

EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY & DAYTIME BAT SURVEY

ST GABRIEL'S, OXFORD PLACE,
GREATER MANCHESTER

FEBRUARY 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	3
3.0	RESULTS	4
	DESCRIPTION OF HABITATS	4
	PROTECTED SPECIES	10
	DAYTIME BAT SURVEY	10
	INVASIVE SPECIES	30
	PROTECTED SITES.....	31
4.0	ASSESSMENT	32
5.0	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	35
6.0	REFERENCES	36

APPENDIX A: PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP



1.0 INTRODUCTION

Site Information

- 1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2022 by McLaren Property to carry out an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey & Daytime Bat Survey at St Gabriel's, Oxford Place, Greater Manchester. The site is situated north of Oxford Place, in the Victoria Park area of South Manchester (O.S. grid reference: SJ 85239 95752 – see Figure 1). The proposed development site is no longer in used and currently comprises the former St Gabriel's Hall, the adjacent Chapel, Woodthorpe Hall and St David's Hall. The buildings are surrounded by hardstanding and overgrown gardens composed of areas of amenity grassland and flowerbeds containing mature shrubs. Scattered trees are present across the site primarily on the site boundaries. The site is located within an urban area, Oxford Place runs along the southern boundary of the site with commercial and residential developments lying on all other sides.

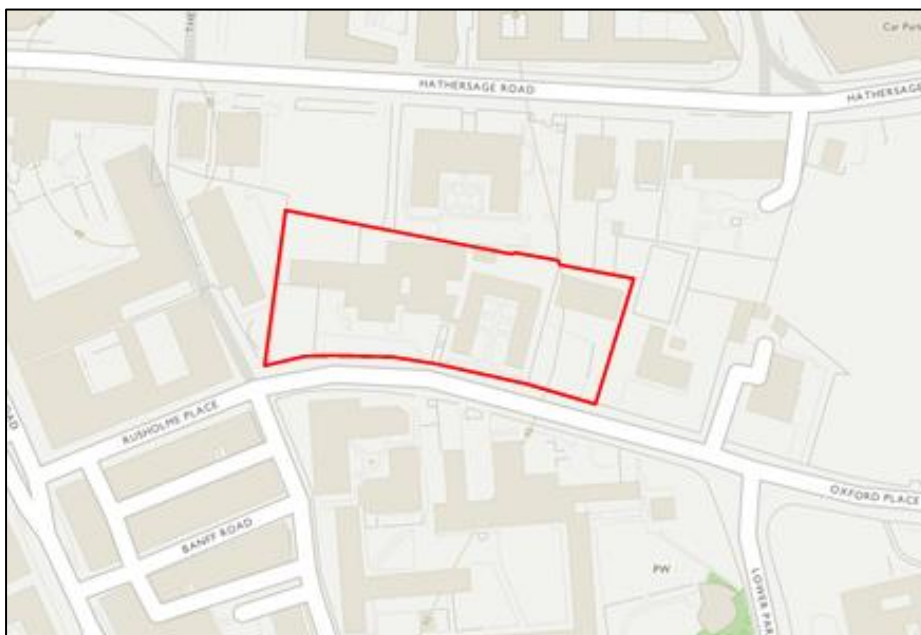


Figure 1 showing the location of the site

Description of Development

- 1.2 The site will be the subject of a planning application for a residential development for 300 units of student accommodation with associated landscaping. The Chapel and Woodthorpe Hall will be retained, and refurbished, and the remaining buildings demolished for new build.

Biodiversity in Planning

- 1.3 Biodiversity is a material consideration, and Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) 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.



2.0 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey is required to provide an overview of the habitats present within the site and to assess any potential protected species issues on the site. A daytime bat survey is required to assess the potential use of the property by bats.

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

- 2.2 A Phase 1 Habitat survey was undertaken to JNCC standards (JNCC, 2010). The site was walked and each habitat was assigned a Phase 1 habitat category. Species lists were taken at locations of botanical interest. All botanical nomenclature follows Stace, 2019. A Phase 1 map was produced showing habitat boundaries.
- 2.3 During the Extended Phase 1 survey, the habitats were assessed for their potential to support protected species. This included, for example, looking for signs of Badger activity (e.g. setts, paths, latrines and hairs on fences), assessing any waterbodies on site or near the site for their potential to support Great Crested Newt.
- 2.4 The site was also surveyed for invasive, non-native plant species such as Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed.

