Preliminary Roost Assessment

Barway Court

Chorlton

Manchester

M21 9JZ

For

McNulty Architects



Gritstone ecology

www.gritstone.org | info@gritstone.org | 07958314 857

Contents

1 Introduction....2
2 Methods....4
3 Results....6
4 Evaluation....8
5 Impact assessment....9
6 Required actions....10
7 References....11
8 Appendix 1 – Photographs....12



1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the report

The report is written by Stewart Bradshaw, for McNulty Architects. Stewart carried out a Preliminary Roost Assessment of Barway Court, Chorlton, on 1st March 2019. The survey report will be used to provide supporting information for a planning application, at the property.

1.2 Survey aims

The aim of the survey was to determine the actual or potential presence of bats and the need for further survey or mitigation.

1.3 Surveyor details

Stewart is licenced to disturb, take and handle all species of bats in all counties of England under licence number 2015-15615-CLS-CLS. He has 10 years' experience in ecological consultancy, including the planning and preparation of bat surveys, and mitigation licences.

1.4 Proposed development

The development proposals are for the demolition of the building, and garages, and construction of housing on the same plot. Trees within the site, and on the site boundaries may be removed to facilitate the development.

1.5 Site context

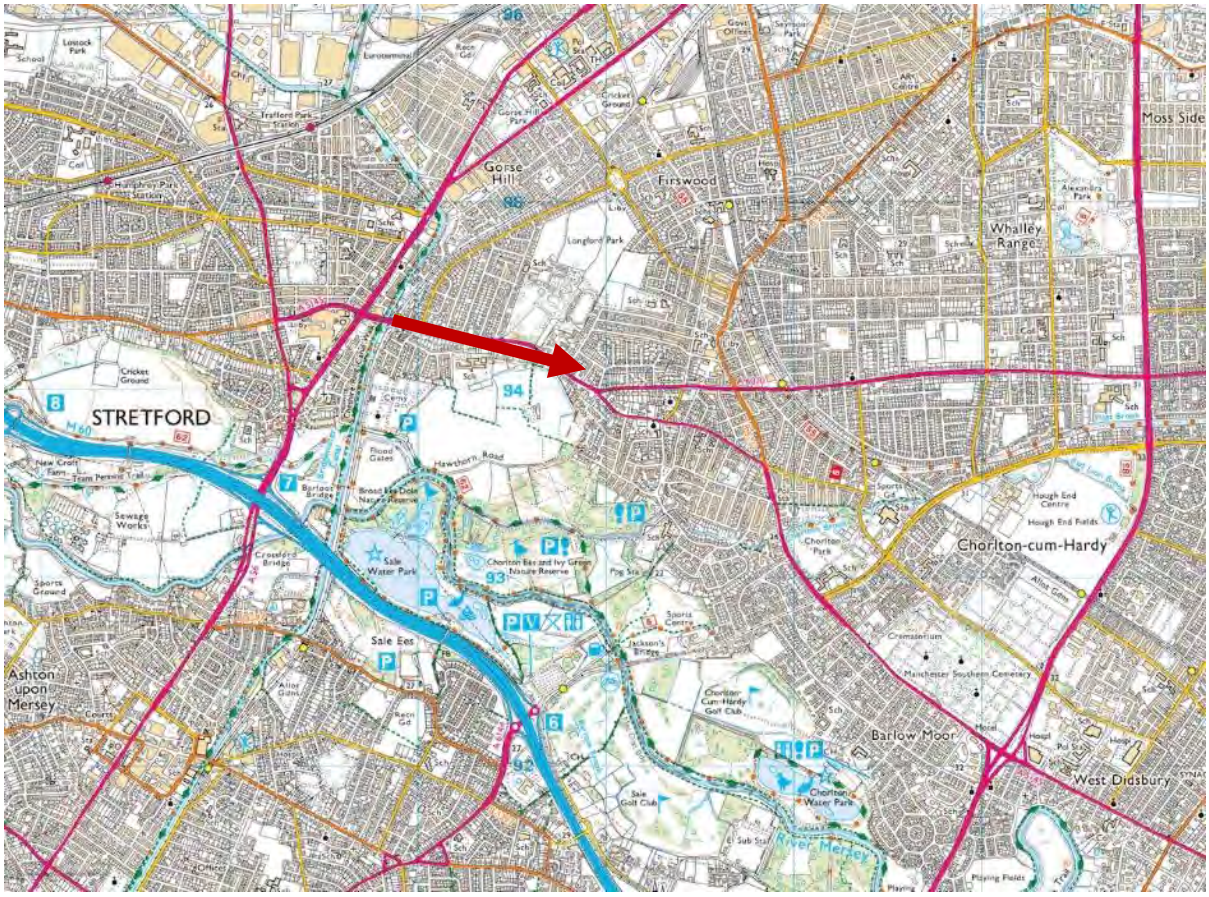
The Building is located on Barway Road, Chorlton, M21 9JZ, GR SJ 80917 94081, approximately 2km east of Stretford town centre.

