

Inspection & Assessment in relation to Bats & Breeding Birds

March 2024

Project Reference: PR-0077-24

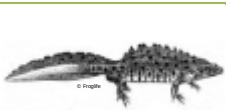
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211 Bury Old Road, Prestwich, Manchester, M25 1JF
Inspection & Assessment in relation to Bats and Breeding Birds

Document Title	Inspection & Assessment in relation to Bats and Breeding Birds
Project Reference	PR-0077-24
Issue no.	1.0
Prepared for	My Property Survey
Prepared by	Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd

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Survey Date	29/02/2024
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Date of Issue	11/03/2024

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Executive Summary

As part of a planning application at 211 Bury Old Road, Prestwich Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd were commissioned by My Property Survey to undertake a daytime preliminary roost assessment in relation to bats with an inclusive inspection for breeding birds in February 2024; current proposals are to demolish the existing structure, subsequent plans are unknown.

Detailed methods, findings, conclusions and recommendations are presented throughout the report; however, the reader should be aware of the following **Key** points:

Bats:

Based upon the findings of the survey, covered through sections 5.0 – 6.0 of the report supported by **Appendix I**, the 211 Bury Old Road is determined to offer a bat roost suitability of '**None**' in line with the guidelines within Bat Conservation Trusts' - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2023); no further surveys are recommended.

Table 4.1. 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	Description	
	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).

Birds:

No impacts are applicable in relation to any Sch. 1 (WCA) specially protected bird and no further surveys or recommendations are necessary in relation to specially protected birds. In relation to more common birds, a feral pigeon was observed perching along a potential ingress point which could be utilised to roost within the loft space.

Thus, demolition should take place outside of the breeding bird season, the breeding bird season is weather dependent but generally extends between March and September inclusive (peak period March – August). For works within the breeding bird season, areas that can support nesting birds should be checked by a professional Ecologist for nesting birds within 48 hours or less prior to works commencing.

Biodiversity Enhancement:

As a means of enhancement and aiding the design of the scheme in keeping with local and national planning policy considering biodiversity net-gain principles, the proposals may consider incorporating wildlife friendly provisions in addition to those described. Further recommendations, regarding birds, native species and invertebrates are provided within **Appendix II**.

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Appendix II: Biodiversity Enhancement: General Recommendations

1.0 Introduction & Reasons for Survey

- 1.1 As part of a proposed planning application at 211 Bury Old Road, Manchester, Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd were commissioned by My Property Survey to undertake a daytime preliminary roost assessment in relation to bats with an inclusive inspection for breeding birds in February 2024; current proposals are to demolish the existing structure, subsequent plans are unknown.



Figure 1.1 – Surveyed building highlighted in red (Source: Google Earth Pro 2023/24)

- 1.2 The aim of the survey was to ascertain if the building is of value to roosting bats, whilst an assessment of nesting and general suitability for birds was also carried out. If any potential roost features (PRF's) were found to be suitable for bats, or signs of use were observed, then more detailed surveys would be recommended i.e., dusk/dawn emergence/re-entry surveys during the main active season of bats which is May – August (extending into September).
- 1.3 If additional surveys are required following the initial site visit this report will outline the details of those further requirements.
- 1.4 If it was determined that bat(s) or their roost/place of rest/shelter would be subsequently impacted by the works then a Protected Species Mitigation Licence would be legally required to proceed with the development.
- 1.5 If evidence indicated breeding birds may be impacted by proposals, tailored recommendations would be made accordingly, species pending.
- 1.6 As part of the local authority's planning policies and obligations to the Planning Framework, ecological surveys are generally required prior to planning permission being granted where protected/priority habitats and species are, or may be present, that could be affected by the proposals for which the application seeks consent. Where more detailed surveys are recommended by the ecologist, following an initial daytime investigation, then Local Planning Authorities (LPA) on the advice of their ecological advisors, will not grant permission until such time that all relevant information is gathered.

2.0 Protected Species & Their Requirements

Bats

- 2.1 All British bats and their **roosts are afforded full protection under the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and are listed in Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended). When dealing with cases where a Protected Species (all UK bats) may be affected, a planning authority is a competent authority within the meaning of Regulation 7 of the Regulations, and therefore has a statutory duty, as the local authority, to have due regard to the provisions of the Regulations in the exercise of its functions.

2.2 Use of Buildings by Bats

- a) Summer breeding roost (May-August)
- b) Hibernation roost (October-March)
- c) Transitional or temporary roost (other months)

- 2.3 Roost selection is often closely correlated to suitable foraging habitat within a reasonable commuting distance from the roost and different sites are used depending upon insect densities and abundance; climatic conditions can also affect their ability to successfully forage. All British bats are insectivorous.

*** The term roost is generically referred to as a place that bat/s use for the any of the above reasons, however it should be noted that under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended) (Regulation 43 (d) the term roost is not used but refers to “a breeding site or resting place of such an animal” and is afforded legal protection. The roost, breeding site or resting place of bats, which ever terminology is used, is legally protected whether or not bats are in occupation.*

- 2.4 Up to ten bat species have been recorded in Manchester, most of which use built structures, notably occupied residential properties, for roosting. All bats feature on the local biodiversity action plan for the area; the most frequently encountered bat species is the common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) which will roost in building crevices, and its abundant status in Manchester is reflected throughout the UK.

Birds

- 2.5 All wild birds, no matter how common, their eggs, young and nests, whilst being built or occupied, are protected under both the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA 1981) and Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC Act 2006) from nest loss. Many bird species which occur in urban environments, for example house sparrows (*Passer domesticus*), are listed priority s.41 species on the NERC Act 2006. Birds listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA 1981, for example peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) and black redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*) are afforded a greater level of protection and are protected also from disturbance.

- 2.6 Any work that would damage an occupied nest, eggs or young of breeding birds must be avoided; any damage to nests that may occur as a result of the development should be outside of the main breeding bird season (March – August). On occasions nests can become unoccupied during the breeding season but the status of the nest(s) should be determined by a suitably experienced ecologist before any damage takes place.

- 2.7 Some species are subject to a greater level of protection, for example black redstart, which is listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), with nests of birds from these species being protected from disturbance as well as destruction. The species is red-listed on Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC 4) with fewer than 100 breeding pairs recorded in the UK; decline in Manchester is part-attributed to regenerative works across the

city resulting in the loss of nesting sites and feeding areas as this is a species typically linked with abandoned sites close to water, railways and industry, whilst habitat such as forest, meadow and areas of dense vegetation of any height are typically avoided. Black redstarts have their own action plan within Manchester (Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan: black redstart) which recommends enhancement for this species in suitable areas across the Greater Manchester conurbation.

Policy

- 2.8 Paragraph 180 of the National Policy Planning Framework (as revised in July 2023) states:

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.

- 2.9 Policy EN15 of the Manchester Core Strategy 2012 to 2027, titled Biodiversity & Geological Conservation, echoes this national focus on ecological conservation, and states:

“Developers will be expected to identify and implement reasonable opportunities to enhance, restore or create new biodiversity, either on-site or adjacent to the site, contributing to linkages between valuable or potentially valuable habitat areas where appropriate...”

and:

“Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, developers will be required to provide appropriate mitigation and/or compensation”, “It is important to recognise that brownfield sites often contain diverse and valuable biodiversity.”

- 2.10 Where more detailed surveys are recommended by the Ecologist following a daytime assessment, then the Local Planning Authority, upon the advice of their ecological advisors, should not determine an application until such time that all relevant information is gathered, i.e. - until all required survey work has been completed.

- 2.11 This is in accordance with the obligations placed upon Local Authorities in the exercise of its functions by way of its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended) and Biodiversity duty¹.

