

Badger and Bat Survey

Residential Development. Land off Vine Street, Gorton



26 November 2024

Peter Black MRTPI

Blackfryers Consultants

9 Ecclesbridge Road, Marple

STOCKPORT SK6 7PF

Tel: 0750 522 1405

PeterBlack62@gmail.com

1 Summary

- Outline permission was granted for 25 houses (Class C3) opposite 83-87 Vine Street, Manchester, M18 8SR subject to a number of conditions including:
- 22) *Prior to commencement of development, a survey to identify whether **badgers** are present on the site shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the City Council as local planning authority, together with any mitigation measures required. Any mitigation measures which are approved shall be implemented within a timeframe to be agreed with the City Council as local planning authority.*
- 25) *If no ground works are commenced on site within 12 months of the date of the permission hereby approved, a survey to identify whether **bats** are present on the site shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the City Council as local planning authority, together with mitigation measures prior to commencement of development . Any mitigation measures which are approved shall be implemented within a timeframe to be agreed with the City Council as local planning authority..*
- **Badgers** are common in the area, are known to forage along the adjacent railway corridor. They may occasionally visit the application site which is bordered by Vine Street, new suburban housing to the south and a live railway corridor with significant vacant land.
 - No evidence of setts, tracks, latrines, hairs or other features were found.
 - A detailed examination of the embankment suggested that not only was there no evidence of badgers, but that much of it was unsuitable for excavation by badgers.
- **Bats** are also common in the area and commute along the railway corridor. Like badgers, they may occasionally overfly the application site to forage.
 - The survey found no buildings or suitably mature trees on site, or any younger trees with potential roost features.
 - Therefore the site is highly unlikely to support bat roosts.
- In conclusion, no mitigation measures for badgers or bats are proposed, and it is not suggested that any Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) for either are required

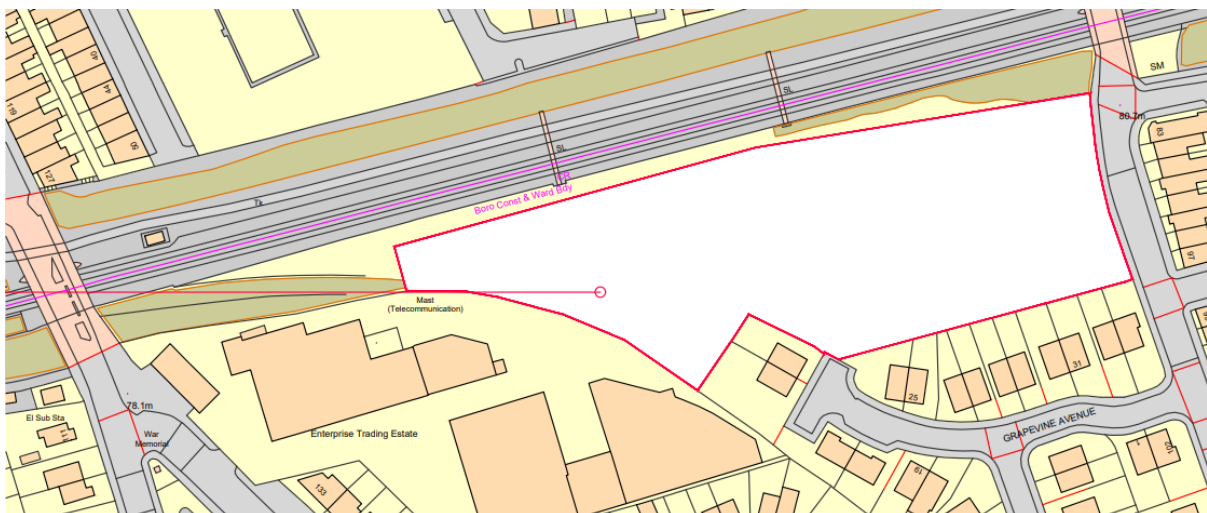


Figure 1 – Site Plan

2 Introduction

Badgers are common in Greater Manchester. They are protected in Britain under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The legislation affords protection to Badgers and Badger setts and makes it a criminal offence to:

- wilfully kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a Badger, or to attempt to do so;
- interfere with a sett by damaging or destroying it;
- to obstruct access to, or any entrance of, a Badger sett; or
- to disturb a Badger when it is occupying a sett.

