

French Barn Lane, Blackley

Bat Dusk Emergence Survey

2024



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Client [Manchester City Council](#)
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Executive Summary

Development Details

The client is proposing residential development at 20 French Barn Lane, hereafter referred to as the 'site'.

This report describes the status of roosting bats at the site and its surroundings and assesses the potential impacts of the development on bats. Recommendations are provided so that the development is compliant with biodiversity policy and legislation.

Ecological Interest

No evidence of roosting bats was recorded during the surveys.

Outcomes

The proposed development is unlikely to result in any impacts to bats or their roosts. No further survey work is required.



1. Introduction

1.1 Project Brief

- 1.1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2024 by Manchester City Council to carry out a dusk emergence bat Survey at 20 French Barn Lane, Blackley, hereafter referred to as the 'site'. The site is a disused children's care home situated in a suburban area. There are woodlands in the surrounding area offering suitable bat habitat. The site is located at O.S. grid reference: SD 85557 03243 (see Figure 1).

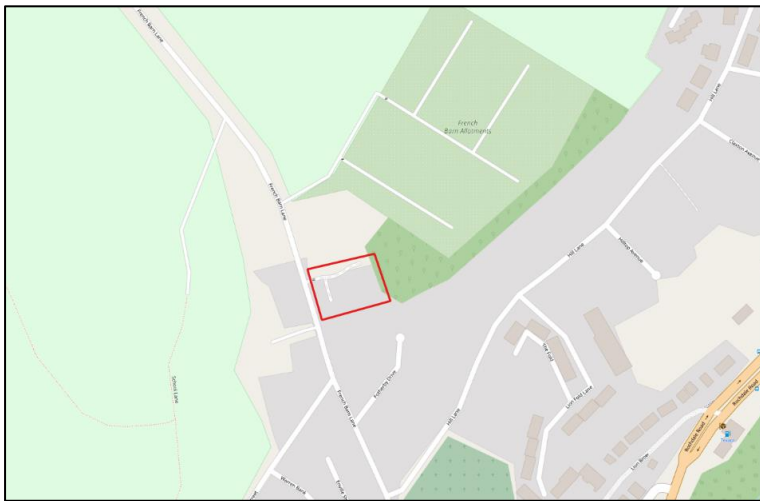


Figure 1. Map showing the location of the site courtesy of © OpenStreetMap Contributors

Description of Development

- 1.1.2 The site will be the subject of a planning application for the demolition of the building and levelling of the site

1.2 Scope of Work

- 1.2.1 The Client commissioned Rachel Hacking Ecology to undertake a presence/absence survey.

1.3 Aims of the Survey

- 1.3.1 The aims of the survey were to:
- Assess the status of roosting bats at the site;
 - Inform impact assessment and mitigation requirements.



2. Methods

2.1 Presence/Absence Surveys

- 2.1.1 Two dusk emergence surveys were undertaken. Four surveyors (three surveyors and an infra-red camera on the second survey) monitored the site to ensure complete coverage for any emerging bats. The emergence surveys began 15 minutes before sunset and continued for 90 minutes after sunset. The surveyors used Echo Meter Touch 2 Pro Anabat scout bat detectors to record the echolocations of bats.

2.2 Assessment Criteria

- 2.2.1 Surveys were undertaken in accordance with current guidelines¹. Interpretation of survey findings and assessment of roosting potential was undertaken using professional judgement and criteria described in published guidance^{1,2}.

2.3 Survey Information

- 2.3.1 Details of the survey conditions are presented at Appendix 2.
- 2.3.2 Survey one was undertaken by Joel Hacking (Senior Ecologist), Mark Ashton (Junior Ecologist), Megan Johnson (Ecologist) and Lucia Ruiz Mut (Ecologist). The second survey was undertaken by Mark Ashton, Adam Ousby (Junior Ecologist) and Evie Longman and an infra-red camera. Joel holds a Class 2 level licence (2016-24701-CLS-CLS). All other surveyors have experience in bat emergence surveys.

2.4 Surveyor locations

- 2.4.1 Locations of the surveyors (blue arrows) and infra-red cameras (red arrows) are shown in Figure 2, below.

¹ Collins, J. (Ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists-good practice guidelines*. 4th edn. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

² Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023). UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.



Figure 2 showing surveyor (blue arrows) and IR camera (red arrow) locations

3. Results

3.1 Habitat Appraisal

- 3.1.1 Woodland is abundant within 100m of the site, offering good foraging opportunities for bats.

3.2 Dusk Emergence Survey

- 3.2.1 No evidence of roosting bats was recorded during either of the dusk emergence surveys. Raw data are provided at Appendix 2.



4. Assessment

4.1 Interpretation of Results

- 4.1.1 The surveys were undertaken at an appropriate time of year under suitable conditions. A high degree of confidence is placed on the results.

No evidence of roosting bats was recorded and it is concluded that the site does not support a bat roost.

4.2 Potential Impacts

- 4.2.1 The proposed development is unlikely to result in any impacts to bats or their roosts.



5. Recommendations

5.1 Further Surveys

- 5.1.1 No further surveys are required.

5.2 Mitigation and Enhancement Measures

- 5.2.1 Any future development of the site should include roosting opportunities for bats such as integral bat boxes.

General Precautions

- 5.2.2 Bats can roost in suitable features opportunistically. It is recommended that roof coverings are removed with due caution. Should a bat be identified at any time, work should stop in that area and a suitably qualified ecologist contacted to attend site and advise how to proceed.
- 5.2.3 This report is considered to be valid for two years. After this, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted to assess its validity. An assessment update may be required.



Appendix 1: Planning Policy & Legislation

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2023) describes the Government's planning policy for England and how it should be applied. Within this framework, the requirements in relation to biodiversity are included within several policies. The two most relevant to individual planning decisions are Paragraphs 180 and 180, shown below:

- 180. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
 - a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
 - c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
 - d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
 - e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
 - f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.
- 186. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:
 - a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
 - b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments),



should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

Legislation

All bat species are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (Amendment) (EU Exit), which make it an offence to:

- Deliberately kill, injure or capture a bat;
- Deliberately disturb bats;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat.

The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) contains further provisions making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- Obstruct access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection; or
- Disturb any bat while occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

Proposed development works that are likely to disturb or destroy bats or their roosts will need to obtain a licence from the relevant Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (e.g., Natural England) prior to work commencing.



Appendix 2: Survey Data

Table A1. Results from the first dusk emergence survey				
Survey Type	Date	Average Temp (°C)	Sunset/ Sunrise	Weather
Dusk Emergence	19/06/24	15	21:40	Light Rain on/off
Results				
21:35 – Common Pip; foraging over site				
22:06 – Common Pip: foraging, heard not seen				
22:21 – Common Pip: foraging, heard not seen				
22:28 – Common Pip: foraging over the site				
22:35 – Common Pip: foraging, heard not seen				

Table A2. Results from the second dusk emergence survey				
Survey Type	Date	Average Temp (°C)	Sunset/ Sunrise	Weather
Dusk Emergence	09/07/24	18/19	21:35	Intermittent light rain during first half.
Results				
21:51 – Common Pip; no sighting				
21:52 – Common Pip: no sighting				
21:55 – Common Pip: no sighting				