

DAYTIME BAT SURVEY OF 7 RAINFORTH STREET, LONGSIGHT, MANCHESTER

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2020 by Broadgrove Planning & Development Limited to undertake a daytime bat survey of 7 Rainforth Street in Longsight. The site will be the subject of a planning application for the conversion of the upper floors of the building into residential apartments, and the renovation of the commercial areas within the ground floor and basement.
- 1.2 The building is located at 7 Rainforth Street, Longsight, Manchester (O.S. grid reference: SJ 86797 95499). The site comprises a large commercial property that is no longer occupied. The site is surrounded by residential and commercial development offering limited foraging and commuting 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 bungalow 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).

2.0 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 A daytime bat survey of 7 Rainforth Street was undertaken to search for, and to assess the potential for, a bat roost within the bungalow and garage.
- 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 building was 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.

Personnel and Timing

- 2.5 Joel Hacking (Senior Ecologist) carried out the daytime bat survey on the 13th March 2020. Joel is an experienced ecologist and holds a Natural England Level 2 Class Survey Licence for bats (Licence Ref: 2016-24701-CLS-CLS). The weather on the day of the survey was cool and dry.

Survey constraints

- 2.6 Daytime bat surveys can be conducted at any time of the year. The property was fully accessible and could be surveyed internally and externally.

3.0 RESULTS

External Survey

- 3.1 The property is constructed from brick and has a pitched, tiled roof. The external brickwork is complete and intact on the front elevation, with no significantly damaged bricks or recessed mortar. The window frames are flush to the surrounding masonry (see Photograph 1). The brick lintels are complete and intact.



Photograph 1 showing the front elevation of the property

- 3.2 The brickwork on the rear elevation is partially damaged in places, though none of the damaged bricks present cavities suitable for bats to roost within. Vegetation is penetrating parts of the external brickwork. Rainwater is also affecting the brickwork.
- 3.3 The roof is not fully visible at ground-level. Several tiles are damaged at the roof edges (see Photograph 2). The upper brick courses are intact. One elevation has a cement render, which is complete and offers no gaps or cracks for bats to exploit.



Photograph 2 showing the broken roofing tiles

Internal Survey

- 3.4 The interior of the property is split over several floors and is currently unoccupied. The ground floors and most of the remaining floors offer no suitable bat roosting habitat. The uppermost floor is open to the roof and has no separate roof void (see Photograph 3). The wooden and metal roof joists are complete and without gaps or cracks for bats to exploit. The roof is lined throughout, with no major tears or rips in the lining. Parts of the roof are lined with roofing felt, with one section lined with Breathable Roofing Membrane (see Photograph 4). Several roof beams are damp, suggesting rainwater is accessing the internal space.



Photograph 3 showing the roof structure of the upper floor



Photograph 4 showing the roof linings

- 3.5 The internal brickwork is complete and intact, offering no gaps in the mortar for bats to exploit. The upper floor is well-lit internally. The roof edges are well-sealed internally.
- 3.6 A section of the roof is elevated and houses the motor mechanism for the lift (see Photograph 5). The lift motor room has a flat roof, and is well-sealed, offering no gaps where the roof meets the internal masonry.



Photograph 5 showing the lift motor room

- 3.7 No evidence of bat activity, such as bat droppings, was found in the upper floor of the property or on any floor of the building.

- 3.8 The property has an extensive cellar space (see Photographs 6 and 7). The space is well-lit and offers no suitable bat roosting spaces. The walls are plaster-boarded, and no potential points of entry for bats could be located. No evidence of bat activity was located in the cellar space.



Photograph 6 showing the basement



Photograph 7 showing the basement

Surrounding Land

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

4.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 No evidence of bat activity was found at 7 Rainforth Street, Longsight. Whilst the external brickwork has not been maintained, with vegetation establishing within it, no suitable bat roosting cavities were found. The gaps were damp. Internally, the building is in good material condition, and no suitable bat roosting spaces were found. The roof lining, beams and upper floor are damp, which would deter bats from roosting. The building is also isolated from any bat foraging and commuting habitat. Due to the lack of evidence found, and the above reasons, 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 renovation 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).

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.