¹ [Complying with the biodiversity duty - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complying-with-the-biodiversity-duty)

3.0 Survey Methodology

- 3.1 As part of the Inspection & Assessment for Bats and Breeding Birds report, a desk-top and field-based study is conducted. Methods for both components of the appraisal are given below.

Desktop Study

- 3.2 Prior to a site visit a desktop study was conducted using online resources to obtain information pertaining to any sites afforded statutory (e.g. SSSI) and non-statutory (e.g. LWS) designations within 2.0 kilometres of the site boundary. To do so, the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGiC – provided by DEFRA) was accessed to gather such information; this particular interactive mapping service was also used to locate any locally granted European Protected Species Mitigation Licenses (EPSML) and species records to further inform conclusions concerning such species in the context of the study site and its proposed development.
- 3.3 Historic satellite imagery was reviewed using sources such as Google Earth (© 2023/24) to help establish past use of the site and determine the nature of adjoining and extending habitats; such information aids in the understanding of how the site might interact with its surroundings ecologically and its value in that context, and how the development may impact at a wider scale.
- 3.4 A commercial data request to the Local Environment Records Centre serving the area, Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) has not been sourced by the Ecologist and is justified through application of the following guidance:

1) The Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity Data in the UK (CIEEM, 2020) states:

“It is generally expected that a desk study, including a data search, will be a key part of the ecological surveys or reports produced to inform a planning application. Freely available web-based sources of data and contextual information should always be used; in some cases, it may be acceptable to not undertake a data search with the LERC or other relevant NSS or local interest groups, for example:

ii) Situations where the data search would be extremely unlikely to provide information needed to inform the assessment, due to the scale and location of the proposed development. The appropriateness of excluding a data search will need to be judged on a case-by-case basis as, in most situations, it will be essential to carry out such a search even if the development is very small or is likely to have a low impact. It can be very difficult to demonstrate that a data search would not have provided relevant information without obtaining and reviewing those data.

iii) In some cases for Preliminary Roost Assessments of buildings in low impact / small-scale scenarios, such as an extension to a residential property, loft conversions (full or partial), installation of Velux/dormer windows, single modern agricultural or similar building conversion or demolition; however, it should not be assumed that data searches are never required for such scenarios and this must be judged on a case by case basis and justified accordingly.

2) The Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017) also states:

“Very occasionally it might be possible to carry out a robust PEA without obtaining LERC/NBDC/CEDaR data; this will usually only apply to low impact or small-scale projects (e.g. by virtue of size, extent, duration of works, magnitude and locality), and should be determined on a case-by-case basis.”

- 3.5 As the exemptions can be applied at the site whilst following best practice, it is considered unnecessary to conduct a commercial data request following the desk study effort and daytime assessment at this time.

Field Survey

- 3.6 In context with the above, a diurnal inspection and assessment of the building in relation to bats and breeding birds was conducted on 29th February 2024 in cloudy conditions (8°C), wind 1/12 (Beaufort scale), average 100% cloud, by the following surveyor (see **Table 3.1**):

Table 3.1 – Site surveyor credentials

Name	Description of most relevant credentials
Mr. H. Mulligan Qualifying CIEEM	- Junior Ecologist with two years of training and experience, - MBiolSci in Biological Sciences (Zoology), - Accredited agent on the (Class 2) Natural England bat licence of Mrs. K. Wilding (CLS-14227).

- 3.7 Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2024) states:

“The guidelines should be interpreted and adapted on a case-by-case basis according to site-specific factors and the professional judgement of an experienced ecologist. The question should not be whether the guidelines were followed, but whether the objectives of the survey met? Where examples are used in the guidelines, they are descriptive rather than prescriptive.”