The site includes a block of low-rise apartments, with hard-landscaping, trees, and shrubs to the front, side & rear. Habitat within 50m of the building includes; houses, mature gardens, trees, and busy well-lit roads. Habitat within 500m includes, housing and busy roads, linked back gardens, open green-space and watercourses.

The site and surrounding area provide low quality foraging, commuting, and roosting opportunities for bats.



1.6 Site location



1.6a – Barway Court – site location.



1.6b – Barway Court – aerial photograph.

2 Methods

2.1 Survey timings

The survey was undertaken on 1st March 2019. Weather conditions during the survey were cloudy cold, and dry, with a temperature of 9°C.

2.2 Desk study

No desk study of the site was undertaken, prior to the preliminary roost assessment, and no other ecological surveys have been carried out in relation to the proposals.

The development has a small footprint, and impacts beyond the site boundary are unlikely. A site-specific investigation was considered more suitable.

2.3 Habitat assessment

The habitat on site and in the surrounding area was assessed using Ordinance Survey mapping, and aerial photography. Habitat features on site, and those in the surrounding area were assessed for their suitability for use by bats during the site visit.

2.4 Building inspection

A systematic search of the exterior of the building was made to identify potential or actual bat access points and roosting places, and to locate any evidence of bats such as live or dead specimens, bat droppings, urine splashes, fur-oil staining and or squeaking noises. Bat specimens and droppings are the most reliable type of evidence; the other types are not always the result of bat activity. Sometimes bats leave no visible sign of their presence on the outside of a building (even when they do wet weather can wash evidence away.)

The search included (where present) the ground beneath potential access points, windowsills, window panes, walls, behind peeling paintwork and lifted rendering, hanging tiles, weatherboarding, eaves, soffit boxes, fascia's, lead flashing, gaps under felt, under tiles / slates and in existing bats boxes. Gaps in brickwork and stonework were searched (where present). All evidence of use by bats, or features with the potential to be used by bats was recorded and photographed.

A systematic search of the inside of the building was undertaken to identify potential or actual bat access points and roosting places, and to locate evidence of bats. Bat specimens (live or dead) and droppings are the most reliable type of evidence. Other evidence can include urine splashes, fur-oil staining, feeding remains, squeaking noises, bat fly (Nycteribiid) pupal cases (Hutson 1984) or odour.

Areas inspected include;

Within rooms

- floors and surfaces
- behind wooden panelling
- in lintels above doors and windows
- behind window shutters and curtains
- behind pictures, posters, furniture, peeling paintwork, peeling wallpaper, lifted plaster and boarded up windows
- inside cupboards and in chimneys accessible from fireplaces.

Within roof spaces



- the tops of gable end and dividing walls
- the top of chimney breasts
- ridge and hip beams and other structural timbers
- mortise and tenon joints
- all beams
- the junction of roof timbers, especially where ridge and hip beams meet
- behind purlins
- between tiles and the roof lining (where accessible)
- under flat felt roofs.

The areas listed above were inspected (where present), any additional areas with potential for use were also inspected.

2.5 Tree inspection

Trees were inspected from ground level, using binoculars and a Clu-lite torch. Where suitable features were identified, or where ivy cover prevented a thorough assessment, a climbed inspection was carried out, using ladders, or roped access, and an endoscope.

Evidence of bats in trees can be identified in a number of ways:

- Obvious holes, cavities and splits
- Dark staining caused by urine on the tree below a hole
- Staining around a hole caused by the natural oils in bats' fur
- Scratch marks around the hole made by bats' claws
- Droppings below a hole
- On close inspection a hole may contain droppings or smell of bats
- Noise (squeaking or chittering) coming from a hole-especially on a hot day or at dusk

However, it should be noted that bats often produce little or no evidence of their occupation.

2.6 Equipment

The equipment listed below was available for use during the surveys and was used where required.

Clulite CB2 1,000,000 candlepower torch. Rigid Seesnake CA-300 digital endoscope with 0.9m cable reach with 17mm and 6mm imaging heads. Digital camera with 50x zoom. 8x25 close focussing binoculars, 4m ladders, bat handling gloves, DNA sampling tubes.

2.7 Survey limitations

All accessible areas of the building were searched in detail. The survey was completed in March, when bats are less active, and external signs of use, such as droppings, are less likely to be present.



3 Results

3.1 External inspection



3.1a – The front of the building.

Barway Court is a block of low-rise residential apartments, which are occupied. It has a pitched roof, covered with slate roof tiles, and ceramic ridge tiles; roof pitches face east & west, gable ends face north & south. Lead flashing is fitted at the chimney base. Wooden boxed soffits are fitted at the eaves, bargeboards are fitted to the end of purlins at the gable ends.

Walls are brick with an insulating cavity, lintels are concrete, sills are concrete; window and door frames are wooden & UPVC, all glass is intact.

The building is well maintained and in good condition. The majority of cement between ridge tiles is intact, although, there are some minor gaps. There are no missing ridge tiles. There are gaps beneath roof tiles, and no missing or broken tiles. Wooden fascia boards are fitted to the ends of rafters and purlins with no suitable gaps, boxed soffits are fitted tightly against the walls. Window and door frames are tightly fitted and sealed into the brickwork with no suitable gaps.

Walls are in generally good condition with no missing mortar, or cracks. Leadwork is tightly fitted against tiles into the chimney; there are no suitable gaps beneath leadwork.

There are no features externally which are suitable for, or likely to be used by roosting bats, and no evidence of use by bats was present during the inspection.

3.2 Internal inspection



3.2a – The roof void.

The house has one roof void, which is partially divided into three sections. The roof has a wooden rafter and purlin structure, which is lined with bitumen felt, and insulated with mineral wool between ceiling joists.

There are no gaps which could give direct access to bats in flight. The space between roof timbers and the wall plate was inspected using an endoscope. No smaller crevices, which could give crawled access, were noted. The boxed soffits open into the roof void and were inspected.

The wall cavities have been filled with resin coated polystyrene beads, the beads are blown in under pressure, and filled any cavities in the walls. It is unlikely that the walls provide any cavities suitable for use by roosting bats.

3.3 Outbuildings

There are single storey garages on the site boundary which will be demolished to facilitate the proposed works. The garages have single pitched roofs, covered with corrugated asbestos cement or corrugated steel panels. Walls are single layered solid brick, doors and door frames are wooden.

The garages could not be internally inspected, however, they do not have any crevices, roof voids, or other enclosed spaces which could be used by roosting bats.

3.4 Trees

There are a number of trees on, and within, the site boundary, which will be removed to facilitate the development.

The trees are semi-mature sycamore with an average height of 8m, and average stem diameter <30cm.

There is ivy cover, pruning injuries, and minor rot holes on main stems, all of which were inspected in detail from a ladder.

No suitable roosting features were noted during the inspection, and the trees have negligible potential for use by roosting bats.

3.5 Evidence of use

No evidence of use by bats was present during the survey, either internally, or externally.

3.6 Level of potential

The building has **low potential** for use by roosting bats. This is as it is set in low quality habitat for bats, is in reasonable condition, and as few suitable roosting opportunities were noted during the building inspection.

The trees on site have **negligible potential** for use by roosting bats, there are minor pruning wounds and rot holes on the stems, however none are suitable for use by roosting bats.

