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BAT SCOPING SURVEY

At

Weston Hall and Pendulum Hotel,
Sackville Street,
Civic Quarter,
City Centre,
Manchester,
M1 3BB

NGR: SJ 84478 97512

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A bat scoping survey was undertaken on 15th August 2025. The objective of the survey was to establish the suitability of the buildings on site to support roosting bats, based on a site-specific survey and habitat assessment. The building were searched externally and internally (where accessible) for bat presence and features associated with bat activity, as detailed in Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidance (2023).

Weston Hall and Pendulum Hotel is situated in an area which provides minimal habitat for bats. The surrounding highly developed urban area of Manchester City Centre has high levels of disturbance deterring bats from roosting and foraging in this area. Other factors that contribute to the poor habitat quality include lack of vegetation and the prevalence of well-lit roads and busy pedestrian areas. While watercourses are present in this area they provide limited foraging opportunities due to the bankside habitats.

The quality of roosting habitats within the buildings on site was low, with minimal external potential roosting features (PRFs) and a limited PRFs identified within the buildings. External PRFs consist of shuttered vents and weep vents, as well as gaps in the box soffits and wooden cladding. Internal PRFs consist of gaps in wooden trusses, tears in the bitumen felt and access points due to vents.

The buildings on site are considered to have low potential to support roosting bats. However, all features could be fully inspected and no evidence was found to suggest present or historic use by bats. As such, no further survey or mitigation work is required for the development to proceed.

The report should be read in conjunction with appendices 1 to 4, which give visual representations of the survey results.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Author, surveyors and qualifications

This report is compiled and written by Matthew Inthone Chao, UES Graduate Ecologist. Other surveyors include:

- Daniel Smith BSc MScRes, UES Ecologist. Daniel is licensed by Natural England to disturb, take and handle all species of bats under licence number 2024-12117-CL18-BAT (level 2).
- Toby Leverett BSc MSc, UES Graduate Ecologist
- Bethany Dineley BSc, UES Graduate Ecologist.

All surveyors have the knowledge, skills and experience identified within CIEEM's "Competencies for Species Survey: Bats" (2013), or were under the supervision of a surveyor with the required competencies.

1.2 Survey objectives

UES was commissioned in August 2025 to conduct site surveys which include the following activities:

- Conduct internal and external building inspections to look for field signs of bats
- Assess the suitability of the building for use by roosting bats
- Recommend further surveys, mitigation and compensation, where appropriate

1.3 Proposed development

The proposed development will be phased:

a) partial removal of the existing structures and erection of two buildings comprising purpose-built student accommodation, one of 50 storeys and one of 17 storeys with an 8-storey link, together with associated amenity space, external landscaping, highways works and change of use of the Pendulum hotel to purpose-built student accommodation; and

b) Removal of remaining existing structure and erection of two buildings comprising purpose-built student accommodation, one of 33 storeys and one of part-24 and part-8 storeys with a 1-storey link, together with associated amenity space, external landscaping, and highways works.

As such, Phases A and B will comprise the following:

- Phase A: 50-storeys, 17-storeys, with 8-storey link.
- Phase B: 33-storeys, part-24 and part-8 storey, with 1-storey link.

1.4 Structure of the report

This report sets out the methodology, results, and recommendations in relation to a specific bat survey. Recommendations are in line with statutory legislation and planning policy objectives.

The report should be read in conjunction with appendices 1 to 4, which give visual representations of the survey results.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 General

All surveys were carried out to recognised guidelines, timings and weather conditions, with particular reference to Natural England and BCT publications (see references for further information).

The habitats on site and in the surrounding area were assessed during a walkover survey and by studying aerial photographs, in order to gauge their suitability to support roosting, foraging and commuting bats.

2.2 Building survey

The building on site was searched both externally and internally for bat presence and features associated with bat activity, as detailed in BCT guidance (Collins, 2023). This was conducted on 15th August 2025 by Daniel Smith and Bethany Dineley.

2.2.1 External inspection

The external inspection of the building on site was carried out from ground level using binoculars, and also using ladders and an endoscope to investigate suitable gaps. The objective of the survey was to find and record any signs of bat use, for example:

- Bat droppings
- Feeding remains
- Grease staining / urine marks
- Corpses or skeletons

The bat signs listed above are visible from the outside of a building. The following areas were searched, where present:

- Roof and ridge tiles
- Lead flashing
- Eaves
- Boxed soffits
- Fascia and barge boards
- Window sills and panes
- Walls
- Gaps under felt
- Cracks / holes in woodwork or behind cladding
- Gaps in brickwork and mortar
- Air bricks
- Grills
- Vents

2.2.2 Internal inspection

The internal inspection covered all of the accessible rooms and roof spaces within the building.

