

21 Pinfold Lane, Prestwich,

Manchester,

Daytime Bat Survey

2023



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Client Wyvern Partnership

Project Title 21 Pinfold Lane, Prestwich, Manchester

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Project Leader Ben Crossthwaite

Contact Details ben@rachelhackingecology.co.uk

	Name	Position	Date
Author	Jasmin West	Assistant Ecologist	28/07/23
Reviewer	Ben Crossthwaite	Senior Ecologist	03/08/23
Revision			



RACHEL
HACKING
ECOLOGY

The Stables
Paradise Wharf
Ducie Street
Manchester
M1 2JN

0161 465 8971

www.rachelhackingecology.co.uk

mail@rachelhackingecology.co.uk



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Executive Summary

Development Details

The client is proposing the demolition of the current building at 21 Pinfold Lane, Prestwich, hereafter referred to as 'the site'.

This report describes the ecological features of the site and its surroundings and assesses the potential impacts of the development on the ecological interest. Recommendations are provided so that the development is compliant with biodiversity policy and legislation.

Ecological Interest

The site has a moderate level of Ecological interest. Features of interest include an accumulation of Bat droppings discovered in the roof void of the building. Surrounding habitat is mostly residential, with a small, forested area immediately to the North of the site which poses as suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bats. A golf course exists to the South of the site.

Outcomes

Further survey work is recommended given that the building has been assessed to have a moderate suitability to support roosting bats. This is due to the concentration of bat droppings discovered in the roof void along with potential access points features located by surveyors during the Daytime Bat Survey.



1. Introduction

1.1 Project Brief

- 1.1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2023 by Wyvern Partnership to carry out a Daytime Bat Survey at 21 Pinfold Lane, Prestwich (O.S. grid reference: SD 80519 05657).



Figure 1. Map showing the location of the site courtesy of © GoogleMap Contributors

- 1.1.2 The proposed development site currently comprises a two-storey dwelling, set in mature gardens.

Description of Development

- 1.1.3 The site will be the subject of a planning application for the demolition of the existing dwelling to make way for the construction of a replacement dwelling.

1.2 Scope of Work

- 1.2.1 The Client commissioned Rachel Hacking Ecology to carry out the following works:
- Search for signs of protected species and assessment of the potential of habitats and features to support protected and notable species.
 - Carry out targeted surveys to record assemblages of species and/or protected and notable species.

1.3 Site Visit Information

Surveyor Details

- 1.3.1 Ben Crossthwaite (Senior Ecologist) and Megan Johnson (Junior Ecologist) visited the site on 26th July 2023. Ben is an experienced consultant ecologist and holds a Natural England Level 2 Class Survey Licence for bats (Licence Ref: 2020-48541-CLS-CLS).

Weather

- 1.3.2 The weather at the time of the survey was partly cloudy, mild and dry.



2. Methods

2.1 Field Survey

Bats

- 2.1.1 The exterior of the site was surveyed from the ground using binoculars and a high-powered. Features offering potential access to roosting bats were recorded. Such features may include suitable gaps in roof coverings, gaps behind external cladding/facia and gaps in masonry.
- 2.1.2 Evidence indicating the presence of roosting bats was also searched for. This may include bat droppings on walls, windows or on the ground below roost entrances or staining from fur oil around roost entry points.
- 2.1.3 The interior of the site, including the roof void, was surveyed to identify any evidence indicating use by roosting bats. Such evidence may include bat droppings, feeding remains, urine splashes, live or dead bats and staining from fur oil on timbers.
- 2.1.4 Any trees on the site that are to be affected by the proposals were given a ground-level assessment, searching for Potential Roosting Features (PRF's), such as flaking bark, woodpecker holes, knot holes and limb splits.

2.2 Mitigation Hierarchy

- 2.2.1 Mitigation measures should be embedded within the masterplan design and planning application process. Measures during the construction phases should be included in a Construction Environmental Management Plan: Biodiversity (CEMP). This process from proposal to implementation needs to consider the 'mitigation hierarchy' of avoid, reduce, compensate, and enhance:
 - Aim to avoid negative effects through the design process.
 - Mitigate if negative effects cannot be avoided.
 - Use compensation measures to offset residual impacts.
 - Identify and implement opportunities to enhance biodiversity

3. Results

3.1 Constraints

- 3.1.1 Field survey results are valid for a limited duration and no investigation can provide a complete description and characterisation of a site. The composition of habitats and species can change depending on environmental variables and the mobility of species, so the results of a study become less reliable over time. In some cases, surveys that are 3 years old may be acceptable for a project assuming that habitats have not significantly changed in the intervening period, but for protected species it is likely that survey data will need to be no more than 18 months old.

3.2 Daytime Bat Survey

External Survey

- 3.2.1 The building is a two-story brick-built dwelling. It has pitched, hipped and flat roof sections, which are largely covered with roof tiles that are largely in good condition. All external masonry is in good condition (see Photograph 1).



Photograph 1. Showing the front elevation of the building.

- 3.2.2 Some slipped and missing roof tiles were observed at both the front and rear of the building (see Photographs 2 & 3). However, the roof was in generally good condition.



Photograph 2. Showing the slipped and missing tiles at the rear of the building



Photograph 3. Showing some missing tiles at the front of the building

- 3.2.3 The soffit boards were generally in good condition, however there was some gapping between the soffit and the brickwork at the gable ends (See photograph 4).



Photograph 4. Showing gapping between soffit boards and chimney breast on the western gable

- 3.2.4 Other potential access point included some lifted flashing on the western gable at the apex of the roof (see Photograph 5).



Photograph 5. Showing lifted flashing at one of the gable ends

Internal Survey

- 3.2.5 The interior of the dwelling was slightly damp following a water leak in the roof void space. This resulted in damage to the ceiling below, providing open access from first floor space to the roof void above (see Photograph 6).



Photograph 6. Showing where the ceiling had collapsed, exposing the roof void

- 3.2.6 The roof lining was in good condition, however multiple patches of daylight could be seen from inside the roof void at the eaves from the soffit vents.
- 3.2.7 Gaps in the internal brickwork was observed at the apex of the western facing gable end (see Photograph 7). A concentration of bat droppings, approximately 200-300 hundred, were discovered below the apex of the western gable and down the wall, below the aforementioned gap (see Photograph 8). A sample of the droppings was taken for DNA analysis if required.



Photograph 7. Showing the gap in the brickwork above the accumulation of bat droppings



Photograph 8. Showing the accumulation of bat droppings found within the roof void

- 3.2.8 Another roof void space is located in the eastern part of the site (see Photograph 9). This has been converted and is a well-sealed space.



Photograph 9. Showing a different section of roof void in the building.

Trees

- 3.2.9 The trees on site were the subject of a ground level assessment for Potential Bat Roost Features (PRFs).
None of the trees on site offer any PRF's, and are considered to offer negligible bat roost suitability.

4. Assessment

4.1 Development Context

- 4.1.1 The following assessment assumes that the current building at the site will be demolished.

4.2 Impacts on Species

Bats

- 4.2.1 Bats and their habitats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Seven bat species are also listed as Species of Principal Importance under the provisions of the NERC Act 2006.
- 4.2.2 A bat roost may be any structure a bat uses for breeding, resting, shelter or protection. It is important to note that since bats tend to re-use the same roost sites, current legal opinion is that a bat roost is protected whether or not the bats are present at the time.
- 4.2.3 Given that evidence of Bats was discovered inside the roof void of the building, as well as the multiple potential access points found on the exterior of the dwelling, It is concluded the building on site offers moderate bat roost suitability. It is considered the evidence does not suggest the presence of a maternity roost. Further survey work is required to determine if the bat roost is active and if so, by what species and how many bats.



5. Recommendations

5.1 Further Surveys

Bats

- 5.1.1 It is recommended two dusk emergence surveys are undertaken to assess the presence of a bat roost in the affected building, and if present, the size and type of roost.
- 5.1.2 The results of the surveys will determine the extent to which bat mitigation will be required. This could be, for example, bat boxes incorporated into the building fabric or on nearby trees. The type and location of these should be specified by a suitably qualified ecologist. This would demonstrate conformity with the planning policy requirement for development to provide enhancements for wildlife where possible.
- 5.1.3 If a confirmed bat roost is present, further survey work and a bat mitigation licence may be required prior to the commencement of works. The licence can only be sought following the granting of planning permission.



Appendix 1: Planning Policy & Legislation

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021) describes the Government's planning policy for England and how it should be applied. Within this framework, the requirements in relation to biodiversity are included within several policies. The two most relevant to individual planning decisions are Paragraphs 174 and 180, shown below:

- 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; etc...
- 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 reasons 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.

Legislation

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CRoW Act 2000) includes the notification and confirmation of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). SSSIs can be notified for their floral, faunal, geological, or physiographical features. Protection against damaging operations and management of SSSIs is also included within the Act. Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are zones around an SSSI account for the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and identify development proposal which could have adverse impacts.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CRoW Act 2000) protects native animals, plants and habitats. Under the Act it is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild animal listed on Schedule 5 and it is an offence to interfere with places used for shelter or protection, or intentionally disturb animals occupying such places. The Act prohibits picking, uprooting or destroy any wild plant (or any attached seed or spore) listed in Schedule 8.

European Protected Species (EPS) such as bats, Hazel Dormouse, Otter, Natterjack Toad, Smooth Snake, Sand Lizard and Great Crested Newt are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CRoW Act 2000) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. The Acts make it an offence to:

- a) Deliberately capture, injure or kill an EPS;
- b) Deliberately impair an EPS's ability to survive, breed, reproduce, rear or nurture young; to hibernate or migrate; or significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the EPS.
- c) Possess or control live or dead EPS or any part of, or anything derived from a EPS;
- d) Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of an EPS;
- e) Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place that is used for shelter or protection by an EPS;
- f) Intentionally or recklessly disturb a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection that is occupied by an EPS.



All common herptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CROW Act 2000). Grass Snake, Slow Worm, Common Lizard, Adder are protected against intentional killing or injury. Common Frog, Common Toad, Smooth Newt and Palmate Newt is protected against sale. In addition, all British reptiles, Common toad and Great Crested Newt are listed as Species of Principal Importance.

All nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage, or destroy its nest whilst in use or being built, or take or destroy its eggs. It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb a species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act while they are nest building or at or near a nest with eggs or young, or to disturb the dependent young.

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 makes it an offence to wilfully, or to attempt to kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a Badger, or intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett. Interference of a sett includes disturbing badgers during occupation of a sett, or damaging or destroying a sett, or obstructing access to the sett.

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 places a duty on every public authority to have regard to conserving biodiversity. Section 41 of the same Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of the living organisms and types of habitats that are of 'Principal Importance' for the purpose of conserving biodiversity. The Secretary of State must take steps, as appear reasonably practicable, to further the conservation of those living organisms and habitats in any list published under this section. The list of species and habitats of principal importance currently includes 943 species and 56 habitats. These are the species and habitats found in England which are regarded as conservation priorities under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework

The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 protect 'important' hedgerows from destruction or damage. A hedgerow is 'important' if it (a) has existed for 30 years or more; and (b) satisfies at least one of the criteria listed in Part II of Schedule 1 of the Regulations. Under the Regulations, it is against the law to remove or destroy 'important' hedgerows unless permitted by the local planning authority.

