.3.1. BATS

A total of seven buildings were assessed for their potential to support roosting bats. B1, B3, B5 and B6 were assessed as having High bat roosting potential, and B2, B4 and B7 were assessed as having Low bat roosting potential. Further surveys will therefore be required, please refer to Section 5.1 for further detail.

Artificial street lighting was noted directly adjacent to the site boundary on the south-west, north-west and north-east aspects. Due to the levels of artificial lighting directly adjacent to site, it is anticipated that local bat species are more likely to utilise darker areas away from the site. It is therefore not anticipated that an increase in artificial lighting will have an impact on local bat species, and therefore a lighting plan will not need to be produced.

It is recommended that any planting within the site be of native fruiting/flowering species in order to enhance the site for foraging bats post-completion. Bat boxes could be integrated into the proposed building to enhance the site for the species group.

4.3.2. BREEDING BIRDS

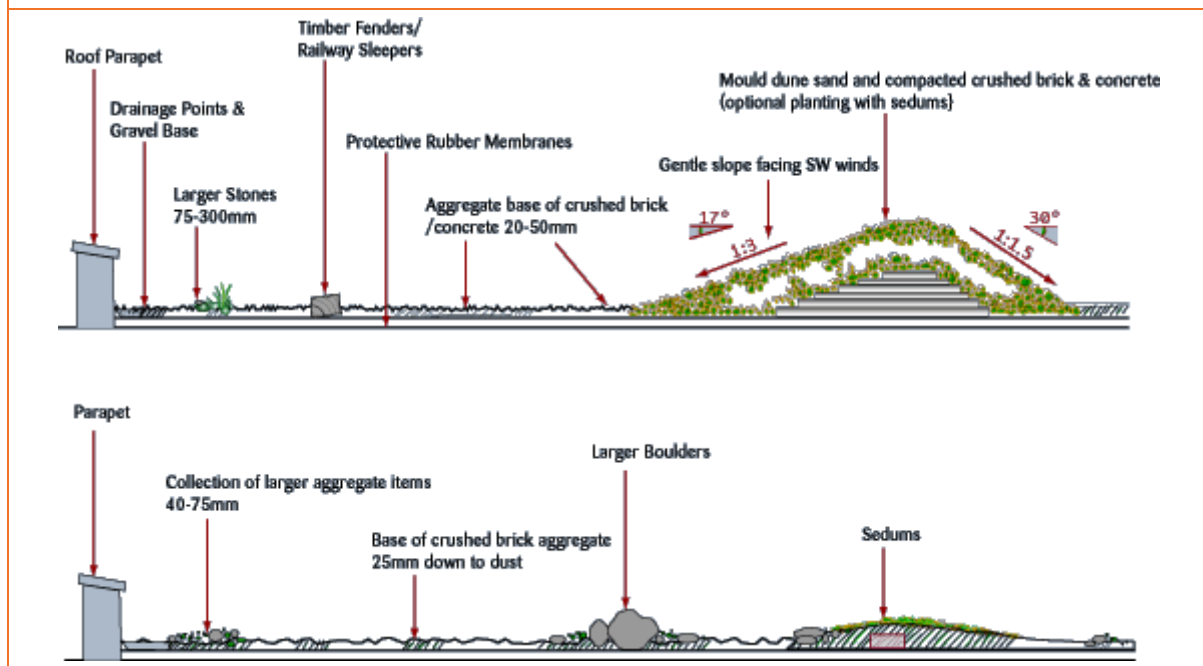
It is recommended that a pre-commencement check of all on-site buildings is undertaken at any time of year (pigeon species (*Columba* sp.) nest all year round) by a suitably qualified ecologist no more than 24 hours prior to works commencing. If buildings are deemed clear of nesting birds by the ecologist, it is recommended that netting is placed over any potential access points to prevent any birds gaining egress into the building. 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 a suitable stand off and provide a toolbox talk to all site contractors regarding their working limits and legal implications.