Bats regularly utilise specific areas within roof spaces, which were searched for any field signs of bats using high-powered torches and an endoscope, where considered necessary by the licenced ecologist. The following features were searched, where present:

- Roof beams and junctions
- Gaps under felt
- Dividing walls
- Chimney breasts
- Gaps in brickwork and mortar
- Cracks / holes in woodwork
- Floor or other surfaces on which droppings could accumulate

2.3 Survey limitations

No limitations were associated with the survey.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Habitat assessment

Weston Hall and Pendulum Hotel is located within the city centre of Manchester. The habitats included within the curtilage of the development boundary include areas of modified grassland, introduced shrubs and scattered trees.

The immediate area surrounding the site consists of the central business district of Manchester City Centre. This area includes a high density of buildings used both for residential and commercial purposes. Small patches of introduced shrubs and modified grassland are also present as well as limited scattered trees. The waterbodies of Rochdale Canal and River Merlock are located nearby. Rochdale Canal is approximately 300m north of the site, with River Merlock 150m west of the site.

In the wider surrounding area, the habitats are similar in composition. Areas of greenspace within the wider area are limited to small patches of modified grassland with scattered trees interspersed between the buildings. A small number of number of parks such as North Ridge Recreational Area to the east and a scattering of smaller parks such as Whitworth Park and Hulme Park to the west and the south.

3.2 Building survey

3.2.1 External inspection

Weston Hall is a five-storey block of flats with a complex roof structure (Photograph 1), and is currently used as student accommodation. The roof is a mix of both pitched and hipped rooves with concrete tiles and box soffits at the eaves (Photograph 4). The building was constructed in the 2010's as such the brick exterior remains in good condition. The roof has raised elements to house the utilities machinery, with vents and weep holes are present on the walls of these sections of the building (Photographs 2 and 3).

Pendulum Hotel is a five-storey brick built hotel with a pitched roof (Photograph 5). The hotel was built in the 1960's. The roof is constructed from concrete tiles, which are in good condition. Raised sections of the roof are present providing space for the utilities and air conditioning machines (Photograph 7). Lead flashing is present where the tiling meats the brickwork (Photograph 6). Box soffits are present at the eaves of the building and are in good condition. The brickwork of the building is in good condition and is partially covered in timber cladding, some of which is lifted in places.

External PRFs were found to be severely limited and came in the form of vents, weep holes, lifted lead flashing. and potential gaps in the wooden slats and claddings.

No evidence of bats were found during the external building inspections.

3.2.2 Internal inspection

Weston Hall has three utility lofts and one cellar which were inspected during the internal inspection. The lofts have breeze block internal walls, with timber trusses and purlins supported by steel beams (Photographs 8–10,14,15, and 17). The roof is lined with bitumen felt and the floor is insulated with mineral wool (Photographs 10 and 15). The utility rooms house machinery and pipework, creating noisy and cluttered space (Photographs 12, 16,

and 18). This both limits flight paths and provides high levels of disturbance for bats. Internal PRFs were limited.

Utility Loft 1 had points of light ingress behind wooden slats, most of these were lined with metal mesh. Mouse droppings were found scattered throughout, but no bat droppings (Photograph 11).

Utility Loft 2 had points of light ingress behind wooden slats located on gable ends which were blocked with mesh (Photograph 13). PRFs include gaps in the timber trusses and gaps in the bitumen felting.

Utility Loft 3 had openings at the gable ends allowing light ingress, however this was found to be not suitable as it was too open.

The cellar is constructed from breeze blocks, with a concrete ceiling at a height of approximately 2m (Photograph 19). Vents present are well sealed with mesh. Mouse and rat traps were present; however, no evidence of use was observed.

Pendulum Hotel has two utility lofts. Utility Loft 4 had vents present at the gable ends however these were found to be well covered in mesh (Photograph 17). The roof of loft 5 is comprised of a wooden truss structure, with the ceiling made of wooden slats lined with bitumen felt (Photograph 23). A rip in the bitumen felt was present at the northern gable end. The walls consist of well-sealed breeze block and plaster (Photograph 24).

No evidence of bat activity was found during the internal building inspections.

