NORTH MANCHESTER GENERAL HOSPITAL

Bat Survey Report: Preliminary Roost Assessment

Drees & Sommer LTD

2489216-D01 (00)

www.rskbiocensus.com

RSK biocensus
EXPERTS IN ECOLOGY

General Notes

Document ref.: 2489216-D01 (00)

Title: North Manchester General Hospital – Bat Survey Report: Preliminary Roost Assessment

Client: Drees & Sommer LTD

Date: 16/07/2025

Office: Helsby

Status: Rev00

Revision	Date	Comments/amendments	Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
00	16/07/2025		EL33	EC22	WH09

Executive Summary

1. RSK Biocensus was appointed by Drees & Sommer LTD to complete a Preliminary Roost Assessment for bats at EMBE 6 building at North Manchester General Hospital.
2. The objective of the assessment was to identify features of the building that may have bat roosting potential, to look for evidence of bats, and to make recommendations for further surveys that may be needed.
3. The survey was undertaken in July 2025 following best practice guidance. It was required in relation to a proposed demolition of the EMBE 6 building within the hospital site.
4. The EMBE 6 building was currently in use by the hospital, as such not all areas of the buildings were inspected internally. However, this was taken into account during the assessment and is not considered to significantly limit the findings.
5. A single building (EMBE 6 building) was assessed and found to have negligible potential for supporting roosting bats. No evidence of bats or roosting features was identified, either internally or externally.
6. In the context of the surrounding landscape, which includes urban infrastructure and high levels of artificial lighting, the site is considered to offer limited opportunities for bats. However, the wider landscape does contain more suitable habitats such as woodland, rivers and parkland, which offer higher quality habitat for foraging and commuting bats.
7. Based on the evidence gathered, the proposed works are highly unlikely to result in adverse impacts on bats or their roosts. As such, no further survey effort or mitigation is recommended at this stage.
8. The results of this report can be used to support the proposed development's planning submission, demonstrating due consideration of protected species and compliance with wildlife legislation.

Contents

..... 1
General Notes 1
Executive Summary i
Contents ii
1 Introduction 1
1.1 Purpose of the report 1
1.2 Proposed development 1
1.3 Landscape context 1
1.4 Legislation 2
2 Methodology 3
2.1 Preliminary roost assessment 3
2.2 Limitations 4
2.3 Validity of data 5
3 Results 6
3.1 External inspection 6
3.2 Internal inspection 6
4 Evaluation and Recommendations 7
5 References 8
Figures 9
Appendix A - Photographs 10

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the report

1.1.1 RSK Biocensus was appointed by Drees & Sommer LTD to complete a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) for bats at EMBE 6 building at North Manchester General Hospital (NMGH).

1.1.2 This report is required in connection with future planning application, hereafter referred to as the proposed development. The requirement for bat surveys was identified as part of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), previously undertaken in July 2021 (RSK Biocensus 2021). A previous PRA was also undertaken on this building in 2020 by RammSanderson and in 2021 by RSK Biocensus, both of which assessed the building as having negligible suitability to support roosting bats.

1.1.3 The survey area included the land within the red-line boundary for the proposed development (hereafter referred to as 'the Site'). The Site and survey area are shown on Figure 1.

1.1.4 The objective of the assessment was to determine any changes in the suitability of the building for roosting bats.

1.2 Proposed development

1.2.1 The survey was required in connection with the potential development of the Site, It is understood that proposed works will include the demolition of a singular building (EMBE 6). In addition, other areas of hospital land are also likely to be impacted for the purposes of re-developing them into new open areas such as car parks and the new village green. Timescales for the proposed works are currently unknown.

1.3 Landscape context

1.3.1 The 962m^2 Site (centred on to the Ordnance Survey [OS] grid reference SD 84958 02377) is in the town of Crumpsall, Manchester. A review of aerial photographs and OS maps showed that to the north, east and west of the site are major road networks as well as areas of mixed residential and commercial properties; Directly to the east of the hospital is a large area of broadleaved woodland as well as the River Irk and Crumpsall Park is situated immediately south-west of the site. The surrounding land comprised of hardstanding, bare ground, amenity grassland and some broadleaved woodland with scattered buildings throughout. The northern part of the site also includes some areas of rough grassland as well as part of the River Irk.