4 Evaluation

The building is set in an area which, in general, provides low quality habitat, for foraging, commuting and roosting bats, although bats are likely to be present locally.

Gardens in the surrounding area could be used by foraging bats. However, the area is heavily fragmented by well-lit, busy roads, and the presence of larger numbers of bats, or a significant roost is unlikely.

The building is well maintained, and in reasonable condition. There are no features externally, which are suitable, or likely to be used by roosting bats; the roof void has no gaps which could give direct access to roosting bats, and no evidence of use was found during the inspection.

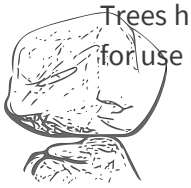
The roof void is not used for storage and is only accessed for essential maintenance works; the lack of any evidence of use inside the roof void, such as droppings or feeding remains, reduces the likelihood of a significant roost being present.

If loft dwelling species of bats were present, it is likely that some evidence of their presence would persist, as the loft is undisturbed. The lack of any evidence of use suggests that roosting bats are likely absent.

The wall cavity has been filled with insulation, walls are in good condition, with no cracks, or missing mortar which could be used by crevice dwelling bats.

The small gaps between brickwork, roof timbers, and tiles, in the roof voids were inspected in detail using an endoscope. These areas were dusty and cobwebbed. No droppings were found, and no suitable gaps were present which could give access or shelter to roosting bats.

Trees have minor pruning injuries and rot holes, and light ivy cover, however they are not suitable for use by roosting bats.



The building has **low potential** for use by roosting bats, the garages have **negligible potential** for use by roosting bats, trees have **negligible potential** for use by roosting bats.

4.1 Legal and planning context

All species of bats in the UK and their roosts are legally protected by UK and European legislation. The UK the legal protection is summarised as follows:

You will be committing a criminal offence if you:

1. Deliberately* capture, injure or kill a bat
2. Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats
3. Damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
4. Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat
5. Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost even if bats are not present at the time

*In a court, 'deliberately' will probably be interpreted as someone who, although not intending to capture/injure or kill a bat, performed the relevant action, being sufficiently informed and aware of the consequence his/her action would most likely have).

If bats or bat roosts are present in the building, the proposed demolition of the building would likely result in an offence being committed.

5 Impact assessment

The proposals are for the demolition of the building, and garages, removal of trees and construction of new housing.

The building has few features which are suitable, or likely to be used by roosting bats, and is situated in poor quality habitat.

Once completed, the new housing is unlikely to provide any increase in levels of disturbance for bats locally, and will not affect flight lines or foraging habitat.

Work to the existing roof, or other areas of the building which have suitable roosting features will be carried out using non-licenced reasonable avoidance measures.

The use of non-licenced reasonable avoidance measures (RAMS) during work to the existing roof, such as briefing roof contractors, inspection of the building immediately prior to the start of works, and removal of roof and ridge tiles under the supervision of a licenced bat ecologist, will further reduce the risk of impact on bats.

The proposed work is unlikely to impact on bats or bat roosts; and, once completed is unlikely to provide any increase in levels of disturbance for bats locally.

The proposals are unlikely to impact on bats or bat habitat either during demolition, construction, or as a result of the continued use of the site.



6 Required actions

The building has a **low potential** for use by roosting bats, garages and trees have **negligible potential** to be used by roosting bats, no field signs of use by bats were found internally or externally during the inspection, and no further surveys are required.

Areas of the existing roof have low potential for use by roosting bats. Work in these areas will be carried out using non-licenced reasonable avoidance measures, as a precautionary measure.

A licenced bat ecologist will inspect the building immediately prior to the start of works, and will supervise the stripping of the roof, and ridge tiles. If the work to the existing roof is carried out during the active season for bats, an emergence or return roost survey will be carried out immediately prior to the start of works.



7 References

Department for Communities and Local Government (2012). National Planning Policy Framework.

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

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

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. (2004). The Bat Workers Manual. (3rd ed.) JNCC



8 Appendix 1 – Photographs



1 – The front of the building from Barway Road.