4 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Evaluation of results

4.1.1 Qualitative assessment of foraging habitats

The urban centre of Manchester, in which Weston Hall and Pendulum Hotel is located, provides minimal foraging opportunities for bats. Factors that contribute to the poor foraging quality include lack of vegetation, and high levels of disturbance due to the levels of artificial light and noise. While some higher quality habitats are present within the wider area access is severely limited due to the disturbance of the city centre. The nearby railway and river provide potential dark corridors along which bats can commute, however, these are likely to be at least partially lit.

4.1.2 Qualitative assessment of roosting habitats

The urban centre of Manchester provides poor quality roosting potential for bats due to the level of disturbance present. Alternate roosting positions are limited within this area due to the prevalence of modern buildings. Despite this there are still a number of buildings which provide alternative roosting possibilities.

The quality of roosting habitats within the buildings on site is low, with minimal external PRFs and limited internal PRFs. External PRFs consist of accessible vents and weep holes; as well as any potential gaps in the soffits and wooden slats. Internal PRFs consist of gaps in wooden trusses, tears in the bitumen felt and unsealed vents.

4.2 Mitigation and compensation measures

No evidence of recent or historic bat activity was identified during the internal or external inspection of the buildings. Overall the building was assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats. However all internal loft spaces could be fully inspected and in line with the Bat Mitigation Guidelines, this inspection can be considered to constitute the further survey effort required.

As such, no additional mitigation or compensation measures regarding bats are required.

5 CONCLUSION

Weston Hall and Pendulum Hotel is situated in an area which provides minimal habitat for bats. The site is situated within the urban central business district of Manchester, in an area which is very well lit and has high levels of disturbance due to noise. The area surrounding the site has low levels of vegetation present with what greenspaces are present are dispersed and mainly consist of modified grassland and scattered trees.

While habitats of greater quality are present in the wider surrounding area commuting pathways are severely limited by the prevalence of busy well-lit roads and pathways. The rail line to the north of the site and the river to the immediate west provide potential dark corridors down which bats can commute however these are likely to be at least partially disturbed by streetlights.

The quality of roosting habitats within the buildings on site is low, with limited internal and external PRFs identified. External PRFs consist of shuttered vents and weep vents. Gaps in the soffits and between the timber cladding are also present. Internal PRFs consist of gaps in the wooden trusses, tears in the bitumen felt and unmeshed shutters allowing internal access..

The buildings on site showed no evidence of recent or historic bat use and were classified as having low potential to support roosting bats. However, all internal loft spaces could be fully inspected and in line with the Bat Mitigation Guidelines, this inspection can be considered to constitute the further survey effort required. As such, no further survey or mitigation work is required for the development to proceed.

