



Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Report

Jersey St Bridge, Ancoats, Manchester

Client: Manchester City Council

AMENITY TREE CARE

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Site Description, Location and Development Proposals

- 1.2 Amenity Tree Care was commissioned by Manchester City Council (the client) to undertake a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment at Jersey Street, Ancoats in Manchester (the site) centred at grid reference SJ852987.
- 1.3 The survey area is an old road bridge situated on Jersey Street in the Ancoats area of Manchester. The client is intending to demolish the building and therefore a Bat Roost Assessment is required as such proposals could have a direct impact on protected bat species.
- 1.4 The surrounding landscape is a mixture of commercial and residential properties that are interspersed with areas of green space that includes, deciduous woodland, scattered mature trees and open water. The surrounding habitat offers good foraging and communing opportunities for bats.
- 1.6 The purpose of this report is to establish the potential of the buildings to offer shelter and / or roost facilities to protected species, in particular bats although an appraisal will be undertaken for birds including house nesting species.
- 1.7 The objective of the report is to be able to assess a range of factors including a rated (low-high) potential of the buildings to offer shelter for bats, absence/presence of protected species, species affected, population numbers, potential access points, types of roost and their seasonality of use.
- 1.8 The objectives include the provision of any applicable mitigation measures and / or further survey recommendations in relation to the extent and use of the site by protected species as is required by the current Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologist best practice guidelines (Collins 2016).

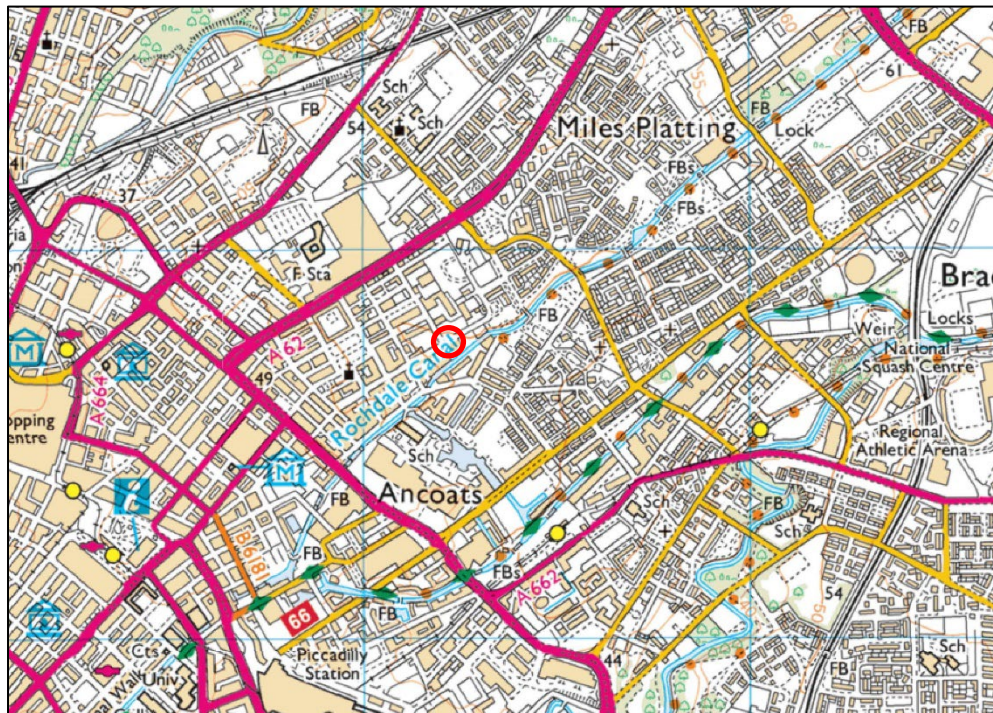


Figure 1: The map shows the location of the survey area at Jersey Street. Grid reference SJ289897 Map Scale 1:2500.



Figure 2: Aerial view of the survey area delineated by the red polygon.

2.0 Bat Survey Methodology

- 2.1 An external and internal inspection was carried out on the building(s) in relation to their potential use by roosting bats. The survey was undertaken following the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologist best practice guidelines (Collins 2016).
- 2.2 In summary this means an external and internal examination of the buildings was conducted looking for signs of bat use and to quantify any field signs for their ecological significance.
- 2.3 The following equipment was used during the survey a high-powered LED Lenser P17.2 Torch, Explorer Premium Endoscope and Zeiss Binoculars.
- 2.4 The following signs may indicate a bat roost within a building.
 - Droppings, these can be found internally within the roof spaces buildings or may be found externally on walls, windows sills or below the entrances to roost sites.
 - Evidence of access and egress by bats to a roost site which may include droppings below the entrance to the roost site or staining around the access to the roost site. Where bats are present in large numbers there may be evidence of urine stains.

2.5 Pre-existing Data on Local Bat Species

- 2.6 A 2-kilometer desktop search was carried out using the MAGIC website that is managed by Natural England. The results showed that 9 European Protected Species License for bats have been recorded within the 2-kilometer search radius of the site.

2.8 Surveyor Information

- 2.9 The Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment survey was undertaken by licensed bat surveyor Steven Shell (Natural England Licence Ref: 2018-38336-CLS-CLS.) on the 5th of April 2022.

2.10 Survey Limitations

- 2.11 The southern elevation of the bridge was covered in ivy.

3.0 Assessment of Bat Roost Potential

3.1 External survey of the bridge

- 3.2 The bridge is still in use for pedestrians and vehicles. The archway below the bridge has been filled in with concrete and the surrounding ground level has been raised so that only a small area of the arch is still visible above ground.
- 3.3 I was able to inspect the area on both sides of the bridge without obstruction. The concrete and stone on the south side of the bridge appears to be still intact although the whole side of the bridge is obscured by ivy which was a significant constraint to the survey.
- 3.4 The stone below the archway on the north side of the bridge has started to degrade and small areas have now opened below the archway.
- 3.5 Because of the constraints with the ivy and the bridge's location close to open water I conclude that the bridge has low roost potential and that a further dawn/dusk survey shall be undertaken in May to confirm the presence or absence of bats.



Figure 3: The photo shows the northern elevation of the bridge.



Figure 4: The Northern elevation of the bridge viewed from jersey Street.



Figure 4: The southern side of the bridge was covered in ivy.



Figure 4: The southern elevation of the bridge viewed from jersey Street.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 It is not possible to check every area of the building or structure during the survey and the lack of evidence does not always equate to evidence that bats are absent from the building. The bridge has been assessed as having low roost suitability for bats.

5.0 Further Survey Requirements and Mitigation

- 5.1 A further dawn or dusk survey will be required. The survey must be undertaken between May and the first two weeks in September.

5.2 Mitigation Measures and Mitigation Licenses

- 5.3 Mitigation measures and the need for Natural England licensing cannot be determined until all summer emergence surveys have been carried out. Should bats be found then a full mitigation statement will be needed for the planning application. In any buildings that are found to contain bats, Natural England licensing will be needed before any demolition works can continue to the building, even with approved planning permission.

Appendix One – Legislation for protected species

Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) [WCA] is the primary legislation for England and Wales for the protection of flora, fauna and the countryside. Part I within the Act deals with the protection of wildlife.

Most European Protected Species offences are now covered under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (see below), but some 'intentional' acts are still covered under the WCA, such as obstructing access to a bat roost.

The WCA prohibits the release to the wild of non-native animal species listed on Schedule 9 (e.g. Signal Crayfish and American Mink). It also prohibits planting in the wild of plants listed in Schedule 9 (e.g. Japanese Knotweed and *Rhododendron ponticum*) or otherwise deliberately causing them to grow in the wild. This is to prevent the release of invasive non-native species that could threaten our native wildlife.

The provisions relating to animals in the Act only apply to 'wild animals'; these are defined as those that are living wild or were living wild before being captured or killed. It does not apply to captive bred animals being held in captivity.

There are 'defences' provided by the WCA. These are cases where acts that would otherwise be prohibited by the legislation are permitted, such as the incidental result of a lawful operation which could not be reasonably avoided, or actions within the living areas of a dwelling house.

Licensing: certain prohibited actions under the Wildlife and Countryside Act may be undertaken under licence by the proper authority. For example, scientific study that requires capturing or disturbing protected animals can be allowed by obtaining a licence – e.g. bat surveys.

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (which are the principal means by which the EC Habitats Directive is transposed in England and Wales) update the legislation and consolidate all the many amendments which have been made to the Regulations since they were first made in 1994.

These regulations provide for the:

- protection of European Protected Species [EPS] (animals and plants listed in Annex IV Habitats Directive which are resident in the wild in Great Britain) including bats, dormice, great crested newts, and otters;
- designation and protection of domestic and European Sites - e.g. Site of Special Scientific Interest [SSSI] and Special Area of Conservation [SAC]; and
- adaptation of planning controls for the protection of such sites and species.

Public bodies (including the Local Planning Authority) have a duty to have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive in exercising their function – i.e. when determining a planning application.

There is no defence that an act was the incidental and unavoidable result of a lawful activity.

Licensing: it is possible for actions which would otherwise be an offence under the Regulations to be undertaken under licence issued by the proper authority. For example, where a European Protected Species has been identified and the development risks deliberately affecting an EPS, then a 'development licence' may be required.

Species protection

The following protected species information is relevant to this report. Legislation is only discussed in relation to planning and development; other offences may exist.

Bats

All British bats are classed as European Protected Species and therefore receive protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, making it an offence inter alia to:

- Deliberately kill, injure or capture a bat;
- Deliberately disturb bats;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat.

In addition, all British bats are also listed under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which contains further provisions making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- Obstruct access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection; or
- Disturb any bat while occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

If proposed development work is likely to destroy or disturb bats or their roosts, then a licence will need to be obtained from Natural Resources Wales, which would be subject to appropriate measures to safeguard bats.

Birds

In the UK, the provisions of the Birds Directive are implemented through the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected it an offence to:

- kill, injure, or take any wild bird;
- take, damage or destroy the nest of any such bird whilst it is in use or being built; or
- take or destroying an egg of any such wild bird.

The law covers all species of wild birds including common, pest or opportunistic species.

Special protection against disturbance during the breeding season is also afforded to those species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act.