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BAT PRESENCE / ABSENCE SURVEY

At

2 Banner Walk

Beswick
Manchester
M11 3TD

NGR: SJ 86834 98063

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'K James'.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A bat scoping survey was undertaken at 2 Banner Walk, Beswick, by United Environmental Services (UES) in January 2023 (see corresponding report UES03959/01). The building was assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats, and as such a single presence / absence survey was recommended in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) survey guidelines.

A bat presence / absence survey was undertaken at 2 Banner Walk by UES in May 2023. The objective of this survey was to establish whether or not bats are using the building on site to roost, and if so to assess the type and importance of the roost(s) in order to inform the planning process. The survey was carried out to recognised guidelines, timings and weather conditions, with particular reference to Natural England and BCT publications. The development proposals involve demolition of the building on site.

2 Banner Walk is located in a suburban area that provides low quality habitat for foraging and commuting bats due to the lack of suitable green spaces and the many well-lit roads which will reduce connectivity. The wider surrounding area contains Clayton Vale, a local nature reserve north-east of the site, and pockets of green spaces surrounding the River Medlock and Ashton Canal. These habitats will likely provide foraging and commuting opportunities for bats.

The quality of roosting habitat within the building on site is considered to be low. A number of external potential roosting features (PRFs), such as gaps underneath the wooden bargeboards, behind boarded windows, and at the top of wall plate, were identified. Potential access points into each loft space were identified around the central ventilation system. Mouse droppings were identified in some of the loft spaces. However, no bat droppings or other field signs of bats were found, suggesting no historical or present use by roosting bats.

One species of bat was recorded during the survey: common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*. Activity was generally low with common pipistrelles recorded commuting and foraging to the north and south of the building.

No bats were found to be roosting within the building on site. Therefore, no further survey or mitigation work is required for the development to proceed, with regards to bats.

This report should be read in conjunction with appendices 1 to 5, which provide visual representations of the survey results and statutory and planning context.



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Author, surveyors and qualifications

This report is compiled and written by Ysobella Cox BSc MBiol, UES Graduate Ecologist. Other surveyors include:

- Toby Hart BSc MCIEEM PIEMA, UES Managing Director. Toby is licensed by Natural England to disturb, take and handle all species of bats under licence numbers 2015-15898-CLS-CLS (level 3) and 2015-15899-CLS-CLS (level 4). Toby is also a registered consultant of the bat mitigation class licence (RC090).
- Tom Kenwright BSc MSc ACIEEM, UES Senior Ecologist. Tom is licensed by Natural England to disturb, take and handle all species of bats under licence number 2023-11076-CL18-BAT (level 2).
- Alasdair Grubb BSc ACIEEM, UES Sub-contractor. Alasdair is licensed by Natural England to disturb, take and handle all species of bats under licence number 2022-10906-CL18-BAT (level 2).
- Robert Mooney MSc, UES Graduate Ecologist

All surveyors have the knowledge, skills and experience identified within CIEEM's "Competencies for Species Survey: Bats" (2013), or were under the supervision of a surveyor with the required competencies.

1.2 Survey objectives

UES was commissioned in January 2023 to conduct site surveys which include the following activities:

- Conduct internal and external building inspections to look for field signs of bats
- Confirm bat presence or likely absence by conducting emergence and re-entry surveys of the building
- Assess the type and importance of the roost(s), if present
- Recommend appropriate mitigation and compensation, if applicable

1.3 Proposed development

The proposed plans involve the demolition of the building on site.

1.4 Structure of the report

This report sets out the methodology, results, and recommendations in relation to a specific bat survey. Recommendations are in line with statutory legislation and planning policy objectives.

The report should be read in conjunction with appendices 1 to 5, which give visual representations of the survey results.



2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 General

All surveys were carried out to recognised guidelines, timings and weather conditions, with particular reference to Natural England and BCT publications (see references for further information).

The habitats on site and in the surrounding area were assessed during a walkover survey and through studying aerial photographs, in order to gauge their suitability to support roosting, foraging and commuting bats.

2.2 Building inspection

A building inspection was conducted as part of the bat scoping survey, which was undertaken on 27th January 2023 by Toby Hart and Ysobella Cox. The building was searched both externally and internally for bat presence and features associated with bat activity, as detailed in BCT guidance (Collins, 2016).