6 REFERENCES

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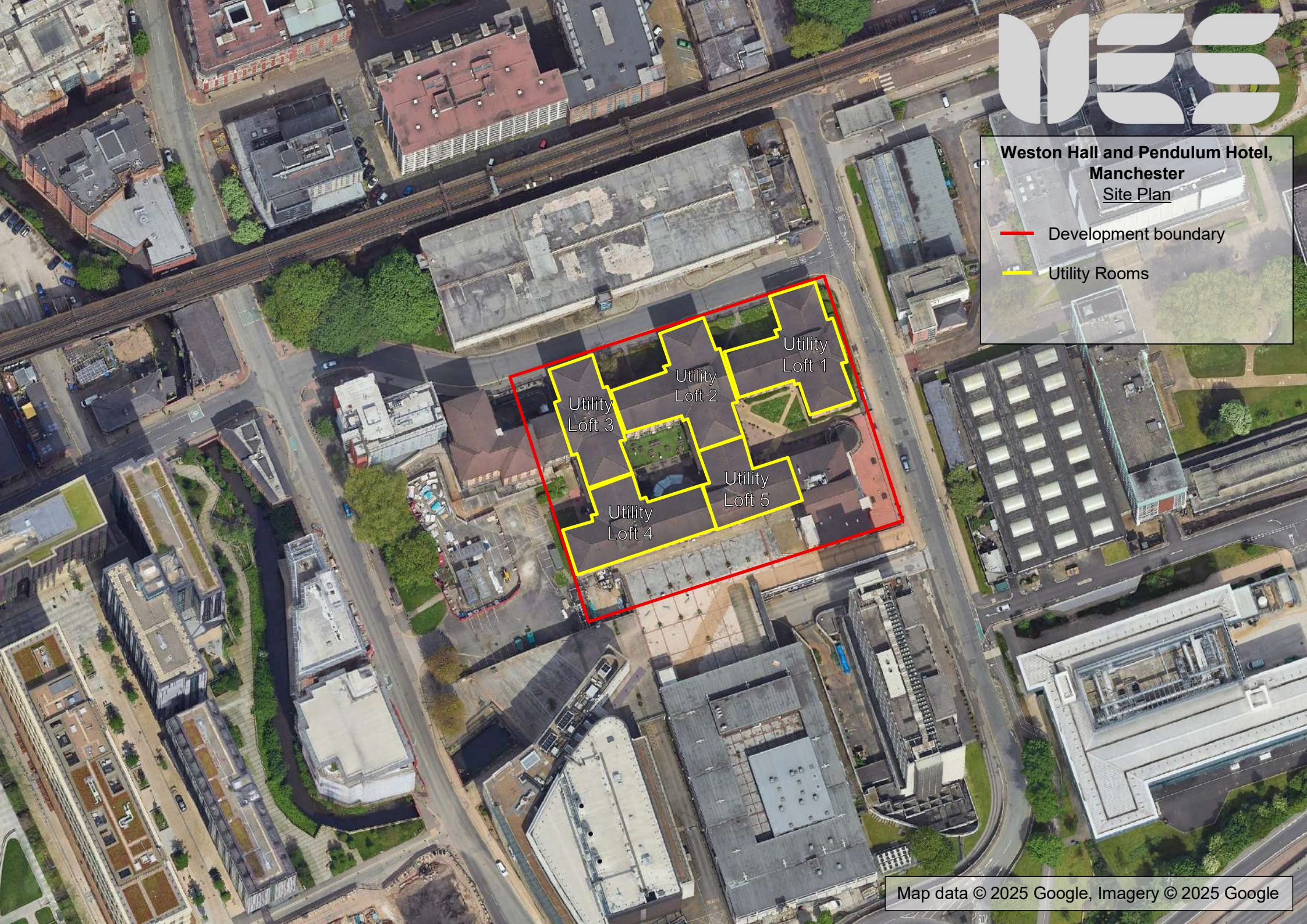
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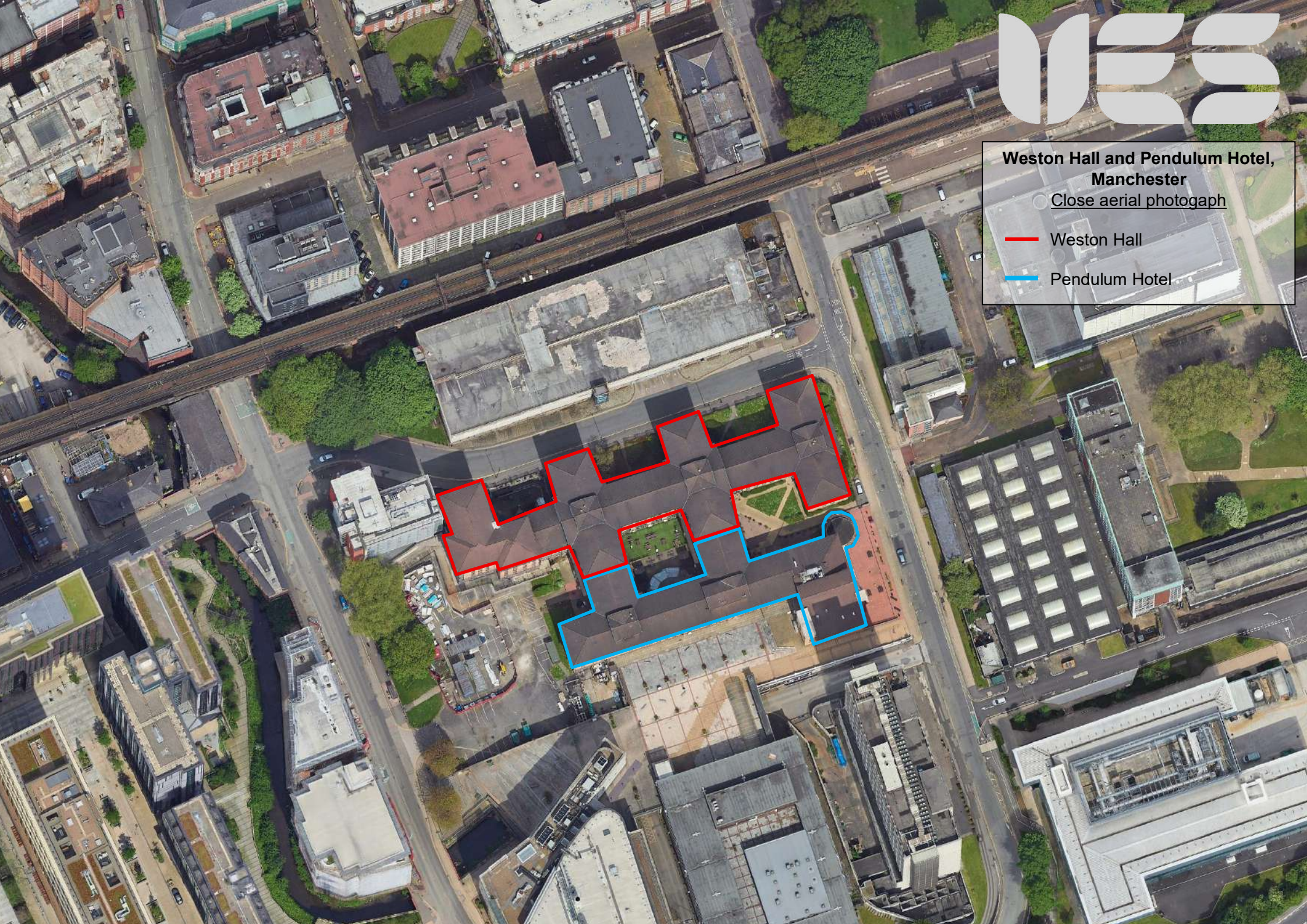
