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Nicola Baxter BSc (Hons), MSc (Hons)
Consultant Ecologist
Email: nicbaxter@arbtech.co.uk
Arbtech Consulting Ltd
arbtech.co.uk

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site:
Maybrook House, 40 Blackfriars Street, Manchester M32EG

Client:
Deansgate Ventures Limited

Survey date:
30/04/2026

Project:
This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Manchester City Council. This proposal can be described as the refurbishment, conversion and extension of the existing building to ahotel, including a two-storey vertical extension, internal reconfiguration, façade/external envelope works, replacement and upgrading of building services, hotel fit-out, and associated external, repair, reinstatement and cosmetic works.

The survey results and recommendations contained within this report are valid for 18 months. An updated site visit may be required if the report is to be used any longer than 18 months after completion

Executive Summary

The following is work you will need to commission to obtain planning permission and to comply with legislation. Further information, along with opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, are outlined in Tables 1, 3 & 4 of this report.

Key Findings
The building on-site was identified as being negligible for roosting bats, therefore the proposed development will not result in the removal of any habitats which could be used by foraging or commuting bats. No further surveys are deemed necessary. The site offers limited opportunities for nesting birds, precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests, depending on species present, until the young have fledged. No evidence of protected species were recorded on-site. The proposed development is unlikely to trigger the requirement for a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment, as it falls under one of the exemptions (less than 25m2 of habitat being impacted).

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Introduction and Context

Introduction

The aim of the PEA was to obtain data on existing ecological conditions, and to conduct a preliminary assessment of the likely significance of ecological impacts on the proposed development. The aim of the PRA was to determine the presence or evaluate the likelihood of the presence of roosting bats, and to gain an understanding of how bats could use the site for roosting, foraging or commuting.

No previous ecology reports have been produced for this site by Arbtech Consulting Ltd or, to the author's knowledge, by any other consultancy.

Methodology

PEA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.

Limitations

Whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report is a preliminary assessment and does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. Nor does it represent a full botanical assessment. It assesses the likelihood of protected, notable and important habitats and species being present, based on a site and landscape level habitat value-based risk assessment. This is based upon the ecology, biology and known distribution of species as currently understood.

A biological records data search has not been undertaken. However, given the location of the site, the nature of the habitats present and the assessed suitability of the site for protected or notable species, it is not anticipated that the purchase of biological records data will add any significant weight or alter the conclusions and recommendations outlined in this report.

Results, Impacts and Recommendations

Site Location and Landscape Context

Table 1: Site location and landscape context

Site Location
The site is located at National Grid Reference SJ 83710 98540 and has an area of approximately 0.21ha comprising one building, surrounded by developed land; sealed surface, artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface with an area of introduced shrub. The site is located in an urban setting, immediately surrounded by roadways and urban development. The site is enclosed by metal palisade fencing to the south around the car parking area. Pedestrian footpaths surround the site to the north, east and western boundaries. The local landscape is an urban one, in the middle of Deansgate in Manchester city centre. The River Irwell runs 50m to the north of the site but is separated from the site by areas of urban development. Light sand-rich, and medium sandy-loam soils and subsoils. Mildly Acidic to Neutral (pH: 4.5 - 6.5).
Priority Habitats and Designated Sites
Summary of Survey Findings Priority Habitats There are 2 priority habitats located within 2 km of the site. These comprise deciduous woodland and traditional orchard. The closest priority habitat comprises deciduous woodland, located ~1085 m NW of the site. The site is located to the East of the River Irwell, in an area of urban infrastructure. There is an individual tree within the redline boundary, but this is not considered connected to the priority woodland located ~1.1km to the northwest. The site is separated from priority habitats by roadways and urban development. Designated Sites There are no other statutory sites within 2 km of the site.

The site does fall within the impact risk zone for SSSI however, the proposed development type is not listed as possible high risk with regard to this designation.

The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from the local records centre. Whilst some habitats in the wider landscape may host designations, the immediate environs of the site do not host habitats likely to be of designable quality.

Impacts
No direct impacts to any designated sites will occur as a result of the proposed development, due to the small scale and low overall impact of the development from such sites (where known), alongside additional factors such as distance in combination with connectivity disrupting barriers.

Recommendations
No recommendations.