It is understood that bird boxes and a living roof are to be integrated into the proposed building to enhance the site for black redstart and mitigate against the loss of potential nesting habitat for the species. A suggested green roof design is detailed in Figure 4.1 to enhance the site specifically for black redstart. The figure shows the cross section of a proposed green roof for black redstarts, Isle of Dogs, London Borough of Tower Hamlets (blackredstarts.org.uk). The green roof should be based on aggregate mix present on the original site, using a mixture of crushed brick and concrete graded from



25 mm to dust. The roof should be contoured from heights of at least 5 cm to 15 cm, and be allowed to colonise naturally. Materials should consist of those present on the site itself and allowed to sit on site during construction. Sedum mats should be avoided; however, if these are desired, they should be planted within the aggregate base. A-frame solar panels provide a complex structure for black redstarts and create microhabitats for invertebrates.

FIGURE 4.1 SHOWING CROSS SECTION OF GREEN ROOF



5. FURTHER SURVEYS

5.1. BATS

A total of 7 buildings were assessed for their potential to support roosting bats. B1, B3, B5 and B6 were assessed as having High bat roosting potential, and B2, B4 and B7 were assessed as having Low bat roosting potential.

A total of three surveys will be required on the High potential buildings between May and September (inclusive), with at least two surveys taking place between May and August (inclusive). The surveys are to be carried out at least three weeks apart (Collins, 2023).

One survey will be required on the Low potential buildings between May and August (inclusive) (Collins, 2023).

B5 and B6 could potentially be downgraded to Moderate condition if internal access can be arranged, which would reduce the survey requirement to two surveys between May and September (inclusive), with at least one survey taking place between May and August (inclusive). The surveys are to be carried out at least three weeks apart (Collins, 2023). B1 cannot be downgraded from High due to the presence of multiple features and access points.

If bats are identified roosting within any building, then a total of three surveys would be required to characterise the roost and a European Protected Species Licence will be required with up to date surveys from the survey season prior to the application submission.

5.2. TABLE OF FURTHER SURVEYS

Please refer to Table 5.1 for a summary of further surveys required to inform a planning application.

TABLE 5.1 TABLE OF FURTHER SURVEYS

SURVEY TYPE	TIMESCALES
HIGH POTENTIAL NOCTURNAL BAT SURVEYS	Three surveys on B1, B3, B5 and B6 between May and September (inclusive), with at least two surveys between May and August (inclusive). The surveys are to be carried out at least three weeks apart.
LOW POTENTIAL NOCTURNAL BAT SURVEYS	One survey on B2, B4 and B7, with the survey undertaken between May and August (inclusive).



6. BIODIVERSITY STATEMENT

The site will be exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) as no habitats are present on-site and therefore falls under the following BNG exemption:

‘Developments impacting habitat of an area below a threshold of 25 m², or 5 m of linear habitats, such as water courses or hedgerows’.



7. REFERENCES

- ✿ Bat Conservation Trust (2023). Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night.
- ✿ Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.
- ✿ CIEEM (2018). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine.
- ✿ Collins, J. (ed.) (2023). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th edition. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- ✿ English Nature (2001). Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines.
- ✿ Glenn Howells Architects (2023). Lever Street Manchester Briefing Pack.
- ✿ Stace, C. A. (2019). New Flora of the British Isles. Fourth Edition. Cambridge University Press.
- ✿ UKHab Ltd (2023). UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0.
- ✿ Wildlife and Countryside Act (2010) Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

END OF REPORT



APPENDIX I

UKHAB HABITAT PLAN

Key:

 Red Line Boundary

 Developed land; sealed surface

 Buildings

Notes

Issue: 1	Revision: 1	Date: 02/02/2024	Drawn: CE	Authorised: CK
Client: Soller Nine Limited			Job No. 81-633	Date: 02/02/2024
			Drawing No. 001	Scale: 1:300 @ A4
Job title: Lever Street, Manchester			Drawing title: UKHab Habitat Plan	



