
EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY & DAYTIME BAT SURVEY

YEW TREE MANOR CARE HOME,
NORTHERN MOOR, WYTHENSHAW,
GREATER MANCHESTER

APRIL 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
	HABITATS	4
	PROTECTED SPECIES	7
	INVASIVE SPECIES	12
	PROTECTED SITES.....	12
4.0	ASSESSMENT	13
5.0	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	15
6.0	REFERENCES	16
APPENDIX A – PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP		

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Site Information

- 1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2022 by Liberty Care to carry out an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Daytime Bat Survey at Yew Tree Manor Care Home, Yewtree Lane, Northern Moor, Wythenshawe (O.S. grid reference: SJ 82138 90593 – see Figure 1). The site currently comprises a detached two-storey care home, surrounded by mature gardens, with access and parking. The site is immediately surrounded by residential development, with greenspace further north.

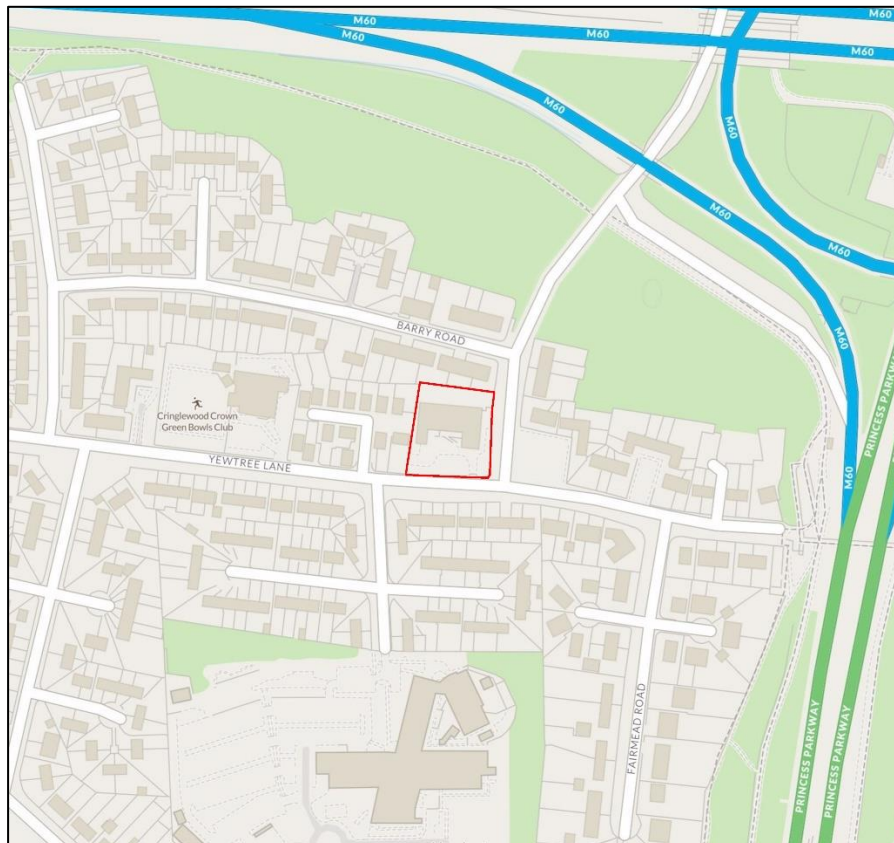


Figure 1 showing the location of the site, circled in red

Description of Development

- 1.2 The site will be the subject of a planning application for the demolition of the building and the construction of a new 59 bedroom care home, with increased parking facilities and landscaping.

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.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 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.
- 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 and a ground-level assessment of the trees on site for potential bat roosting features.
- 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 building was undertaken to search for, and to assess the potential for, a bat roost within the building.
- 2.6 An external assessment 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 pair of close-focussing binoculars, an endoscope and a high-powered torch were used to search for evidence of bats.

Personnel and Seasonal Timing

- 2.8 Sam Harmer (Senior Ecologist) carried out the survey on the 19th April 2022. Sam is an experienced ecologist and is experienced in habitat surveys and protected species assessments. Sam holds a Natural England Level 2 Bat Licence (Licence Number: 2020-49406-CLS-CLS). Late April is within the optimal time of the year for botanical surveys, and given the type of habitats present on site, a thorough assessment could be made. Protected species assessments can be undertaken at any time of the year.

Survey Constraints

- 2.9 The weather at the time of the survey was overcast and cool. The site could be fully accessed and there were no constraints to the Phase 1 Habitat Survey. Some of the loft voids within the older part of the building could not be fully accessed, otherwise the remaining building could be searched internally and externally.

3.0 RESULTS

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.

Amenity Grassland

- 3.2 Amenity grassland occurs to the front and rear of the care home (see Photograph 1). The grassland is managed by mowing and is species-poor, including mainly Perennial Rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, Annual Meadow-grass *Poa annua*, Selfheal *Prunella vulgaris*, Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, Red Fescue *Festuca rubra*, Daisy *Bellis perennis* and bryophytes.