Bats are also common in Greater Manchester and highly protected. it is an offence to intentionally capture, kill, disturb, or injure a bat; to damage or destroy a breeding or resting place (whether in use or not); or to obstruct access to their resting or sheltering place.

This report was prepared by Peter Black, an experienced ecologist with specific training in both badger and ecology. A survey was carried out on the morning of 4 November 2024. This is a time of year when **badgers** are still active (they do not hibernate in the UK, although they can enter periods of winter torpor) is and when evidence of activity is less obscured by vegetation growth. Surveys for trees and buildings with features suitable for **bats** can be carried out at any time of year. The site contains rough grassland, scrub and secondary woodland. There is significant evidence of fly tipping and some recent disturbance.

The weather was calm, overcast, and dry. The survey for the 0.8ha site took one hour.

3 Badger survey

A previous badger walkover survey was carried out in March 2023 (*Preliminary Bat Roost Appraisal And Update Badger Survey Report 24 May 2023*). This identified no evidence of Badger (tracks, latrines, hairs, prints etc) at any location. The survey noted suitable habitat for Badger in the bank leading down to the railway line, however no signs of Badger activity here was recorded during the 2023 survey. The surveyors also looked at private residential gardens immediately adjacent to the site along its southern boundary, but again no evidence of Badger activity was recorded in this area, nor in the embankment to the west of the site.

The site was re-surveyed on 4 November 2024 in line with Government Guidance [Badgers: surveys and mitigation for development projects](#). Typical features indicating badgers include sett entrances and spoil heaps, bedding, footprints, hairs, and badger paths.

The site is surrounded by Vine Street, new suburban housing to the south and a live railway corridor with significant vacant land. The site was surveyed in two parts:

- Higher part of the site. This is generally flat and open with limited scrub cover at the edges. No habitat suitable for badgers was seen, and no evidence of badger activity. The amount of food (such as earthworms, hedgehogs or fruit) was very limited and it is unlikely that badgers visit this area, except for occasional exploratory activity.
- Embankment on the railway side. Most of the visit focussed on a detailed exploration of this area. It has more cover and could potentially house setts. The railway boundary was secured with palisade fencing for its entire length and there was no evidence either of

gaps or of animal activity seeking to dig under. The whole of the embankment was examined in detail and no setts or evidence other badger activity was found.

The surrounding residential streets and gardens was surveyed as much as possible for signs of badgers, but none was found.

My opinion is that there are no badger setts on the site itself and that it is unlikely that badgers use the site for foraging as the habitat is generally unsuitable, although occasional exploratory visits are possible. It is therefore not necessary to carry out any further survey work, and Reasonable Avoidance Measures, at least for badgers are not necessary either.

It is concluded that no RAMs for badgers is required.

3 Bat survey

A previous bat walkover survey was carried out in March 2023 (*Preliminary Bat Roost Appraisal And Update Badger Survey Report 24 May 2023*). This concluded (5.2.3) that ‘*Bat species in the local area are likely to use this site and the adjacent embankment and railway line for both foraging and commuting, however there are currently no opportunities for bat roosting at this site.*’.

The site was re-surveyed on 4 November 2024 in line with standard bat survey guidelines. This is a walkover survey for buildings and for typical features on trees such as holes, deeply fissured bark, rips or other damage that might provide suitable roost sites.

- There are no buildings on site. Some of the older houses in the surrounding area almost certainly have roost sites.
- The site itself including the whole of the embankment was examined in detail. It has no trees that are old enough to have developed features that would typically provide roost sites. Bats will use the live railway corridor for commuting and it is likely that bats will overfly the application site looking for insects – however the construction and completed development will not affect this. Separate recommendations have been made to avoid lighting affecting bats using the railway corridor, however it should be noted that this already has significant disturbance from other lighting and passing trains.
- While bats will return to forage over the site once the development is completed, and will naturally find cracks and crevices in the new houses, it is recommended that that each house is provided with two bat bricks on different facing elevations as part of the fabric.

