

Bat Survey Report: Presence / Absence Survey

23 Ringley Road

Whitefield, Manchester

May 2022

Prepared for: JPL Design and Construct Ltd.

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



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- On 8th December 2021 a Preliminary Roost Assessment (bats) was undertaken at 23 Ringley Road, Whitefield, Manchester.
- The house was considered to have low suitability for bats and further survey work for bats (a single presence/absence survey) was recommended.
- A single evening emergence survey was undertaken in May 2022, in accordance with the current survey good practice guidance.
- No bats were seen or heard emerging from, or entering the building.
- The survey work is considered sufficient to give confidence in a negative result (likely absence of a roost within the building).
- The proposals to demolish the building are considered very unlikely to have any negative impact upon bats in the locality.
- However, there is a risk that individual itinerant bats will roost within the features present in the upon occasion. For this reason, precautionary methods of work during removal of the roof materials as a part of the demolition is recommended.

Verity Webster

Ecology and Protected Species Consultancy



1 Introduction

1.1 Application Site

- 1.1.1. This report details bat survey work at 23 Ringley Road, Whitefield, Manchester, M45 7LD. National grid reference SD79950574.
- 1.1.2. JPL Design and Construct Ltd 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 Survey were 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.

1.3 Proposals

- 1.3.1 The proposals comprise the demolition of the existing building and the construction of a new dwelling.

1.4 Ecologist

- 1.4.1 The Bat Emergence Survey work was lead and 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 for over 13 years. 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 The Survey Site

2.1 Site Location

- 2.1.1 The survey site lies in a residential area on the western outskirts of Whitefield.
- 2.1.2 The landscape immediately surrounding the property is built-up residential, although it is still 'green' given the large gardens and mature trees.
- 2.1.3 Stand Golf Club lies approximately 100m northwest of the survey site beyond Ringley Road and a row of houses. Whitefield Golf Course lies approximately 300m to the south beyond residential housing.
- 2.1.4 Open countryside extends south from Whitefield Golf Course and lies approximately 750m to the west at the closest point. The countryside comprises a matrix of grassland and woodland with small areas of arable land.
- 2.1.5 There are scattered waterbodies throughout the open landscape. In addition, the River Irwell weaves southwest to northeast approximately 900m to the north. A railway line, providing a linear habitat corridor, runs northwest to south approximately 600m to the northeast of the site.

2.2 The Survey Site: Description

- 2.2.1 The survey site lies to the southeast of Ringley Road and comprises a bungalow and garage set within mature gardens.

The House

- 2.2.2 The house is a brick bungalow, partly rendered, with a hipped, tiled roof. The roof is lined beneath with felt. There is a hipped extension to the rear and dormer windows to the front.
- 2.2.3 The loft void is large, approximately 5m to the apex and was accessible at the time of survey.

The garage

- 2.2.4 The garage is constructed of brick with a hipped, tiled roof. The garage is situated to the southwest of the house.

The rear garden comprises amenity grassland bounded by mature shrubs. There are mature beech trees in the front garden adjacent to Ringley Road.