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APPENDIX II PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENTS

REF.	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPH
B1	<p>Building 1 (B1) was located in the south-west of the site and comprised a disused five-storey building, comprising red brick walls and four pitched tile hip roofs. It is understood that the building has been unoccupied for at least ten years. The brickwork was generally in good condition, however access points were noted on the south-west aspect. Superficial damage was also noted, however no features that could be utilised by roosting bats were identified.</p> <p>Multiple windows were noted on the south-west, north-west and north-east aspects of the building. The windows were generally in poor condition, with multiple broken windows noted on the south-west and north-west aspects.</p> <p>An access point was noted on the roof the north-west of the building (A1) – which was identified from ground level through the top floor window. This access point could potentially lead into the loft void, which may have the potential to support a large number of bats, including a maternity roost.</p> <p>The roofs could not be inspected during the survey due to the height of the buildings not allowing a suitable viewing angle.</p> <p>An internal inspection of the building was not undertaken due to health and safety concerns.</p> <p>Due to the building having the potential to support maternity roosts, B1 was assessed as having High bat roosting potential.</p>	



REF.	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPH
		
B2	<p>Building 2 (B2) was a three-storey building located in the south of the site, currently occupied by commercial tenants. The building comprised red brick with an L-shaped tile roof with a hip gable on the north-east aspect.</p> <p>The brickwork and mortar was in good condition. No features that could be utilised by roosting bats were identified.</p> <p>Casement windows with wooden frames were noted on the south-west and south-east aspects of the building. The windows were generally in good condition, with no cracks or crevices around the</p>	



REF.	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPH
	<p>window frames and brickwork that could be used by opportunistic crevice-dwelling bat species.</p> <p>The roof could only be inspected on the south-west aspect due to the height of the building, however no lifted roof tiles were noted. Utilising aerial images, the roof on the south-east and north-east aspects appear to be in good condition, however, some lifted roof tiled may be present which could be utilised by crevice dwelling bat species.</p> <p>An internal inspection of the building and roof void was undertaken during the survey. No evidence of roosting bats was identified during the internal inspection. No access points were observed within the loft void, and can therefore be discounted as a potential roost feature.</p> <p>B2 was assessed on a precautionary basis, as some lifted roof tiles may be present on the south-east and north-east aspects. Any lifted roof tiles would only be able to support small numbers of crevice dwelling bat species. Considering the lack of access points within the loft void, B2 was therefore assessed as having Low bat roosting potential.</p>	  
B3	<p>Building 3 (B3) was an unoccupied two-storey building located in the south-east of the site. The building comprised red brick with an L-shaped tile roof. Concrete render was noted on the south-east and north-east aspect of the building. The render was in poor condition, and had come away in parts on the south-east aspect. No cracks or crevices within the render were identified that could be utilised by opportunistic bat species. The render had been painted cream in parts, which would allow for easier identification of bat staining, if present. However, no staining was identified.</p> <p>The brickwork and mortar was mostly in good condition, with no features that could be utilised by</p>	

