1181 Robert Street, Manchester M3 1EY

ECOLOGICAL SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT

March 2026

ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd Reference: 2025-359

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Document Control

Survey Type:	**Surveyors**[1]	**Survey Date(s)**
Phase 1 Habitat Surveys	Victoria Burrows B.Sc. (Hons) M.Sc. CEnv MCIEEM Principal Ecologist	29th January 2024 18th March 2026
Daytime Bat Walkover Surveys	Victoria Burrows B.Sc. (Hons) M.Sc. CEnv MCIEEM Principal Ecologist	29th January 2024 18th March 2026
Reporting	**Personnel**	**Date**
Author	Victoria Burrows B.Sc. (Hons) M.Sc. CEnv MCIEEM	6th May 2024
Signature(s)		
Checked	Rachel Brown B.Sc. (Hons)	7th May 2024
Revised and issued	Victoria Burrows	8th May 2024
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[1] *Licence reference numbers*

Bats

Victoria Burrows, Natural England Class Survey Licence (bats, Level 2) Registration Number 2015-10390-CLS-CLS

Barn owl

Victoria Burrows Natural England Class Survey Licence Registration Number CL29/00061

SUMMARY

Introduction and Scope

i. This ecological survey and assessment has been prepared for the site at 1181 Robert Street, Manchester M3 1EY. The assessment was requested to inform a planning application proposing '*demolition of existing structures and erection of a part 10, part 11, part 14 and part 20 storey residential building comprising 189 units with associated residents' amenity space, servicing and public realm'.*

ii. This report presents the results of a desktop study, data search, extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and a licensed daytime bat walkover survey carried out in January 2024 and updated in March 2026. The survey was carried out by an appropriately licensed, qualified and experienced ecologist and is in accordance with standard, recognised survey guidelines. The scope of survey undertaken is appropriate to identify potential ecological constraints, the remit of mitigation required and opportunities for biodiversity associated with the redevelopment proposals.

Results of Survey and Assessment

iii. The approximately 0.3 hectare site is located between Robert Street and Dutton Street in the northern portion of Manchester city centre. The site comprises one warehouse building and an area of hard-standing with areas of sparse ruderal / ephemeral vegetation. The site is bordered by roads and buildings on all sides.

iv. The proposals will have no adverse direct or indirect effect on statutory or non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation.

v. No Priority Habitat, semi-natural or irreplaceable habitat is present or will be affected by the proposals. No invasive plant species as listed on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) were detected at the site.

vi. No evidence of the current or previous use of the building by roosting bats was detected during the survey carried out in January 2024 or in March 2026. The building is assessed to conform to a suitability assessment for use by roosting bats of 'none' in accordance with *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)* (Collins, J. (ed.), 2023). No further surveys for roosting bats are required to inform the planning application or to comply with relevant survey guidelines.

vii. Use of the site by nesting birds is considered unlikely. Best practice guidance in relation to nesting birds is provided in **Section 5.3**.

viii. Appropriate and proportionate survey effort and / or assessment, in accordance with standard survey guidelines, has been applied to discount adverse effects on other relevant protected species. No further surveys for other protected species are necessary to inform a planning application.

ix. As discussed in **Section 4.5** the site is exempt from statutory biodiversity net gain (BNG) in accordance with the *de minimis* exemption.

Recommendations and Conclusion

x. This ecological survey and assessment has demonstrated that the redevelopment proposals are feasible and acceptable in accordance with ecological considerations and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

xi. The proposals can be achieved with no risk of an adverse impact on designated sites for nature conservation or ecologically valuable habitats. In the presence of the mandatory actions and best practice measures described in **Section 5.0**, adverse effects on protected species are reasonably discounted.

xii. Whilst the site is exempt from statutory biodiversity net gain on account of the *de minimis* exemption (refer to **Section 54.5**), the recommendations in **Section 5.2** and the extensive areas of landscape planting proposed by the scheme aim to secure measurable gains for biodiversity within the city centre environs and satisfy the requirements of the NPPF, the *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development* (CIEEM, 2016) and best practice.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Rationale

1.1.1 ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd was commissioned to carry out an ecological assessment of land at Robert Street, Manchester M3 1EY (hereafter referred to as the 'site'). The Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference at the centre of the site is SD 83876 99383. An aerial image of the site and its surrounding habitats is appended at **Figure 1** (source image: ESRI World Imagery).

1.1.2 The assessment was requested to inform a planning application proposing '*demolition of existing structures and erection of a part 10, part 11, part 14 and part 20 storey residential building comprising 189 units with associated residents' amenity space, servicing and public realm'.*

1.2 Scope of Works

1.2.1 The scope of ecological works undertaken in January 2024 and updated in March 2026 comprised:

a. A desktop study and data search for known ecological information at the site and the local area;

b. An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and assessment, and assessment of the habitats present at the site using the UK Habitats Classification;

c. Assessment of the ecological value of the habitats within the site with the use of the National Vegetation Classification (NVC) and the Ratcliffe criteria, as presented in *A Nature Conservation Review* (Ratcliffe, 1977), as relevant;

d. A daytime bat walkover survey for bats, which has included a licensed preliminary roost assessment (PRA) of the building (no trees are present at the site);

e. Survey and assessment of all habitats for relevant statutorily protected species[1] and other wildlife including badger (*Meles meles*) and bird species;

f. The identification of any potential ecological constraints on the proposals and the specification of the scope of mitigation and ecological enhancement required in accordance with wildlife legislation, planning policy guidance and other relevant guidance; and

g. The identification of any further surveys or precautionary actions that may be required to inform the progression of the site through the planning process or prior to the commencement of demolition and construction activities.

