

20th March 2023

Our Ref: P.1717.22

Westchurch Homes
Westchurch Homes Ltd
Kennedy House
31 Stamford St
Altrincham
Cheshire
WA14 1ES

Re: Daytime Building Inspection Report for Louisa Street, Openshaw

Ascerta has been instructed by Westchurch Homes to carry out an updated building inspection survey at the site Louisa Street Works, Openshaw.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site was undertaken in August 2022 and Ascerta report P.1717.22 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal should be read in conjunction with the letter report.

Survey and Conditions

The site was visited by Liz Kenyon BSc (Hons) and Lizzie Atkinson MSc CIEEM on 15th March 2023. Weather conditions were cool (6 °C) with light rain showers, overcast (8/8 cloud cover) with a light breeze (F2 Beaufort scale) at the start of the survey.

The weather conditions and time of year that the survey was carried out are not considered a limit to the conclusions of the letter report.

Bat surveys are conducted in accordance with the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists - Good Practice Guidelines, published 2016 (the Guidelines). Strict adherence to these is not necessary, but where practice deviates from them, clear reasons and rationale are required.

The site comprises four industrial buildings (B1-B4) that are surrounded by hardstanding which has become encroached with tall ruderal and scrub throughout. Scattered trees line the southern and western site boundaries. The site lies within Openshaw, approximately 4 miles east of Manchester city centre and is bound by Louisa Street to the east, industrial units to the north, residential dwellings to the west and an area of open space to the south. The surrounding land use is predominantly residential dwellings with retail outlets and pockets of open space.

Bat Survey Methods

The survey methods followed the guidelines set out by the Bat Conservation Trust Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines – 3rd Edition (2016). Habitats, buildings and trees were assessed for suitability for use by bats and categorised independently using table 4.1 page 35 within the Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (Collins, 2016).

External Inspection of the buildings

A daytime external inspection of the buildings was carried out during the survey by suitably experienced ecologists. The buildings were searched externally looking for signs of bats, including staining on barge boards, soffits and more commonly droppings on flat surfaces i.e. window ledges that would indicate potential roosting sites. Possible bat access points such as loose tiles, cracks and crevices or crawl spaces beneath and/or behind roofing materials such as roofing felt, panelling, soffits and tiles were identified and checked for signs of use by bats, for example droppings, scratch marks and staining.

Limitations

Aces to carry out full internal inspection of the buildings was not possible as the vendor confirmed that buildings B1 and B4 were structurally unsafe and B3 is an operation car repair shop/garage, however the buildings could be partially viewed from open doorways. These access restrictions are taken into account within the report conclusions.

Desk Study

One hundred and nineteen records of bat were returned within 2km of the site, including ninety bat record signs and twenty-nine bat roosts. Species present include common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, nathusius's pipistrelle, pipistrelle species, brown long-eared, daubenton's bat, whiskered bat and noctule. The closest record was for a pipistrelle roost in located 140m south-west of the site. The most recent record was in 2018 for a common pipistrelle located 1.6km south-west of the site within Belle Vue stadium. Full details can be viewed in report P.1717.22 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

Preliminary bat roost assessment of buildings

Building 1-

Building B1 is a two-storey building constructed in brickwork walls with a multi-pitched roof. The roof contains tiled and felt sections and large gaps were noted from missing and slipped tiles as well between areas of lifted felt. Tiles are also missing along the ridgeline with the central area of the roof completely exposed. A chimney is present within the southern section of the roof and lifts were noted within the flashing. The brickwork is in poor condition with cracks, missing pointing and bricks identified throughout. The majority of the windows are broken and boarded up, any remaining windows are single-glazed and sit within wooden frames. No evidence of bats was identified during the external inspection. The building could be partially viewed internally from open doorways and the building is in a poor state of repair with numerous Ferrell pigeon noted internally and resting along the building's roofline.

In August 2022, the building was assessed to provide high bat roosting potential, following the updated daytime inspection the building was assessed to have **negligible** hibernation potential for crevice and void dwelling bat and **moderate** potential for day and maternity roosts for crevice dwelling bats and **moderate** potential for void dwelling bats. Overall, the building is classified as having **moderate bat** roosting potential due to its current conditions in March 2023.

Building 2-

Building B2 is a single storey brick building with a multi-pitched roof and wooden fascias. The roof is constructed in tiles with a sloped corrugated metal section present off the eastern elevation. A large gap is present between the corrugated metal sheet and adjoining wall. Gaps were identified between missing and slipped tiles as well as underneath the wooden fascias. The brickwork is in poor condition, with large cracks and missing areas of pointing as well as holes within the bricks. The windows are single glazed and sit within metal frames with metal mesh grills present. A loading entrance with a closed metal shutter is present off the western elevation. No evidence of bats was identified during the external inspection.