2.2.1 External inspection

The external inspection of the building was carried out from ground level using binoculars, and also using ladders and an endoscope to investigate suitable gaps. The objective of the survey was to find and record any signs of bat use, for example:

- Bat droppings
- Feeding remains
- Grease staining / urine marks
- Corpses or skeletons

The bat signs listed above are visible from the outside of a building. The following areas were searched, where present:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| • Roof and ridge tiles | • Gaps under felt |
| • Lead flashing | • Cracks / holes in woodwork or behind cladding |
| • Eaves | • Gaps in brickwork and mortar |
| • Boxed soffits | • Air bricks |
| • Fascia and bargeboards | • Grills |
| • Window sills and panes | • Vents |
| • Walls | |

2.2.2 Internal inspection

The internal inspection covered all of the accessible rooms and roof spaces within the building.

Bats regularly utilise specific areas within roof spaces, which were searched for any field signs of bats using high-powered torches and an endoscope, where considered necessary by the licenced ecologist. The following features were searched, where present:



- Roof beams and junctions
- Gaps under felt
- Dividing walls
- Chimney breasts
- Gaps in brickwork and mortar
- Cracks / holes in woodwork
- Floor or other surfaces on which droppings could accumulate

2.3 Re-entry survey

Potential roost access points were identified during the building inspection. These points were covered by a surveyor during the dawn re-entry period.

Bat echolocation, flight and habitat characteristics were recorded where possible, in order to determine the species. The level and type of bat activity was also recorded to establish how bats are using the site.

2.3.1 Equipment

BATLOGGER M and M2 bat detectors and recorders were used during the survey. This device records bat echolocation calls across the full spectrum, with a sensitivity range of 10 – 150 kHz. The integrated heterodyne live monitoring also allows the observer to hear the echolocation calls in real time, with automatic tuning. The recordings are individually time/date, GPS and temperature stamped, and are of high enough quality to produce time expansion quality sonograms.

2.3.2 Weather conditions

Table 1 - Weather conditions and survey timings

DATE	SURVEY TYPE	TIMINGS	SUNRISE	TEMP.	WIND	RAIN	CLOUD COVER
09/05/23	Re-entry	03:49 – 05:34	05:19	12°C	F1	Dry (It rained overnight prior to the survey)	80%

2.4 Survey limitations

It rained overnight before the dawn re-entry survey. Bats were still recorded as being active during the survey. Therefore, this is not considered to have significantly affected the results.



3 RESULTS

3.1 Habitat assessment

2 Banner Walk is located within a residential area in Beswick, Manchester. The only other habitat found on site is an amenity grassland lawn. Therefore, the immediate habitats provide poor foraging and commuting opportunities for bats.

The surrounding area consists of further residential properties and gardens that provide some roosting opportunities but there are many well-lit roads that reduce connectivity. There are a limited number of green spaces in the surrounding area, including Bradford Park, that provides low quality habitat. The Manchester City Etihad Football Stadium is located approximately 400m north of the site. Furthermore, there is an industrial area 700m south of the site, including a railway line, that will likely cause both light and noise pollution.

There are some moderate quality habitats, including North Ridge recreation area and Orion's community orchard that are located next to the River Medlock, approximately 880m west. These habitats will support an abundance of invertebrates and provide foraging, roosting, and commuting opportunities.

The wider surrounding area contains additional green spaces, including Clayton Vale local nature reserve, located approximately 1.2km north of the site, and Philips Park which surrounds the River Medlock approximately 1km north of the site. These areas will support an abundance of invertebrates and provide commuting, roosting and foraging opportunities. Ashton Canal also runs through the wider area, with the closest point from the site being approximately 750m to the north-east.

There are more suburban areas surrounding the site, such as Clayton, approximately 1.4km north-east of the site, and Openshaw, approximately 1.6km south-east. Both of these areas contain residential buildings and gardens that provide roosting opportunities, but the number of well-lit roads may reduce connectivity for bats.

3.2 Building inspections

3.2.1 External inspection

2 Banner Walk is a 'H' shaped block of residential flats, consisting of four ground floor and four first floor flats, connected by a central corridor that contains a staircase. The building has a pitched roof structure with interlocking roof and ridge tiles, that are in good condition (see Appendix 2, Photographs 1 and 2). The tiles at the edge of the roof are positioned on top of the drainpipe that surrounds the eaves of the building. There could be a gap where the bargeboard meets the underside of the roof tiles behind the drainpipe, however, the viewpoint of where the gap may be is limited, and so it could not be fully investigated during the survey (Photograph 3). There are no chimneys on the building, but there are four ventilation tubes on the roof, one above each of the flats located on the upper floor. The ventilation tubes are surrounded by a plastic polyethylene flashing.