- 3.8 The bat and breeding bird assessment was conducted in tandem; the building was inspected for potential places that may be of value to bats or breeding birds and to determine if evidence of use by any group was present. An internal assessment of the building took place with the aid of a high-powered torch for evidence of bat use, which mainly includes bat droppings and/or prey items, or the incidental presence of live or dead animals, and investigated for evidence of breeding birds which broadly involves a search for nesting materials, presence of pellets or accumulated faeces and/or dead juveniles/hatchlings.
- 3.9 External elevations were investigated with the aid of a high-powered torch and close focus binoculars (where necessary) for places that can be used as a roost by bats or as a means of ingress for bats and birds leading to areas of roosting/nesting potential. These features are typically referred to as potential roost features (PRF) concerning bats. All external features were able to be surveyed without constraint.
- 3.10 A daytime bat walkover (DBW) of the immediate surrounding habitat was also carried out to assess the general suitability of the local habitats or features suitable for usage by bats, either as commuting, foraging or roosting provision. Wider connectivity to other habitats was also considered during the DBW.
- 3.11 Trees are also subject to a ground level tree assessment (GLTA) (where present); this typically involves a search for potential roost features along with an investigation of those features using a high-powered torch or close focus binoculars. Potential roost features can include woodpecker holes, rot holes, hazard beams, other vertical or horizontal cracks or splits in stems and branches, partially decayed lifted bark, knot holes, man-made holes, tear-outs, cankers in which cavities have developed, other hollows or cavities, including butt-rots, double-leaders forming compression forks with included bark, gaps between overlapping stems or branches, partially detached Ivy with stem diameters in excess of 50mm or bat/bird boxes.

- 3.12 Criteria for roost assessment are based upon the determinants given in the Bat Conservation Trust - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2023): (see **Figure 4.1**).
- 3.13 An assessment of the site was conducted when birds are outside of their breeding season (this is typically March – August inclusive). Trees (where present) were inspected for evidence of birds known to be present within the local area, encompassing both common and species protected under legislation, for example on section 41 of the Natural Environment Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act) or on the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP).
- 3.14 Additional to the site's capacity to support common species of bird, the area was subject to an assessment for capacity to support specially protected species such as peregrine and black redstart.
- 3.15 The results, conclusions and recommendations are based on a number of factors i.e.
- Practical experience of surveyor,
 - Knowledge of bat/bird species relevant to the site location and geographical range,
 - Nature of immediate/surrounding habitat in relation to foraging/commuting for all three groups (bats and birds),
 - Condition of the building,
 - Presence/absence of a loft space or cellar and reasonable practicality of use,
 - Presence/absence of roost potential,
 - Value of roost potential – if present.
- 3.16 The results, conclusions and recommendations of this report have been assessed by Mrs. K. Wilding, the Director of Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd, and her assessment is consistent with that of the surveyor Mr. H. Mulligan.

Table 4.1. 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	Description	
	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 ^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).	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	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).	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 ^b 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.

Figure 3.1 – Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidelines extract

4.0 Limitations

- 4.1 The survey was conducted outside of the active season of bats broadly considered as April-October, therefore there was a lower probability of encountering direct evidence of bats such as droppings. Potential roost features and suitability of potential roost features can, however, be adjudged as decisively as within the active season of bats, saving time and unnecessary delay to applicants allowing surveys all year round, thus frequently the assessment can be as conclusive as if it was carried out in the active season. Timing is not, therefore, considered a constraint in this instance.
- 4.2 The survey took place outside the breeding bird season typically considered to be March – September, therefore incidental breeding bird behaviour has a low probability of being encountered. Suitability for breeding birds is readily identifiable all year round however, and often nesting material left from the previous years can attest to the presence of breeding birds, and as such timing is not considered a constraint in this instance.
- 4.3 Considering the above constraints, no significant limitations were experienced that might adversely influence the results, conclusions, and recommendations of this report which are presented following best practice.

5.0 Desk Study Results

- 5.1 The site is located to the west of Bury Old Road, Prestwich approximately 9.2 kilometres north of Manchester city centre (see **Figure 5.1**).