Photograph 1 showing the amenity grassland at the rear of the site

Introduced Shrub

- 3.3 Mature shrub beds occur on site, mostly at the front of the site (see Photograph 2). These are planted with garden varieties such as Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*, Wall Cotoneaster *Cotoneaster horizontalis*, Snowberry *Symphoricarpos albus*, Forsythia, Firethorn *Pyracantha* var. and Cherry Laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*.



Photograph 2 showing one of the shrub beds

Bare Ground

- 3.4 Bare ground exists around the building as paths and patios, as well as the access driveway and parking areas (see Photograph 3). The bare ground comprises hardstanding or flags.



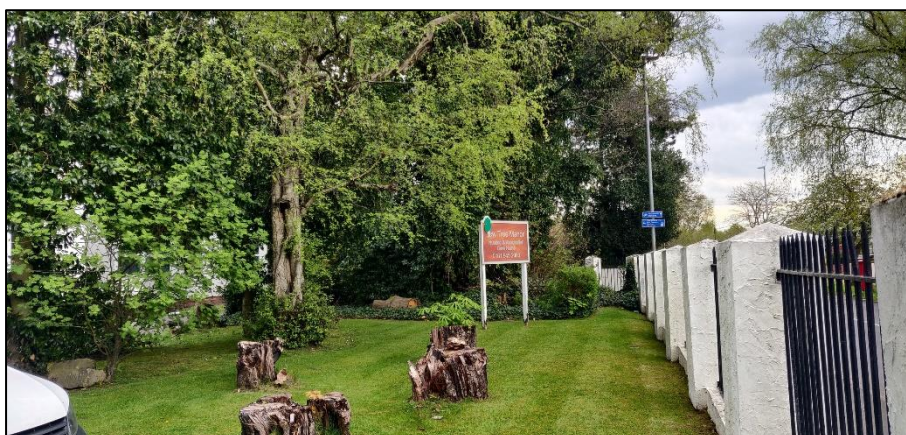
Photograph 3 showing some of the bare ground

Existing Building

- 3.5 A detached two-storey care home exists on site. This is described in more detail within the daytime bat survey results section, below.

Trees

- 3.6 A number of trees, both mature and semi-mature, exist on site (see Photographs 4 and 5). These are Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, Scot's Pine *Pinus sylvestris*, Silver Birch *Betula pendula* and Cherry *Prunus* var.



Photograph 4 showing some of the trees



Photograph 5 showing some of the trees

Boundaries

- 3.7 The majority of the boundaries comprise walls or fencing. A species-poor intact hedgerow exists along the northern boundary (see Photograph 6). Species include Garden Privet *Ligustrum ovalifolium* and Cherry Laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*.



Photograph 6 showing the hedgerow

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

- 3.8 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).
- 3.9 No ponds exist on site or within 250m of the site. The site supports limited suitable terrestrial habitat for Great Crested Newt, with only the shrub beds and hedgerow base offering cover and foraging habitat.

Bats

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

Daytime Bat Survey

- 3.11 One large two-storey detached building exists on site and this is proposed to be demolished. The building is of brick construction with pitched tiled roofs (see Photographs 7 and 8). The central section is the oldest part of the building, with two newer extensions added to each side. The front elevation is rendered and painted. The render and exposed brickwork are in good material condition, with no missing bricks, mortar or render. The stone window lintels and uPVC window frames are in good condition. The windows and doors throughout are intact.



Photograph 7 showing the front exterior of the building



Photograph 8 showing the rear elevation of the building

- 3.12 The brickwork at the newer gable ends of the building is in excellent condition (see Photograph 9). The soffits and bargeboards are mostly in excellent condition and flush to the brickwork (see Photograph 10). Small parts of the corners of the bargeboards have weathered.



Photograph 9 showing one of the gables and bargeboards



Photograph 10 showing the soffits

- 3.13 The building has multiple pitched roofs, with slate tiles and composite tiles in use (see Photographs 7, 8 and 11). Most roof tiles appear to be intact although not all the roof was easily visible from the exterior. A small number of slate tiles have slipped. Where small single-storey extensions exist, these roofs are intact. No evidence of bat activity was found externally. Very limited potential bat entry points were found.



Photograph 11 showing part of the roof of the building

- 3.14 Internally, the ground floor and first floor rooms are in use and do not offer suitable bat roosting habitat. The oldest central part of the building has four small loft voids, which were mostly accessible, although some areas could not be reached due to the amount of storage material and brick dividing walls (see Photographs 12 and 13). Within these voids, the roof timbers are intact with no gaps or cavities. The roof is lined with felt and this supports tears. Daylight could be seen where pipes enter through broken brickwork. The voids are extremely dusty and covered with thick cobwebs. No evidence of bat activity was found within these voids. A number of rodent droppings were found within these voids.



Photograph 12 showing one of the loft voids



Photograph 13 showing the timbers within one of the voids

- 3.15 The newer extensions support loft voids and all were accessible and very similar in construction. The felt roofing liner is intact throughout. The roof timbers are new and support no cavities. The voids are insulated. Daylight could be seen from around vents. A large number of rodent droppings were found within these voids. No evidence of bat activity was found.