1.4 Legislation

Table 1: Legislation considered in this assessment

Legislation/Source	Notes
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Habitats Regulations) 2017 (as amended) The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended)	Affords protection to certain species and habitats listed on the relevant schedules.
The Natural Environment and Rural communities (NERC) Act 2006	Places a duty on planning authorities to consider habitats and species of principal importance in planning applications.

2 Methodology

2.1 Preliminary roost assessment

2.1.1 The survey was carried out on 8 July 2025 and led by suitably qualified and licenced ecologists at RSK Biocensus. The surveyor was licensed by Natural England to disturb, take and handle all species of bats under licence number 2019-39350-CLS-CLS (level 2). The survey was carried out in-line with best practice guidelines (Collins, 2023).

2.1.2 The preliminary roost assessment (PRA) of the EBME Block 6 building was undertaken by RSK Biocensus to inform subsequent presence / likely-absence survey requirements.

2.1.3 Visual, systematic examinations were made of one building for characteristics that may be used by roosting bats externally and internally. Potential access points into the roof voids and internal features were noted as well as any crevices and voids in the building fabric which could provide roosting opportunities.

2.1.4 The building was assessed according to the following factors that influence the likelihood of bats roosting:

- Construction detail: the type and construction of architectural features such as attics, soffit boxes, lead flashing and hanging tiles that could be used by roosting bats.
- Building condition: whether disrepair has opened potential bat-access points (especially around roofs).
- Potential bat-access points: whether there were flight and/or crawl access.
- Potential roosting locations: description of all bat-accessible voids, cracks and crevices.
- Surrounding habitat and landscape context: whether there were potential flight-lines and foraging areas for bats nearby.

2.1.5 The PRA also involved searching for direct signs of roosting bats including live or dead bats, droppings, urine stains, odour, staining from fur-oils, wear marks, feeding remains, odour, squeaking and chattering. Bat droppings can prove beyond doubt that bats use a building and can help to identify roosting locations because piles often accumulate beneath roosting sites or entrance points, although absence of droppings does not mean bats are absent.

2.1.6 A detailed inspection (using an endoscope, binoculars and a torch) of potential roost features was undertaken where safely accessible. The criteria shown in Table 2 were used to categorise the building according to its suitability for roosting bats.

2.1.7 Winter use includes ‘classic’ hibernation sites, i.e. sites (often underground) providing cool stable conditions. However, many bats roost individually or in small numbers in buildings (particularly pipistrelles) or in trees. In addition, when prevailing conditions are favourable, many bats are frequently found in thermally unstable roost sites and not necessarily in hibernation torpor. Winter use is notoriously difficult to determine, particularly in non-classic sites, and an assessment needs to take into account likely suitability, connectivity and landscape context (see Reason and Wray, 2023).

Table 2: Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement.

Potential suitability	Roosting habitats in structures	Potential flight-paths and foraging habitats
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).	No habitat features on Site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).
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.	No obvious habitat features on Site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
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 larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats).	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat.
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 (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-paths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
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, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight-paths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.

2.2 Limitations

2.2.1 The internal inspection was limited as the building was still in use by the hospital. However, several rooms were accessed and assessed for their suitability to support roosting bats. This limitation has been taken into account when assessing the buildings suitability to support bats and is not considered to significant.

2.3 Validity of data

2.3.1 The Bat Survey Guidelines suggests that reports 12-18 months old are likely to be valid with some exceptions, but the reasons for repeating any surveys should be considered (see 2.6.16 et seq; Collins, 2023).

3 Results

3.1 External inspection

3.1.1 EMBE Block 6 building at North Manchester General Hospital is a single-storey structure measuring approximately 962m^2. The building comprises a series of flat-roofed extensions and modular sections with a mix of brick-built walls, metal and plastic cladding. The northern section of the building is constructed from wooden and concrete modular units. The roofs are uniformly flat and consist of bitumen or concrete.