Figure 5.1 – Location of the site (red boundary) within the landscape (Source: Google Earth Pro 2023/24)

- 5.2 The immediate environment (0.5-kilometre radius) is distinctly divided by the A655, to the west of the road reside primarily residential properties and infrastructure associated with suburban regions such as shops, schools and a nursing home, while a treelined tramline runs 60 metres to the north-west, a linear feature potentially utilised by airborne species for foraging and commuting. Semi-natural features within the residential area are inclusive of ornamental residential gardens and greenspaces such as Ostrich Park (0.4 kilometres south) and the 'Rec' (0.4 kilometres northwest); natural features are increasingly prevalent to the east of the site within Heaton Park (20 metres east). To the east of the A655 lies Heaton Park, a large urban greenspace, comprised of abundant amenity grassland, woodland and waterbodies, thus bringing more natural and semi-natural habitats.
- 5.3 The extending environment (2.0-kilometre radius) is increasingly urban in comparison to the immediacy; the residential extent of Prestwich sprawls south-east, south-west and north-west. There are numerous priority habitats within the radial boundary such as 8.32 ha of ancient woodland (0.9 kilometres west), BAP Parkland (20 metres east) and lowland fens (1.4 kilometres north-east), in addition to scattered deciduous woodland throughout. Non-designated greenspace includes St Mary's Park (0.7 kilometres west) in addition to Heaton Park (0.5 kilometres east), the latter host to a large boating lake and deciduous woodland.
- 5.4 The few linear features in both the immediacy and contiguous landscape provide commuting routes for species such as common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) bats, which are likely to be present as this species is commonly associated with roosting in urban settings. Bird species associated with urban environments, such as house sparrows, could also use the site

for breeding, subject to presence, while a large number of species are likely to be present within Heaton Park.

NB: *Where quality habitat is present close to buildings then the percentage use of those buildings, by bats, increases given that roost opportunities are available and vice versa.*

- 5.5 There are five statutory designated sites within a 2.0-kilometre radius (see **Table 5.1**).

Table 5.1 – Statutory designation types and reasons for designation within 2.0-kilometre buffer

Site name	Designation type	Interest features
Kersal Moor (1.5 kilometres south)	Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	A 7.93-hectare moorland with a mosaic of grassland and scattered trees.
The Cliff (Kersal Dale) (1.9 kilometres south)	Local Nature Reserve	A 30.8-hectare urban fringe site, with habitats including woodland, open water, marsh and semi-natural woodland. Species that can be seen here include greater spotted woodpecker (<i>Dendrocopos major</i>) and kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>), which frequent the woodland along the River Irwell.
Blackley Forest (1.4 kilometres east)	Local Nature Reserve	A 34.21-hectare urban site, with habitats including broadleaved woodland, plantation woodland, grassland, lake, marsh and the River Irk.
Philip's Park (0.9 kilometres west)	Local Nature Reserve	A 69.82 ha semi-natural woodland with wildflowers characteristic of ancient woodlands. Some open glades have remnant heathland. Species rich meadows with willow scrub. The species rich meadows include cuckoo flower, common spotted orchid, black knapweed, tufted vetch, and bird's foot trefoil. Butterflies such as orange tip and meadow brown are abundant.
Mere Clough (1.9 kilometres west)	Local Nature Reserve	A 5.46 ha site containing habitats such as lowland fens, ancient woodlands, and deciduous woodland with waterbodies present, the LNR is deemed to be valuable to wildlife.

- 6.6 An online search of MAGiC maps revealed that there is one European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML) that has been granted within a 2.0km radius of the site - 2014-1364-EPS-BDX – which licensed the disturbance of a common pipistrelle roost 1.8 kilometres to the east (See **Figure 5.2**).
- 6.7 Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd have previous and ongoing projects involving bats within the 2.0-kilometre area surrounding the site, with data readily available to the Ecologist from the company database – all data has been previously submitted to the LERC serving the area, which in this case, is GMEU. A single record is within the 2.0-kilometre perimeter of the site:

- 0.7 kilometres west / 2020 / Emergence of a single common pipistrelle bat

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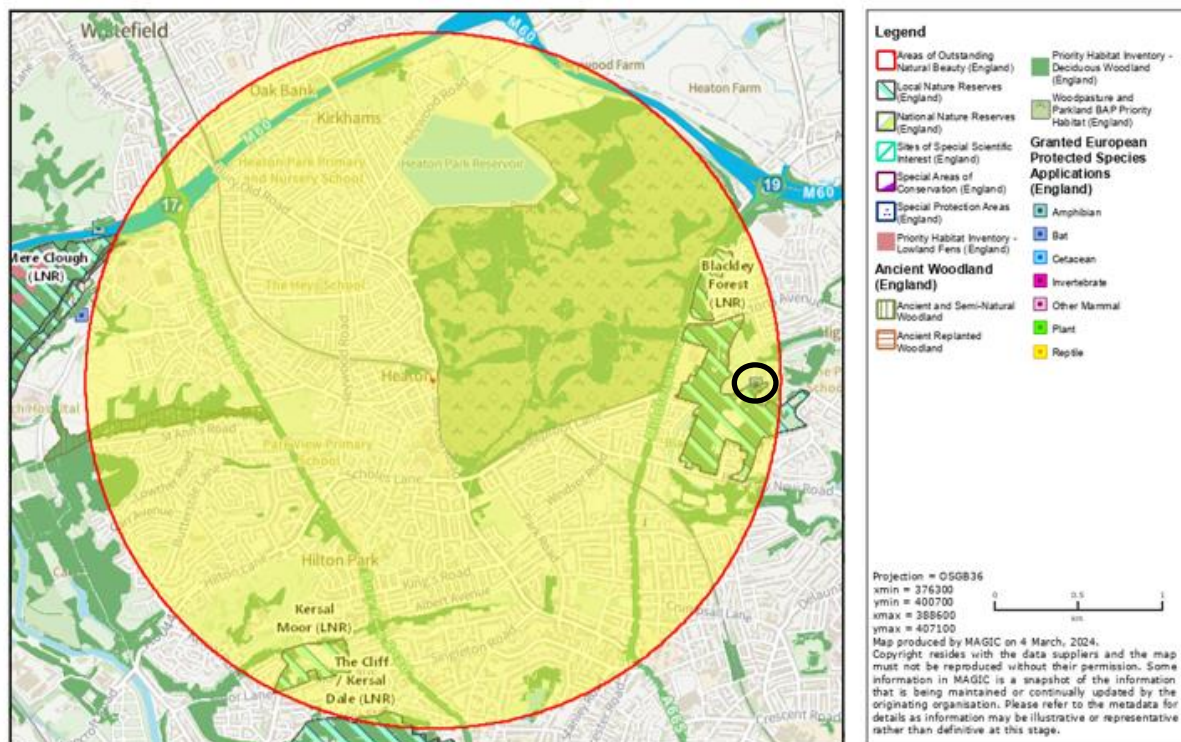


Figure 5.2 – Visual aid showing priority habitats, the EPSML (circled in black) and designated site data for the area within 2.0 kilometres of the site.