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Building 3-

Building B3 is a single storey brick building with a pitched corrugated roof. Gaps are present between the roof and brickwork as well as underneath the fascias. The brickwork is also in poor condition with areas of missing points and large cracks identified. A chimney constructed in brick is present on the southern section of the roof. A small, single storey extension is present off the northern elevation. The extension is constructed in brickwork walls with a pitched, corrugated metal roof. Large gaps are present between the roof and walls as well as at the gable ends of the roof. A large loading entrance with metal shutter is present off the western elevation and small gaps were identified between the shutter and brickwork walls. The windows are single-glazed and sit within metal frames with metal mesh grills present. No evidence of bats was identified during the external inspection.

During the visit in March 2023, the building was open and in operation as a car garage/repair shop. The building is in a deteriorating state of repair and very well lit and is exposed to the elements during operational hours.

The building was assessed to have **negligible** hibernation potential for crevice and void dwelling bat, and **moderate** potential for day and maternity roosts for crevice dwelling bats and **low** potential for void dwelling bats. Overall, the building is classified as having **moderate** bat roosting potential.

Building 4-

Building B4 is a large brick building with corrugated metal cladding present. The roof is multi-pitched with the apex of the roof is tiled with sloped corrugated metal sections also present. The roof ridgeline has collapsed sections and large windows, that are all broken or boarded up, are present below the apex of the roof. Sections of the corrugated metal roof have collapsed, and large lifts between sheets are also present. The brickwork is also in poor condition with areas of missing points, bricks and large cracks identified. Gaps are also present between the corrugated metal cladding and brickwork. Large loading entrances with metal shutters are present off the western and eastern elevations and small gaps were identified between the shutter and brickwork walls. No evidence of bats was identified during the external inspection. The building could be partially viewed internally from open doorways and the building is in a poor state of repair, along with being exposed to the weather conditions. A heavy covering of bird droppings and feral pigeon feathers we noted on the floor space of the building.

The building was assessed to have **negligible** hibernation potential for crevice and void dwelling bats, and **moderate** potential for day and maternity roosts for crevice dwelling bats and **moderate** potential for void dwelling bats. Overall, the building is classified as having **moderate** bat roosting potential.

Recommendations and Conclusions

The habitats on site provide **low** suitability for commuting and foraging bats, however the site is well connected to the surrounding landscape with the scattered trees along the southern and western site boundaries providing valuable commuting and corridors for bats. It is recommended that these habitats are retained and enhanced to maintain foraging and commuting habitat for bats. The buildings (B1-B4) on site were assessed to provide **moderate** potential for bats.

The buildings will be demolished to accommodate the proposals within the site and will require a minimum of two nocturnal surveys between May and August to assess if bats are using the buildings within the site as a roost and to inform further recommendations.

If a high level of bat activity is recorded or a bat roost is identified within any of the buildings, further nocturnal survey will be required, and an application made to Natural England for the destruction of a bat roost.

