

Bat Survey: Presence/Absence Survey

74 Sheepfoot Lane

Prestwich, Manchester

May 2026

Prepared for: Shahdoth Ali Shah

Report prepared by: Verity Webster BSc (Hons) MSc CEcol CMIEEM



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- On 6th February 2026 a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken on land at 74 Sheepfoot Lane, Prestwich, Manchester.
- The house was assessed to determine its potential for roosting bats and was considered to have low suitability for bats.
- A single evening emergence survey undertaken on 10th May 2026 the likely absence of a bat roost in the building.
- The proposals are considered unlikely to have any impact upon bats or their roosts. Reasonable avoidance measures are proposed as a precaution to reduce the risk of harm to bats to negligible.
- Recommendations have been made to enhance the site for bats.

Verity Webster

Ecology and Protected Species Consultancy



1. Introduction

1.1 Application Site

- 1.1.1. This report details bat presence/absence survey work of a building at 74 Sheepfoot Lane, Prestwich, Manchester, M25 0DT. National grid reference: SD83700361.
- 1.1.2. Shahdoth Ali Shah commissioned Verity Webster Ltd to undertake the bat survey work to inform the planning application.

1.2 Objectives

- 1.2.1 The objectives of the Presence/Absence Surveys are to determine:
- Whether bats are currently using the building to roost and if so, how.
 - The species and number of bats present.
 - The status of any roost present.
 - How bats might be using the rest of the site (garden).
 - The potential impacts of the proposals on any roost present or on bats using the site.
 - How any impacts might be avoided, mitigated and / or ameliorated, including advice on European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) application if required.
 - The potential for biodiversity net gain on site.
- 1.2.2 The format and content of this report follow that required by the European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence application where appropriate.

1.3 Proposals

- 1.3.1 The proposals comprise the refurbishment and extension of the house.

1.4 Ecologist

- 1.4.1 The Preliminary Roost Assessment was undertaken by Verity Webster. Verity is a licensed bat surveyor (Bat Survey Class Licence WML CL18 (Class 2) Registration number: 2015-13858-CLS-CLS).
- 1.4.2 Verity has worked as an ecological consultant since 2007. She has undertaken preliminary bat assessments and further bat emergence/activity surveys for a large variety of projects and schemes, producing the required impact assessment and subsequent mitigation schemes/method statements when necessary.



2. Site Location

- 2.0.1 The survey site is located in a residential area of Prestwich, Manchester. Sheepfoot Lane runs along the northern boundary. Middleton Road runs southwest to northeast approximately 40m to the east.
- 2.0.2 The site is located in close proximity to extensive areas of open space. Heaton Park, supporting grassland, woodland and standing water lies opposite the site beyond Sheepfoot Lane. Blackley Forest Local Nature Reserve lies approximately 150m to the east. The River Irk weaves north to south through Blackley forest, approximately 230m to the east at the closest point.
- 2.0.3 The locality is considered to have high suitability for bats.



Figure 1: Ordnance survey map showing the location of the proposed development site.





Figure 2: Aerial image showing the proposed development site and immediate surroundings





3. The Survey Site

- 3.0.1 74 Sheepfoot Lane comprises a detached two-storey house. There is a small area of amenity grassland.

The House

- 3.0.2 The house is a roughly square, two-storey brick structure with a large, pitched, corrugated tiled roof. The gables are on the north and south elevation. There are UPVC soffits. The roof is lined with bitumen felt. The loft is large, approximately 3m to the apex. The windows and doors are UPVC.
- 3.0.3 Works are currently taking place at the property on the northeast elevation.



4. Legislation

Full details of relevant legislation and planning policy can be found in Appendix A.

4.1 UK and EU Legislation

4.1.1 Key legislation regarding the protection of bats:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW), 2000
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC, 2006)
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

4.1.2 Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2018, it is a criminal offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats
- Damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
- Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.

4.2 Planning Policy and Legislation

4.2.1 Under the NERC Act 2006, planning authorities are obliged to make sure that they have all the information on the presence of protected species on site before they make a decision on the planning permission.

