

Land off Snell Street, Manchester Supplementary Bat Survey

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 In March 2021, Dunelm Ecology Ltd undertook a daytime bat inspection survey of a building off Snell Street, Manchester. The survey was undertaken in support of a planning application to demolish the building and create a new residential development. Although no evidence of bats was recorded, the inspection survey assessed the building as having moderate roost potential due to the presence of several potential roosting features, while suitable foraging habitat exists relatively close to the site despite its urban setting. The ensuring report (Dunelm Ecology Ltd 2021) therefore recommended that nocturnal bat surveys were undertaken to give confidence in the initial negative survey result and to comply with industry standard survey guidelines (Collins 2016). This report presents the results of these further surveys which were carried out in May 2021. For context, the current report should be read in conjunction with the initial ecology report (Dunelm Ecology Ltd 2021).

2 Methods and Approach

2.1 Field Survey

- 2.1.1 The bat surveys were undertaken following methodologies prescribed in English Nature's *Bat Mitigation Guidelines* (Mitchell-Jones 2004) and the Bat Conservation Trust's: *Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines* (Collins 2016); further details of which are provided below. The surveys were carried out by suitably qualified and experienced surveyors.

Nocturnal Survey

- 2.1.2 Two dusk emergence surveys were carried out on 12 and 26 May 2021. These aimed to record bats exiting the building and started 15 minutes before sunset and ended 90 minutes after sunset. The surveys were undertaken using time expansion (Echometer Touch 2) detectors coupled with iPads to view bat call sonograms. The time of exit and the number of bats and species (if identifiable) were recorded; whilst any bat activity in the general area was also noted.

2.2 Survey Constraints

- 2.2.1 The surveys were undertaken at an optimal time of year under favourable weather conditions. As such, no significant constraints are associated with the survey.

Table 1 Summary of Bat Survey Times and Weather Conditions

Survey	Date	Timings	Weather
Dusk emergence	12/05/2021	20:42 – 22:27 (sunset 20:57)	11 – 10°C, dry, light breeze, 50% cloud cover.
Dusk emergence	26/05/2021	21:05 – 22:50 (sunset 21:20)	14 – 11°C, dry, light breeze, 50% cloud cover.

3 Results

3.1 Nocturnal survey

- 3.1.1 No bats were recorded exiting the building during the nocturnal surveys but moderate levels of activity by common pipistrelle bats were encountered during both surveys. Bats were typically first recorded 20 minutes after sunset suggesting the presence of a roost site nearby. Bats appeared from the north and southeast and were mainly observed commuting over the building with some occasional foraging around trees and vegetation within the site. Bat activity tended to decrease one hour after sunset.

4 Discussion

4.1 Assessment and Recommendations

- 4.1.1 There is no conclusive evidence that the building is used by roosting bats, although it does support roosting features which are typically favoured by crevice roosting species such as pipistrelle bats. Indeed, it should be noted that bats are itinerant in their roosting habits meaning the presence of a summer non-breeding roost (low conservation value) used by solitary or low numbers of bats should not be discounted.
- 4.1.2 In light of the above, it is considered that providing suitable precautions are taken, the planning proposals would have no adverse impacts on the local bat population or individual bats. It is advised that fascia boards and peeling rendering are removed carefully by hand. In the event of a bat being discovered, works must cease immediately, and a licensed bat ecologist contacted for advice.
- 4.1.3 As discussed in the initial ecology report, it is recommended that artificial bat roosting features are provided as part of the development proposals. This can be achieved by incorporating bespoke bat roosting units within gable end walls of the new dwellings (just below the apex) while integral swift and sparrow nesting units should also be installed under the eaves on the sides of the buildings (one unit per a building). Such measures are in accordance with the NPPF which advises that developments should secure net gains for biodiversity.

5 References

Collins J (2016). *Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines. Third Edition*. BCT, London.

Dunelm Ecology Ltd (2021). *Land off Snell Street. Ecology Report*. Unpublished report.

Mitchell-Jones AJ (2004). *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature, Peterborough