Wooden bargeboards are located at the eaves of the building, but they are in relatively poor condition due to peeling (Photograph 4). There is a gap underneath the bargeboard on the southern aspect of the central corridor (Photograph 5) and a gap within the bargeboard on the northern aspect of the central corridor (Photograph 6), that both provide PRFs. The bargeboard on the eastern aspect of the building is partially obscured by ivy, however, it is too



cluttered to present a PRF (Photograph 2). The walls are constructed from red brick, with a pebbledash render on the upper half of the building and a PVC capping (Photograph 1). There is a gap at the top of the wall plate where it connects with the bargeboard on the eastern aspect of the building near a window that provides a PRF (Photograph 4). Sections of the wall on the eastern aspect of the building are also obscured by ivy, but this is too cluttered to be a PRF (Photograph 2). On the northern aspect of the building there is an electrical box which is open at the bottom and could present a PRF (Photograph 7). The electrical box was inspected using a torch and binoculars; however, it could not be fully inspected from the ground level during the survey due to the height of the feature. Most of the windows were covered in metal sheets or wooden boards which could provide PRFs for bats as there are gaps between the coverings and the windows that vary in size (Photographs 2 and 15). The features were inspected using a torch and endoscope where necessary, and no evidence of roosting bats was found.

No bat droppings or other field signs were found during the external building inspection.

3.2.2 Internal inspection

Each of the four flats on the first floor have separate loft spaces, all of which share the same construction layout. The loft spaces have a queen's post truss structure with a bitumen felt roof lining (Photograph 8). Each of the internal loft spaces had a central ventilation system with a gap around it that provided a potential access point into the loft (Photograph 9).

There are two internal stone render walls in each of the loft spaces, on the northern and southern aspects (Photographs 10 and 11). The stone walls were in good condition in all of the loft spaces with no noticeable cavities, except for Flat 11. The floors are insulated with mineral wool insulation and there were no draughts in the loft spaces during the survey (Photograph 11).

Flat 9 is located on the north-eastern aspect of the building and the loft space was accessed by a ceiling hatch. A section of the roof space was also visible from the cupboard in the bathroom. Old mouse droppings were identified in the loft space (Photograph 12), but no evidence of roosting bats was found.

Flat 11 is located on the south-eastern aspect of the building. The internal stone render wall on the southern aspect has a cavity that provides a PRF. The feature was inspected but no evidence of roosting bats was found (Photograph 13). Mouse droppings were identified in the loft space, but no evidence of roosting bats was present.

Flat 13 is located on the north-western aspect of the building. The internal loft space was fully inspected, but no evidence of roosting bats was found during the survey.

Flat 15 is located on the south-western aspect of the building. The internal loft space was fully inspected, but no evidence of roosting bats was found. However, approximately 20 mouse droppings were identified in the centre of the loft space, under the ventilation system.

The four flats located on the ground floor of the property (Flats 1, 3, 5 and 7) were also inspected (Photographs 14 to 18).

No bat droppings or other field signs were found during the internal building inspection.



3.3 Activity summary

Table 2 – Bat activity summary

DATE	SURVEY TYPE	SPECIES	NOTES
09/05/23	Re-entry	Common pipistrelle	Low levels of common pipistrelle activity were recorded throughout the survey, between 03:48am and 4:44am. Activity recorded during the survey included commuting and foraging to the south of the building and within the open space at the north of the building.



4 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Evaluation of results

In summary, the areas immediately surrounding 2 Banner Walk provide low quality habitat for bats due to the number of well-lit roads that will likely reduce connectivity, and due to the limited number of green spaces. The wider surrounding area contains pockets of moderate quality habitat including Clayton Vale, which is a local nature reserve located north-east of the site, and Philips Park that surrounds the River Medlock. These habitats are likely to support an abundance of invertebrates and provide foraging opportunities for bats, although they are relatively far from the site and separated by poor quality habitat.

The building on site presents a number of potential roosting features which could be used by bats. Having said this, no field signs of bats, such as droppings, were found during the building inspection.

Activity was generally low with common pipistrelles recorded commuting and foraging to the north and south of the building during the survey.

Despite the favourable conditions, no bats were recorded roosting in the building on site.

4.2 Mitigation and compensation measures

As no bats were found to be using the building on site to roost, no further mitigation or compensation measures are required with regards to bats.