6.0 Field Study Results

Bats

- 6.1 The surveyed building is a single storey, rendered building surrounded by hardstanding, currently utilised as a clothes shop and subject to high levels of illumination via the street and surrounding security lights. The length of the building has a pitched roof, with the eastern portion having interlocking clay tiles, and the western section having a corrugated metal roof. The building is to the approximate dimensions of 18.0 x 8.0 x 2.0 metres (length x width x height). The building features a metal fascia and shutters to the east of the building in addition to UPVC drainpipes throughout, while on the eastern roof pitch there is a timber fascia. In respect of its condition, the surveyor is not qualified to assess structural state, however the state of the building is considered to be in poor condition primarily due to the degradation of the roof on the eastern aspect.
- 6.2 Internally, there is a loft space present over the eastern, tiled section which has a maximum roof apex of approximately 2.0 metres; the loft is heavily cobwebbed and fairly cluttered, the walls are lined with smooth, timber boards presenting a lack of internal crevice value, and the climatic conditions of the space were noted to be cold and draughty, with moderate light ingress.
- 6.3 Given the structure and aforementioned climatic conditions of the loft space, weighed against the surrounding habitat, the loft space is considered to be unsuitable for brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*) bats, which is a species that prefer roost sites such as dark open, undisturbed loft spaces with consistent thermal conditions and open areas permitting free flight.
- 6.4 No underfelt was present beneath the clay tiled or the corrugated metal roof, with timber boarding instead present throughout the loft space; where present, underlinings typically improve a building's value to bats, notably for crevice-dwelling bats of the *Pipistrellus* genus, whereby the bats roost between linings and the roof cover material provided external access opportunities exist. Conversely, an absence of roof linings can lower a structures value in the same respect. No evidence of any bats was found inside; however, this is often the case due to the crevice dwelling nature of these species. No potential roost features were noted inside the building which was considered broadly absent of typical features a bat might use for shelter, ingress or crevice use.
- NB:** *The breeding roosts of Pipistrelle bats are proportionally higher in occupied residential dwellings where the warm, dry conditions favour the requirements of a maternity colony but other structures are also used, especially for hibernation or by male bats which do not need the same conditions as a maternity colony.*
- 6.5 Externally, the building is in a dilapidated state; there are missing tiles at the wall plate level on the western pitch although the holes are deemed too large to provide roosting provision for a crevice dweller and internal crevices are limited. There are gaps beneath the ridge tiles although due to the lack of roof underlining, this leads directly to the loft void which presents no roosting opportunities for bats. The roof of the corrugated section provides ingress under the grooves although does not possess the thermal properties to support crevice dwelling species.
- 6.6 Considering the level of degradation of the building and the disturbance by feral pigeons, there is a lack of feasible opportunities to be utilised, as a result, the building at 211 Bury Old Road is categorised as offering a bat roost suitability of 'None'.
- 6.7 There are no trees located within the site boundary to warrant any consideration.

Breeding Birds

- 6.8 In relation to WCA Schedule 1 specially protected bird species such as peregrine falcon and black redstart, no evidence or specific suitability was found to suggest any form of site use or historic nesting and direct impacts to protected bird species can be confidently ruled out from the proposals.
- 6.9 In relation to more common bird species, a feral pigeon (*Columba livia*) was observed perching on the western ridge at 211 Bury Old Road, though no internal evidence of nesting was found. In addition, the entry points to the structure could provide potential ingress for a number of bird species adapted to urbanisation during the breeding bird season, and thus their presence during this period cannot be ruled out.

7.0 Conclusions & Recommendations

Bats

- 7.1 Based upon the findings of the survey covered through sections 5.0 – 6.0 of the report and supported by **Appendix I**, 211 Bury Old Road is determined to offer a bat roost suitability of '**None**' in line with the guidelines within Bat Conservation Trusts' - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2023). See **Figure 7.1** below.

Table 4.1. 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	Description	
	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).

Figure 7.1 – BCT extract on roost suitability criteria

- 7.2 No further surveys are recommended. However, bats are a transient species and buildings can gradually deteriorate over time to provide greater value to bats. This assessment should be considered valid for 18 months in accordance with currently survey validity guidelines. In the highly unlikely event that bat(s), or evidence of bat(s), are found during the proposed works schedule then as legal requirement the work at the site should immediately cease and an Ecologist should be contacted for further advice. If it is determined bat(s) or their roost(s) will be affected, then a development licence may be required to legally commence with the works. See **Figure 7.2** for indicative evidence of bats - a visual aid.



Figure 7.2 – Evidence of bats – droppings on the left / a common pipistrelle bat on the right – indicative visual aid

Breeding Birds

- 7.3 No impacts are applicable in relation to any Sch.1 (WCA) specially protected bird species and no further surveys or recommendations are necessary in relation to specially protected birds. In relation to more common bird species, a single feral pigeon was observed perching on the western ridge at 211 Bury Old Road; despite no evidence of breeding observed, the building has the potential to support birds due to the number and large size of the ingress points. As a result, demolition should take place outside of the breeding bird season, the breeding bird season is weather dependent but generally extends between March and September inclusive (peak period March – August).

- 7.4 For works within the breeding bird season, areas that can support nesting birds should be checked by a professional Ecologist for nesting birds within 48 hours or less prior to works commencing.

NB: *All wild birds (with only minor exceptions) and their nests whilst being built or containing eggs or dependant young are protected from destruction, damage and disturbance under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is a punishable offence to interfere in any way with an active nest.*

- 7.5 Where / if active nests are / have been located by the Ecologist, then any works which may affect them would have to be delayed until the young have fledged and the nest has been abandoned naturally, this can be aided, for example, via implementation of appropriate buffer zone(s) around the nest site (typically 5 – 10 metres) in which no disturbance is permitted until the nest is no longer in use. This would have to be coordinated through the expert judgement of the professional ecologist and species pending.

Point 3.24 of the British Standards Publication 42020:2013 defines a professional ecologist as: *“a person who has, through relevant education, training or experience, gained recognised qualifications and expertise in the field of ecology and environmental management.”*

Biodiversity Enhancement

- 7.6 As a means of enhancement and aiding the design of any future schemes should they come to fruition in keeping with local and national planning policy considering biodiversity net-gain principles, the proposals may consider incorporating wildlife friendly provisions in addition to those described. Further recommendations, regarding birds, native species and invertebrates are provided within **Appendix II**.

8.0 Bibliography

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Appendix I: Site Photographs



Plate 1 – *Degradation on the eastern side of the clay-tiled roof*



Plate 2 – *211 Bury Old Road from the southern aspect*



Plate 3 – Shop front at 211 Bury Old Road (eastern aspect)



Plate 4 – Timber boarding beneath roof tiles within loft space



Plate 5 – *Perching feral pigeon on western aspect of site*



Plate 6 – *Additional aspect of 211 Bury Old Road*

Appendix II: Biodiversity Enhancement: General Recommendations

Breeding Bids - House Sparrow

The Sparrow Terrace has been designed to help redress the balance of falling House Sparrow numbers. The current UK population is now half of what it previously was in 1980 and this is widely attributed to habitat destruction and lack of suitable nesting spaces. House Sparrows are social birds and like to nest in company, therefore, this terrace provides ideal nesting opportunities for three families. The terrace can be fixed on to the surface of a suitable wall or incorporated into the wall. It is suitable for all types of buildings.



Native Planting and/or Landscaping

New feature landscaping should incorporate native woody plants as opposed to non-native species that are of significantly less benefit to biodiversity. Species such as Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*), Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), Guelder-rose (*Viburnum opulus*) and Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) are native and will provide a valuable resource for a myriad of wildlife as opposed to non-native, exotic species which are generally much less effective, particularly to pollinator groups including bees, butterflies and moths.

Suitable Trees	Suitable Woody Shrubs
English Oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>)	Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>)
Rowan (<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>)	Honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>)
Wild Service Tree (<i>Sorbus torminialis</i>)	Guelder Rose (<i>Viburnum opulus</i>)
Silver Birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>)	Elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>)
Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>)	Wild Privet (<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>)
Goat Willow (<i>Salix capraea</i>)	Blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>)
Beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>)	
Wild Cherry (<i>Prunus avium</i>)	