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# DAYTIME BAT SURVEY

SWALLOW STREET,  
LEVENSHULME, GREATER  
MANCHESTER

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**RACHEL  
HACKING  
ECOLOGY**

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

[www.rachelhackingecology.co.uk](http://www.rachelhackingecology.co.uk)  
[mail@rachelhackingecology.co.uk](mailto:mail@rachelhackingecology.co.uk)



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### Site Information

- 1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Ltd. was commissioned in 2022 by Pinnacle Estates Ltd via Paul Butler Associates Ltd to undertake a daytime bat survey the property off Swallow Street, Levenshulme, Greater Manchester (O.S. grid reference: SJ 87256 94808). The proposed development site currently comprises a detached former commercial 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.

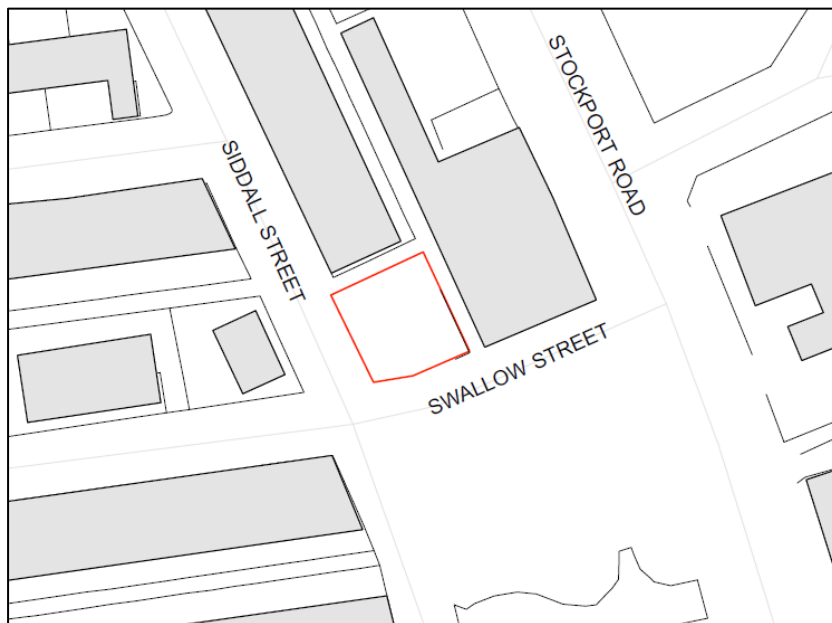


Figure 1 showing the site location

### Description of Development

- 1.2 The site will be the subject of a planning application for the conversion of the building into residential apartments.

### 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 (Senior Ecologist) carried out the daytime bat survey on the 20<sup>th</sup> April 2022. Joel is experienced and fully trained in protected species surveys and holds a Natural England Class 2 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 off Swallow Street comprises a detached former commercial property constructed from brick and has a pitched, sheet-metal roof. The property is unoccupied.

### External Assessment

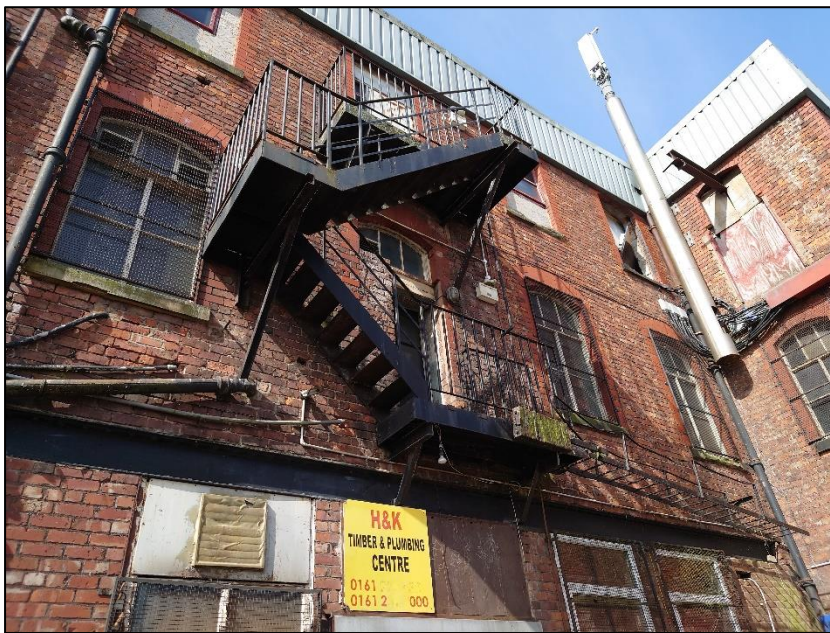
- 3.2 The external brickwork is in good condition with no significantly damaged bricks or recessed mortar cavities (see Photographs 1 and 2). The window and door frames are flush to the surrounding masonry (see Photograph 3). Some of the windows are boarded, with metal grills in position over the ground floor and second floor windows. The brick window lintels are intact, offering no gaps.