4.2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) encourages Local Planning Authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Chapter 15, Para 180 of NPPF states: *"The planning system 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....***
- 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"***.

Para 181 states: *"Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites;*

allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a

strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of

natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries."

Para 185 identifies that plans should do the following to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity:



- a) ***“Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and***
- b) ***Promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and peruse opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.”***

Para 186 states that *“when determining planning applications, local authorities should apply the following principles:*

- a) ***if significant harm to biodiversity from a development cannot be avoided...,adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort compensated for, then planning permission should be refused”***

- 4.2.3 The local planning authority has a responsibility, therefore, to obtain all information regarding the potential for protected species on a site prior to making a decision about a proposal.



5. Survey Methodology

- 5.0.1 The bat emergence survey was undertaken in accordance with currently accepted guidance: Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

5.0 Bat Emergence, Re-entry Surveys and Assessment of Activity

- 5.0.1 Following the Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) undertaken February 2026, the building was considered to have low suitability for bats, given the presence of a gap in the soffit and under the eaves. The surrounding habitat is also of high quality, since the site is close to Heaton Park, and this increases the likelihood of bats.
- 5.0.2 A single evening emergence survey were considered sufficient to provide information about the presence or absence of a bat roost in the building.
- 5.0.3 The bat evening emergence survey was undertaken on 10th May 2026. The emergence surveys were undertaken from 15 minutes before sunset to 1.5 hours after sunset. Two surveyors were positioned to observe all elevations of the house. Nightfox Whisker Night Vision Binoculars and Nightfox Swift 2 were also used to determine emergence of bats.
- 5.0.4 Batbox Duet detectors and Echo Meter Touch detectors were used by the surveyors so that any calls heard that could not be identified were recorded for later analysis.
- 5.0.5 The time, activity (emergence, foraging, commuting) and species of bats (where possible) were recorded when observed. Notes were made of the activity of bats elsewhere on site as well as around the building. The number of bat passes were recorded to provide an indication of bat activity level within the site.

6. Survey Limitations

- 6.0.1 The emergence survey work was undertaken in May in good weather conditions, at a time when bats are expected to be occupying summer roost sites.



7. Findings: Presence / Absence Surveys and Activity Assessment (Bats)

7.1 Survey 1: Evening Emergence on 10th May 2026

Surveyors: Verity Webster BSc MSc CEcol MCIEEM (bat licence Class 2) and Erica Booth (single seasons' bat survey experience).

Weather: 10-9°C, 70-20% cloud cover, humidity 80%. Wind 9mph northwest.

Sunset: 20:55

Time on site: 20:25– 22:30

Findings

- 7.1.1 Two bat species were recorded during the survey: common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*).
- 7.1.2 The first bat, a common pipistrelle, was recorded at 21:19, 24 minutes after sunset, suggesting the bat emerged from a roost close to the survey area, although it was not recorded emerging from the building. This first bat was recorded commuting southwest to northeast.
- 7.1.3 A second common pipistrelle was recorded at 21:24 foraging over gardens to the east of the survey area.
- 7.1.4 At 21:38 a single soprano pipistrelle was recorded commuting south to north over the site. At 21:41 a common pipistrelle was recorded commuting south to north over the site.
- 7.1.5 Following this, only sporadic passes of common pipistrelle bats were recorded, mostly distant from neighbouring gardens. There was no foraging activity on site, but there is little vegetation present.
- 7.1.6 No bats were recorded emerging from the building or entering the building.



Showing the south and southwest elevation of the house using the night vision aid.



Figure 4: Showing the survey site and the location of the surveyors and night vision aids





8. Appraisal and Assessment of Impact

- 8.0.1 During the evening survey of the house at 74 Sheepfoot Lane, Manchester, no bats were recorded emerging from the building. Activity was present on site, with bats commuting towards Heaton Park to the north, and foraging in adjacent gardens.
- 8.0.2 The survey undertaken is considered sufficient to indicate the likely absence of a bat roost in the house. The proposals are considered unlikely to be of significance to bats in the locality.
- 8.0.3 However, the risk of itinerant bats utilising the potential roost features present cannot be entirely ruled out. For this reason, reasonable avoidance measures are proposed during works.
- 8.0.4 The proposals provide the opportunity to retain the ecological functionality of the site for bats and to enhance the site for bats and recommendations for this have been made.



