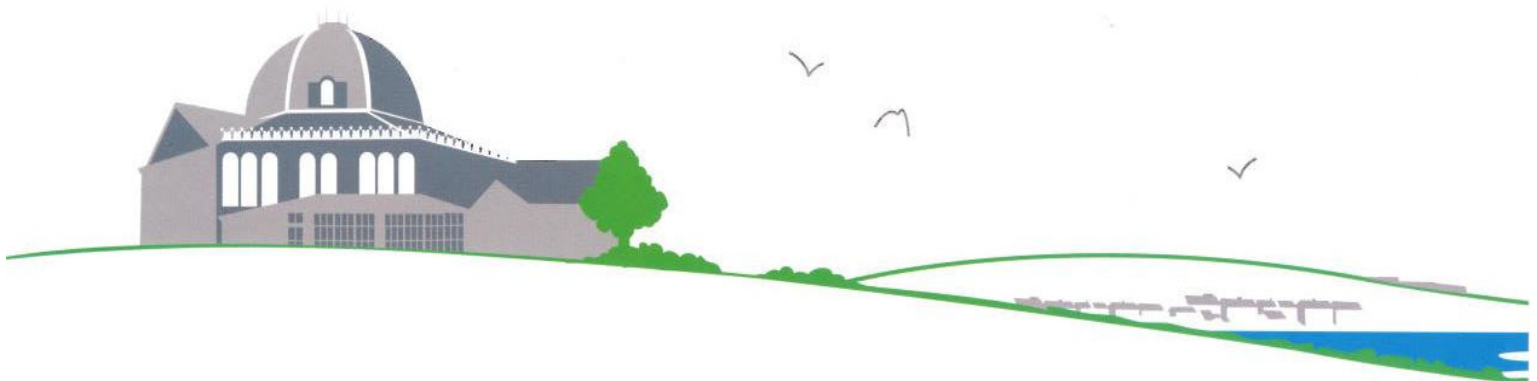




PROPERTY ALLIANCE GROUP AND STARWOOD CAPITAL GROUP

PREMIER HOUSE, RENAISSANCE,
MANCHESTER

BAT ACTIVITY SURVEY REPORT



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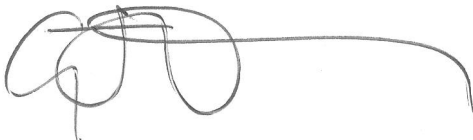
Penny Anderson Associates Limited
'Park Lea'
60 Park Road
Buxton
Derbyshire
SK17 6SN

Project Manager
Gerard Hawley BA (Hons), MSc, DipPSE (Dist), MCIEEM (Principal Scientist)

Author
Rob Lamb BSc (Hons), MSc (Ecologist)

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This project has been undertaken in accordance with PAA policies and procedures on quality assurance.



Signed: _____

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1	Summary of the Legislation Relating to Bats
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Penny Anderson Associates Ltd (PAA) was commissioned by Property Alliance Group and Starwood Capital Group on behalf of Deansgate SOF Alliance Leaseco Limited to carry out an ecological assessment of land and the building referred to as Premier House, Renaissance, Manchester. This included an inspection of buildings and trees on site for potential to support roosting bats. The results of the building and tree inspections are presented in a separate report (see Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Inspection of Building for Bats, PAA 2021).
- 1.2 Following the results of the building and tree inspections, which found the main structure to have low potential to support roosting bats, a further bat activity survey was recommended. This report details the methods and results of this further activity survey and makes any recommendations as required.

Site Description

- 1.3 The site is located between Deansgate, Manchester and the River Irwell, at postcode M3 2EQ. The majority of the site comprises a large building (a multi-storey hotel to twelve floors) as well as a multi-storey NCP car park. There is a paved frontage adjacent to the River Irwell to the west of the building, largely of hardstanding with scattered trees and introduced ornamental shrubs.
- 1.4 The Renaissance complex currently comprises a vacant 15-storey, 203 bedroom hotel building, a multi-storey car park, a restaurant and a dilapidated former office building (Premier House) which has been vacant for a significant number of years. This particular application relates to/proposes the redevelopment of Premier House. Separate planning applications have already been submitted for the new 4* Treehouse hotel and the partial demolition of Premier House.
- 1.5 The setting of the site is highly urbanised, in the high-rise surroundings of Deansgate. The River Irwell is immediately adjacent to the west and recreational parks such as Parsonage Gardens and Cathedral Gardens are present in the wider landscape.