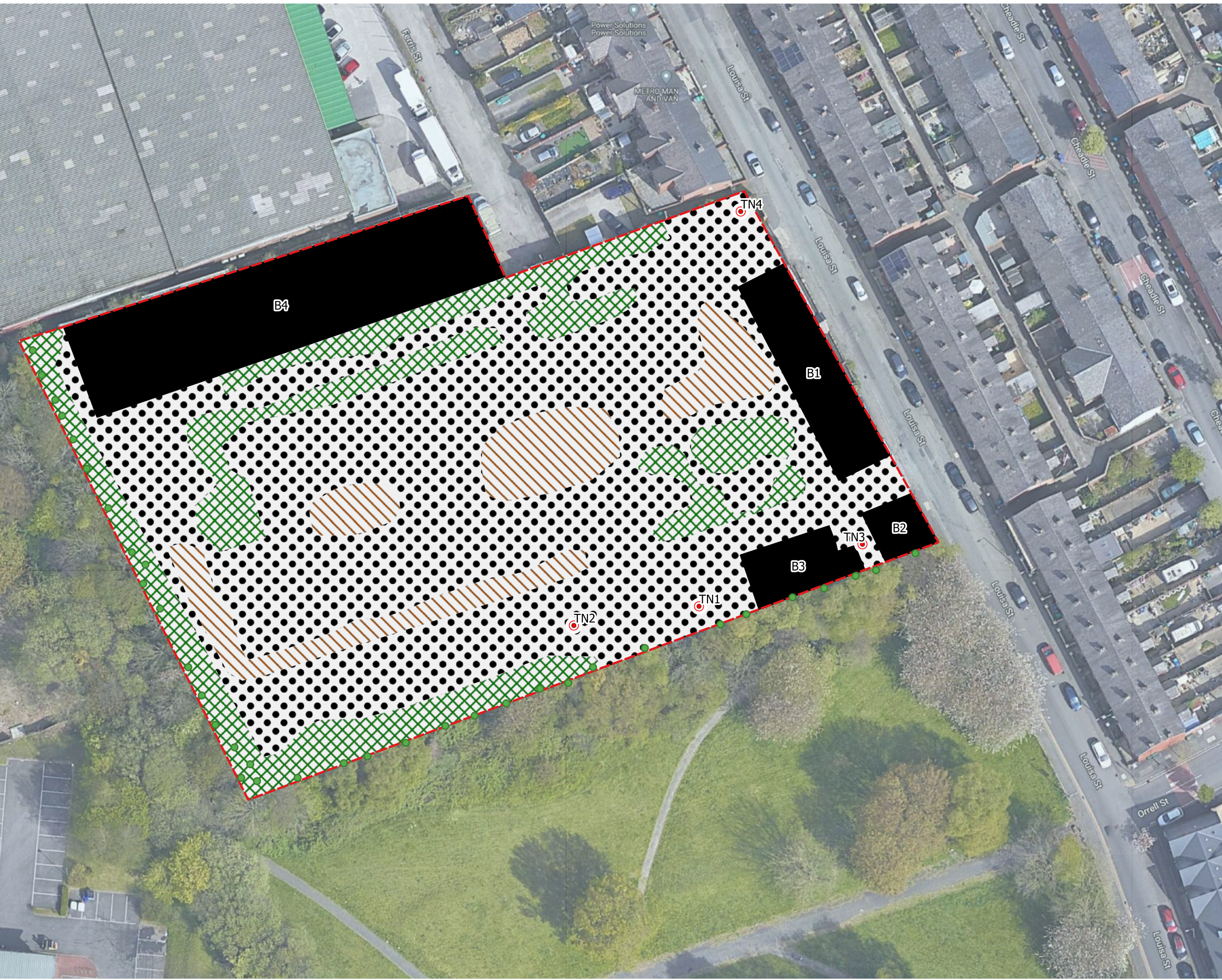
The site should also be enhanced for bats following the development with the provision of 8 bat features (e.g. Vivara bat bricks or '*bird brick houses*' bat boxes) integrated within new buildings and Suitable landscaping incorporating species that provide a food or shelter resource to wildlife to include hawthorn, hazel, holly, blackthorn, field maple, dog rose and honeysuckle as hedgerow species and oak, alder, field maple, silver birch, crab apple, rowan and bird cherry as tree species together with implementing a relaxed mowing regime and establishing wildflowers in these areas.

Yours sincerely,

Liz Kenyon

Ascerta

Appendix 1



Key

- Site boundary
- J3.6 - Buildings
- J4 - Hardstanding
- A2.1 - Scrub
- C3.1 - Tall ruderal
- Scattered trees
- Target note

TN1 - Shipping container
TN2 - Metal scaffolding and wooden pallets
TN3 - General rubbish
TN4 - Substation

DO NOT SCALE.
ALL COORDINATES RELATED TO LOCAL GRID.
LOCATED TO NG BY BEST FIT TO DETAIL.
EXTRACTED FROM OS DIGITAL DATA.

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CLIENT: Westchurch Homes		
PROJECT: Louisa Street Works		
DRAWING TITLE: Phase One Habitat Survey		
SCALE: NTS@A3	DRAWN BY: LA	DRAWING No: P.1717.22.01
DATE: 16.08.2022	CHKD BY: LK	REV: -

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Appendix 2

Relevant legislation

Bats

In England, all bats and their roosts are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Several species of bat are also highlighted as Priority Species under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and within the Local BAP. Under the current legislation as summarised on pages 8 and 9 of the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines – 3rd Edition (2016) it is a criminal offence to:

“To kill, capture, injure or take a wild bat;

- To damage or destroy a place used by a bat for breeding or resting. All offences of this nature are identified within the Habitats Regulations. This offence is unique in that it can be committed accidentally. No element of intentional, reckless or deliberate action needs to be evidenced;*
- To disturb bats anywhere (roosts, flight lines or foraging areas) if levels of disturbance can be shown to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, to rear or nurture their young, to hibernate or migrate or to affect significantly local distribution or abundance;*
- To intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat, whilst it is occupying a place of shelter or protection;*
- To intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place used by a bat for shelter or protection; and*
- To be in possession or control of a bat alive or dead (or any part of a bat or anything derived from a bat, although bat droppings are generally considered to be acceptable), or to transport a bat, to sell or exchange a bat or to offer to sell or exchange a bat taken from the wild.”*

It is a criminal offence to intentionally, wilfully kill, injure or take any of the aforementioned protected species or to destroy or disturb its habitat.