[1]In accordance with *Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and Their Impact on the Planning System* (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2005) developers should not be required to undertake surveys for protected species unless there is reasonable likelihood of the species being present and affected by the development. In this instance (for example) there are no ponds, water bodies or water courses within or adjacent to the site; there has been no requirement to consider great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) or other amphibians, water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*), otter (*Lutra lutra*) and other riparian fauna as part of this assessment. Given the city centre location of the site and the absence of suitable habitat, further survey and assessment in relation to reptile species has been reasonably discounted.

2.0 METHOD OF SURVEY

2.1 Desktop Study and Data Search

2.1.1 The following sources of information and ecological records were consulted:

a. MAGiC Maps: A web-based interactive map which brings together geographic information on key environmental schemes and designations, including details of statutory nature conservation sites;

b. Ancient Tree Inventory (Woodland Trust, 2024): An online database of ancient and veteran trees;

c. Greater Manchester Local Record Centre (GMLRC);

d. Greater Manchester Nature Network Map (the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)); and

e. Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).

2.2 Survey Dates, Surveyor and Weather Conditions

2.2.1 An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey of the site was carried out by Victoria Burrows B.Sc. (Hons) M.Sc. CEnv MCIEEM on 29th January 2024. The weather was dry, overcast, and calm (Beaufort scale 0) with an air temperature of 10°C.

2.2.2 An updated survey was carried out on 18th March 2026 by Victoria Burrows. The weather conditions were dry and sunny with a light air (Beaufort Scale 1) and an air temperature of 19°C.

2.3 Vegetation and Habitats

2.3.1 A Phase 1 Habitat Survey map was prepared for the site and the immediate surrounding area and is appended at **Figure 2**. The mapping is based on the Joint Nature Conservation Committee Phase 1 Habitat Survey methodology (JNCC, 2010) with minor adjustments to illustrate and examine the habitats with greater precision.

2.3.2 The plant species within the site boundary were determined with estimates of the distribution, ground cover, abundance and constancy of individual species. The estimation of abundance was based on the DAFOR system, where D = Dominant, A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional and R = Rare, this being a widely used and accepted system employed by ecological surveyors. The terms L = Locally and V = Very were additionally used to describe the plant species distributions with greater precision.

2.3.3 Stands of vegetation and habitats were described and evaluated using the National Vegetation Classification (NVC). The NVC provides a systematic and comprehensive analysis of British vegetation and is a reliable framework for nature conservation and land-use planning.

2.3.4 Habitats within the site were assessed in accordance with *The UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* (UKHab Ltd, 2023). The UK Habitat Classification, or 'UKHab' has been designed to function at two scales of minimum mappable unit (MMU): fine scale (25m^2 or 5 metres length) and large scale (400m^2 or 20 metres length). It has been considered for the purposes of this survey that the fine scale of 25m^2 or 5 metres length MMU is appropriate.

2.3.5 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. Plant nomenclature follows *New Flora of the British Isles 3rd Edition* (Stace, 2010).

2.3.6 Searches were carried out for the presence of invasive species, including those listed on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended), including Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Indian Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*).

2.4 Daytime Bat Walkover Survey and Assessment

Surveyor and Guidelines

2.4.1 The daytime bat walkover survey and assessment was carried out by Victoria Burrows (Natural England Class Survey Licence WML CL18 (Bat Survey Level 2), Registration Number 2015-10390-CLS-CLS on 29th January 2024 and updated on 18th March 2026. Victoria's qualifications and experience meet the criteria as defined in the *Technical Guidance Series Competencies for Species Survey: Bats* (CIEEM, 2013).

2.4.2 The survey was carried out in accordance with standard methodology including the *Bat Mitigation Guidelines* (Mitchell-Jones, 2004), the *Bat Workers' Manual 3rd Edition* (Mitchell-Jones & Mcleish, 2004) and *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)* (Collins, J. (ed.), 2023).

Habitat Assessment for Commuting / Foraging Bats

2.4.3 Habitats within and adjacent to the site were assessed for their value and suitability for commuting and foraging bats in accordance with Table 4.1 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)* (Collins, J. (ed.), 2023). Reference has been made to the categories and descriptions / examples, presented below.

Table 2.1: Consideration of Suitability of Foraging and Commuting Habitat for Bats

Suitability	Potential Flight Paths and Foraging Habitats
None	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 [a]	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	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. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Moderate	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	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.
[a] Negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant'. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute).	

Preliminary Roost Assessment: Building

2.4.4 A systematic inspection and assessment of the external surfaces and walls of the building was carried out to search for potential bat roosting habitat or accesses into crevices or areas where roosts may be present. Searches for evidence of bat presence in the form of droppings, urine stains, feeding signs, grease marks and other evidence were carried out.

2.4.5 Where required and where it was safe to do so, ladders were used to gain closer inspections of specific features at the external elevations of the building.