Habitats and Flora

The site survey was undertaken by Nicola Baxter BSc (Hons), MSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist.

Table 2: Survey weather conditions

Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
30/04/2026	14.9	46	0	23.5	None

Table 3: Habitats and flora

Habitats and Flora: Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations

This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

Onsite habitats
Summary of Survey Findings Developed land; sealed surface (u1b) The site is dominated by developed land, sealed surface. Hardstanding entirely surrounds the only building on-site. Public footpaths run adjacent to the northern and western boundaries. In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, this habitat is not subject to a condition assessment and is automatically assigned N/A condition. Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1c) There is a small section of gravel present along the southwestern corner of the site, it forms a small seating area outside one of the ground level commercial businesses. In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, this habitat is not subject to a condition assessment and is automatically assigned N/A condition. Built-up areas and gardens (u1) - Introduced shrub (847) There is a small area of ornamental planting along the western section of the site. Ornamental shrubs have been planted for their visual appearance and low maintenance. Species include Japanese Mock Orange (Pittosporum tobira), Spotted Laurel (Aucuba japonica 'Variegata'), and Mexican Orange Blossom (Choisya ternata). In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, this habitat is not subject to a condition assessment and is automatically assigned N/A condition. Building (u1b5) There is one building on site, which is used as a commercial building. Full details for buildings on site are included within Table 4. **Impacts** The proposed development will result in the loss of sealed and unsealed surface, the planting around the ground level will be retained. Therefore, the loss on-site is likely to have a minimal impact on biodiversity due to the small size and low ecological value of these habitats.

Recommendations
Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution must be implemented during construction. This should include the following measures:
- Remove only the minimum of habitat required to facilitate the development
- Use of Heras or other appropriate fencing to prevent encroachment by contractors onto retained habitats.
- Protect retained turf and soil resource from destruction and compaction using plastic matting and wooden boarding. Do not store skips and other heavy materials on retained turf.
- Grasscrete, cell web or any other porous surface treatment facilitating recovery of vegetation is preferred to hard standing.

A Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP) will be required, outlining best practice measures delineate the construction zone and to minimise the possibility of pollution and habitat damage during construction.

The proposed development is unlikely to trigger the requirement for a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment, as it falls under one of the exemptions (less than 25m2 of habitat being impacted).

Invasive / non-native species

Summary of Survey Findings
No non-native invasive or otherwise problematic plants were recorded on site or are considered likely to be on site, but given seasonal limitations and the sites wider context, may be visible at other times of year.

Impacts
None

Recommendations
None.

Fauna

Table 4: Fauna

Fauna: Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations *This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.*
Roosting Bats

Summary of Survey Findings

A review of the MAGIC database for European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) for bats within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. 20 EPSL were identified, as detailed below:

Table 4a: EPSL records within 2km of the site - bats

EPSL reference	Bat species affected	Distance from site	Impacts allowed by licence
2017-31569-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	~210m north	Destruction of a resting place
2014-4219-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	~230m north	Destruction of a resting place
2018-33674-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	~530m southeast	Destruction of a resting place
2020-45213-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	~560m south	Destruction of a resting place
EPSM2012-5061	Brown long-eared	~590m south	Destruction of a breeding place
2014-3569-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	~890m west	Destruction of a resting place
2016-24504-EPS-MIT-1	Common pipistrelle	~1km southwest	Destruction of a resting place

2016-24504-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	~1.1km east	Destruction of a resting place
2018-33674-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	~1km southeast	Destruction of a resting place
EPSM2013-5644	Common pipistrelle	~1.2km east	Destruction of a resting place
EPSM2013-5575	Common pipistrelle	~1.2m south	Impacts unknown
2014-3531-EPS-MIT-2	Common pipistrelle	~1.4km east	Destruction of a resting place
2019-38955-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	~1.5km southeast	Destruction of a resting place
2020-50604-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	~1.6km southeast	Destruction of a resting place
2019-41924-EPS-MIT-1	Common pipistrelle	~2km east	Destruction of a breeding place
CASE_REF2014-6380-EPS-MIT-1	Common pipistrelle	~560m south	Destruction of a resting place
2014-6380-EPS-MIT-2	Common pipistrelle	~560m south	Destruction of a resting place
EPSM2012-4767	Common pipistrelle	~590m south	Destruction of a resting place
2014-3531-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	~1.4km east	Destruction of a resting place
2014-3531-EPS-MIT-1	Common pipistrelle	~1.4km east	Destruction of a resting plac

No buildings or trees were present on site with suitable roosting features for bats to utilise.