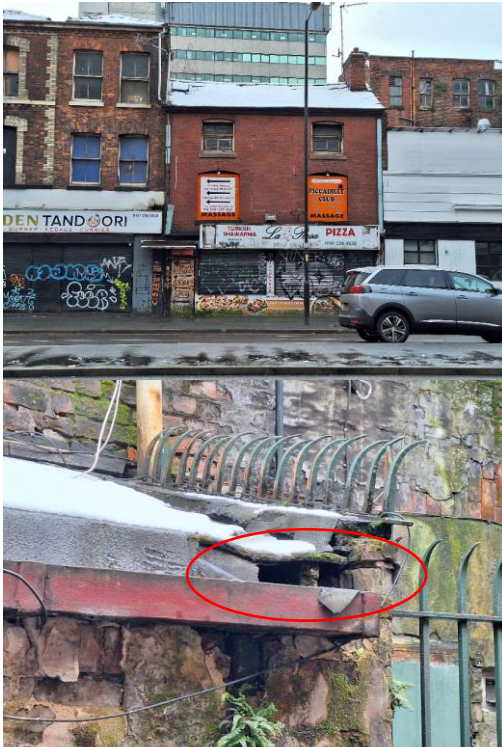


REF.	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPH
	<p>roosting bats identified. However, a missing brick was identified on the north-east aspect which may allow bats entry into the loft void.</p> <p>Casement windows with uPVC frames were noted on the south-east and north-east aspects of the building. The windows were generally in good condition, however, a broken window which was partially boarded up was present on the south-east aspect. No cracks or crevices around the window frames and brickwork were present that could be used by opportunistic crevice-dwelling bat species.</p> <p>The roof could not be inspected externally during the survey due to the height of the buildings not allowing a suitable viewing angle. Utilising aerial images, the roof appears to be in good condition, however, some lifted roof tiled may be present which could be utilised by crevice dwelling bat species.</p> <p>An internal inspection of the building and roof void was undertaken during the survey. No evidence of roosting bats was identified during the internal inspection. An access point into the roof void was identified during the inspection of the roof void (A2). The loft void may have the potential to support a large number of bats, including a maternity roost.</p> <p>Due to the building having the potential to support maternity roosts, B3 was assessed as having High bat roosting potential.</p>	  
B4	<p>Building 4 (B4) was located in the centre of the site and comprised a two-storey building with a pitched tile roof. B4 could not be accessed internally during the survey. It is understood that B4 is connected internally to B1.</p> <p>The brickwork and mortar was in good condition, with no obvious cracks or crevices that could be utilised by opportunistic bat species. No windows were present.</p>	



REF.	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPH
	<p>The roof could not be inspected externally during the survey due to the height of the buildings not allowing a suitable viewing angle. Utilising aerial images, the roof appears to be in good condition, however, some lifted roof tiled may be present which could be utilised by crevice dwelling bat species.</p> <p>B4 was assessed as having Low bat roosting potential on a precautionary basis, as some lifted roof tiled may be present on the south-east and north-east aspects.</p>	
B5	<p>Building 5 (B5) was located in the north-east of the site and comprised an occupied three-storey building, with red brick walls and two pitched tile hip roofs.</p> <p>The brickwork and mortar was mostly in good condition, however, damaged brickwork was noted on the northern corner of the building at the top of the wall plate. This damaged brickwork may potentially lead into the loft void, which may have the potential to support a large number of bats, including a maternity roost. Damaged brickwork could also provide roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling bat species (F1).</p> <p>Multiple sash and casement windows were noted on the south-west, north-west and north-east aspects of the building. The windows were generally in good condition on the north-east and south-east aspects; however, the windows were badly damaged on the south-west aspect, with some access points that could potentially lead into a sash box cavity (A3).</p> <p>The roofs could not be fully inspected on the south-east and south-west aspects during the survey due to the height of the building not allowing a suitable viewing angle. Utilising aerial images, the roof appears to be in good condition, however, some lifted roof tiled may be present which could be utilised by crevice dwelling bat species.</p> <p>An internal inspection of the building could not be undertaken during the survey as tenants were not present to allow access into the building.</p>	 <p>The photographs show Building 5 (B5) from three different perspectives. The top image is a street-level view of the ground floor, showing a brick building with a 'GOLDEN TANDORI' sign and extensive graffiti. The middle image is a low-angle view looking up at the upper floors, showing the brickwork and windows. The bottom image shows the roofline of the building, which has a pitched tile hip roof.</p>