5 CONCLUSION

2 Banner Walk is located in a suburban area that provides low quality habitat for foraging and commuting bats due to the lack of suitable green spaces and the many well-lit roads which will reduce connectivity. The wider surrounding area contains Clayton Vale, a local nature reserve north-east of the site, and pockets of green spaces surrounding the River Medlock and Ashton Canal. These habitats will likely provide foraging and commuting opportunities for bats.

The building on site has low potential to support roosting bats and presents a low number of potential roosting features which could be used by bats. Having said this, no field signs of bats, such as droppings, were found during the building inspection.

As no bats were found to be using the building on site to roost, no further mitigation or compensation measures are required with regards to bats.



6 REFERENCES

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2013). *Competencies for Species Survey: Bats*.

Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (2021). *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



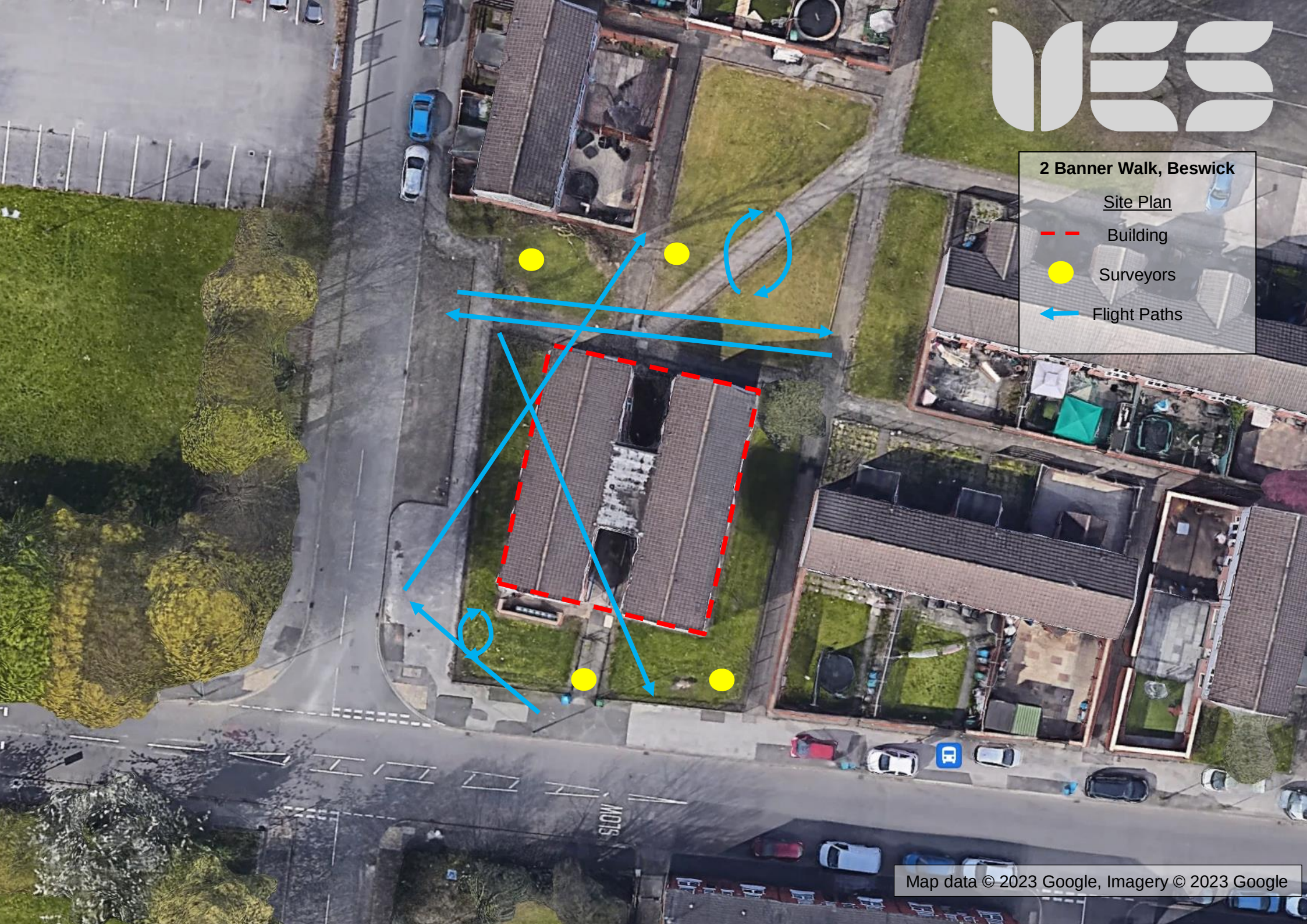
APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Site plan

2 Banner Walk, Beswick

Site Plan

- Building
- Surveyors
- Flight Paths





Appendix 2 – Aerial photographs



**2 Banner Walk, Beswick,
Manchester**

Close aerial photograph

 Survey boundary





**2 Banner Walk, Beswick,
Manchester**

Wide aerial photograph



Site location





Appendix 3 – Photographs



Photograph 1. South-eastern aspect of the building.



