

DAYTIME BAT SURVEY & NESTING BIRD SURVEY AT 84-86 OLDHAM STREET, MANCHESTER

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2020 by The Daylesford Trust to undertake a daytime bat survey and nesting bird survey at 84-86 Oldham Street in Manchester. The site will be the subject of a planning application for the renovation of the properties, including the construction of additional storeys.
- 1.2 The building is located on Oldham Street in central Manchester (O.S. grid reference: SJ 84625 98625). The site comprises three attached properties. The site lies adjacent to other commercial developments on a busy road, offering limited bat foraging and commuting habitat and limited bird nesting habitat.
- 1.3 Biodiversity is a material consideration to the planning process and consideration must be given to protected species. The proposed works to the property will be destructive/intrusive and therefore consideration should be given to roosting bats and other protected and notable species, which could potentially utilise the building.
- 1.4 All bat species are fully protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (Amendment) (EU Exit) and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 1.5 All bird species are protected whilst at the nest under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

2.0 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 A daytime bat survey of 84-86 Oldham Street was undertaken to search for, and to assess the potential for, a bat roost within the buildings.
- 2.2 An external survey was carried out, which included, for example, looking for gaps between any soffit boards and walls, gaps between window frames and the walls, and looking for bat droppings on the walls and window ledges.
- 2.3 The buildings were also searched internally for evidence of a bat roost, which included looking for the following signs:
 - live or dead bats
 - bat droppings
 - bat entry/exit points
 - bat urine staining
 - grease marks on any timbers
 - feeding remains such as insect wings
 - areas clear of cobwebs.
- 2.4 A pair of close-focussing binoculars, a high-powered torch and an endoscope were used to search for evidence of bats externally and internally.
- 2.5 In addition to the daytime bat survey, a nesting bird survey was carried out on the building. This involved a search for evidence of nesting by birds, including nesting material and feeding remains.

Personnel and Timing

- 2.6 Kate Reed (Senior Ecologist) carried out the daytime bat survey and nesting bird survey on the 20th April 2020. Kate is an experienced ecologist and fully trained in protected species assessments. The weather on the day of the survey was cool and dry.

Survey constraints

- 2.7 Daytime bat surveys can be conducted at any time of the year. The property was fully accessible and could be surveyed internally and externally. Nesting bird surveys can be carried out during the nesting bird season, generally March-August.

3.0 RESULTS

External Survey

- 3.1 84-86 Oldham Street are a pair of attached properties. The properties are constructed from brick and partially rendered (see Photographs 1 and 2). The external brickwork is complete and intact, offering no damaged bricks for bats to exploit. The render is also complete, with no cracks in the render. The ground-level shops have metal shutters which are well-sealed. The window frames are well-sealed to the surrounding masonry.



Photograph 1 showing the exterior of the property



Photograph 2 showing the front elevation

- 3.2 The properties have pitched roofing, which are roofed with clay tiles. The roof tiles are all in situ, and flush to one another (see Photograph 3). The roof edges are mortared. The clay ridge tiles are in position and have ventilation tiles present. None of roof tiles are slipped or broken.



Photograph 3 showing the roof of the property

Internal Survey

- 3.3 The property upper floors do not provide suitable bat roosting habitat. The property roof voids have wooden roof joists which do not have cracks or gaps for bats to exploit (see Photographs 4 and 5). The roof voids are lined throughout with felt, and there are no major tears or rips in the lining. The roof voids are insulated throughout. The roof voids do not have daylight at the roof edges, suggesting the voids are well-sealed. No evidence of bat activity was found in the roof voids.



Photograph 4 showing the roof joists



Photograph 5 showing the roof void

- 3.4 No evidence of nesting birds was found inside the building.

Surrounding Land

- 3.5 The property is entirely enclosed by hardstanding. No mature trees exist on the site. No evidence of other protected species was located on site.

4.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 No evidence of bat activity was found at 84-86 Oldham Street. The buildings offer no suitable voids or cavities for bats. Due to the lack of evidence found, the property is considered to offer **negligible bat roost suitability**.
- 4.2 It is the opinion of the author of this report that the proposed works can proceed without the need for further survey work (e.g. bat activity surveys) or bat mitigation due to the negligible potential of the buildings to support bats. However, if the work is delayed by longer than two years from the date of this survey, a further bat survey will be required to update the findings.
- 4.3 It should be noted that bat absence is very difficult to prove definitively due to their mobility and size, and single or small numbers of bats are able to roost in extremely small spaces, such as in gaps between panels. The demolition work should be undertaken with care.
- 4.4 **If during development works a bat (or an accumulation of bat droppings) is discovered at any time, work is to temporarily cease whilst an experienced bat ecologist is contacted for guidance and assistance.** This can be Rachel Hacking Ecology (0161 465 8971) who undertook the initial survey, any licensed bat worker, or the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) helpline (0845 1300 228).
- 4.5 No evidence of nesting birds was found during the survey. The lack of suitable vegetation on the site indicates that nesting birds are unlikely to be a constraint on the proposed development.

REFERENCES

Collins, J. (ed.). (2016). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd Edition*. Bat Conservation Trust. London.

Mitchell-Jones, A. J. (2004). *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature.