DAYTIME BAT SURVEY

39 ANCOATS STREET, MANCHESTER

MAY 2022

RACHEL HACKING ECOLOGY

Bowden Hall,
Bowden Lane,
Marple, Stockport
SK6 6ND
0161 465 8971

www.rachelhackingecology.co.uk
mail@rachelhackingecology.co.uk

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION 2

2.0 METHODOLOGY 4

3.0 RESULTS 5

4.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS 9

5.0 REFERENCES 10

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Site Information

1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Ltd. was commissioned in 2022 by Mr Mike Dillon to undertake a daytime bat survey the property 39 Great Ancoats Street, Manchester (O.S. grid reference: SJ 84767 98618). The proposed development site currently comprises a detached property, which is now unoccupied. The site is in a suburban location immediately surrounded by residential and commercial development with limited potential bat foraging and commuting habitat.

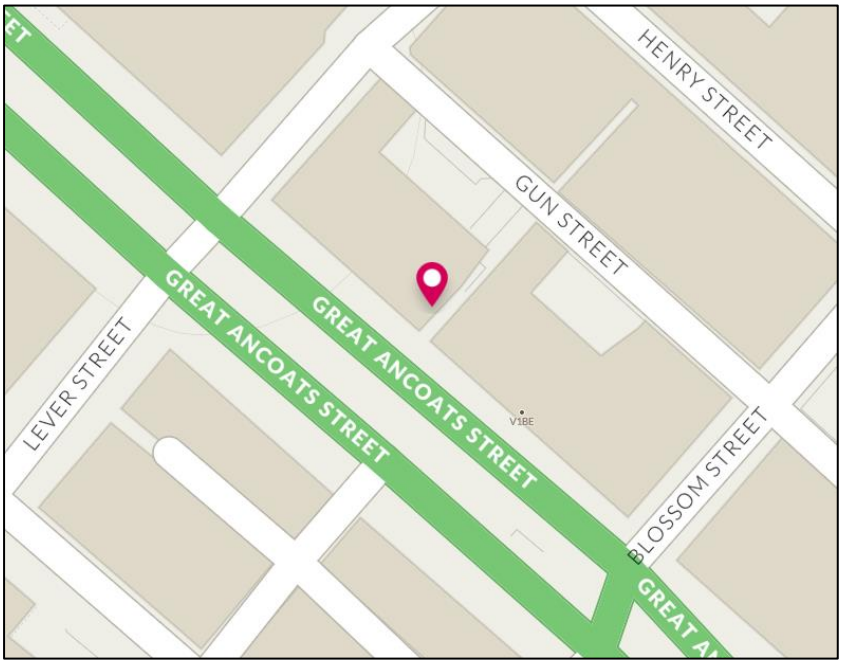

Figure 1 showing the site location

Description of Development

1.2 The site will be the subject of a planning application for a rear extension, addition of dormer windows and renovation of the property into a residential dwelling.

Biodiversity in Planning

1.3 Biodiversity is a material consideration, and Local Planning Authorities have a requirement to consider biodiversity and protected species when determining planning applications. Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) gives specific reference to minimising the impacts of development on biodiversity. Local and Neighbourhood plans also provide guidance towards protecting and enhancing biodiversity, including priority habitats and notable species.

Legal Context

1.4 All bat species are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (Amendment) (EU Exit), which make is 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.

1.5 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.

1.6 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.

1.7 All bird species are protected at their nest under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Daytime Bat Survey

2.1 A daytime bat survey of the site was undertaken to search for, and to assess the potential for, a bat roost 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. An internal survey was also carried out, with particular focus on gaps in walls, cracks in roof beams, and any evidence of bat activity, such as bat droppings, in the internal spaces.

2.3 A pair of close-focussing binoculars and a high-powered torch were used to search for evidence of bats externally.

Personnel and Seasonal Timing

2.4 Joel Hacking, Kate Reed (Senior Ecologists) and Jasmin West (Ecologist) carried out the daytime bat survey on the 20th April 2022. All surveyors are experienced and fully trained in protected species surveys and Joel holds a Natural England Level 2 Class Survey Licence (ref: 2016-24701-CLS-CLS). The weather at the time of the survey was dry and mild.