9. Summary and Mitigation

- 9.0.1 Survey work on the house at 74 Sheepfoot Lane has confirmed the likely absence of a bat roost.
- 9.0.2 The proposals to refurbish and extend the building are unlikely to impact bats or their roosts in the locality.
- 9.0.3 Reasonable avoidance measures are proposed during works to minimise the risk of harm to itinerant bats.
- 9.0.4 The proposals provide the opportunity to retain the ecological functionality of the site for bats and to enhance opportunities for roosting bats.

10.0 Reasonable Avoidance Measures

Mitigation Prior to and During Works

- A toolbox talk on bats is delivered to site operatives prior to the start of works. The toolbox talk must describe the bat species, where there is a risk they may be found, the legislation and what to do if a bat is found.
- Works to the roof structure including soffits is undertaken with care, by hand, whilst checking for the presence of bats.
- If a bat or evidence of bats (droppings) are found then works must stop and an ecologist must be contacted for advice.

10.1 Maintenance of existing functionality and enhancement

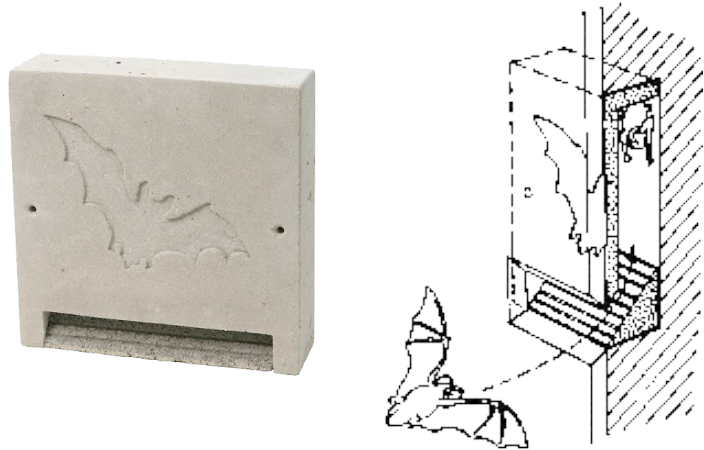
- 10.1.1 To maintain and enhance the functionality of the site for bats and improve roosting opportunities, provision of bat roost boxes is recommended.
- 10.1.2 It is proposed that:
 - Three crevice-roost sites for roosting bats are integrated into the newly refurbished dwelling.
 - Bat boxes could be attached externally to the building, or integrated into the stonework – see the examples below. There are many alternatives at NHBS.com.



Bat Boxes

1FE Schwegler bat access panel

This box is durable and does not require cleaning.



Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box 'C'

This box is durable and does not require cleaning.



Beaumaris Woodstone Bat Box

This box is durable and does not require cleaning.

All bat boxes are available from NHBS Ltd



10. References

- BCT (2003) BATS AND LIGHTING IN THE UK Bats and the Built Environment Series. Version 3. Bat Conservation Trust.
- BING maps (Accessed 2025) <http://www.bing.com/mapspreview>
- Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London. ISBN-978-1-7395126-0-6
- Google maps (Accessed 2025) <https://www.google.co.uk/maps>
- MAGIC Map (Accessed 2025) <http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>. DEFRA.



• APPENDIX A: Wildlife Legislation and Planning Policy

UK AND EU LEGISLATION

10.1. KEY LEGISLATION

10.1.1. Key legislation regarding the protection of bats:

- o Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- o The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW), 2000
- o The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC, 2006)
- o Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

10.2. WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 (AS AMENDED)

10.2.1. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is UK legislation.

10.2.2. Bats are listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981. Under Section 9 of this legislation it is an offence to:

- Kill, injure or take a bat.
- Possess, a live or dead bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly damage or destroy any structure or place which any bat uses as shelter or protection.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat whilst it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection.
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which a bat uses as shelter or protection.
- Sell, offer or expose for sale any live or dead bat.