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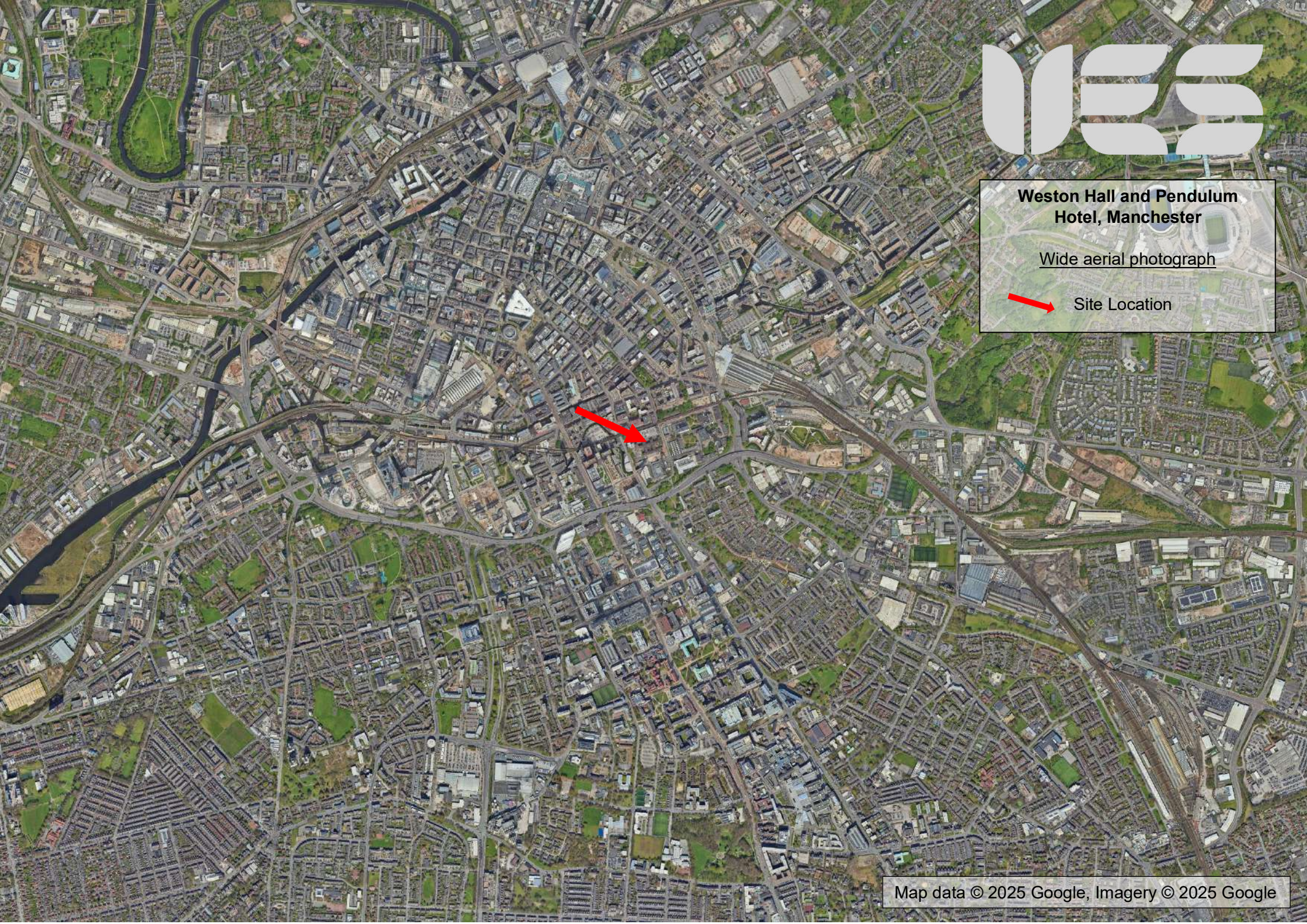
APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Site plan