Legislative Context

- 1.6 The text below provides a brief summary of the legislation in relation to the species or species group in England and Wales. The original Acts, Regulations and any amendments should be referred to for the precise wording.
- 1.7 A range of international and national legislation has been established in the UK to protect important nature conservation sites and priority species. At the international level, European Union (EU) Directives require individual member states to implement their conservation provisions nationally for the benefit of Europe as a whole. These Directives have been transposed into UK law by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (amended); further details can be obtained from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) web site at www.jncc.defra.gov.uk.
- 1.8 Other international conventions include: the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979), which requires the maintenance of populations of wild flora and fauna, giving particular protection to endangered and vulnerable species; and the Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979), which requires the protection of migratory species throughout their entire range. The above conventions are implemented in England and Wales via the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) (1981) (as amended) and Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000. This legislation also protects important habitats and sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

- 1.9 At the national level, the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework published in 2012 is the Government's response to the Convention on Biological Diversity (2010). It describes the UK's biological resources, commits a detailed plan for the protection of these resources within the UK's devolved framework across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The document identifies future priorities for nature conservation and adopts a more strategic approach, including ecosystem services and sustainability alongside biodiversity. Despite administrative changes following devolution, there is still an underlying objective of protecting and enhancing a range of priority species and habitats, often still based on the objectives and classifications of the original UK Biodiversity Action Plan. *Biodiversity 2020* is England's national biodiversity strategy. Building on the *Natural Environment White Paper* published in 2011, this provides a means of delivering the international and EU commitments to biodiversity. Under Biodiversity 2020, Priority Species and Habitats referred to are those of 'Principal Importance' for the conservation of biodiversity in England listed on Section 41 (England) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.
- 1.10 Finally, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) provides guidance for local authorities on the content of the Local Plans and is a material consideration in determining planning applications. Briefly, with an overall focus on sustainable development, the NPPF states that developments should aim to engender positive outcomes for habitats and biodiversity, with a particular focus on the maintenance and creation of ecological networks. Furthermore, the NPPF also states that any planning proposals for which significant negative impacts on biodiversity cannot be avoided, mitigated or compensated for should be refused. The NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural environment through a range of actions, including:
- protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils;
 - recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services; and
 - minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains for biodiversity including establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.
- 1.11 To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:
- Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and
 - promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Bat Biology

- 1.12 There are 17 species of native bats known to be resident (i.e. breed) in the British Isles. British bats feed entirely on insects and have developed a complex sonar system, known as echolocation, which enables them to find prey and navigate around their environment at night.
- 1.13 Habitat requirements vary widely, both on an individual and species level, although certain features, such as woodland, parkland, traditional pasture, marshes and areas of freshwater, are often focal points for foraging, as insects are plentiful in these areas (Mitchell-Jones 2004). Bats

use linear features such as rivers, hedgerows, roads and woodland edges as landmarks in order to commute from one location to another (Schofield and Mitchell-Jones 2003).

- 1.14 Bats utilise different roosts at different times of the year. Between late October and March, bats hibernate; this requires an unexposed roost with a stable temperature, typically a cave, cellar or tunnel. Around March, the bats emerge and gradually move to their summer roosts, typically within man-made structures or suitable crevices in trees. During the spring and summer period female bats gather together at maternity roosts to give birth and rear their young. Most births occur between late June and mid-July, with the young able to fly within three to five weeks (Altringham 2003; Waters and Warren 2003). By the end of August, most of the young bats are independent and the colony begins to break up (Schofield and Mitchell-Jones 2003). Mating takes place between August and December, either at the winter hibernation site or at autumn breeding sites. The numbers of bats utilising these roosts can vary from single bats to hundreds of bats in a nursery colony or hibernation site (Altringham 2003).
- 1.15 Bats play an important role in many environments around the world, including pollination and insect control. In the UK, bats can tell us a lot about the state of the environment because they are top predators of common nocturnal insects and are extremely sensitive to changes in their surroundings, e.g. climate, landscape, agricultural intensification, development and habitat fragmentation. Populations of British bats have suffered severe declines in the past century, influenced by these factors.

Protected Species

- 1.16 Details of the protected species legislation relevant to this report can be found in Appendix 1.

2. METHODS

- 2.1 Buildings, trees and habitats within the site were previously inspected for bats as detailed in PAA 2021.
- 2.2 The main structure was assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats and, therefore, requiring a further activity survey.