The southeast (rear) elevation of the house



The northwest (front) elevation of the house



The northeast and southeast elevation of the garage



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



Ordnance survey 1:25000

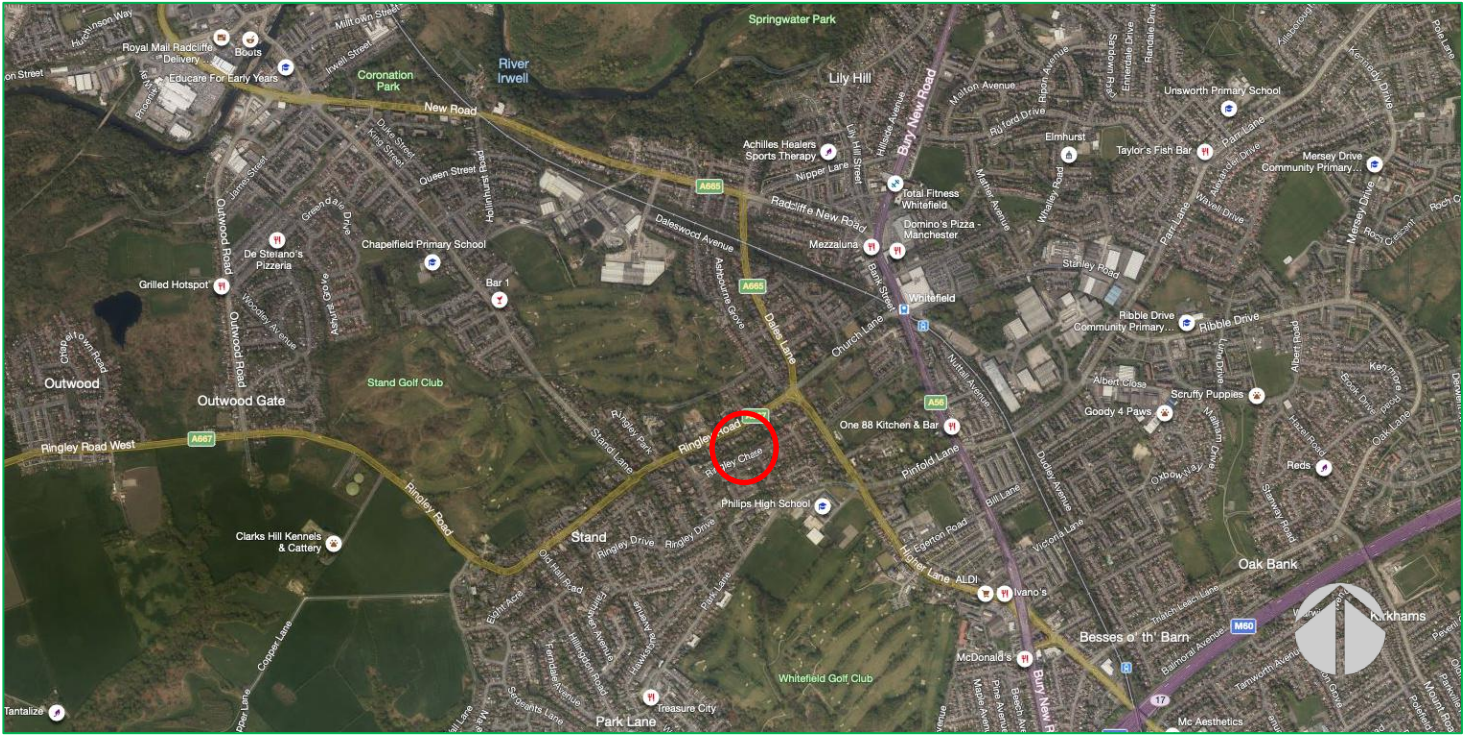
Key



Survey site



Figure 2: Aerial image showing the survey site and immediate surroundings



From BING Maps

250m

Key
 Survey site



3 Legislation

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

3.1 UK and EU Legislation

3.1.1 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) (The Habitats Regs).

3.1.2 Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 and Habitats Regs, 2017, 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.

3.2 Planning Policy and Legislation

3.2.2 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.

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

Chapter 15, Para 174 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”.***

3.2.4 Para 179 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.”*

3.2.5 Para 180 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.”**
- 3.2.6 Para 175 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”**
- 3.2.7 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.



4 Survey Methodology

- 4.0.1 The Bat Surveys were undertaken in accordance with current accepted guidance: Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

4.1 Bat Emergence / Re-entry Surveys and Assessment of Activity

- 4.1.1 Following the Preliminary Roost Assessment 23 Ringley Road was considered to have low suitability for bats due to the presence of potential roost features in the roof structure, including crevices beneath tiles.
- 4.1.2 A single evening survey was considered sufficient to give confidence in a negative result (absence of a roost).
- 4.1.3 Table 7.1 of Collins, J. (ed.) (2016). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London:

Table 7.3 Recommended minimum number of survey visits for presence/absence survey to give confidence in a negative result for structures.

Low roost suitability	Moderate roost suitability	High roost suitability
One survey visit. One dusk emergence or dawn re-entry survey.	Two separate survey visits. One dusk emergence and a separate dawn re-entry survey.	Three separate survey visits. At least one dusk emergence and a separate dawn re-entry survey. The third visit could be either dusk or dawn.

- 4.1.4 The bat emergence survey was undertaken from 15 minutes before sunset to 1.5 hours after sunset.
- 4.1.5 During the surveys two surveyors were positioned on site such that that the elevations of the building were easily observed. The skyline was such that it was clear to see bats against the sky if they were to emerge.
- 4.1.6 Batbox Duet detectors and Echo Meter Touch detectors were used so that any calls heard that could not be identified were recorded for later analysis.
- 4.1.7 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.