10.3. COUNTRYSIDE AND RIGHTS OF WAY ACT 2000

10.3.1. Schedule 12 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, amended by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 by removing the need to prove intent to damage a roost / harm (etc) a bat or other species listed on Schedule 1 by adding the words 'or recklessly' after 'intentionally' into the wording in Section 9 of the WCA 1981. The CROW act also strengthened the penalties for offences to bats and other species listed on Schedule 5.

10.4. CONSERVATION OF HABITATS AND SPECIES REGULATIONS 2017 (AS AMENDED)

10.4.1. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) consolidate all the various amendments made to the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 in respect of England and Wales.

10.4.2. The 1994 Regulations transposed Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (EC Habitats Directive) into national law. The regulations came into force on 30 October 1994.

10.4.3. The Regulations provide for the designation and protection of European Sites and European Protected Species, including bats.



10.4.4. Under the Regulations, competent authorities (ie any government department or public body) have a general duty, in the exercise of any of their functions, to have regard to the EC Habitats Directive.

10.4.5. With regard to European Protected Species (including bats), the Regulations make it an offence to:

- Deliberately capture;
- Kill;
- Disturb or;
- Trade in animals listed in Schedule 2, which include all UK bat species.

10.5. European Protected Species (EPS) Licenses and the Three Tests

10.5.1. These actions can be made lawful through the granting of licenses by the appropriate authorities. Licenses may be granted for a number of purposes (such as science and education, conservation, preserve public health and safety). For such a licence to be granted the appropriate authority would have to be satisfied that an application has met the three tests, which are:

- 1)- The licence may be granted "to preserve public health or public safety or for reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences or primary importance for the environment"
- 2)- There must be "no satisfactory alternative"
- 3)- The proposal "will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the species at a favourable conservation status in its natural range"

10.6. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL COMMUNITIES (NERC) ACT 2006 (PLANNING SYSTEM)

Planning Authorities: A Duty to Conserve Biodiversity

10.6.1. Under this legislation, planning authorities are obliged to make sure that they have all the information on the presence of protected species on site *before* they make a decision on the planning permission.

10.6.2. Part 2, Section 40 confers on the planning authorities a duty to conserve biodiversity and states:

"Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of biodiversity"

Species of Principal Importance

10.6.3. Part 3, Section 41 requires the Secretary of State to "*publish a list of the living organisms and types of habitat which in the Secretary of State's opinion are of **principle importance** for the purpose of conserving biodiversity*".

10.6.4. This requirement leads to production of a list of species and habitats of Principal Importance. This list includes all UK bats.



PLANNING POLICY

10.7. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 10.7.1 Under the NERC Act 2006, planning authorities are obliged to make sure that they have all the information on the presence of protected species on site before they make a decision on the planning permission.
- 10.7.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) encourages Local Planning Authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Chapter 15, Para 180 of NPPF states: *"The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*

- b) **protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils....***
- e) **minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures"**.*

Para 181 states: *"Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries."*

Para 185 identifies that plans should do the following to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity:

- c) **"Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and***
- d) **Promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and peruse opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity."***

Para 186 states that *"when determining planning applications, local authorities should apply the following principles:*



b) *if significant harm to biodiversity from a development cannot be avoided...,adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort compensated for, then planning permission should be refused*"

10.7.3 The local planning authority has a responsibility, therefore, to obtain all information regarding the potential for protected species on a site prior to making a decision about a proposal.

10.8. ODPM CIRCULAR 06/2005: BIODIVERSITY AND GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION

10.8.1 This document, to be read in conjunction with NPPF provides administrative guidance on the application of the law relating to planning and nature conservation as it applies in England. It makes it clear that it is the intention of the government that local authorities and developers consider protected species at the earliest possible stage in the planning process. Any planning application that is likely to affect protected species should come with details of the surveys which have been undertaken and should include, if necessary, recommendations for mitigation. Applications which do not include sufficient data should be rejected.