REF.	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPH
	<p>As the loft void could not be accessed during the survey, any potential access points could not be identified. B5 was therefore assessed as having High bat roosting potential on a precautionary basis, as the loft void may be able to support a bat roost of high conservation status, such as a maternity roost.</p> <p>If internal access into the loft void can be arranged and no access points are identified, then B5 can be downgraded to Moderate potential.</p>	
B6	<p>Building 6 (B6) was located in the north-east of the site and comprised an unoccupied three-storey building, comprising red brick walls and a pitched tile hip roof. Two single-storey extensions were present on the south-west aspect of the building. The building had previously been used as a take-away restaurant. An internal inspection of the building could not be undertaken during the survey as the roller door to enter the building had seized, preventing access.</p> <p>The brickwork and mortar was mostly in good condition, however, damaged brickwork was noted on the northern corner of the building at the top of the wall plate. This damaged brickwork may potentially lead into the loft void, which may have the potential to support a large number of bats, including a maternity roost. Due to a lack of access, the presence of bats or any potential roost features could not be confirmed. Damaged brickwork could also provide roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling bat species (F2).</p>	



REF.	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPH
	<p>Sash windows with wooden frames were noted on the north-east aspect of the building. The windows were in good condition, with two of the windows covered by advertising boards. No obvious cracks or crevices were present in the brickwork surrounding the windows.</p> <p>The roofs could not be fully inspected on the south-east aspect during the survey due to the height of the building not allowing a suitable viewing angle.</p> <p>The extensions on the south-west aspect were in poor condition, with multiple sections of damaged brickwork that could potentially allow access into the extensions. The extensions could not be accessed internally during the survey. It could not be determined if the damaged brickwork forms potential roost features or access points due to lack of internal access. Assumed to be access points (A4 and A5) until can be ruled out if internal access is arranged.</p> <p>As the loft void and extensions on the south-west aspect could not be accessed during the survey, any potential access points could not be identified. B6 was therefore assessed as having High bat roosting potential on a precautionary basis, as the loft void may be able to support a bat roost of high conservation status, such as a maternity roost.</p> <p>If internal access into the loft void and extensions can be arranged and no access points are identified, then B6 can be downgraded to Moderate potential.</p>	
B7	<p>Building 7 (B7) was a three-storey building located in the south of the site, currently in use as a restaurant. The building comprised red brick with two pitched tile roofs. A single-storey extension was noted on the adjacent to south-east. The extension comprised a glass roof and a parapet wall on the north-east aspect.</p> <p>Concrete render was noted on the north-east and north-west aspects of the building. The brickwork and mortar was in good condition. No features that could be utilised by roosting bats were identified.</p> <p>Sash windows with wooden frames were noted on the north-west and north-east aspects of the building. The windows were in good condition, with no cracks or crevices around the window frames</p>	



REF.	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPH
	<p>and brickwork that could be used by opportunistic crevice-dwelling bat species.</p> <p>The roof could only be fully inspected on the north-east aspect due to the height of the building, however no lifted roof tiles were noted. Slightly lifted end roof tiles were present on the south-east aspect of the building (F3), which could be utilised by opportunistic crevice-dwelling bat species on an occasional basis.</p> <p>An internal inspection of the building and roof void was undertaken during the survey. No evidence of roosting bats was identified during the internal inspection. No potential access points were noted during the internal inspection of the roof void.</p> <p>B7 was assessed as having Low bat roosting potential on a precautionary basis, as some lifted roof tiled may be present on the south-east and north-east aspects.</p>	



REF.	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPH
		



APPENDIX III

POTENTIAL BAT ROOST FEATURE AND ACCESS POINT LOCATIONS

Key:

-  Red Line Boundary
-  Potential bat roost feature
-  Access point

Notes

Issue: 1	Revision: 1	Date: 02/02/2024	Drawn: CE	Authorised: CK
Client: Soller Nine Limited			Job No. 81-633	Date: 02/02/2024
			Drawing No. 002	Scale: 1:300 @ A4
Job title: Lever Street, Manchester			Drawing title: Potential bat roost feature and access point locations	



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