

OLDHAM STREET, MANCHESTER BAT SURVEY REPORT



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REPORT

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Prepared for:

Cumming Group

Dan Ward
Associate Director

31 Booth Street, Manchester M2 4AF

T +44 (0)161 503 9080
E Dan.Ward@cumming-group.com

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- RPS were commissioned by Cumming Group to undertake a bat emergence survey of buildings located at 68–70 Oldham Street and 61 Spear Street, Manchester. This comprised a single dusk emergence survey to the site to determine if the site supports bat roosts, which could present a constraint to the development of the site.
- The proposals involve redevelopment of the site into a hotel.
- The site is approximately 0.05 ha in size and comprises two buildings: 68-70 Oldham Street and NQ1 which is located at 61 Spear Street.
- The buildings were determined to have features with low potential to support roosting bats during the PEA previously undertaken by RPS.
- There were access issues at the site, including a reduced view along Warwick Street, and restricted views of the various building roofs, meaning limitations are associated with the conclusions of this survey.
- Bats were observed foraging in the area adjacent the site; however, no bats were identified as emerging from the buildings. As no bats were observed coming from the direction of the building, bat activity was very low, and given the urban setting of the buildings, it is considered unlikely that the site supports bat roosts.
- While considered unlikely that a bat roost is present it was not possible to rule out the presence of one conclusively, due to the limitations stated. It is therefore recommended that work at the site takes place under a Precautionary Working Method Statement with features that may be suitable to support a bat roost, such as lifted tiles, carefully removed under the supervision of a licenced bat ecologist.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and scope of this report

- 1.1.1 RPS was commissioned by Cumming Group to undertake a bat emergence survey at 68–70 Oldham Street and 61 Spear Street, Manchester.
- 1.1.2 The aim of the survey was to ascertain the current use of the buildings by bat species (*Chiroptera* spp.) prior to redevelopment.
- 1.1.3 This report pertains to these results only. Recommendations included within this report are the professional opinion of an experienced ecologist and therefore the view of RPS. The survey undertaken and this subsequent report are prepared in accordance with the British Standard for Biodiversity Code of Practice for Planning and Development (BS42020:2013).

1.2 Legislation

- 1.2.1 All British bat species are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as updated by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. All British bats are also included on Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as European Protected Species. It is an offence to:
- intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or capture bats;
 - deliberately or recklessly disturb bats (whether in a roost or not); and
 - damage, destroy or obstruct access to bat roosts
- 1.2.2 A roost is defined as 'any structure or place which [a bat] uses for shelter or protection'. As bats tend to reuse the same roosts, legal opinion is that a roost is protected whether or not bats are present at the time of survey.
- 1.2.3 A licence will therefore be required by those who carry out any operation that would otherwise result in offences being committed.
- 1.2.4 The following bat species are listed as being of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England, (commonly referred to as UKBAP Priority species): barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein's bat *Myotis bechsteinii*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*, greater horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, and lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*.

2 METHODS

2.1 Bat Emergence Survey

- 2.1.1 A dusk emergence survey was carried out by four experienced surveyors. The timing and weather conditions for this survey are detailed in Table 1 below. Bat calls were recorded by each surveyor using a Batlogger M or Echo Meter Touch 2 bat detector.
- 2.1.2 The location of the buildings and those of the surveyors can be seen in Figure 1.

Table 1: Summary of bat survey conditions

Date	Sunset	Time		Weather Conditions at Beginning of Survey			
		Start	End	Temp (C)	Wind (m/s)	Cloud (oktas)	Rain*
24.08.22	20:18	20:03	21:48	20	1	6	0

* 0 - no rain, 1 – drizzle/mist, 2 – light shower, 3 – heavy shower, 4 - heavy rain

2.2 Limitations

Survey

- 2.2.1 It was not possible to view all the sections of existing roof, due to the height of the building and close presence of surrounding buildings and the construction site located on Warwick Street.
- 2.2.2 It was not possible to get closer views of the roofs by surveying from the flat roof section of 68-70 Oldham Street due to safety concerns. As such it is possible that bats emerged but were not seen if the bats did not fly towards Spear Street following emergence.

Accurate Lifespan of Ecological Data

- 2.2.3 The majority of ecological data remain valid for only short periods due to the inherently transient nature of the subject. The survey results contained in this report are considered accurate for two years, assuming no significant considerable changes to the site conditions in line with current CIEEM guidance¹.

¹ <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Advice-Note.pdf>.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Bat Emergence Survey

- 3.1.1 Common pipistrelle and noctule bats were recorded using Spear Street as a foraging route. Seven common pipistrelle recordings were made, and three recordings of a noctule. A single common pipistrelle was observed making several passes to the north of Warwick Street. No noctules were observed by any of the surveyors.
- 3.1.2 The common pipistrelle observed foraging to the north of Warwick Street appeared from north of the site, over buildings within the adjacent construction site. This individual bat returned along this direction. The observed flight route of this bat is shown in Figure 1. This was the only bat seen during the survey.
- 3.1.3 No bats were observed emerging from the visible parts of the building.

4 CONCLUSIONS

During the initial PEA of the site, the buildings were identified as having low potential to support bat roosts. Therefore, one emergence survey was required to determine if the site is currently used by bat species (Collins, 2016²).

During the dusk emergence survey no bats were observed emerging from the visible elevations of the building. A small number of recordings and observations were made of bats foraging over Spear Street; however, it was considered highly unlikely that these bats emerged from the site.

Due to the limitations described above, it is not possible to conclusively rule out the use of the site by bats. As such it is recommended that work at the site takes place under a Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS) ensuring that any work is carried out under the observation of a bat licensed ecologist. The PWMS would specify working methods to avoid harming bats, if present, including hand removal of potential bat roost features such as ridge and roof tiles. Should any bats or signs of bats be found (e.g. faeces or feeding signs) work would cease until further investigations are carried out and a bat licence may be required at this stage.

² Collins J. (ed.) (2016). Bat surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good practice guidelines (3rd Edition). Bat Conservation Trust, London.



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Legend

-  Site boundary
 Surveyor location
 Observed flight
 Common pippistrelle

Rev	Description	By	CB	Date



Atholl Exchange, 1st Floor, 6 Canning Street, Edinburgh EH3 8EG
T: +44(0)131 555 5011 E: rpsed2@rpsgroup.com

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