Photograph 2. Eastern aspect of the building.



Photograph 3. Potential roosting feature where the wooden bargeboard meets the underside of the roof tiles, behind the drainpipe.



Photograph 4. Wooden bargeboards located at the eaves of the building.



Photograph 5. Gap under the bargeboard on the southern aspect of the central corridor.



Photograph 6. Gap in the bargeboard on the northern aspect of the central corridor.



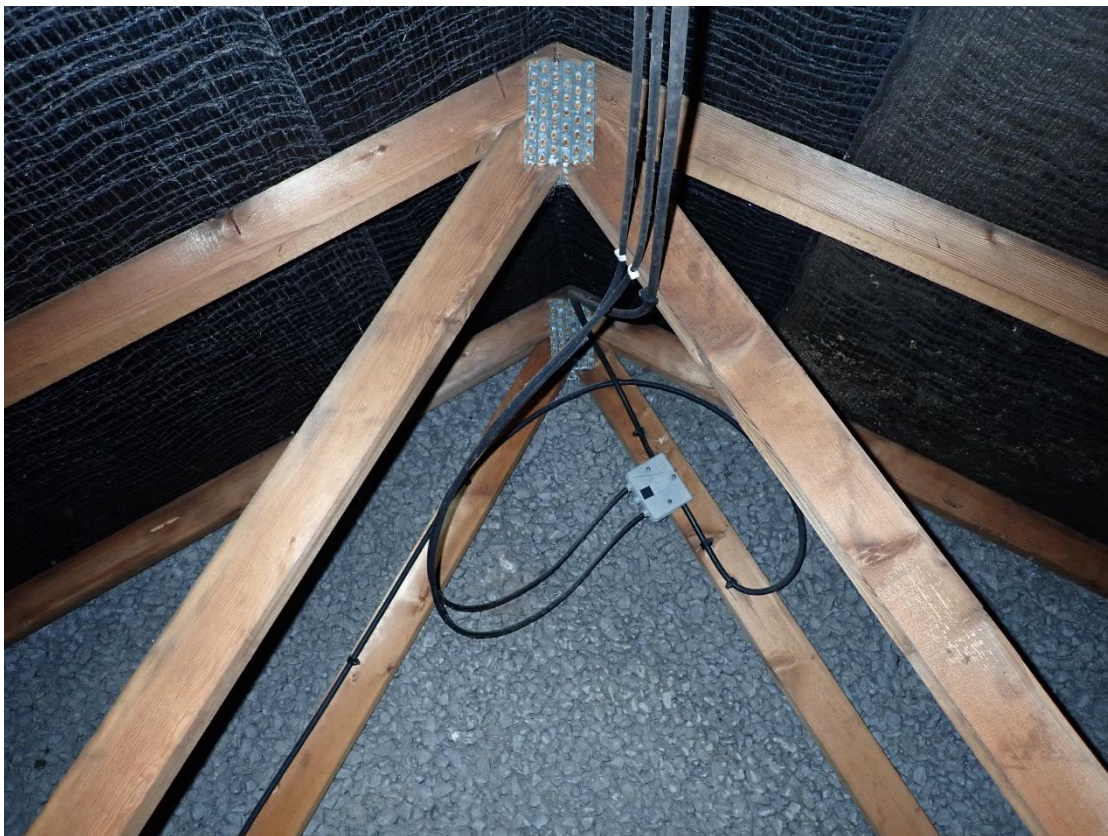
Photograph 7. Electrical box on the northern aspect of the building.



Photograph 8. Loft space of Flat 13; representative of all of the loft spaces in the building.



Photograph 9. Ridge tiles are visible around the central ventilation system in Flat 13. The same feature is present in each of the loft spaces.



Photograph 10. South internal stone render wall in Flat 13.



Photograph 11. North internal stone render wall and rock wool floor insulation in Flat 13.