Buildings

Building B1 Description	
B1 is a multi-storey, detached, brick-built commercial building with a flat EPDM rubber membrane roof. No bat evidence was found during the survey. In line with Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J (Ed) 2023), B1 is assessed to have negligible habitat value for roosting bats due to there are no features externally that provide suitable access for roosting bats. The internal spaces do not provide suitable features that can be utilised by either crevice dwelling or void dwelling bat species.	 *B1 – View of southern elevation*



B1 – Intact brickwork



B1 - Rooftop

Impacts
No impacts on roosting bats are anticipated.

Recommendations
None.

Foraging and Commuting Bats

Summary of Survey Findings
There are no habitats on site which could be used for foraging bats. The area of introduced shrub is isolated and not connected to any areas of suitable habitat in the wider landscape. There are no strongly connected linear features present that may provide cohesive commuting routes between the site and features in the urban landscape.

Impacts
The proposed development will not result in the removal of any habitats which could be used by foraging or commuting bats.

Recommendations
None.

The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for foraging bats:
- Planting of locally characteristic tree, shrub and hedgerows to increase foraging opportunities.

Amphibians

Summary of Survey Findings

A review of MAGIC database found no granted EPSL for great crested newts (GCN) within 2km of the site.

A check was also completed for great crested newt class survey license returns and historic pond surveys. No records were identified.

No ponds are located on, or adjacent to, the site. A review of aerial imagery shows there are no ponds within 500m of the site.

The on-site habitats are not suitable for supporting common amphibians, due to the lack of any terrestrial habitat outside of the hardstanding present.

Impacts
No impacts are anticipated on great crested newt, as a result of the proposed development as this species is considered to be absent from the site.

Recommendations
None.

Reptiles

Summary of Survey Findings
No evidence of reptiles on-site. There is a lack of any suitable terrestrial habitat outside of the hardstanding present.

Impacts
No impacts are anticipated on reptiles as a result of the proposed development.

Recommendations
None.

Birds

Summary of Survey Findings
No evidence of nesting birds was identified on or within B1, however the area of introduced shrub provides suitable shelter and could be used by common nesting birds.

Due to the small size of the site and the extent and type of the habitats recorded, the site not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/or notable birds.

Impacts
The area of introduced shrub will be retained during construction. However, the proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests.

Recommendations
Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests, depending on species present, until the young have fledged.

Badgers

Summary of Survey Findings
No evidence of badgers on-site. There is a lack of any suitable terrestrial habitat outside of the hardstanding present.

Impacts
No impacts are anticipated on badgers as a result of the proposed development.

Recommendations
None.

Riparian animals

Summary of Survey Findings
There are no riparian habitats on or adjacent to the site.

Impacts
Otters
No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.

Water Vole
No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.

Recommendations
Otters
None.

Water Vole
None.

Hazel dormouse

Summary of Survey Findings
There are no suitable habitats on site to support hazel dormice. The site is not within the known range for hazel dormice.

Impacts
No impacts are anticipated on hazel dormice as a result of the proposed development.

Recommendations
None.

Invertebrates

Summary of Survey Findings
The site provides limited habitat value for a variety of commonplace species but is unlikely to support important species and assemblages. The only suitable habitat is the area of introduced shrub which is isolated from any additional areas of suitable habitats in the wider landscape. The plant species present are non-native and have been selected for their low maintenance levels and decorative nature, not for their contributions to native invertebrates.

Impacts
The proposed development will result in the loss of developed land. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local invertebrate populations owing to the presence of more extensive habitat locally. The introduced shrubs will be retained.