2.4.6 The internal areas of the building were searched for roosting bats and / or evidence of previous use of the building by bats such as droppings and prey remains. **Note:** The building was a vacant warehouse in January 2024 and all internal areas were searched. During the March 2026 visit it was confirmed that the building has been adapted for use a padel courts and is in current operation (12 hours per day) with music playing. The underside of the roof remained visible for assessment although the presence of the glass-framed courts prevented inspection of all internal areas. Due to the fabrication of the building and its suitability for use by roosting bats (as discussed below) this is not considered to be a survey limitation and a comprehensive survey was feasible.

2.4.7 The suitability of the building for use by roosting bats has been assessed in accordance with Table 4.1 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)* (Collins, J. (ed.), 2023) (reproduced at **Table 2.2**), taking into account the presence of any gaps suitable for access by bats, features suitable for use by roosting bats within the building (including crevice dwelling species and species which can roost in the open in roof voids), and the suitability of the surrounding habitats for use by foraging and commuting bats.

Table 2.2: Suitability Categories for Roosting Habitats in Buildings

Suitability	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[a]	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[b] 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[c]).
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions[b] 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).
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[b] and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool / stable hibernation site.

[a]Negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant'. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute).
[b]For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance.

Suitability	Description
[c]Evidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten *et al*., 2016 and Jansen *et al*., 2022). Common pipistrelle swarming has been observed in the UK (Bell, 2022 and Tomlinson, 2020) and winter hibernation of numbers of this species has been detected at Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland (National Trust, 2018). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK, but ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in prominent buildings in the landscape, urban or otherwise.	

Equipment

2.4.8 A list of equipment used / available for use during the surveys is provided below.

Table 2.3: Survey Equipment Used / Available for Use During Daylight Bat Survey

Ladders and stepladders
LED Lenser P14 torch
Canon Ixus digital camera
8x20 binoculars
Ridgid Micro Inspection Camera Endoscope CA-300

2.5 Other Protected Species and Animal Life

Badger

2.5.1 The survey area for badger covered the site (as annotated on **Figure 2**) and extended to accessible land within a radius of 50 metres from the site boundary. Off-site land bordered by palisade fencing were excluded from the survey; these areas were viewed through the fencing.

2.5.2 The survey was conducted in accordance with guidance presented within *Badgers and Development* (Natural England, 2007) and *Badgers: advice for making planning decisions* (Natural England, 2022).

2.5.3 The following signs of badger activity were searched for:

a. Sett entrances, e.g. entrances that are normally 25 to 35cm in diameter and shaped like a 'D' on its side;

b. Large spoil heaps outside sett entrances;

c. Bedding outside sett entrances;

d. Badger footprints;

e. Badger paths;

f. Latrines;

g. Badger hairs on fences or bushes;

h. Scratching posts; and

i. Signs of digging for food.

2.5.4 Habitats within and surrounding the site were assessed in terms of their suitability for use by foraging and sheltering badger in accordance with their known habitat preferences as detailed in current guidance and *Badger* (Roper, 2010).

Bird Species

2.5.5 Bird species observed and heard during the survey were recorded.

2.5.6 Habitats throughout the site and in the immediate surrounding area were assessed for their value to roosting, feeding and nesting birds, as indicated by the amount of shelter, feeding value, woody vegetation structure and species diversity of tree and shrub species in the site.

2.5.7 The building was searched for evidence of previous use by nesting birds and the building were assessed for its suitability for use by nesting birds including Schedule 1 listed birds.

2.6 Survey and Reporting Limitations

2.6.1 All areas of the site were accessible. No limitations on the intended scope of survey were identified or experienced.

2.6.2 All measurements within this report are approximate only, and have been either estimated whilst on site or calculated using mapping software (QGIS) or internet-based mapping services such as MAGiC Maps and Google Earth.

2.7 Evaluation Methods

2.7.1 The habitats, vegetation and animal life were evaluated with reference to standard nature conservation criteria as described in *A Nature Conservation Review* (Ratcliffe, 1977). These are size (extent), diversity, naturalness, rarity, fragility, typicality, recorded history, position in an ecological or geographical unit, potential value and intrinsic appeal.

2.7.2 Habitats have been assessed to determine whether they meet those described in *UK Biodiversity Action Plan: Priority Habitat Descriptions* (Maddock, A (ed), 2008); these lists are used to help draw up the statutory lists of Priority Habitats, as required under Section 41 of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities* (NERC) *Act 2006*. Where suitable, the ecological value of the habitats present has been assessed using the terms outlined in *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine* (CIEEM, 2018). Each habitat and individual trees have been assessed to determine whether they are 'irreplaceable habitat', defined in *National Planning Policy Framework* (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2023)[2] as '*Habitats which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen'*. The further detail presented in *The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024* (GOV.UK, 2023) draft document has also been referred to.

2.7.3 Government advice on wildlife, as set out in the NPPF and associated government circulars has been taken into consideration. Legislation relating to protected species, such as those listed under Schedules 1, 5, 6 and 8 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) and *The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019*, is referenced where applicable, and any impacts to protected species are evaluated in accordance with current guidance.

2.7.4 The presence of any Priority Species, as listed under Section 41 of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006* is noted, and habitats are assessed in terms of their suitability and value for these species. The presence of habitats and / or species listed by the Greater Manchester BAP has been taken into account in the evaluation of the site.

[2]Hereafter the NPPF

3.0 SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 Desktop Study and Data Search

Statutory Designated Sites for Nature Conservation and SSSI Impact Risk Zones

3.1.1 The site and adjacent land have no statutory designation for nature conservation.

3.1.2 The site lies within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zone for the Rochdale Canal SSSI and Special Area of Conservation (SAC), located approximately 5.3 kilometres to the east.

3.1.3 The SSSI Impact Risk Zone requires the Local Planning Authority to consult with Natural England on likely risks from the following development categories (Ordnance Survey, 2026):

a. Air pollution: Livestock and poultry units with floorspace greater than 500m², slurry lagoons and digestate stores greater than 4000m²; and

b. Combustion: General combustion processes greater than 50MW energy input. Including energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis / gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works and other incineration / combustion.

3.1.4 The proposals do not meet any of the development categories which would require further consultation with Natural England on likely risks from the proposed development to the statutory designated sites for nature conservation present in the wider area.

Non-statutory Designated Sites for Nature Conservation

3.1.5 The site and adjacent land have no non-statutory designations for nature conservation, called 'Sites of Biological Importance' or 'SBI' in Greater Manchester.

Priority Habitats Inventory

3.1.6 The Priority Habitats Inventory[3] was checked via MAGiC Maps. No Priority Habitats are identified at or adjacent to the site by the inventory.

Ancient Tree Inventory

3.1.7 No ancient or veteran trees are identified at the site by the Ancient Tree Inventory.

Greater Manchester Nature Network / LNRS

3.1.8 The site has no allocation as an opportunity area on the Greater Manchester Nature Network / LNRS.

Protected and Notable Species

3.1.9 GMLRC hold no records of protected and notable species for the site. Records of protected and notable species for a 1 kilometre radius from the centre of the site are summarised below.

[3] A spatial dataset that describes the geographic extent and location of Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41 habitats of principal importance.

Table 3.1: Records of Protected Species Within a 1 Kilometre Radius from the Centre of the Site

Taxon Group	Species Name and Designations[1] and Notes
Birds – WCA1	Black redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*): WCAs1 and GMBAP. 54 records, dated between 2005 and 2018. The closest record is 435 metres to the south of the site, and from 2012.
	Hobby (*Falco subbuteo*): WCAs1. 1 record from 2008, located 655 metres to the south of the site.
	Kingfisher (*Alcedo athhis*): WCAs1. 7 records, dated between 2008 and 2021. The closest record is 440 metres to the south-west of the site, and from 2008.
	Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*): WCAs1. 129 records, dated between 2003 and 2022. The closest record is 355 metres to the south of the site, and from 2006.
Birds - PS	**PS Only:** Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*), dunnock (*Prunella modularis*), herring gull (*Larus argentatus*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), spotted flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), and yellow wagtail (*Motacilla flava*).
Terrestrial Mammals	Badger (*Meles meles*): PBA. 1 record from 2011 (further information is not disclosed here).
	Otter (*Lutra lutra*): WCAs5 and PS. 2 records, dated 2013 and 2018. The closest record is 370 metres to the south-west of the site, and from 2018.
	Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*): EPS, WCAs5 and GMBAP. 30 records, dated between 1994 and 2022. The closest record is 60 metres to the west of the site, and from 2017.
	Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*): EPS, WCAs5 and GMBAP. 1 record from 2009, located 605 metres to the south of the site.
	Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*): PS. 4 records, dated between 2016 and 2020. The closest record is 335 metres to the south of the site, and from 2020.
	Unidentified Pipistrelle sp. (*Pipistrellus* sp.): EPS, WCAs5 and GMBAP. 7 records, dated between 1994 and 2021. The closest record is 600 metres to the north-east of the site, and from 2021.

[1]Key to Designation Codes:
EPS = European Protected Species under The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.
WCAs1 = Species receives full protection under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
WCAs5 = Species receives full protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
PBA = Protection of Badger Act 1992.
PS = Priority Species listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.
GMBAP = Species listed on the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan.

3.1.10 The presence of these known records within the wider area has been taken into account.

3.2 Vegetation and Habitats

General Description

3.2.1 The approximately 0.3 hectare site is located between Robert Street and Dutton Street in the northern portion of Manchester city centre. The site comprises one large warehouse building current used for padel courts and an area of hardstanding with areas of sparse ruderal and ephemeral vegetation.

3.2.2 The site boundaries are demarcated by metal palisade fencing. Land beyond the site boundaries is occupied by Dutton Street and built development to the west, Robert Street and buildings to the east and a building is present to the north. The southern tip of the site meets the road junction of Dutton Street and Robert Street.

3.2.3 A Phase 1 Habitat Survey map is appended at **Figure 2**. Photographs are appended at **Section 8.1**.

Buildings

3.2.4 The buildings are described in detail in relation to their suitability for use by roosting bats in **Section 3.3**. No vegetation is associated with the buildings, which are described by the UKHab as u15b buildings.

Hardstanding and Sparse Ruderal / Ephemeral Vegetation

3.2.5 Refer to **Photo 11** for the conditions as recorded in January 2024 and **Photo 19** for conditions in March 2026 . The hard-standing bordering the buildings is typically devoid of vegetation and is described by the UKHab as u1b6 other developed land with secondary code 804 car park.

3.2.6 Vegetation at the site margins is characterised by sparse ruderal and ephemeral herbs of very locally frequent plants of Canadian Fleabane (*Erigeron canadensis*), Procumbent Pearlwort (*Sagina procumbens*), Oxford Ragwort (*Senecio squalidus*), Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*), Nipplewort (*Lapsana communis*), Field Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*) and occasional Broad-leaved Dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*).