Photograph 12. Mouse droppings identified in the loft space of Flat 9.



Photograph 13. A hole in the south internal stone render wall in the loft space of Flat 11.



Photograph 14. Flat 1.



Photograph 15. Wooden boards behind a window in Flat 1.



Photograph 16. Flat 3.



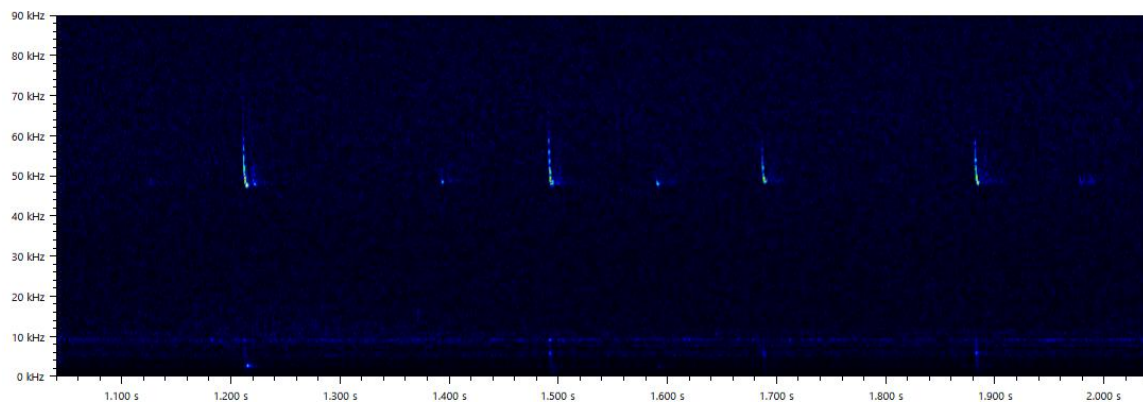
Photograph 17. Flat 5.



Photograph 18. Flat 7.



Appendix 4 – Results



Photograph 1. A common pipistrelle bat recorded at 03:50am on 9th May 2023.



Appendix 5 – Statutory and planning context

Ecological assessments

Ecological assessments play an important part within the planning context; they include an initial assessment which highlights any specific interests of a site. From the initial site assessment, the surveyor assesses the suitability of habitats within the site to support protected species and makes recommendations for further survey works if required. The following paragraphs provide a brief interpretation of the legislative protection that is relevant to the findings of this report.

Bats

In the United Kingdom, all species of bat and their roosts are afforded full protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (known as the “Habitats Regulations”). The Wildlife and Countryside Act is the domestic implementation of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (the Bern Convention) and was amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. This makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or capture a bat
- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection
- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a bat uses for shelter or protection (even if the bat is not present at the time)
- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange any live or dead bat, any part of a bat or anything derived from a bat

Under UK law, a bat roost is *any structure or place which any wild [bat] ... uses for shelter or protection*. As bats often reuse the same roosts, legal opinion is that a roost is protected whether or not the bats are present at the time of the activity taking place.

Penalties for offences include fines of up to £5000, plus up to six months imprisonment, for each offence committed.

If an activity is likely to result in any of the above offences, a licence can be applied for to derogate from the protection afforded. These licences must provide appropriate mitigation and are issued by Natural England.

A Natural England mitigation licence application requires a Mitigation Method Statement and, in many cases, a Reasoned Statement of Application. The Mitigation Method Statement contains details of the proposed mitigation works. The Reasoned Statement needs to provide a rational and reasoned justification as to why the proposed development meets the requirements of the Conservation (National Habitats & c.) regulations 1994, namely Regulations 44(2)(e), (f) or (g), and 44(3)(a).

The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) provides guidance on the interpretation of the law in relation to the natural environment and development.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 lists the following bat species as species of principle importance under Section 41:

- Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*
- Bechstein’s bat *Myotis bechsteinii*
- Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*
- Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*
- Brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*
- Greater horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*
- Lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*

Section 40 requires every public body in the exercising of its functions ‘have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity’ (all biodiversity and not just section 41 species and habitats); therefore making these bats a material consideration in the planning process and requiring a detailed ecological bat survey before planning permission can be granted.

Planning policy

National Planning Guidance is issued in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF). The most relevant section is 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

Key relevant principles stated in 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment are;

- 174.** 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.
- 179.** To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:
- a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity⁶¹; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation⁶²; and
 - b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity
- 180.** 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 reasons⁶³ 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.