Dusk Emergence Survey

- 2.3 The survey was undertaken by Principal Scientist Gerard Hawley (GH), Consultant Ecologists Rob Lamb (RL- Level 1 Bat Licence Registration No. 2020-44441-CLS-CLS), Phoebe Gray (PG), and Assistant Ecologist Connie Webb (CW). All members of the survey team have the necessary experience of surveys for protected species, including bats, and are appropriately qualified to carry out this work based on the CIEEM¹ competencies for survey (CIEEM 2013).
- 2.4 The surveyors were positioned at vantage points in view of potential roost features and recorded any bat activity heard or seen. Each surveyor had a Batbox Duet bat detector to aid detection in the field, and an Anabat SD1 to record echolocation calls and enable sonogram analysis for confirmation of species identification.
- 2.5 Following good practice guidance (Collins 2016), the dusk survey commenced 22 minutes prior to sunset, and continued for 1h 30m, taking into account the typical emergence times for the species considered likely to be present.
- 2.6 Survey times and weather conditions are detailed in the Results section of this report.
- 2.7 Bat calls recorded by all surveyors were analysed using specialist sound analysis software 'Analook W'. Based on parameters such as peak frequency and call duration, each call was assigned to a particular bat species to confirm the identification recorded by surveyors in the field.

Limitations

- 2.8 The emergence survey was undertaken within the peak active bat survey season, in suitable weather and temperature conditions. There were no significant constraints to the survey and the results are considered robust.

¹ Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management

3. RESULTS

Dusk Emergence Survey

- 3.1 The dusk emergence survey was undertaken on 14th May 2021. The findings of the survey are summarised in Table 1, with surveyor locations.

Table 1 Dusk Emergence Survey Results, 14th May 2021

Species	First Recorded	Notes
Common pipistrelle (CP)	21:09	Common pipistrelles (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>) were first heard and seen at 21:09, observed by RL and GH flying in from off-site to the west. 3 x common pipistrelles were observed flying along the River Irwell to the west throughout the survey. The species was also occasionally seen commuting over the lower roof level by GH. PG observed a common pipistrelle foraging close to the building to the north-west of the site.
Surveyors and Location. GH: lower roof level, Premier House; RL: south-west, ground level; PG: north-west, ground level; CW: west, ground level.		
Start time: 20:40		Sunset: 21:02
		End time: 22:10
Conditions: Dry with light wind with ~60% cloud cover throughout survey.		
Temperature: 11°C decreasing to 9°C. Humidity: 81% decreasing to 77%.		

Bat Activity on Site

- 3.2 Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) were the single bat species detected during the survey. The survey picked up a moderate level of common pipistrelle bat foraging and commuting activity, occasionally passing over the lower roof level of the building. Most feeding calls were associated with the River Irwell. No bats were seen to interact directly with the building or potential roost features on site.
- 3.3 It was noted that there was significant security and street lighting within the open multi-storey car park to the west of the building, facing onto the River Irwell. High light levels can deter bat activity.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Survey Summary

- 4.1 The survey picked up a low to moderate level of common pipistrelle foraging and commuting activity within the site boundary, with most calls and observations associated with the adjacent River Irwell to the west and off-site.
- 4.2 No bats were seen to emerge from the building during the activity survey.
- 4.3 No incidental signs or sightings of black redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*) or peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) were observed during the visit (these are Schedule 1 bird species² that are afforded protection and known to be present in central Manchester).

Recommendations

- 4.4 No further recommendations are made in respect of roosting bats at this time. In the unlikely event that bats are found during future demolition, works should stop immediately, and advice be sought from a professional bat ecologist.
- 4.5 If works have not been undertaken within two years of the date of this survey, then the site should be reassessed for bats to ensure that any decisions or actions taken at that time are based on up-to-date survey data.

Biodiversity Enhancement Opportunities

- 4.6 The site is currently of limited ecological value and development presents an opportunity to increase biodiversity. Potential enhancement measures that could be considered are:
- Use of native or wildlife friendly trees, shrubs and herbaceous species in any landscape planting, for example, inclusion of species that provide nectar for invertebrates or berries to provide a food source for birds;
 - Inclusion of bird boxes to accommodate typical urban bird species;
 - Designs that offer similarly higher-level areas to what are currently present on the building would retaining opportunities for breeding black redstart to use these as song posts;
 - Including a green/brown roof design that would enhance foraging opportunities for local populations of black redstart;
 - Inclusion of integrated or external bat roost features such as bat slates, tiles and bricks or bat boxes to increase opportunities for roosting bats, coupled with a suitable lighting strategy to avoid unnecessary lighting of roost features; and
 - Limiting exterior lighting to maintain links to the wider area for local bat populations.

² Schedule 1 under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 - Part I. Birds and their young, for which it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb at, on or near an 'active' nest.