3.1.2 Externally, the brick-built sections of the building feature wooden soffits and fascias, and metal/plastic cladding is present across multiple elevations, the majority of these were tightly sealed offering no opportunities for roosting bats. A small section was lifted on the western aspect of the building, but this was fully inspected using a torch and no evidence of roosting bats was recorded. There are several small weep holes on the northern and eastern aspects of the building and a small number of gaps in the brickwork are present on the eastern aspect of the building. However, these gaps were inspected using a high powered torch and the majority of these gaps were found to be superficial, and no evidence of roosting bats was recorded.

3.1.3 The northern sections of EMBE Block 6 are modular, portakabin-type units constructed with wooden soffits, bitumen flat roofs, and walls made of wood and pebble dash render. A small gap was noted in one section of wooden cladding, although on close inspection with a high-powered torch, it was considered to be shallow and offer limited opportunities for roosting bats. Furthermore, no evidence of roosting bats was recorded.

3.1.4 All aspects of the building is extremely well-lit with security lighting and surrounding street lighting, further reducing the buildings suitability to support roosting bats.

3.2 Internal inspection

3.2.1 Internally, within the inspected sections, the ceiling is constructed from suspended ceiling tiles. No loft voids or accessible roof spaces were present due to the flat-roofed design. Several ceiling tiles were missing and the gap between the tiles and the roof was visible. The voids between the suspended ceiling tiles and roof were not large enough to support roosting bats, and no internal features were found that would offer suitable shelter. No bat droppings were recorded within internal areas. No loft voids are anticipated within the other areas of the building due to the flat roof design.

4 Evaluation and Recommendations

4.1.1 The EMBE Block 6 building is situated in an area that provides low-quality foraging habitat for bats. The immediate surroundings are heavily urbanised, comprising large expanses of hardstanding, buildings, and infrastructure that offer limited opportunities for commuting or foraging bats. In addition, the area is well lit with street and security lighting, which further reduces its suitability for nocturnal bat activity. However, habitats in the wider surrounding area are of higher quality, including woodland, ponds, and the nearby River Irk, which provide more suitable foraging opportunities and dark commuting corridors.

4.1.2 The building itself is a single-storey, flat-roofed structure with brick-built walls, metal/plastic cladding, and some wooden and concrete modular units. Several small gaps were observed externally, such as weep holes and minor gaps in the cladding and brickwork. However, these features were inspected and many were found to be superficial and therefore unsuitable to support roosting bats. The remaining features, such as weep holes, which are a suitable depth to support individual bats, are considered unlikely to be used by bats as they are extremely well lit from the nearby security and street lighting.

4.1.3 No loft voids or roof spaces are present due to the building's flat-roofed design, and internal inspection confirmed the absence of suitable roosting features. No bat droppings or field signs were found during either the external or internal inspections.

4.1.4 Therefore, taking into account the limited number of roosting features within the building, the urban location and large amount of lighting, and the absence of evidence for bat presence, it is considered reasonably unlikely that bats will use the building to roost. As such, the building has been assessed as having negligible suitability to support roosting bats.

4.1.5 As such, no further survey work or mitigation measures are required in relation to bats for the development to proceed.

5 References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2023), *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (4th edn), The Bat Conservation Trust, London. Available online: https://www.bats.org.uk/resources/guidance-for-professionals/bat-surveys-for-professional-ecologists-good-practice-guidelines-4th-edition (accessed 14/07/2025)

Mathews, F., Coomber, F., Wright, J. and Kendall, T. (2018), *British Mammals 2018 – The Mammal Society's Guide to their Population and Conservation Status*. Mammal Society, Dorset.

RSK Biocensus., 2021. North Manchester General Hospital: Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report – REV01..

Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023), *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats*. Version 1.1. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield. Available online: https://cieem.net/resource/uk-bat-mitigation-guidelines-2023/

Figures

Figure 1. Site Location Plan.

Figure 2. Survey Results.