5 Survey Limitations

- 5.0.1 The survey work was undertaken in early May. This is an ideal time to undertake survey work within the bat survey period. At this time of year bats would be expected within their summer roosts. Given the nature of the potential roost features upon the building pipistrelle bat species were most likely to be expected, if a roost were present. The surveys undertaken and data obtained are



considered sufficient to make an adequate, reliable assessment of the likely presence / absence of a bat roost within the structure.

- 5.0.2 Records data from the local records centre was not obtained in order to inform this assessment. In this case, it is considered unnecessary to obtain the data, as the inspection and survey work is adequate to inform any necessary mitigation recommendations.

6 Findings: Presence / Absence Surveys and Activity Assessment

6.1 Survey 1: Evening Emergence on 3rd May 2022

Surveyors: Verity Webster Bsc MSc CEng MCIEEM (bat licence Class 2) and James Callan (four years bat survey experience)

Weather: 12.6°C at sunset. 70% cloud. Dry. humidity 62%. Very light breeze 3mph SSW.

Sunset: 20:43

Time on site: 20:25 – 22:15

Findings

- 6.1.1 One species of bat was recorded on site: common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*).
- 6.1.2 No bats were seen emerging from the building.
- 6.1.3 Bat activity within site during the survey was low. Bat activity was first recorded at 20:57, 14 minutes after sunset. The bat was northeast to southwest along the rear of the garden. From this time three bats followed in quick succession. A couple of bats were also recorded commuting in this way later in the evening around 21:20. It is considered likely that there is a roost to the northeast and the bats regularly utilise the tree and shrub corridor at the rear of the property to commute.
- 6.1.4 Bat activity to the front (northwest) was low with sporadic sightings.
- 6.1.5 No foraging was recorded to the rear or front of the property.



Figure 3: The positions of surveyors during emergence and re-entry survey



From Bing Maps

10m

Key

Surveyor Positions





7 Appraisal and Impact Assessment

7.1 Appraisal

- 7.1.1 A single species of bat was recorded within the survey site: common pipistrelle. Bat activity within the site was moderate.
- 7.1.2 The first bats were recorded 14 minutes after sunset suggesting the bat emerged from a site within relatively close proximity to the survey site.
- 7.1.3 No bats were recorded emerging from the building.
- 7.1.4 The survey work is considered sufficient to give confidence in a negative result (likely absence of a roost within the building).

7.2 Assessment of Impacts

- 7.2.1 The survey work indicates the likely absence of a bat roost within the building at 23 Ringley Road. The proposals to demolish the building will have no foreseen negative impact upon bats roosting in the area.

8 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 8.0.1 The survey work undertaken indicates the absence of a bat roost within the building and it is considered therefore that the proposals to demolish the building are unlikely to have a negative impact upon individual bats, their roosts, or on bat populations in the locality.
- 8.0.2 However, due to the fact that there are potential roost features within the structure, there is a risk that single, itinerant bats may roost on site from time to time. For this reason, precautionary methods of work are recommended during the removal of the roof structure as part of the demolition. It is recommended that:
 - Workers on site must be informed of the risk of bats within the roof structure of the building.
 - Tiles should be removed by hand, with care, and turned and checked for the presence of bats prior to being discarded.
 - If a bat is found during the works, all works must stop in the vicinity and an ecologist be contacted for advice.



9 References

- Bing Maps (Accessed 2022) <https://www.bing.com/maps/>
- Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London. ISBN-13 978-1-872745-96-1
- Google maps (Accessed 2022) <https://www.google.co.uk/maps>
- MAGIC Map (Accessed 2022) <http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>. DEFRA.



APPENDIX A: Wildlife Legislation and Planning Policy

UK AND EU LEGISLATION

1.1. KEY LEGISLATION

1.1.1. 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)

1.2. WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 (AS AMENDED)

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

1.2.2. 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.

1.3. COUNTRYSIDE AND RIGHTS OF WAY ACT 2000

1.3.1. 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.

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

1.4.1. 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.

1.4.2. 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.

1.4.3. The Regulations provide for the designation and protection of European Sites and European



Protected Species, including bats.

1.4.4. 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.

1.4.5. 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.

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

1.5.1. 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"

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

Planning Authorities: A Duty to Conserve Biodiversity

1.6.1. 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.

1.6.2. 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

1.6.3. 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*".

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



PLANNING POLICY

1.7. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

1.7.1. 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.

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

Chapter 15, Para 174 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"**.*

1.7.3. Para 179 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."*

1.7.4. Para 180 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."***

1.7.5. Para 175 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"***

1.7.6. 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.

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

1.8.1. 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.