Photograph 14 showing one of the loft voids within the extensions



Photograph 15 showing one of the newer loft voids and timbers

Trees

- 3.16 The trees were all searched for potential bat roosting features (PRFs) such as cavities and limb damage (see Photographs 16 and 17). None of the trees support PRFs. Any loose bark was endoscoped and no evidence of bat usage found.



Photographs 16 and 17 showing some of the trees

Badger

- 3.17 Badgers *Meles meles* are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). 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.
- 3.18 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.

Nesting Birds

- 3.19 All bird species are protected at their nest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The site offers no suitable nesting habitat for birds.
- 3.20 Suitable bird nesting habitat exists on site, within the hedgerow, mature trees and mature shrubs.

INVASIVE SPECIES

- 3.21 Wall Cotoneaster and Rhododendron exist within the shrub beds on site. These are invasive, non-native species, and are listed on Schedule 9 Part II (plants) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), making it offence to allow these species to spread into the wild.

PROTECTED SITES

- 3.22 No statutory protected sites exist on the site or adjacent to the site. The nearest statutory protected site is Wythenshawe Park Local Nature Reserve (LNR) which lies just over 500 metres from the site to the south. Chorlton Water Park LNR lies just over a kilometre from the site to the north. Brookheys Covert Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies 7.7km to the west.
- 3.23 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 type of development proposed here is not listed as a concern at this location.
- 3.24 No non-statutory protected sites exist on or adjacent to the site. The nearest non-statutory protected site is Gibb Lane Wood Site of Biological Importance (SBI) which lies 860m to the south 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 site offers limited ecological value, being mainly a building and hardstanding. The amenity grassland is species-poor and isolated within a built-up area. The shrub beds and trees are also isolated but do offer cover for birds and mammals. The hedgerow, shrub beds and trees offer nesting habitat for birds.

Development Context

- 4.3 The proposed development will cause the loss of most of the habitats on site, including the building. The northern hedgerow will be retained. Given the poor ecological value of the site, no specific habitat mitigation is required. However, the implementation of species-rich landscaping (such as wildflower amenity grassland and native tree or fruit tree planting) and the provision of bird and bat boxes would enhance the ecological value of the site.

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

- 4.4 No ponds exist on site or within 250m of the site boundaries. The site supports limited suitable Great Crested Newt terrestrial habitat. Due to the lack of suitable breeding habitat in the locality and limited suitable terrestrial habitat, it is considered Great Crested Newt is unlikely to be present on site and is not considered to be a constraint on the development.

Bats

- 4.5 The building on site has been the subject of a daytime bat survey. No evidence of bat activity was located within any of the accessible loft voids. However, a very small number of potential bat entry points do exist on the external features as well as some slipped slate roof tiles. Part of the older loft voids were inaccessible. Therefore, the building is considered to offer low suitability for a bat roost and a single precautionary bat emergence survey should be undertaken. The trees on site offer no potential bat roosting features. The trees are considered to offer negligible suitability for a bat roost. Only the northern hedgerow on site offers suitable bat foraging and commuting habitat and this is to be retained. This should be maintained as a dark wildlife corridor.

Badger

- 4.6 No Badger sett or evidence of Badger activity was located on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. Badger is not considered to be a constraint on the development at this time.

Nesting Birds

- 4.7 The site supports suitable bird nesting habitat, within the hedgerow, mature trees and shrubs. It is recommended that the vegetation is cleared outside of the bird nesting season (the nesting season is generally March to August) or a bird nesting survey is undertaken first.

INVASIVE SPECIES

- 4.8 Wall Cotoneaster and Rhododendron were found within the shrub beds on site. These are invasive, non-native species. It is expected that these plants will be removed during site clearance as all shrub beds are to be removed. Eradication must be undertaken carefully.

PROTECTED SITES

- 4.9 No statutory or non-statutory protected sites lie within the proposed development site or immediately adjacent to the site. The nearest statutory protected site is Wythenshawe Park LNR which lies just over 500 metres from the site to the south. There is no habitat connectivity between the site and the LNR. The nearest non-statutory protected site is Gibb Lane Wood SBI, which lies 860m to the south of the site. Given the distances involved and the fact that the site is isolated within a built-up area, it is considered that the proposed development will have no deleterious effect on protected sites.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Further Surveys

- 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. From the results of the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey, the following survey is recommended:

- **Bats** – It is recommended that a precautionary single bat emergence survey at dusk is undertaken, concentrating on the potential entry points and slipped tiles. This must be undertaken between May and September, in suitable weather conditions and with enough surveyors to observe the different features of the building.

- 5.2 Depending on the timings of the site clearance, the following survey may be required:

- **Nesting Birds** - If any work to the trees, shrubs or hedgerows 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 any protected species, such as bats or evidence of bat activity, is found during the development works, then work must stop, and an ecologist be contacted for advice.
- 5.4 If the building is not demolished within two years of the date of the daytime bat survey, then a further bat survey will be required to update the findings.

Biodiversity Enhancement

- 5.5 During landscaping design, the following measures should be implemented to increase the biodiversity value of the site:
- 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 bat boxes should be erected/incorporated onto the new building.
 - Native trees and/or fruit trees should be planted.

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