3.2.7 The colonising vegetation is not characteristic of an NVC community and is described by the UKHab as u1b developed land; sealed surface (i.e. a "*sealed surface with vegetation cover of <10%"*[4]) with the secondary code 81 ruderal or ephemeral.

Invasive Plant Species

3.2.8 No Japanese Knotweed or other invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) was detected at the site.

3.3 Licensed Daytime Bat Walkover Survey and Assessment

Habitat Assessment for Commuting / Foraging Bats

3.3.1 The location of the building within the city centre environment, the presence of artificial lighting bordering the site and negligible vegetation cover are assessed to be of 'negligible' suitability for use by foraging and commuting bats.

Preliminary Roost Assessment: Building

3.3.2 Refer to **Photos 1** to **10** for conditions as recorded in January 2024 and **Photos 12** to **18** for conditions in March 2026. The warehouse / padel court is a single storey streel-framed building with lower elevation walls of brick and upper sections of corrugated sheet metal. The pitched corrugated sheet covered roof has skylights to create a light internal area.

3.3.3 Examination of the external elevations did not detect any gaps, crevices or opportunities for bat access to the interior of the building or potential roost features. The area behind the sheet metal sections of the elevation walls is infilled with concrete and the sections of brick elevation walls are well-pointed with no gaps in the mortar.

3.3.4 The internal inspection confirmed that the concrete block elevation walls are well-pointed with no gaps between the blocks and the top of the blocks are covered with a timber plank.

3.3.5 No bats or bat droppings were found inside the building. The internal area of the building is illuminated by daylight owing to the presence of the skylights and by artificial lights associated with the padel courts.

[4] As described by the *The UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* (UKHab Ltd, 2023).

3.3.6 Due to the absence of opportunities for use by roosting bats the building is assessed to have a suitability for use by roosting bats of 'none' at all times of year. Best practice precautionary guidance to be applied during the redevelopment works is described at **Section 5.3**.

3.4 Other Protected Species and Animal Life

Badger

3.4.1 No signs of badger such as setts, snuffle holes, tracks, hairs or burrows were detected at the site and survey area. The hard-standing habitat within the site provides no opportunities for use by foraging badger. The presence of badger is reasonably discounted.

Bird Species

3.4.2 No bird species were recorded at the site during the survey on 29th January 2024 and 18th March 2026. The absence of gaps at the building currently prevents access by birds including bird species typically associated with urban areas such as feral pigeon (*Columba livia domestica*). The roof structure and fabrication is not considered to be suitable for use by Schedule 1 nesting birds that can be associated with an urban environment such as peregrine and black redstart.

4.0 EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

4.1 Introduction and Description of Proposals

4.1.1 The proposals are shown on the '*Site Plan*' (Tim Groom Architects Ltd, 2026) and are described as '*demolition of existing structures and erection of a part 10, part 11, part 14 and part 20 storey residential building comprising 189 units with associated residents' amenity space, servicing and public realm'.*

4.1.2 The extensive landscape proposals at various building levels, as informed by ecological guidance, are presented on the *General Arrangement* plan (LandStudio, 2026) and the *Landscape Design Workbook* are discussed in **Section 5.2**.

4.1.3 **Section 4.2** provides an assessment of any impacts of the proposed development on the designated sites for nature conservation present in the wider area. The ecological value of habitats within the site is evaluated at **Section 4.3** and protected and notable species are considered at **Section 4.4**. The relevance of statutory biodiversity net gain (BNG) is discussed in **Section 4.5**.

4.2 Designated Sites for Nature Conservation

4.2.1 It is considered that the distance from the site, lack of hydrological connectivity and absence of supporting habitat to any statutory designated sites for nature conservation present in the wider area is such that the proposals works can be achieved with no risk of a direct or indirect effect on any statutory and non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation.

4.3 Vegetation and Habitats

4.3.1 None of the habitats present are representative of semi-natural habitat or are classed as irreplaceable habitat.

4.3.2 No rare or uncommon plant species were found at the site. No invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) were detected.

4.3.3 In terms of each habitat's importance in a geographical context[5] the buildings and hardstanding with ruderal / ephemeral vegetation are not considered to hold any importance on a geographical scale.

4.3.4 It is recognised that plants and trees within the city centre environment can provide a source of food for the attraction of invertebrates and their predators and can enhance the value of the built environment for biodiversity; guidance on the enhancement of the site by the provision of landscape planting associated with the redevelopment is provided in **Section 5.2**.

4.4 Protected Species and Other Wildlife

Bat Species

4.4.1 No evidence of the current or previous use of the building by roosting bats was detected during the surveys in January 2024 and March 2026. The building is assessed to be of no suitability for use by roosting bats.

4.4.2 The features at the building are not considered to provide the potential roost features and / or features that would be considered to provide the 'classic hibernation conditions' (i.e. cool, stable and damp conditions typically selected by roosting bats in the hibernation season).

4.4.3 It is considered that appropriate and proportionate survey effort has been carried out to comply with the relevant survey guidelines and to determine the likely absence of roosting bats at the site. No further surveys for roosting bats are required to inform the planning application or the proposed demolition.

Bird Species

4.4.4 The building and hardstanding habitats at the site currently provide no opportunities for use by nesting birds. Use of shallow sloping roofs by nesting gull species can occur but this activity is not known in this area of Manchester (and is more typical of larger warehouses in areas such as Liverpool that are closer to the coast / other larger roosts and a source of food). Mandatory measures to be applied to ensure the protection of nesting birds during and prior to the site preparation works are described at **Section 5.3**.

Other Animal Life

4.4.5 Appropriate and proportionate survey effort and / or assessment, in accordance with standard survey guidelines, has been applied to discount adverse effects on other relevant protected species. No further surveys for other protected species are necessary to inform a planning application.

4.5 Consideration of Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

4.5.1 The development, as proposed, will not impact a Priority Habitat or an irreplaceable habitat and will impact less than:

- 25 square metres (5m by 5m) of on-site habitat; and
- 5 metres of on-site linear habitats such as hedgerows.

[5] Using the terms presented at Section 4.7 of *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine* (CIEEM, 2018), i.e. International and European, National, Regional, Local Authority-wide area, River Basin District, Estuarine system / Coastal cell or Local. The term 'site' value is additionally used to highlight ecological features considered to be of importance in the context of the wider site habitats, but which are of negligible value in the context of the local area.

4.5.2 Based on the above it is understood that the proposals meet the *de minimis* exemption criteria in consideration of statutory 10% biodiversity net gain and *The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024* [6].

4.5.3 Notwithstanding the above, the recommendations outlined below aim to secure measurable gains for biodiversity / ecological enhancement to satisfy the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development* (CIEEM, 2016) and best practice.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The recommendations described below are appropriate and proportionate to the scale of the redevelopment proposals and aim to ensure that the proposals are implemented in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy, relevant wildlife legislation, Natural England guidance, the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2024), local planning policy and best practice.

5.1.2 The recommendations aim to ensure compliance with Chapter 15, paragraph 193(d) of the NPPF which states:

'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'.

5.2 Site Design and Enhancements for Biodiversity

Appropriate Use of Lighting

5.2.1 Paragraph 198(c) in Chapter 15 (conserving and enhancing the natural environment) of the NPPF states that development should:

"*limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation*"

5.2.2 It is advised that any external lighting to be installed at the site should involve the use of appropriate products and screening, where necessary, to ensure no excessive artificial lighting shines over areas of landscape planting as lighting overspill may deter use by wildlife such as foraging bats.

5.2.3 The lighting scheme should be designed with reference to current guidance, namely:

a. *Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night* (Institution of Lighting Professionals & Bat Conservation Trust, 2023); and

b. Bats and lighting: Overview of current evidence and mitigation guidance (Stone, 2014).

[6] As presented at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments

Landscape Planting / Habitat Creation

5.2.4 The proposals at Robert Street provide a number of opportunities for landscape planting and habitat creation. The concepts and intentions are described in more detail in the *Landscape Design Workbook* (LandStudio, 2026) and are in accordance with the following principles:

a. Maximised tree planting, including fruit trees, at the ground level to create shading, windbreaks, cooler conditions, steeping stones for the movement of wildlife and opportunities for invertebrates and feeding bats and birds;

b. Use of coniferous species to provide winter shelter;

c. Use of rain gardens and / or pools;

d. Creation of habitats with the use of 'fallen' logs and stepping logs;

e. Use of plants such as alpine plants in the planting schedule, particularly on the higher levels and roof gardens, to provide flowering plants and opportunities for the attraction of feeding and breeding invertebrates;

f. Use of a range of native and non-native species to prolong the availability of feeding opportunities (for example, *Mahonia* sp. is a non-native species that flowers early and can be invaluable in the provision of an early source of nectar for emerging bumblebees);

g. Creation of areas of gravel / hard-landscaping as 'successional pockets' to provide niches for natural colonisation by invertebrates and self-seeded native plants; and

h. Avoidance of planting of species that can quickly become invasive and will dramatically reduce the diversity of the planting over a number of years without intensive management.

Accommodation of Opportunities for Nesting Birds: House Sparrow

5.2.5 To enhance the opportunities for use by nesting birds at the redeveloped site the installation of four bird boxes at the new building / trees or structures within the site is recommended. Boxes should not be positioned over windows or doorways where droppings may become a nuisance. RSPB advice states that boxes should ideally be sited facing north to east, to avoid exposure to direct sunlight, which may cause overheating of chicks in the nest. Examples of suitable nest boxes are presented at **Insert 1:**



Insert 1: Small bird nest box (28mm hole) available from www.NHBS.com

5.3 Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) for Biodiversity

Introduction

5.3.1 To inform the demolition / site preparation and construction activities it is recommended that a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) for Biodiversity is prepared and implemented. The CEMP for Biodiversity will describe the following actions / measures:

Nesting Birds

5.3.2 All wild birds are protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) while they are breeding. Based on the results of the ecological survey the risk of the presence of nesting birds is assessed to be low.

5.3.3 Completion of vegetation clearance works between September and February inclusive will avoid the bird breeding season. If works are scheduled between March and August inclusive and / or if breeding birds are detected the ecologist should be contacted and guidance in relation to the protection of the nesting birds in conjunction with the scheduled works will be issued. This may involve cordoning off an area of the site until the young birds have fledged.

Demolition of the Building: Best Practice Measures to be Applied During Works

Timing of Works

5.3.4 There are no seasonal constraints on the commencement of works (subject to the absence of nesting birds).

Discovery of a Bat During Works

5.3.5 If at any time during the works a bat is discovered or suspected all contractors must withdraw from the area and ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd (01772 750502) or the Bat Conservation Trust must be contacted for further guidance.

Dust Suppression, Incidents and Accidents

5.3.6 The risk of adverse effects on habitats surrounding the site as a result of dust, spills and leaks will be minimised by the application of best practice measures and appropriate environmental controls such as dust suppression, appropriate storage of chemicals and fuel, presence of spill kits and appropriate training of on-site personnel.

Invasive Plant Species and Biosecurity

5.3.7 To ensure no invasive or undesirable plant species are introduced to the site and local area it is essential that plant and machinery to be brought to the site is clean and clear of plant material and excessive mud and other materials. Contractors must not accept any hired plant or machinery onto the site that contains plant material or excessive mud / earth cover.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 This ecological survey and assessment has demonstrated that the demolition of the existing building and redevelopment of the site is feasible and acceptable in accordance with ecological considerations and the National Planning Policy Framework.

6.2 The development proposals can be achieved with no adverse effect on designated sites for nature conservation, Priority Habitat and irreplaceable habitat. Appropriate survey and assessed has been carried out to reasonably discount adverse effects on roosting bats and other protected species.

6.3 Measures to protect wildlife, including nesting birds, and actions that aim to enhance the value of the site for biodiversity are feasible and will be secured as part of the works to achieve compliance with wildlife legislation, the NPPF, local planning policy and best practice.

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8.0 APPENDIX: PHOTOGRAPHS AND FIGURES

8.1 Photographs Taken January 2024



Photo 1: Southern elevation of the warehouse showing hard-standing to the south.



Photo 2: Southern elevation of the warehouse



Photo 3: Western elevation of the warehouse showing pointed brickwork and metal cladding



Photo 4: Area of bare ground between the building (right) and the boundary

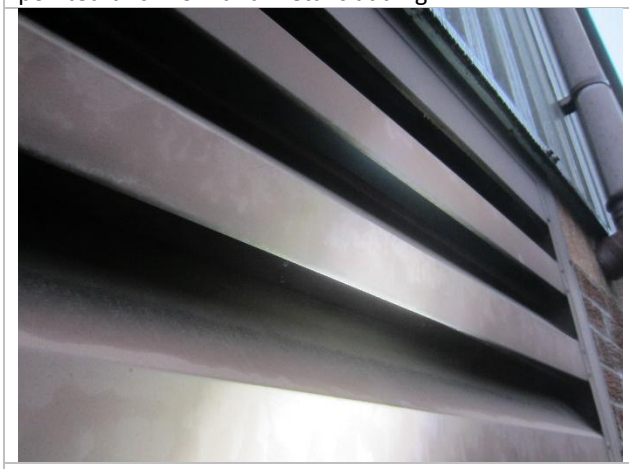


Photo 5: No gaps or potential for access by bats and birds at the vents / louvers



Photo 6: No gaps or opportunities for access by bats and birds behind the metal cladding



Photo 7: Interior of warehouse



Photo 8: Interior of warehouse

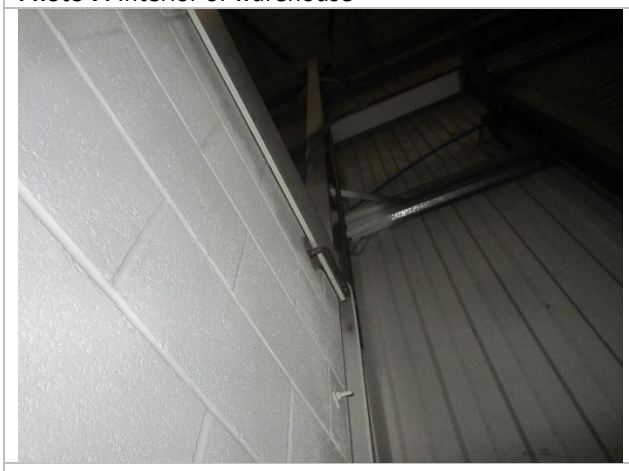


Photo 9: Single-ply metal walls and well-pointed concrete blocks at internal walls



Photo 10: Insulated internal area with no opportunities for bats and birds

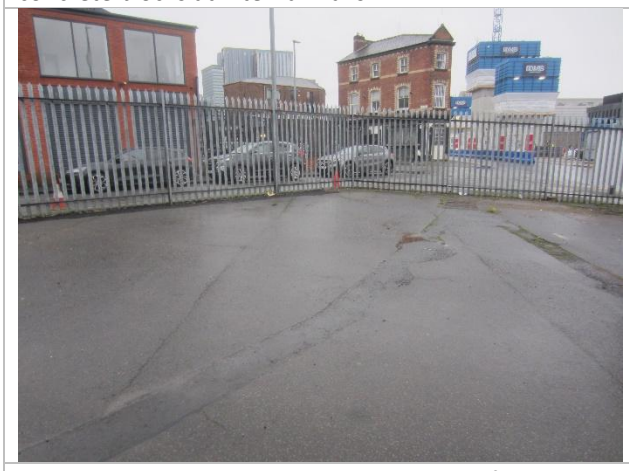


Photo 11: Hard-standing at southern end of the site and palisade fencing

8.2 Photographs Taken March 2026



Photo 12: Southern elevation of the building showing hard-standing to the south.