Recommendations
The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for invertebrates:
- Installation of insect hotels
- Incorporation of log piles/dead wood
- Incorporation of bee bricks into the fabric of the new building. These should be installed 0.5m above ground level on a south-facing

elevation with no obscuring vegetation
▪ Creation of rock and brash piles

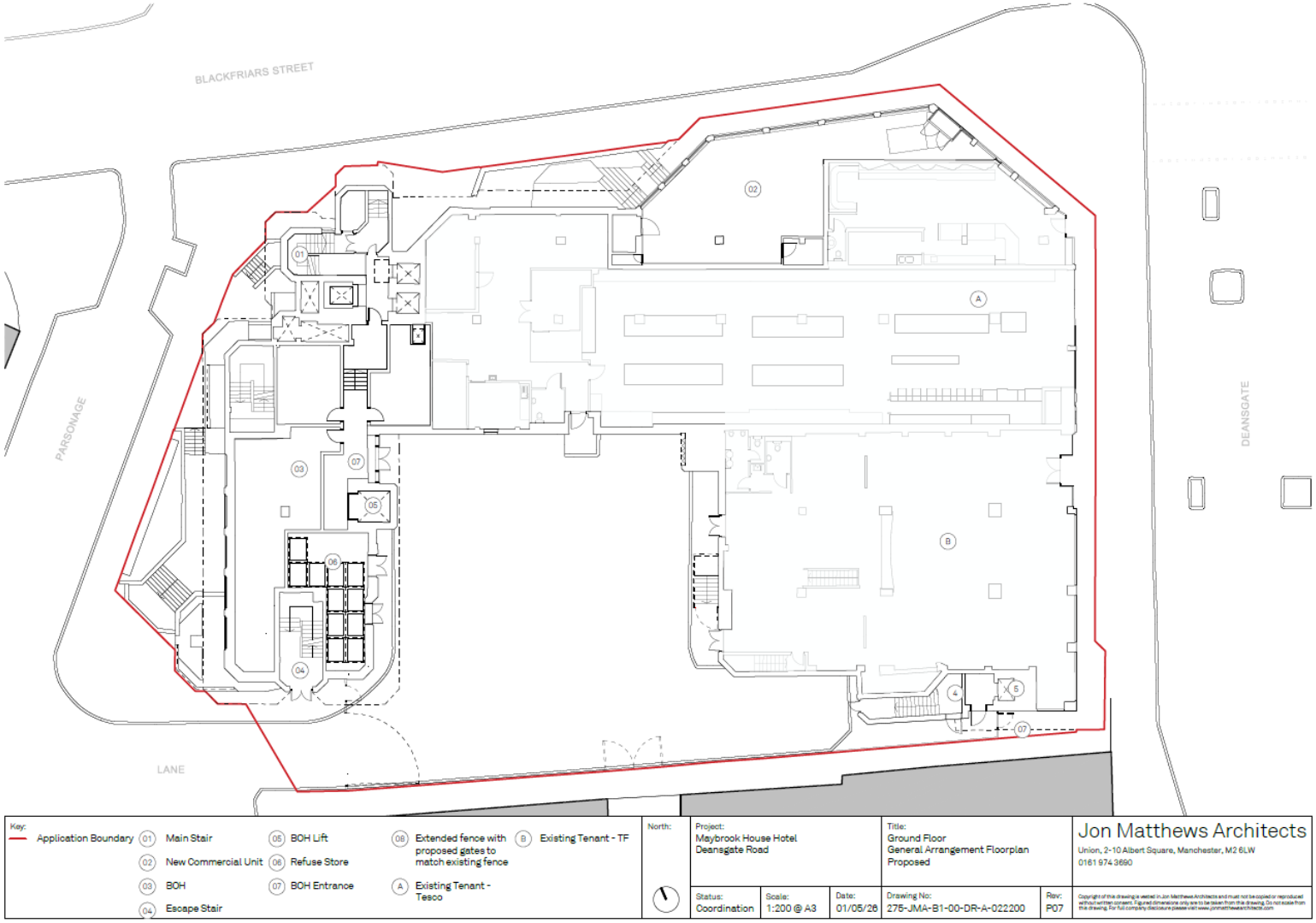
Other e.g. small mammals

Summary of Survey Findings
No evidence of hedgehogs on-site. There is a lack of any suitable terrestrial habitat outside of the hardstanding present.