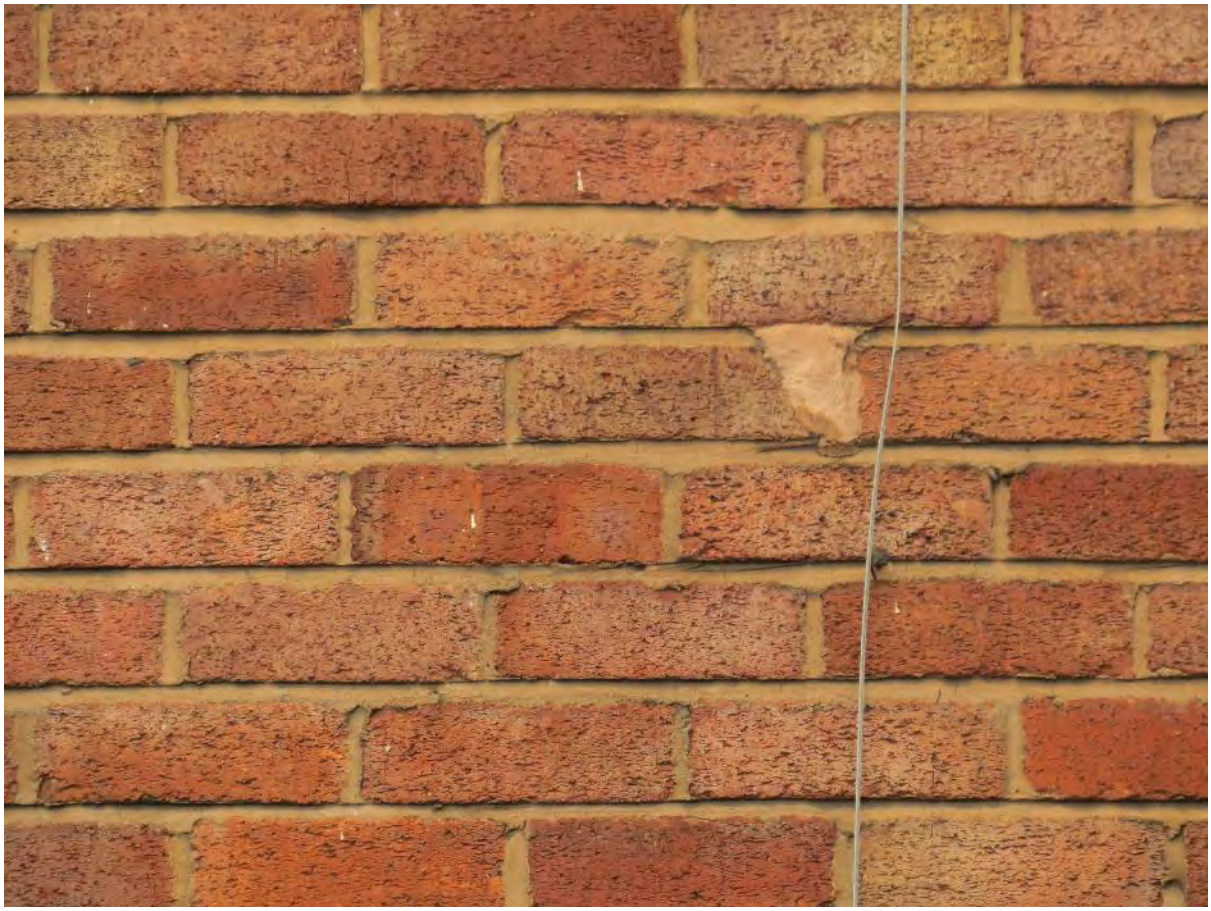
2 – The rear of the building.



3 – The north gable end.



4 – The south gable end.



5 – Brickwork is in good condition with no cracks or missing mortar.



6 – The roof overhangs the walls, and there are no suitable gaps behind fascia boards.



7 – Window and door frames are tightly sealed into brickwork with no suitable gaps.



8 – Boxed soffits are tightly fitted with no suitable gaps.



9 – Ridge tiles are sealed with cement, with some minor gaps present.



10 – Wall cavities have been filled with insulation.



11 – Garages have moss covered corrugated roofs, and single layer brick walls.



12 – Trees have ivy cover, and minor pruning wounds, but none are suitable for roosting bats.