Daytime Bat Survey

- 2.5 A daytime bat survey of the site was undertaken to search for, and to assess the potential for, a bat roost.
- 2.6 An external assessment of the affected buildings on the site was undertaken, 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 assessment 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.
- 2.7 A ground-level assessment of any trees affected by the proposals was also undertaken. This involved a search for potential roosting features (PRF's), including peeled bark, knot holes and branch splits.
- 2.8 A pair of close-focussing binoculars, a high-powered torch and, where necessary, an endoscopic camera, were used to search for evidence of bats.

Personnel and Seasonal Timing

- 2.9 Kate Reed and Joel Hacking (Senior Ecologists) and Holly Ainsley (Ecologist) carried out the survey on the 24th February 2022. All the surveyors are experienced ecologists and fully trained in botanical surveys and protected species assessments. February is a sub-optimal time of the year for botanical work however due to the habitat types present a throughout assessment could be made at this time. The weather at the time of the survey was sunny and dry. Daytime bat surveys can be undertaken at any time of year.

Survey Constraints

- 2.10 Most of the site was fully accessible, unless indicated within the report. There were negligible constraints to the survey.



3.0 RESULTS

Description of Habitats

- 3.1 The Phase 1 Habitat Map can be found at the back of the report. The habitats on the proposed development site are described below.

Bare Ground

- 3.2 The majority of the site is covered with hardstanding, surrounding the buildings, as amenity spaces, car parking and paths between the buildings (see Photograph 1). Ephemeral short perennial species are present on the edge of the bare ground (see Photograph 2). Species include Bryophytes, *Sedum* sp., Groundsel *Senecio vulgaris*, Broad-leaved Willowherb *Epilobium montanum*, Annual Meadow-grass *Poa annua*, and Dove's-foot Crane's-bill *Geranium molle*.



Photograph 1 showing the hardstanding



Photograph 2 showing the ephemeral vegetation on the edge of the site

Amenity Grassland

- 3.3 Areas of Amenity grassland are present on the site (see Photograph 3). The grassland is managed infrequently keeping it generally short. Species within the sward includes Perennial Rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus*, Red Fescue *Festuca rubra*, Creeping Bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens* and Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg.



Photograph 3 showing the ephemeral short perennial

Introduced Shrub

- 3.4 Beds of mature shrubs are present on the edge of the garden spaces (see Photograph 4). These are becoming overgrown and support Silverberry *Elaeagnus* var., Butterfly Bush *Buddleja davidii*, Holly *Ilex aquifolium*, Cherry Laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*, Heather *Calluna vulgaris*, Firethorn *Pyracantha* sp. and Dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*.



Photograph 4 showing an area of introduced shrub

Scattered Trees

- 3.5 Scattered trees occur on the site, primarily within the flowerbeds on the site boundaries (see Photograph 5). Species include Red Oak *Quercus rubra*, Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, Beech *Fagus sylvatica*, Horse Chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum* and Lime *Tilia x europaea*.



Photograph 5 showing some of the scattered trees on site



Continuous and Scattered Scrub

- 3.6 Two introduced shrub beds overgrown with scrub occur in the east of the site (see Photograph 6). These contain Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg., Beech *Fagus sylvatica* Saplings, Snowberry *Symphoricarpos albus*, Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*, and Spindle *Euonymus europaeus*. Scattered scrub is also present across the site mainly within the bare ground/ephemeral short perennial habitat (see Photograph 7). Species include Butterfly Bush *Buddleja davidii*, Beech *Fagus sylvatica* Saplings, Tutsan *Hypericum androsaemum* and Japanese Laurel *Aucuba japonica*.



Photograph 6 showing an area of continuous scrub



Photograph 7 showing some of the scattered scrub on site

Species-poor intact hedgerows and other boundaries

3.7 Four Hedgerows exist on the site (see Photographs 8-11).

- The first is an ornamental hedgerow composed of *Euonymus*, that demarks the edge of the amenity grassland. The hedgerow it is approximately 35m long, 1.5m high and 0.5m wide there are no gaps within the structure of the hedgerow or at the base of the hedgerow.
- The second hedgerow composed of Beech *Fagus sylvatica* and lies on a section of the southern site boundary. The hedgerow is approximately 30m long, 3m high and 1m wide. There is a gap in the centre to allow access and there is a small gap at the base approximately 0.25m the hedgerow is otherwise complete. Additional species within the hedgerow include Holly *Ilex aquifolium* which occurs only occasionally.
- The third hedgerow is composed of Garden Privet *Ligustrum ovalifolium* that lies in the east of the site. The hedgerow it is approximately 30m long, 3m high and 2m wide there are no gaps within the structure of the hedgerow or at the base of the hedgerow. Additional species within the hedgerow include Japanese Laurel *Aucuba japonica*, Yew *Taxus baccata*, Holly *Ilex aquifolium*, and Box *Buxus sempervirens* which each occur only occasionally.
- The fourth is composed of Firethorn *Pyracantha* sp. The hedgerow it is approximately 4m long, 1.5m high and 2m wide there are no gaps within the structure of the hedgerow or at the base of the hedgerow.



Photograph 8 showing Hedgerow 1



Photograph 9 showing Hedgerow 2



Photograph 10 showing Hedgerow 3





Photograph 11 showing the Hedgerow 4

Buildings/Structures

- 3.8 Numerous buildings are present on the site included the former St Gabriel's Hall, the adjacent Chapel, Woodthorpe Hall and St. David's Hall. Other buildings/structures on the site include a container and service units.

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

- 3.9 Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* is a European Protected Species under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (Amendment) (EU Exit) and the species is fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 3.10 No waterbodies exist on the site or within 250m of the site boundary. The site supports limited suitable Great Crested Newt terrestrial habitat. The hard standing and ephemeral short perennial habitats are considered hostile habitat for amphibians. The introduced shrub, hedgerow bases and continuous scrub do offer some cover from predation and foraging opportunities for Great Crested Newts.

Bats

- 3.11 All bat species are European Protected Species. This is implemented in the UK through the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (Amendment) (EU Exit). Bats are also protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Daytime Bat Survey

- 3.12 Several buildings exist on the site (see Figure 2). All the buildings on site were the subject of a daytime bat survey. Not all roof voids were fully accessible.

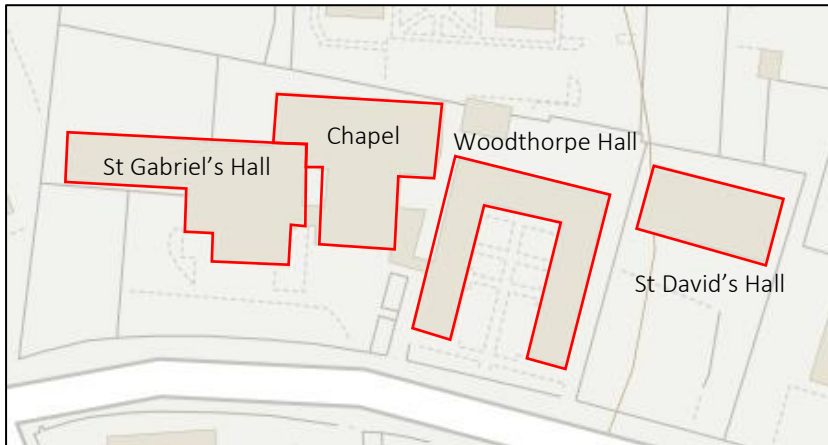


Figure 2 shows the location of the buildings on site

St Gabriel's Hall

- 3.13 St Gabriel's Hall comprises interconnected buildings constructed from brick with multiple hipped roofs. The external brick walls are in good condition, with no missing bricks or mortar, and do not support suitable cavities for roosting bats (see Photographs 12 and 13). The brick chimney stacks are complete. The windows and door frames are uPVC and are well-sealed. A small number of windows on the third storey have been left open which could provide potential access into the internal space of the building (see Photograph 15). Some of the lower-floor windows are covered with sheet metal and are well-sealed.



Photograph 12 showing the exterior St Gabriel's Hall



Photograph 13 showing the brickwork



Photograph 14 showing an open window

- 3.14 The building has multiple hipped and gabled roofs constructed with slate tiles (see Photograph 15). Multiple tiles have slipped or are damaged offering potential access to the internal spaces for bats (see Photograph 16). The remaining tiles lie flush to one another. The ridge tiles are in-situ, however missing mortar has created gaps beneath some of the ridge tiles offering potential entry points into the roof void. Lead flashing exists around the chimney, and in the valleys between pitches. This is flush to the tiles and brickwork.



Photograph 15 showing part of the roof of St Gabriel's Hall



Photograph 16 showing some of the slipped and damaged roof slates

- 3.15 Painted wooden soffit boards are featured throughout the building and bargeboards are present on the gable ends (see Photograph 17). The soffit boards do support some damage and rot in places. Gaps are present beneath the eaves of the roof at the front of the property, creating potential access points for bats (see Photograph 18).





Photograph 17 showing the wooden soffits



Photograph 18 showing the gaps at the eaves of the roof and damaged soffits

- 3.16 The ground floor-, first floor and second-floor rooms are finished spaces and do not present suitable bat roosting habitat. The roof voids in the eastern section of the buildings were not accessible (see Photograph 19). The western section of the building has one large and accessible roof void, which covers the expanse of the roof space (see Photograph 20).



Photograph 19 showing the inaccessible loft hatch in the eastern section of the building



Photograph 20 showing the roof void in the western section of the building

- 3.17 The roof void has wooden roof joists, which are without cracks for bats to use (see Photograph 21). Small gaps do occur where roof timbers meet, these were found to be cobwebbed suggesting they have not been used by bats to roost in (see Photograph 22). The mortar lining the roof tiles is crumbling and daylight can be seen in places (see Photograph 23).



Photograph 21 showing the roof timbers



Photograph 22 showing the gap between roof timbers



Photograph 23 showing the daylight seen where mortar has crumbled

- 3.18 The roof void is insulated to the floor throughout. The internal brickwork is complete and sealed at the apex (see Photograph 24). Daylight is present at the roof edges throughout (see Photograph 25). No evidence of bat activity, such as bat droppings, were found within the western roof void.



Photograph 24 showing some of the internal brickwork



Photograph 25 showing daylight at the roof edges

The Chapel

- 3.19 The Chapel is adjacent to St Gabriel's Hall and comprises multiple interconnected buildings. The building is constructed from brick with pitched and flat roofs (see Photograph 26). The external brick walls are in good condition, with no missing bricks or mortar, and do not support suitable cavities for roosting bats (see Photograph 27). The windows and door frames are uPVC and are well-sealed. Some of the lower-floor windows are covered with sheet metal and are well-sealed.



Photograph 26 showing the front facing elevation of The Chapel



Photograph 27 showing The Chapel losing north-west

- 3.20 The building has multiple gabled and flat roofs constructed with slate tiles (see Photograph 28). A small number of tiles have slipped or are minorly damaged, but no potential cavities or access opportunities are created as a result that could be used by bats. The remaining tiles lie flush to one another. The ridge tiles are all in position and well-sealed with mortar. The flat roofs are firmly sealed. Bargeboards are featured on the gable ends. These are complete and in position (see Photograph 29).



Photograph 28 showing a section of the Chapel roof looking north

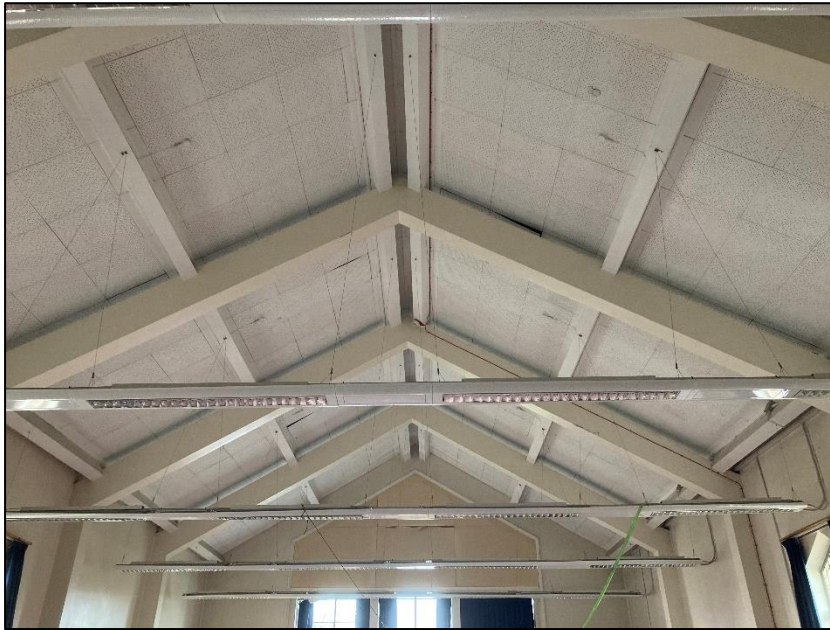


Photograph 29 showing the bargeboards on the Chapel

- 3.21 The building is currently not in use. The ground-floor and first-floor rooms are finished spaces that do not present suitable bat roosting habitat (see Photograph 30). The Chapel does not support a roof void (see Photograph 31). The wooden roof beams are visible, complete and intact with no cracks or crevices that could be used by bats for roosting. The underside of roof is lined with panels these are lie flush to the roof above and each other offering no potential access to the internal space.



Photograph 30 showing the internal space of the Chapel



Photograph 31 showing the roof structure of the chapel

Woodthorpe Hall

- 3.22 Woodthorpe Hall comprises a U-shaped building which were formerly used as apartments. The building is constructed from brick and features hipped roofs constructed from clay tiles. The external brick walls are in good condition, with no missing bricks or mortar, and do not support cavities that could be exploited by roosting bats (see Photographs 32 and 33). The brick chimney stacks are complete. The windows and door frames are uPVC and are well-sealed. The ground floor windows are covered with sheet metal or plyboards and are well-sealed.



Photograph 32 showing Woodthorpe Hall



Photograph 33 showing the brickwork

- 3.23 The roof of the building is hipped and constructed from clay tiles (see Photograph 34). A small number of tiles are minorly damaged or slipped and one tile is missing (see Photograph 35) but no suitable cavities for bat roosting are created or access to the internal space. The ridge tiles are all in position and well-sealed with mortar. Lead flashing exists around the chimney, and in the valleys between pitches. This is flush to the tiles and brickwork.



Photograph 34 showing the roof of Woodthorpe Hall



Photograph 35 showing the missing tile

- 3.24 Wooden soffit boards are present on the roof edges throughout the building, these have vents throughout. These are complete and generally in a good condition. In places they do not lie flush to the brickwork, creating a small gap. This was inspected and was found to be cobwebbed suggesting no bat access has taken place (see Photograph 36).



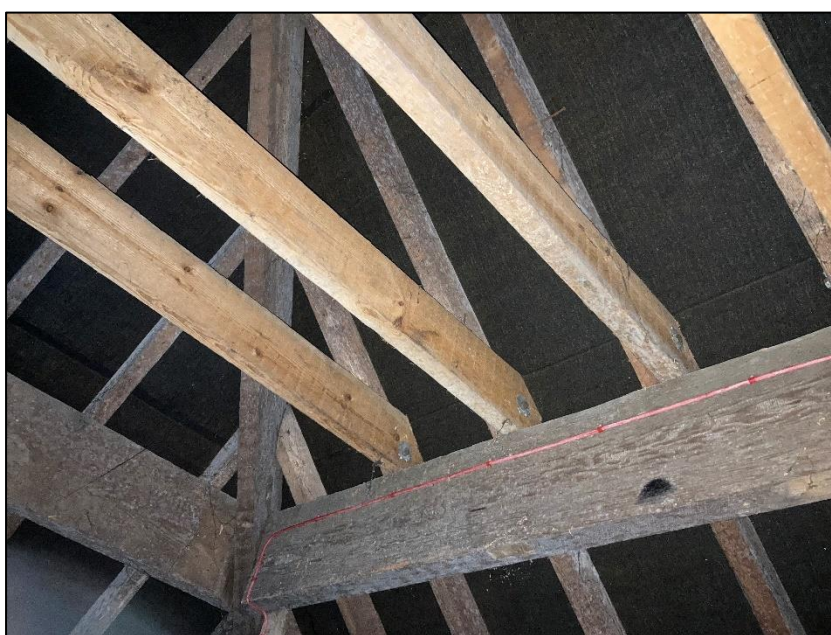
Photograph 36 showing the soffits

- 3.25 The building is not currently in use. The ground-floor and first-floor rooms are finished spaces which do not offer suitable bat roosting habitat. The building has multiple large and accessible roof voids which contain services. The spaces are cold and cobwebbed throughout (see Photograph 37). The roof voids have wooden roof joists, which are

without gaps or cracks for bats to use (see Photograph 38). The roof is lined throughout, and this is complete and lies flush to the roof above, with no significant tears or rips.



Photograph 37 showing the roof void



Photograph 38 showing the roof joists

- 3.26 The roof voids are fully insulated to the floor. The internal brickwork within both buildings is complete but are not fully sealed at the apex (see Photograph 39). These cavities are heavily cobwebbed (see Photograph 40). Daylight is present at the roof edges in several places where the vented soffit boards exits (see Photograph 41). No evidence of bat activity, such as bat droppings, could be found inside the property



Photograph 39 showing the internal brickwork



Photograph 40 showing a cavity at the roof apex



Photograph 41 showing daylight at the roof edges

St David's Hall

- 3.27 St David's Hall is located to the east of the site and is a former theatre building (see Photograph 42). The building is single-storey and constructed from brick with a hipped roof. The external brickwork is in good condition with no areas of recessed mortar or cracks. The brick chimney stack is complete. The windows are boarded over with sheet metal and are well-sealed.



Photograph 42 showing St David's Hall

- 3.28 The roof of the building is hipped and constructed with clay tiles. A small number of tiles have slipped but do not create potential cavities for bats to roost. The remaining tiles lie flush to one another. The ridge tiles are in-situ and well-sealed with mortar. The



roof supports a decorative cupola with louvre windows (see Photograph 43). This offers potential entry points for bats into the roof void of the building. Lead flashing exists around the chimney, and in the valleys between pitches, this lies flush to the tiles. The building features soffits which are complete and lie flush to the brickwork.



Photograph 43 showing the roof of St David's Hall

- 3.29 The building is not currently in use, the ground floor rooms are finished spaces that do not present suitable bat roosting habitat. The building has a concealed roof void above a plastered ceiling (see Photograph 44). It was not possible to access the roof void. No evidence of bat activity was found within the internal space of St David's Hall.



Photograph 44 showing the internal space of St David's Hall

Other Structures

- 3.30 A shipping container is located on the site (see Photograph 45). This is in good condition, well-sealed and does not present any suitable opportunities for roosting bats. A services building is present on the north of the site (see Photograph 46). This is a single storey brick-built structure with a flat roof. The windows and door have been sealed with sheet metal, and so there was no internal access. The building appears to be extremely well-sealed with no potential access points for bats, or external feature that could be used by bats for roosting.



Photograph 45 showing the shipping container



Photograph 46 showing the service building

- 3.31 The trees on site were the subject of a ground level assessment to search for potential roosting features (PRFs) such as damaged limbs, cavities, or woodpecker holes. None of the trees on site are considered to offer any such features. Some of the trees support minor damage but none of it is significant enough to support a roost, being too shallow and exposed (see Photograph 47). Bats use linear landscape features for foraging and commuting and it is possible that bats forage and commute over the site, particularly the tree belts and hedgerow.



Photograph 47 showing a tree with minor trunk damage

Badger

- 3.32 Badgers *Meles meles* are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)/The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011. These Acts, for example, make it illegal to disturb a Badger whilst it is in a sett, to kill, injure or take a Badger and to obstruct the entrance to a Badger sett.
- 3.33 No Badger sett was located on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. No evidence of Badger activity such as latrines or snuffle holes was located on site. Mammal tracks were noted in the east of the site, but there was no evidence to suggest these were because of Badger activity on the site.

Nesting Birds

- 3.34 All bird species are protected at their nest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011.
- 3.35 The continuous scrub, hedgerows, introduced shrub, scattered trees and the buildings on site in particular St David's Hall which has potential access through the decorative pergola offer potential habitat for nesting birds.

INVASIVE SPECIES

- 3.36 Three invasive, non-native species as listed on Schedule 9 of The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) are present on site. Wall Cotoneaster *Cotoneaster horizontalis* is present in an introduced shrub bed adjacent to the southern elevation of St Gabriel's Hall (see Photograph 48). Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum* is present in an introduced shrub bed along the southern boundary of the site (see Photograph 49). Montbretia *Crocasmia x crocosmiiflora* is present along the southern wall of Woodthorpe Hall (see Photograph 50).



Photograph 48 showing the Wall Cotoneaster



Photograph 49 showing the Rhododendron



Photograph 50 showing the Montbretia

PROTECTED SITES

- 3.37 No statutory protected sites lie on the site or immediately adjacent to the site boundary. Four statutory protected sites are located within 5km of the site:
- Highfield Country Park Local Nature Reserve (LNR) which lies 3.3km to the south-east of the site.
 - Clayton Vale LNR which lies 3.9km to the north-east of the site.
 - Chorlton Ess and Ivy Green LNR which lies 4.5km to the south-west of the site.
 - Heaton Mersey Common LNR which lies 4.6km to the south of the site.
 - Chorlton Water Park LNR which lies 4.6km to the south-west of the site.
- 3.38 The site lies within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone, which lists certain types of development that may have a deleterious impact on protected sites nearby. The LPA may consult Natural England for advice on any potential impacts the proposed development may have on the nearby protected sites.
- 3.39 No non-statutory protected sites exist on or within 1km of the site. The nearest is Ashton Canal Site of Biological Importance (SBI) which lies 2.3km to the north of the site.

4.0 ASSESSMENT

Habitats

- 4.1 The Phase 1 Habitats present on the site are common throughout the UK. No nationally rare or locally rare plant species were located during the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey.
- 4.2 The bare ground and amenity grassland are habitats of limited ecological value. The introduced shrub, continuous shrub, scattered trees and scrub and hedgerows are the habitats of most ecological value on the site. These habitats offer a source of nectar and pollen for invertebrates, foraging habitat for small mammals, cover from predation and potential nesting habitat for birds these habitats should be retained where possible.

Development Context

- 4.3 The development proposals involve the demolition of St Gabriel's Hall and St David's Hall with two new buildings being erected in their place, the existing Chapel and Woodthorpe Hall will be retained and refurbished. The wider site will be landscaped, the majority of the trees on site will be retained. It is recommended a suitable landscaping scheme is created to help mitigate the loss of any habitats on site.

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

- 4.4 No ponds exist on the site. No waterbodies exist within 250m of the site. The site support suitable terrestrial habitat for Great Crested Newt within the introduced shrub, hedgerow bases and continuous scrub. However, given the lack of breeding habitat in the locality, Great Crested Newt is not considered to be a constraint on development at this time. No further survey work is required at this time.

Bats

- 4.5 The buildings on site have been the subject of a daytime bat survey.

St Gabriel's Hall

- 4.6 St Gabriel's Hall is a large three-storey brick-built building with multiple pitched slate covered roofs. It supports potential access points to the roof voids through slipped and missing roof voids, gaps in the wooden soffit boards and via a small number of open windows on the upper floor. The slipped tiles also offer external roosting opportunities. The roof voids in the east of the building were not accessible at the time of the survey, one large roof void in the west of the building was accessed and found to support multiple potential access points, no evidence of bat activity was found within this roof void during the survey. St Gabriel's Hall is considered to offer **Moderate Potential** to support a bat roost. A minimum of two dusk emergence surveys should be conducted to determine if bats are using the roof void in the east of the building and the external features of the building.

The Chapel

- 4.7 The Chapel is a two-storey brick-built building with a mixture of flat and pitched roofs covered with roofing felt and slate tiles. A small number of slipped tiles exist on the roof, but these do not present potential access points or a cavity suitable for roosting. All the external features are in good condition. The internal spaces are open to the roof with no roof voids. No evidence of bat activity was found in the building during the survey. The Chapel is considered to offer **negligible potential** to support a bat roost.

Woodthorpe Hall

- 4.8 Woodthorpe Hall is a two-storey brick-built building with a hipped roof covered with clay tiles. The building is in a good material condition with no external features that could be exploited by bats for roosting and no potential access points for bats to the internal spaces. The roof voids are fully accessible and appear to be well-sealed also. No evidence of bat activity was found within the building. Woodthorpe Hall is considered to offer **negligible potential** to support a bat roost.

St David's Hall

- 4.9 St David's Hall is a double height single-storey brick. The building is generally in a good material condition with the only potential access point the decorative cupola on the roof. There is a concealed roof void above the main theatre below the cupola. St David's Hall is considered to offer **Low Potential** to support a bat roost. A minimum of one dusk emergence surveys should be conducted to determine if bats are gaining access to the roof void.
- 4.10 The trees on site were subject of a ground level assessment to search for features that could support roosting bats. No such features were found during the survey, the trees on site are considered to offer **negligible potential** to support a bat roost.

Badger

- 4.11 No Badger sett was located on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. No evidence of Badger activity was located. Badgers are not considered to be a constraint on development.

Nesting Birds

- 4.12 The site does support nesting habitats for birds within the hedgerows, introduced shrubs, scattered trees, continuous scrub and buildings. Nesting birds can be mitigated for by allowing no works to potential nesting habitats to be carried out within the bird nesting season (which is generally March – August) unless a nesting bird survey is undertaken first.

INVASIVE SPECIES

- 4.13 The Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*, Montbretia *Crocasmia x crocosmiiflora* and Wall Cotoneaster *Cotoneaster horizontalis* should be removed prior to work commencing or during construction, using a suitable eradication methodology or managed on site with ongoing management to prevent them from spreading into the wild.

PROTECTED SITES

- 4.14 No statutory or non-statutory protected sites lie on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. The nearest statutory protected site is Highfield Country Park LNR which lies 3.3km to the south-east of the site. The nearest non-statutory protected site is Ashton Canal SBI which lies 2.3km to the north of the site. At this distance, and with barrier habitats between the LNR and the SBI and the proposed development site, there is expected to be no deleterious impact on any protected sites from the development.
- 4.15 The site lies within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone, for the location of the site, the development type is not listed as a concern. The LPA will not need to consult Natural England for advice as a part of this development.



5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

5.1 Protected species are a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a planning application. The presence of protected species, the effect of the proposed development and suitable mitigation, if required, must be established before planning permission can be granted. Following the findings from the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey, the following survey will be required:

- **Bats** - A minimum of two dusk bat emergence surveys is recommended on St Gabriel's Hall. A minimum of one dusk bat emergence survey is recommended on St David's Hall. The surveys should be carried out between May-September, in suitable weather conditions. Should an active bat roost be found on the site, bat mitigation will be required, as well as a Natural England bat mitigation licence in order to carry out works on the bat roost. Mitigation could include a number of bat boxes, for example.

5.2 Depending on the timings of the work and the extent of vegetation disturbance, the following survey may be required:

- **Nesting Birds** - If any work to the scattered scrub needs to be carried out within the bird nesting season (which is generally March to August), then a nesting bird survey will be required immediately prior to work commencing.

Protected Species

5.3 If a protected species is found during the site preparation and construction, work must temporarily cease and a suitably experienced ecologist be contacted for advice.

Invasive Species

5.4 Cotoneaster, Rhododendron and Montbretia are present on the site. These plants are invasive, non-native species and it is recommended they are eradicated from the site during site clearance works, using a suitable methodology for each species or managed on site as part of the landscaping.

Habitat Enhancement

5.5 General recommendations to bring biodiversity gain to the site are:

- Soft landscaping should include the provision of native and non-native flowering perennial species, to provide a pollen and nectar source for invertebrates.
- Bird boxes and/or bat boxes should be erected on the new buildings and/or retained trees where possible including a Sparrow Terrace.
- Trees planting of native species where practically possible.
- 'Hedgehog holes' to be incorporated into the fencing of the site.

6.0 REFERENCES

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

JNCC. *Phase 1 Habitat Survey – a technique for environmental audit*. JNCC, Updated 2010.

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

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

Preston, C.D., Pearman, D. & Dines, T. (2002). *New Atlas of the British and Irish Flora*. Oxford University Press.

Stace, C. A. (2019). *New Flora of the British Isles, 4th Edition*. C&M Floristics.



APPENDIX A PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP