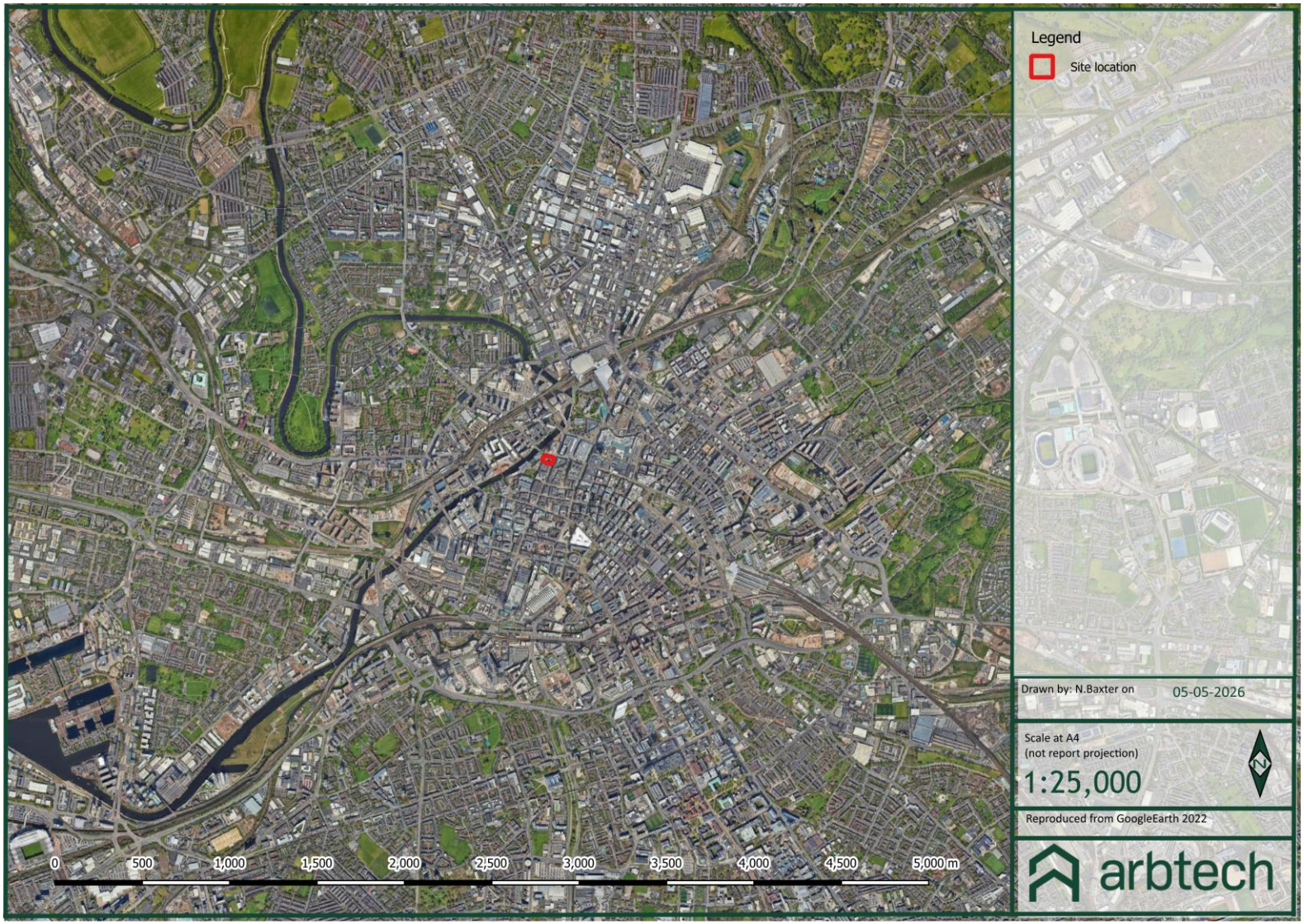
Impacts
No impacts are anticipated on small mammals as a result of the proposed development.

Recommendations
None.

Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan



Appendix 2: Site Location Plan



Appendix 3: Habitat Survey Plan



Appendix 4: Site Photographs



Photo 1: Carparking to the rear of the building



Photo 2: Footpaths wrapping around the site



Photo 3: Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface



Photo 4: Introduced shrub



Photo 5: B1 – Southern elevation



Photo 6: B1 – Intact brickwork



Photo 7: B1 - Rooftop



Photo 8: B1 – Eastern elevation

Appendix 5: Baseline Condition Assessments

Limitations and Copyright

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Version Control

Status	Issue	Name	Date
Final	1.0	Nicola Baxter BSc (Hons), MSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist	05/05/2026
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