My opinion is that there are no sites suitable for bat roosting on the site itself. Bats will simply avoid the site during construction and It is therefore not necessary to carry out any further survey work, and no Reasonable Avoidance Measures, are not needed. Bat bricks should be provided in the new dwellings.

End of main text – appendices follow:

- Site photos

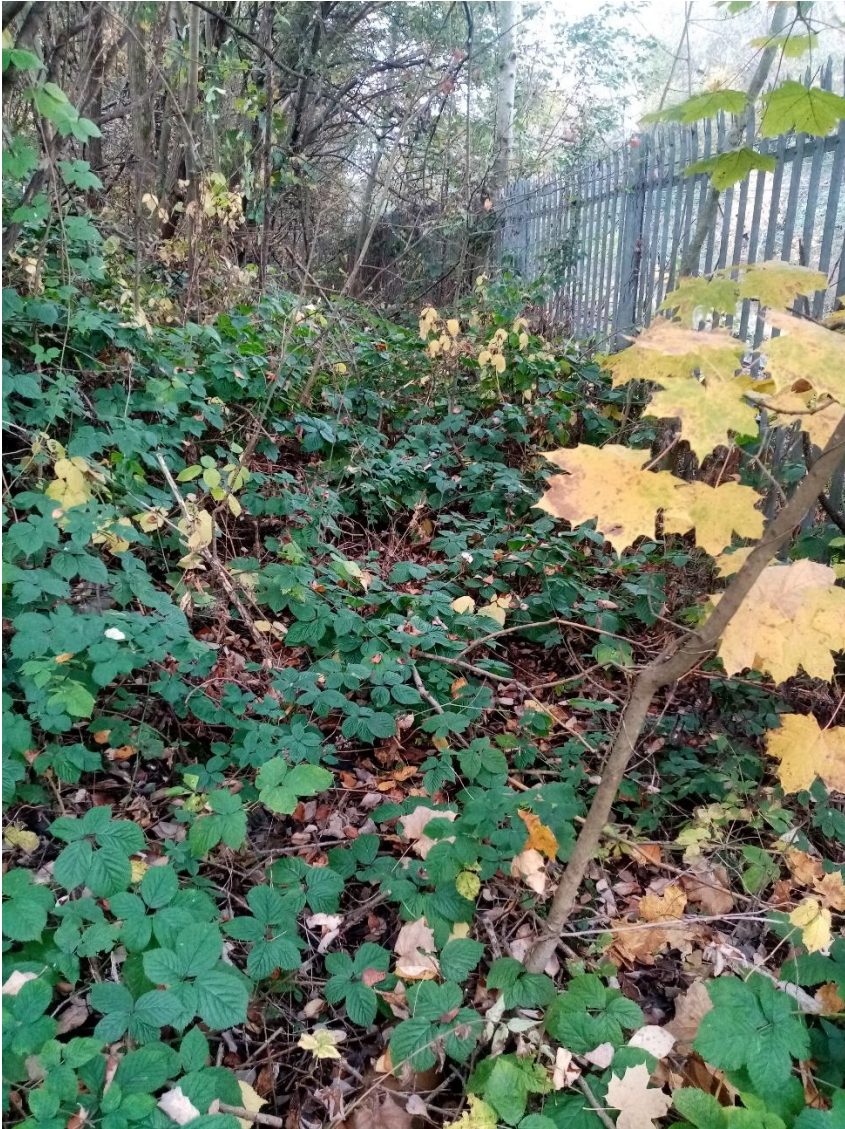


Figure 2 - View of embankment - no sign of badger activity. Trees are too young to have potential bat roost features.



Figure 3 - Bottom of embankment to north, showing palisade fencing to live railway and lack of disturbance.