Weston Hall and Pendulum Hotel, Manchester
Site Plan
Development boundary
Utility Rooms
Utility Loft 1
Utility Loft 2
Utility Loft 3
Utility Loft 4
Utility Loft 5
Map data © 2025 Google, Imagery © 2025 Google

Appendix 2 – Aerial photographs


Weston Hall and Pendulum Hotel, Manchester
Close aerial photogaph
Weston Hall
Pendulum Hotel


Weston Hall and Pendulum Hotel, Manchester
Wide aerial photograph
Site Location
Map data © 2025 Google, Imagery © 2025 Google

Appendix 3 – Photographs



Photograph 1 – Weston Hall, brick exterior in good condition.



Photograph 2 – Raised area of the roof housing utilities showing the vents present.



Photograph 3 - Vents upon utility section of the roof on Weston Hall.



Photograph 4 – Well-sealed boxed soffits on the eaves of Weston Hall.



Photograph 5 – Pendulum Hotel, brick wall exterior in good condition.


Photograph 6 – Concrete roof and lead flashings of Pendulum Hotel



Photograph 7 – Raised area of the roof housing utilities on Pendulum Hotel. Vents and weepholes present.



Photograph 8 – Wooden truss structure of Utility Loft 1.



Photograph 9 – Steel beam structure of Utility Loft 1, Wooden slats and light ingress at the gable end.



Photograph 10 – Bitumen felt lining of the roof ceiling in Utility Loft 1.



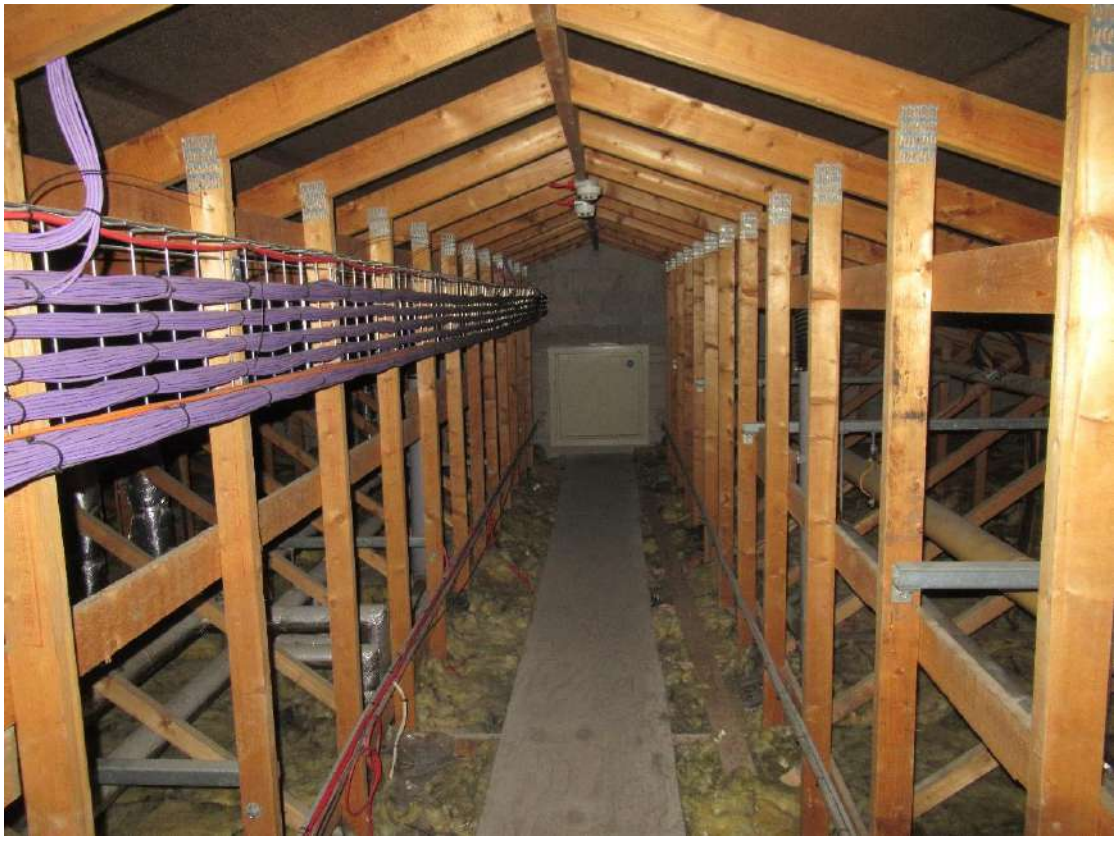
Photograph 11 – Mouse droppings in Utility Loft 1.



Photograph 12 – Machinery and Pipework in Utility Loft 2.



Photograph 13 – Wooden slats at gable end in Utility Loft 2.



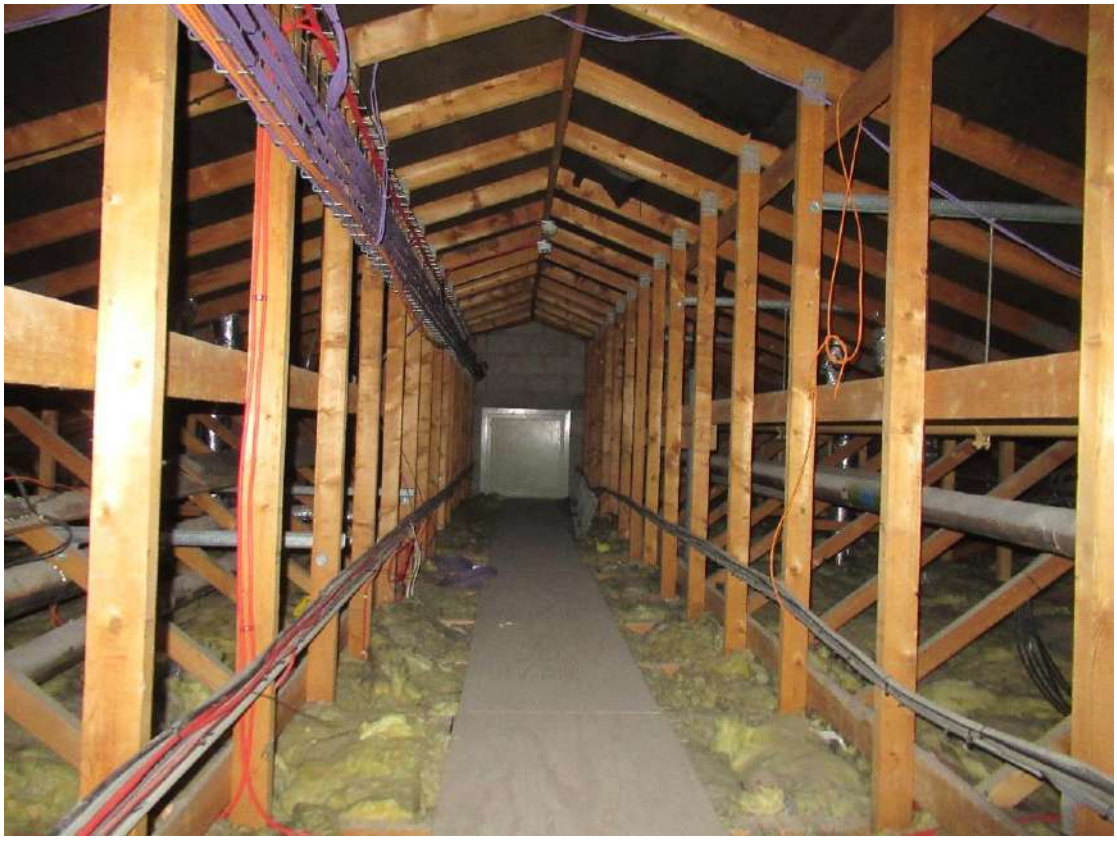
Photograph 14 – Wooden truss structure and mineral wool in Utility Loft 2.