Survey Constraints

2.5 Daytime bat surveys can be conducted at any time of the year. The structure could be surveyed fully internally and externally, therefore there were no constraints to the survey.

3.0 RESULTS

Site Description

3.1 The property at 39 Great Ancoats Street comprises a former commercial property constructed from brick and has a pitched, tiled roof. The property is unoccupied.

External Assessment

3.2 The external brickwork is in good condition with no significantly damaged bricks or recessed mortar cavities (see Photographs 1 and 2). One section of brickwork at the rear, where part of the building has been removed, has exposed the wall cavity, but no onward cavity is present, and no evidence of bat usage found between the bricks. The window and door frames are flush to the surrounding masonry. The ground floor windows are boarded at the front. The brick chimney stacks are complete and mortared.

Photograph 1 showing the exterior of the property

Photograph 2 showing the rear of the property

3.3 The roof of the property is pitched and tiled, with just one slipped tile on the front elevation (see Photographs 3 and 4). The front Velux window is sealed to the tiling. The decorative ridge tiles are in situ and sit flush to one another. A small amount of lead flashing occurs at the base of the chimney stacks, and this is flat and flush to the tiles.

Photograph 3 showing the roof of the property

3.4 The roofing on the rear of the property, above the small extensions is complete and intact, offering no suitable bat roosting cavities. The property has a wooden bargeboards on the rear elevation, and these sit flush to the brick, offering no suitable bat roosting cavities.

Photograph 4 showing the roof of the property

Internal Assessment

3.5 The property is unoccupied, and the former commercial spaces do not offer suitable bat roosting habitat. The upper floor has been partially converted into office space, with the rear half of the roof retaining a roof void (see Photograph 5). The wooden beams are complete and intact, offering no cavities for bats to exploit. The roof is lined with roofing felt, with no tears or rips in the lining. The internal brickwork and breeze block wall are complete and intact, offering no damaged bricks or recessed mortar (see Photograph 6). No evidence of bat activity was found inside the roof void.

Photograph 5 showing the roof void

Photograph 6 showing the internal breezeblock inside the roof void

3.6 The property has an extensive cellar space (see Photograph 7). The cellar space is sealed internally, offering no potential bat access points. No suitable bat roosting cavities are present in the cellar, and no evidence of bat activity was found.

Photograph 7 showing the cellar space

Surrounding Land

3.7 The property is enclosed entirely by hardstanding, with a small yard present at the rear. No evidence of other protected species could be found on the site.

4.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 No evidence of bat activity was found at the property 39 Great Ancoats Street, Manchester. The property offers no suitable bat roosting cavities. Given the results of the survey, the property is considered to offer negligible bat roost suitability.

4.2 It is the opinion of the author of this report that the development can proceed without the need for further survey work (e.g., bat activity surveys) or bat mitigation due to the negligible potential of the building to support bats. However, if the work is delayed by longer than two years from the date of this survey, a further bat survey will be required to update the findings.

4.3 It should be noted that bat absence is very difficult to prove definitively due to their mobility and size, and single or small numbers of bats are able to roost in extremely small spaces, such as in gaps between panels. The development work should be undertaken with care, for example with roof tiles lifted rather than dragged.

4.4 If during development works a bat (or an accumulation of bat droppings) is discovered at any time, work is to temporarily cease whilst an experienced bat ecologist is contacted for guidance and assistance. This can be Rachel Hacking Ecology (0161 465 8971) who undertook the initial survey, any licensed bat worker, or the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) helpline (0845 1300 228).

4.5 No evidence of other protected species, such as nesting birds, was found on the site.

5.0 REFERENCES

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

Mitchell-Jones, A.J, & McLeish, A.P. Ed., (2004) *3rd Edition Bat Workers' Manual*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.

MAGIC mapping: www.magic.gov.uk. Defra, London

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

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021). Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government