384950 385000 385050 385100 385150 385200 385250

402450 402400 402350 402300 402250 402200

Linbert Circle

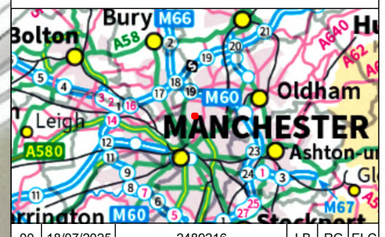
North Manchester General Hospital

Central Drive

Crescent Drive

Legend:

Site boundary



Rev	Date	Project Code	Drn	Chk	App
00	18/07/2025	2489216	LB	RG	ELC

Bat Survey of EBME Block 6

RSK biocensus EXPERTS IN ECOLOGY

TITLE: Figure 1:

Site Location Plan

0 10 20 30

Metres

SCALE: 1:1,000 @ A3

N W E S

REV 00

Document Path: C:\OneDrive\OneDrive - RSK Group\RSK Biocensus - 2489216 - Bat Survey of EBME Block 6\08 GIS - 2489216 - Bat Survey of EBME Block 6\02 - APRX\2489216 - Bat Survey of EBME Block 6 - Figure 1 - Site Location Plan.aprx

World Imagery: Maxar, Microsoft
OS Open Rasters: Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2022
Hybrid Reference Layer: Esri Community Maps Contributors, Esri UK, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS
© Crown copyright 2025 OS AC0000868432

385065 385070 385075 385080 385085 385090 385095 385100 385105 385110 385115 385120 385125

402360 402355 402350 402345 402340 402335 402330 402325 402320 402315 402310

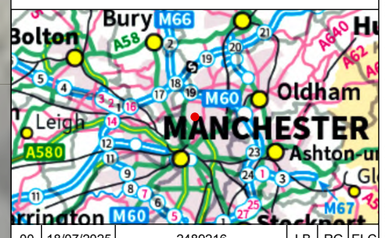
Hospital building, extension

Legend:

Site boundary

Bat Roost Suitability

Negligible



Rev	Date	Project Code	Drn	Chk	App
00	18/07/2025	2489216	LB	RG	ELC

Bat Survey of EBME Block 6

RSK biocensus
EXPERTS IN ECOLOGY

TITLE: Figure 2:

Survey Results

0 2.5 5 7.5
Metres
SCALE: 1:200 @ A3

N W E S

REV 00

Document Path: C:\OneDrive\OneDrive - RSK Group\RSK Biocensus - 2489216 - Bat Survey of EBME Block 6\08 GIS - 2489216 - Bat Survey of EBME Block 6\02 - APRX\2489216 - Bat Survey of EBME Block 6 - Figure 2 - Survey Results.aprx

World Imagery: Maxar, Microsoft
OS Open Rasters: Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2022
© Crown copyright 2025 OS AC0000868432

Appendix A - Photographs

Photo 1 (08/07/2025): Northern and eastern aspects of the building.

Photo 2 (08/07/2025): Northern aspect of the building.

Photo 3 (08/07/2025): Southern and eastern aspects of the building.

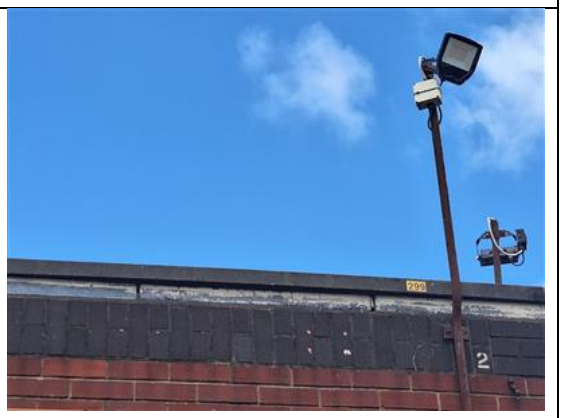


Photo 4 (08/07/2025): Example of the weep holes present on the eastern aspect of the building, with security lighting present adjacent to features.

Photo 5 (08/07/2025): Gaps in the brickwork identified on the eastern aspect of the building, found to be superficial on closer inspection with a high-powered torch.

Photo 6 (08/07/2025): Example of a gap in the wooden cladding on the western aspect of the building. Feature fully inspected with a high-powered torch and found to be shallow and limited for roosting bats.

Photo 7 (08/07/2025): Western aspect of the building.	Photo 8 (08/07/2025): Northern and eastern aspect of the building.
Photo 9 (08/07/2025): Internal view of entrance hall within building.	Photo 10 (08/07/2025): Internal view of room within the south, eastern section of the building.

RSK biocensus

EXPERTS IN ECOLOGY

www.rskbiocensus.com