*Photograph 1 showing the exterior of the property*

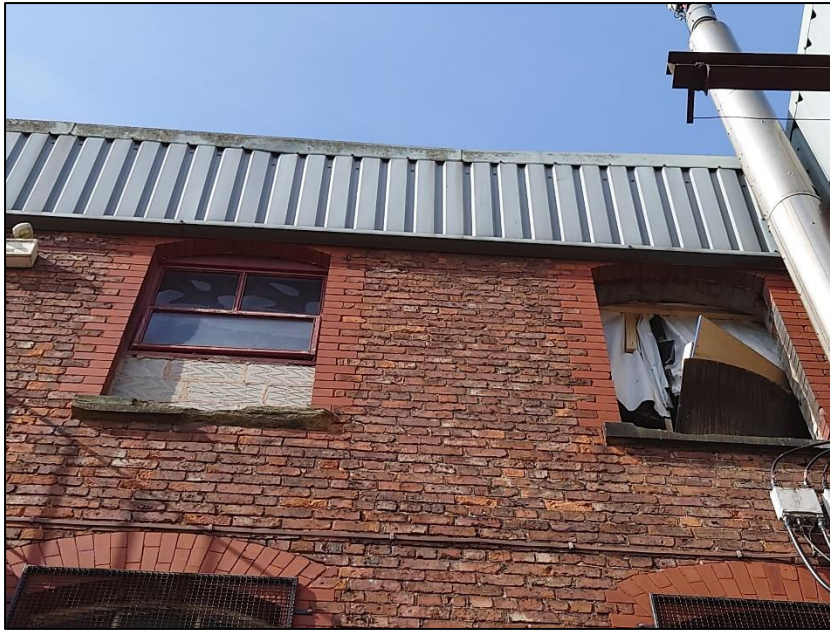


*Photograph 2 showing the rear elevation of the property*



*Photograph 3 showing the exterior of the property*

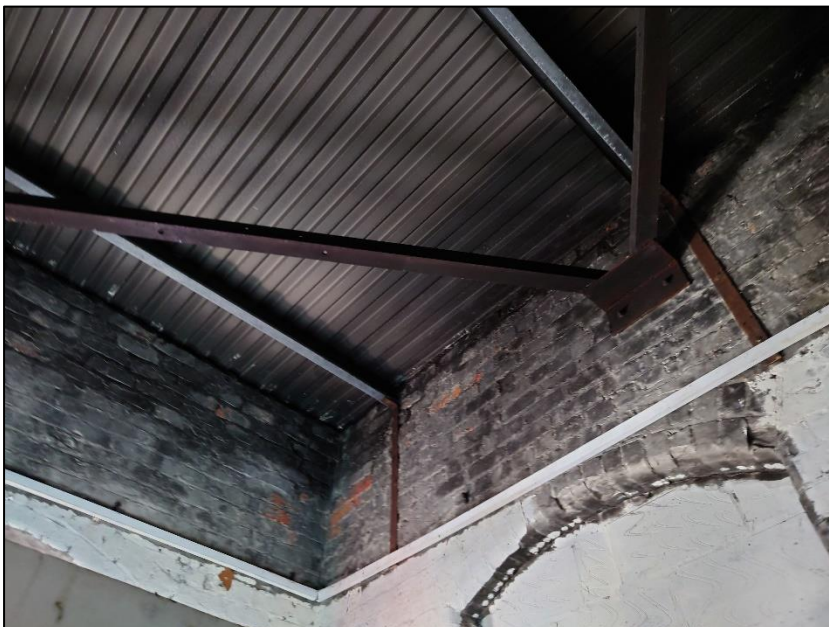
- 3.3 The roof of the property is constructed from sheet-metal, which clads the upper brick courses (see Photograph 4). The sheet metal panels sit flush to the brickwork, offering no gaps or cavities. The metal panels are flush to one another, offering no suitable cavities for bats.



*Photograph 4 showing the roof of the property*

#### **Internal Assessment**

- 3.4 The interior of the building is used for storage only. The building is currently unoccupied. The upper floor is built up to the roof, and has no separate roof void (see Photograph 5). The steel beams are complete and intact, offering no cavities for bats to exploit. The roof is unlined. The internal brickwork is complete and intact, offering no damaged bricks or recessed mortar (see Photograph 6). The interior is well-lit. No evidence of bat activity was found inside the building.



*Photograph 5 showing the interior of the upper floor*



*Photograph 6 showing the internal brickwork*

### Surrounding Land

- 3.5 The property is enclosed entirely by hardstanding, with a small yard present on the front elevation (see Photograph 7). No evidence of other protected species could be found on the site.



*Photograph 7 showing the small yard on the site*

## 4.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 No evidence of bat activity was found at the property off Swallow Street, Levenshulme. 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 within the buildings.

## 5.0 REFERENCES

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

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

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