Photograph 15 – Bitumen felt in good condition within Utility Loft 3.



Photograph 16 – Machinery and pipework in Utility Loft 3.



Photograph 17 – Wooden truss structure, bitumen felt, and mineral wool within Utility Loft 4.



Photograph 18 – Machinery and pipework in Utility Loft 4, wooden slats at gable end.



Photograph 19 – Cellar of Weston Hall.



Photograph 20 – Well sealed breeze block wall of the cellar.



Photograph 21 – Well sealed vent within the cellar.



Photograph 22 – Machinery and pipework in the Pendulum Hotel utility loft.



Photograph 23 – Wooden truss structure and bitumen felt lined wooden slats in the Pendulum Hotel loft room.



Photograph 24 - Well sealed gable end within the Pendulum Hotel utility loft. Walls constructed of breeze block and plaster.

Appendix 4 – Statutory and planning context

Ecological assessments
Ecological assessments play an important part within the planning context; they include an initial assessment which highlights any specific interests of a site. From the initial site assessment, the surveyor assesses the suitability of habitats within the site to support protected species and makes recommendations for further survey works if required. The following paragraphs provide a brief interpretation of the legislative protection that is relevant to the findings of this report.

Bats
In the United Kingdom, all species of bat and their roosts are afforded full protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Amendment (EU exit) Regulations 2019 (known as the "Habitats Regulations"). The Wildlife and Countryside Act is the domestic implementation of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (the Bern Convention) and was amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. This makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or capture a bat
- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection
- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a bat uses for shelter or protection (even if the bat is not present at the time)
- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange any live or dead bat, any part of a bat or anything derived from a bat

Under UK law, a bat roost is *any structure or place which any wild [bat] … uses for shelter or protection*. As bats often reuse the same roosts, legal opinion is that a roost is protected whether or not the bats are present at the time of the activity taking place.

Penalties for offences include fines of up to £5000, plus up to six months imprisonment, for each offence committed.

If an activity is likely to result in any of the above offences, a licence can be applied for to derogate from the protection afforded. These licences must provide appropriate mitigation and are issued by Natural England.

A Natural England mitigation licence application requires a Mitigation Method Statement and, in many cases, a Reasoned Statement of Application. The Mitigation Method Statement contains details of the proposed mitigation works. The Reasoned Statement needs to provide a rational and reasoned justification as to why the proposed development meets the requirements of the Conservation (National Habitats & c.) regulations 1994, namely Regulations 44(2)(e), (f) or (g), and 44(3)(a).

The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) provides guidance on the interpretation of the law in relation to the natural environment and development.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 lists the following bat species as species of principle importance under Section 41:

- Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*
- Bechstein's bat *Myotis bechsteinii*
- Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*
- Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*
- Brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*
- Greater horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*
- Lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*

Section 40 requires every public body in the exercising of its functions 'have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity' (all biodiversity and not just section 41 species and habitats); therefore making these bats a material consideration in the planning process and requiring a detailed ecological bat survey before planning permission can be granted.

Birds
All wild birds, their nests and young are protected throughout England and Wales by the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is illegal to kill, injure or take any wild bird, or damage or destroy the nest or eggs of breeding birds. The legislation applies to all bird species, common and rare.

In addition to the protection afforded to all wild birds, more vulnerable species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act receive enhanced protection when breeding. Schedule 1 species, including their dependent young, are protected from intentional or reckless disturbance whilst at or near the nest, in addition to the protection afforded the more common species.

The NERC Act offers further protection to the nests of some species that regularly re-use their nests, even when the nests are not in use.

The leading governmental and non-governmental conservation organisations in the UK have reviewed the population status' of 244 UK bird species. "Birds of Conservation Concern 4: the Red List for Birds" is the most recent publication summarising their findings. Three lists, Red, Amber and Green, have been produced based on the most up-to-date evidence available and criteria include conservation status at global and European levels and, within the UK: historical decline, trends in population and range, rarity, localised distribution and international importance. These lists are a valuable resource when considering conservation priorities.

Planning policy

National Planning Guidance is issued in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF). The most relevant section is 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

Key relevant principles stated in 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment are;

174. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

179. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:
- a) 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[61]; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation[62]; and
- b) 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

180. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons63 and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.