Photo 13: Southern and eastern elevations of the building



Photo 14: Eastern and northern elevations of the building



Photo 15: Western and part of southern elevation of the building



Photo 16: Sealed conditions at brickwork and upper sections of roof remain as described in 2024; no potential roost features present

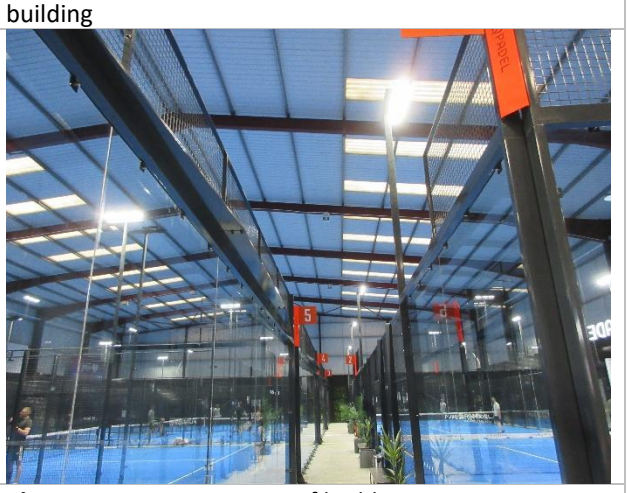


Photo 17: Current interior of building



Photo 18: Current interior of building



Photo 19: Hardstanding in the southern area of the site

8.3 Figures

Figure 1: Aerial Image of the Site and its Surroundings

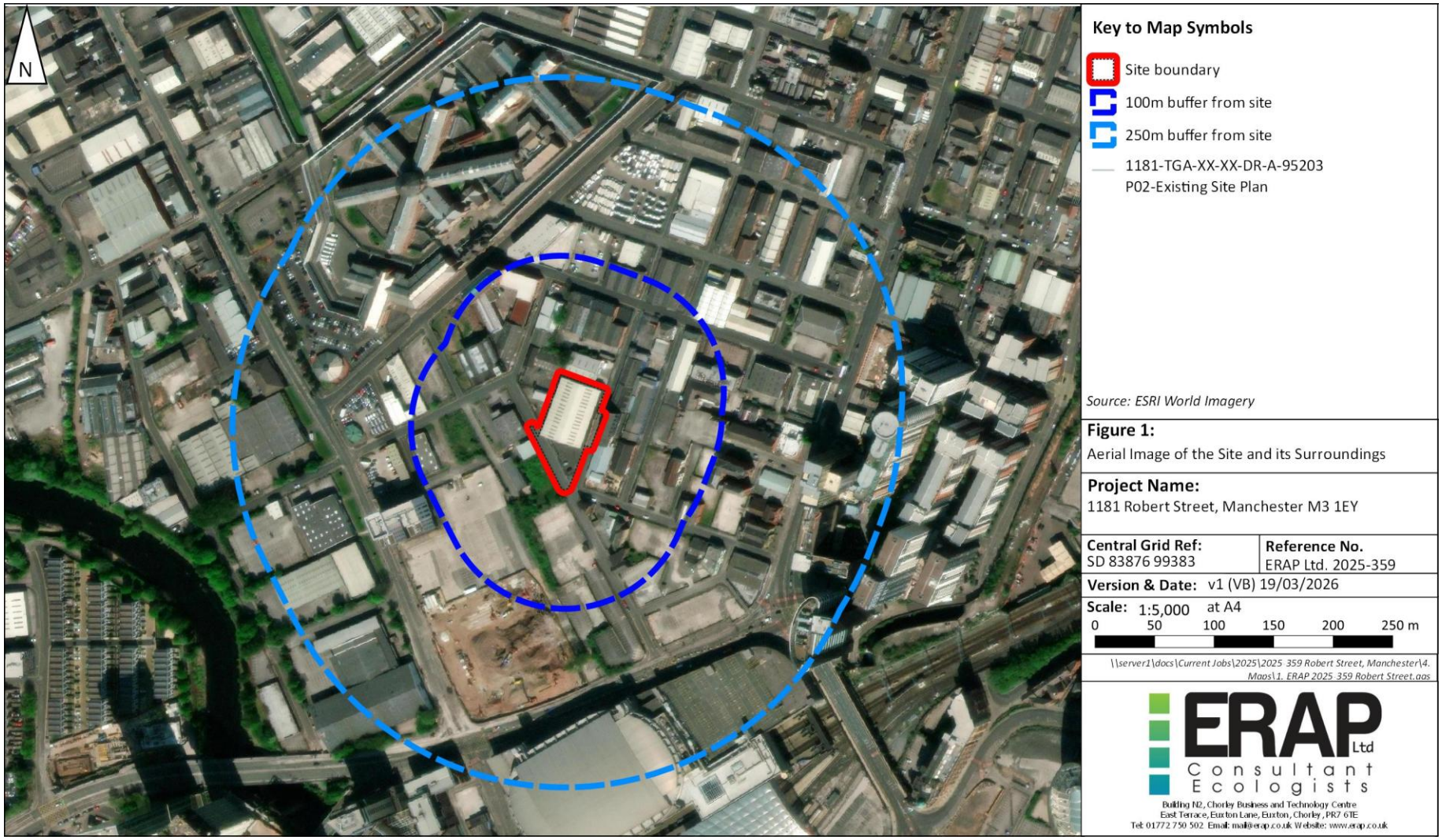


Figure 2: Phase 1 Habitat Survey Map