5. REFERENCES

- Altringham, J.D., 2003. *British Bats*. New Naturalist Series 93, Harper Collins.
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- NPPF, 2019. *National Planning Policy Framework, updated February 2019*. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- PAA, 2021 *Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Inspection of Building for Bats*. Report produced for Property Alliance Group and Starwood Capital Group.
- Schofield, H.W., and Mitchell-Jones, A.J., 2003. *The Bats of Britain and Ireland*. The Vincent Wildlife Trust.
- Waters, D. and Warren, R., 2003. *Bats*. The Mammal Society.

6. ABBREVIATIONS

CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
CRoW	Countryside and Rights of Way
CW	Connie Webb
EU	European Union
GH	Gerard Hawley
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
NERC	Natural Environment and Rural Communities
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PAA	Penny Anderson Associates Ltd
PG	Phoebe Gray
RL	Rob Lamb
SSSI	Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest
WCA	Wildlife and Countryside Act

APPENDIX 1

Summary of the Legislation Relating to Bats

SUMMARY OF THE LEGISLATION RELATING TO BATS

All wild species of bat are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981, which has also been amended by later legislation, including the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (amended), and this legislation is applicable to England and Wales. Bats are listed on Schedule 5 of the WCA and are therefore subject to some the provisions of Section 9 which, with the amendments, make it an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection (S9:4b).
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection by a bat (S9:4c).

There are additional offences in relation to buying and selling (S9:5) any live or dead animal of this species or anything derived from them.

Bat species are also listed under Annexes IIa and IVa of the EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, also known as the 'Habitats Directive'. Inclusion on Annex IVa means they are consequently identified as European Protected Species (EPS) and protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (amended).

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (amended) state that a person commits an offence if they:

- (a) deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild animal of a European protected species,
- (b) deliberately disturb wild animals of any such species, in such a way as –
 - (i) to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear their young, or
 - (ii) in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate, or
 - (iii) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong;
- (c) deliberately take or destroy the eggs of such an animal, or
- (d) damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal.

Under these Regulations it is an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place whether the animal is in occupation or not, and protection extends to all life stages of the animal in question. There are additional offences relating to possession, control and sale of a live or dead bat or part of such an animal.

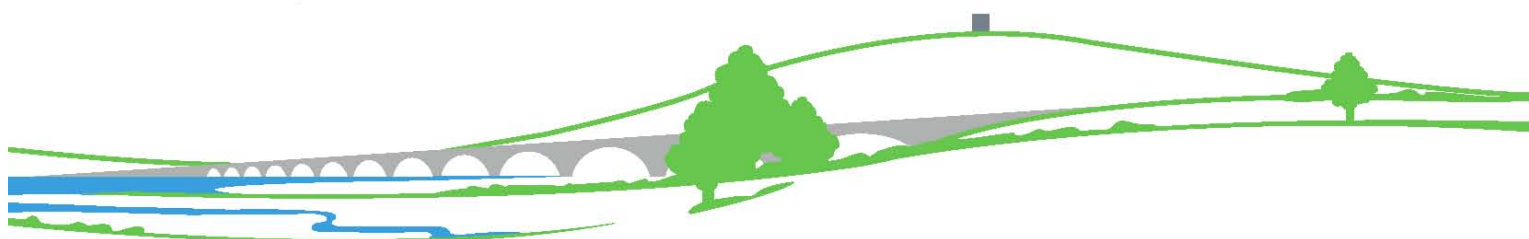
In addition, seven native British bat species, including the soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and the brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*), that are frequently found in buildings, are listed as a 'Priority Species' under the 2011 biodiversity strategy for England, *Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services*, under the 2012 UK Post-2010 UK Biodiversity Framework. These Priority Species are also referred to as 'species of principal importance' for the conservation of biodiversity in England and Wales within Section 74 of the CROW Act 2000, and Sections 41 (England) and 42 (Wales) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) has an overall focus on sustainable development, and states that developments should aim to engender positive outcomes for habitats and biodiversity, with a particular focus on the maintenance and creation of ecological networks. Furthermore, the NPPF also states that any planning proposals for which significant negative impacts on biodiversity cannot be avoided, mitigated or compensated for should be refused. Reference is made to Circular 06/2005 *Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact within the Planning System* in respect of statutory obligations for biodiversity and geodiversity conservation.

The commitment to preserving, restoring or enhancing biodiversity is further emphasised for England and Wales in Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006.

Please note: the above text provides a brief summary of the legislation in relation to bats in England and Wales and the original Acts, Regulations and any amendments should be referred to for the precise wording.

Penny Anderson
Associates Ltd
CONSULTANT ECOLOGISTS



Park Lea, 60 Park Road, Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 6SN