DAYTIME BAT SURVEY AT FRASER HOUSE, MANCHESTER

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2013 by CINNS Limited to undertake a daytime bat survey of Fraser House, Manchester. The building is the subject of a planning application for change of use to residential. The building will be converted into flats from its past use as offices.

1.2 Fraser House is located on Portland Street, Manchester (O.S. grid reference: SJ842980). It is a four-storey Grade II listed building. See Figure 1 which shows the site location and the surrounding infrastructure.

1.3 All bat species are European Protected Species under the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 1994, updated and consolidated by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. They are also fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. It is illegal to disturb or damage a bat roost whether or not there are bats present. The presence of a protected species is a material consideration in planning.

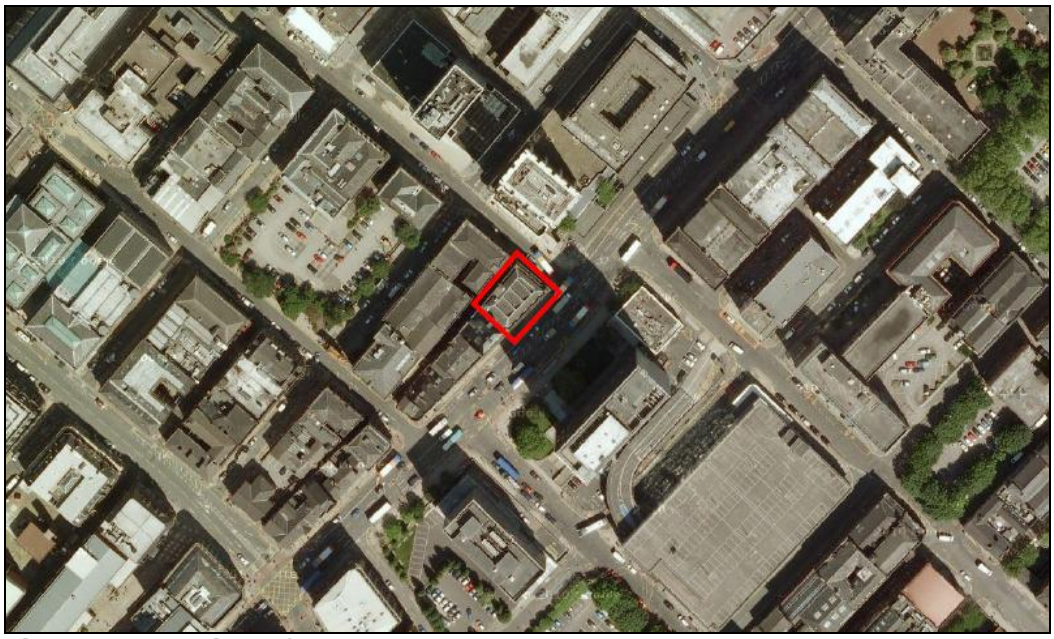


Figure 1. Location of Fraser House

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 A daytime bat survey of Fraser House was undertaken to search for, and to assess the potential for, a bat roost to be present within the building.

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 top floor of 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 heterodyne bat detector was carried throughout the survey to detect echo-location and/or chattering. A high-powered torch and close focussing binoculars were also used where required.

Personnel and Timing

2.5 Anthony Nickson carried out the daytime bat survey on the 6th November 2013. The weather was dry and bright.

2.6 The surveyor holds a Natural England survey licence (WML-CL18) for bats and has many years of experience of conducting bat surveys.

3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 Fraser House is a circa 1855 four-storey Grade II listed building. It is of red brick construction with a slate roof. Roof lights exist on the 4th floor. Internally, no roof voids exist. Scaffolding is present on parts of the building.

3.2 Listed building consent has already been obtained from Manchester City Council for the development at Fraser House. Work has commenced and the building has been stripped internally.

3.3 Fraser House is located in the centre of Manchester and is surrounded by city centre buildings with a small amount of green infrastructure, providing minimal foraging opportunities for bats.

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 The building was inspected externally using close focussing binoculars. The brick external walls extend to the top floor windows and are in a good state of repair. No missing bricks or gaps in the mortar could be located. Parts of the building were obscured by netting but as much of the building as possible was surveyed externally and the condition noted as being similar throughout.

4.2 The slate roof and lead flashing to the 4th floor roof is in good condition (see Photograph 1). No slates are missing. The lead flashing is flush to the walls. The roof exhibits minimal roosting opportunities for crevice dwelling bats such as Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus* spp.



Photograph 1 showing the roof of Fraser House

4.3 Internally, all of the floors of the building could be accessed easily. No roof voids exist which would be suitable for void-roosting bats such as Brown Long-eared *Plecotus auritus*. The top floor was inspected throughout and was found to be open to the roof. This floor is light, with many windows (see Photograph 2). The window frames are flush to the walls. No obvious entry and exit points for bats could be found. The building has been in use in the recent past. No evidence of bat activity could be located such as bat droppings or feeding remains.



Photograph 2 showing the top floor of Fraser House

4.4 No evidence of the presence of roosting bats was found during the daytime inspection. The building offers very low potential for use as a bat roost.

5.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 No evidence of bat activity could be located at Fraser House during the daytime survey, despite conducting a thorough search. The building exhibits a lack of potential roosting features. Fraser House is located within Manchester City Centre, surrounded by poor bat foraging habitat. No further survey work is recommended and bat mitigation is not considered to be necessary.

5.2 It should be noted that bat absence is very difficult to prove definitively due to their mobility and size. **During construction works, if any bats are found then work must stop immediately and an ecologist be contacted.**

REFERENCES

Bat Mitigation Guidelines, English Nature, A J Mitchell-Jones A J, 2004

Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines, 2nd Edition, Bat Conservation Trust, L Hundt, 2012

Countryside and Wildlife Act, 1981

EU Habitats Directive, 1994