

Mark Lucy
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Our ref: 13883_R01_JD_19032021

Dear Mark,

Bat Method Statement pursuant to the discharge of Condition 4 of planning consent 125974/FO/2020 (Manchester City Council)

Introduction

This note has been produced by Tyler Grange Group Ltd. on behalf of Mulbury Homes Ltd. It has been prepared pursuant to the discharge of Condition 4 of planning consent 125974/FO/2020 (Manchester City Council). This consent permits the erection of 25 residential dwelling (use C3a) with associated car parking, landscaping and boundary treatment, following demolition of part of the Higher Blackley Community Centre and Former Royal British Legion and other associated works. The location of the site and building in question is illustrated in **Figure 1** below. It is located off Victoria Avenue in Higher Blackley (OS Grid Ref: SD852041).

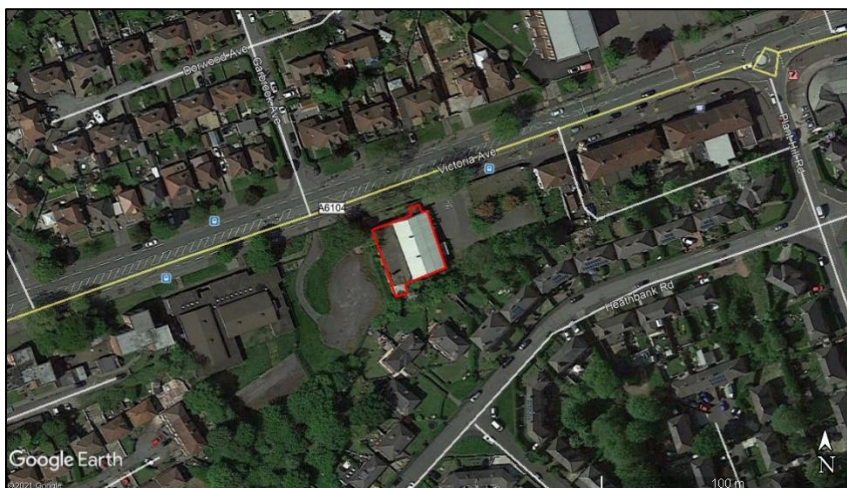


Figure 1: Location of former British Legion Building. Crown Copyright GoogleEarth ©.



Condition 4 of the consent states:

"No demolition of the former British Legion Building shall take place during March and October¹ unless bats have shown to be absent, or, a method statement for the demolition including for the protection of any bats is agreed in writing by the City Council, Local Planning Authority. Any method statement shall then be implemented for the duration of the demolition works".

Background

The former British Legion Building was previously subject to a suite of bat surveys in 2019 by Urban Green (Report Reference UG22 – Victoria Avenue, Blackley). This note should, therefore, be read alongside the report previously produced. The results of these surveys confirmed the former British Legion Building had 'low' bat roost potential and was subject to a single nocturnal survey during the optimal season in June 2019. This subsequent survey did not record any roosting bats associated with the building and roosting bats were, therefore, considered likely absent. Such data is now considered to be 'out of date' in 2021 in accordance with British Standard BS42020 and the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidelines. Therefore, it cannot be relied upon to conclude the likely absence of bats from the building at the time of demolition in 2021

Method Statement

The former British Legion Building is planned for demolition in May 2021. Due to the time required to discharge Condition 4 and obtain the consent in time for the planned demolition in May, it is necessary to submit a Reserved Matters application for this condition (and others) in April 2021. Condition 4 requires evidence of bats being absent from the building or a method statement for its demolition is to be provided. As we are outside of 'optimal' season for conducting nocturnal emergence surveys for bats (i.e. May – August), the only option to determine the likely absence of bats would be to thoroughly inspect the building with an endoscope. This would be both time intensive and unlikely to conclusively rule out the likely absence of bats due to its size. Therefore, it is not considered realistically possible to conclude the likely absence of bats in the building at the time of the Reserved Matters application in April 2021.

It is considered, therefore, that the most effective solution would be to conduct a repeat nocturnal dusk emergence survey in early May 2021 in the week prior to demolition. The survey will be completed in the first week of May 2021 and, in accordance with survey guidelines, will start 15 minutes before sunset and last for at least 1.5 hours after sunset. Two surveyors will be positioned around the building, as previously conducted, to cover all possible sightlines.

¹ Note – this is known to be a grammatical error and was confirmed in telephone conversation with Suzanne Waymont of Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) on Monday 15th March 2021. The wording is meant to read 'No demolition of the former British Legion Building shall take place **between** March and October...'



The survey will be immediately preceded by an update Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) to confirm that the building remains unchanged in its potential to support bats since 2019.

In the event the likely absence of roosting bats is confirmed, a short note of the survey findings will be submitted to Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) and Manchester City Council (MCC) as evidence of adherence to this method statement.

In the unlikely event a bat roost is recorded in the building, the demolition works will be delayed until a licence from Natural England has been acquired (either a traditional mitigation licence or Low Impact Class Licence) to lawfully permit the demolition works. In this instance, a short note of the findings and course of action (i.e. intention to acquire a licence from Natural England) will be submitted to GMEU and MCC as evidence of adherence to this method statement and legislation protecting bats.

If the update PRA confirms that the building has increased in its potential to support roosting bats, additional nocturnal emergence/re-entry surveys will be required in line with best practice guidelines.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposed methods and actions put forward in this note would be sufficient to a) conclude the likely absence of roosting bats in accordance with best-practice guidelines for buildings with 'low' bat roost potential and b) provide the ecological consultee (GMEU) and the council with the confidence that appropriate control mechanisms are in place to ensure the building is not demolished before the update nocturnal survey(s) either confirms the likely absence of bats or b) confirms that a licence from Natural England will be required if a roost is encountered. The LPA will be updated throughout the process in the form of email notes to confirm the results of surveys and adherence to this method statement.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries on the above information.

Yours sincerely,

Joseph Dance
Associate