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Inspection & Assessment in relation to Bats & Breeding Birds

August 2021

9 Derby Street,
Ormskirk,

L39 2BJ

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Prepared by	Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd

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Review date	17/08/2021
Approved by	Mrs. K. Wilding CEnv MIEMA ACIEEM
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This report aims to provide general advice on ecological constraints associated with any development of the site and includes recommendations for further survey; it is not intended that this report should be submitted with a planning application for development of the site, unless supported by the results of further surveys and a detailed assessment of the effects of the proposed development

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Executive Summary

As part of a proposed planning application at 9 Derby Street in Ormskirk, Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd carried out a daytime inspection and assessment in relation to bats and breeding birds in late July 2021. The survey was commissioned by RAL Architects Ltd.

The proposal is to demolish the two flat roof extensions at ground floor, and to covert the rear ground and first floor into student accommodation, the ground floor area accessed from the front of the site will be used as a dental surgery.

Extensive findings, conclusions and recommendations are presented throughout the report; however, the reader should be aware of the following Key recommendations.

Bats: Based upon the findings of the survey covered through sections 6.0-7.0 of the report and supported by Appendix I, whilst following best practice guidance, 9 Derby Road offers 'Negligible' bat roost suitability in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd ed. (2016), whilst the immediate environment also offers a fairly hostile, unfavourable environment for foraging and commuting bats. No further surveys are required at the building at this time, and the proposals will not result in any impacts to bats, bat roosts or loss of bat roost opportunities, in all reasonable judgement.

Table 4.1 Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement.

Suitability	Description Roosting habitats	Commuting and foraging habitats
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats.

Bats are a transient species and buildings can deteriorate over time. In the highly unlikely event that bat(s) are found, or evidence of bat(s) during the scheme of proposed works then as a legal requirement the work at the site should immediately cease and an Ecologist be contacted for further advice. If bat(s) or their roost(s) will be affected, then an EPSML may be required to legally commence with the works. See Figure 8.1 for indicative evidence of bats.

Enhancement: As a means of enhancement and aiding the design of the scheme in keeping with local and national planning policy considering biodiversity net-gain principles, the proposals may consider incorporating wildlife friendly provisions such as:

- Native species only when landscaping / re-planting,
- Bat, bird and invertebrate provisions,

Further information is provided within Appendix II.

Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction & Reason for Survey

1.1 As part of a proposed planning application at 9 Derby Street in Ormskirk, Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd carried out a daytime inspection and assessment in relation to bats and breeding birds in late July 2021. The survey was commissioned by RAL Architects Ltd.

1.2 The proposal is to demolish the two flat roof extensions at ground floor, and to covert the rear ground and first floor into student accommodation, the ground floor area accessed from the front of the site will be used as a dental surgery

1.3 See Figures 1.1 - 1.2 for Location plan and Existing layout plan.

1.4 The aim of the survey was to ascertain if the building is of value to bats whilst an assessment for birds was also carried out. If any potential roost features were found to be suitable for bats, or signs of use were observed, then more detailed surveys would be recommended i.e. dusk/dawn emergence/re-entry surveys during the main active season of bats which is May – August.

1.5 If additional surveys are required following the initial site visit this report will outline the details of those further requirements.

1.6 If determined that bat(s) or their roost/place of rest/shelter will be subsequently impacted by the works then a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML) would be legally required to proceed with the development.

1.7 If evidence indicated breeding birds may be impacted by proposals, in which case tailored recommendations would be made accordingly species pending.

1.8 As part of the local authority's planning policies and obligations to the Planning Framework, ecological surveys are generally required prior to planning permission being granted where protected/priority habitats and species are, or may be present, that could be affected by the proposals for which the application seeks consent. Where more detailed surveys are recommended by the ecologist, following an initial daytime investigation, then Local Planning Authorities (LPA) on the advice of their ecological advisors, will not grant permission until such time that all relevant information is gathered**.**

1.9 In accordance with *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development* (CIEEM *et al*, 2019) the site visit also aims to identify enhancement opportunities for biodiversity in line with national and local planning policy.

LOCATION PLAN

N

Site boundary

Ral Information
Studio 23
23 Princes Street
Southport PR8 1EG
T:01704 885511
F: 01704 885522
studio@ralarchitects.com
www.ralarchitects.com

RAL architects

Job Information
Name
Former TSB Bank - Student Accomodation
Number
0207870

Drawing Information
Location plan

Number	Revision	Date	Scale @ A4
L02	*	28.06.21	1:1250

Figure 1.1 – Site Location Plan

Figure 1.2 – Existing layout plan

2.0 Protected Species & Their Requirements

Bats

2.1 All British bats and their **roosts are afforded full protection under the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and are listed in Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2019) (EU Exit). When dealing with cases where a European Protected Species (EPS) (all UK bats) may be affected, a planning authority is a competent authority within the meaning of the Regulation 7 of the Regulations, that has a statutory duty as the local authority to have due regard to the provisions of the Regulations in the exercise of its functions.

2.2 Use of Buildings by Bats

a) Summer breeding roost (May-August)
b) Hibernation roost (October-March)
c) Transitional or temporary roost (other months)

Roost selection is often closely correlated to suitable foraging habitat within a reasonable commuting distance from the roost and different sites are used depending upon insect densities and abundance; climatic conditions can also affect their ability to successfully forage. All British bats are insectivorous.

** The term roost is generically referred to as a place that bat/s use for the any of the above reasons, however it should be noted that under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2019) (EU Exit) (Regulation 43 (d) the term roost is not used but refers to "*a breeding site or resting place of such an animal*" and is afforded legal protection. The roost,

breeding site or resting place of bats, which ever terminology is used is legally protected whether or not bats are in occupation.

Birds

2.3 All wild birds no matter how common, their eggs, young and nests whilst being built or occupied are protected under both the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA 1981) and Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC Act 2006). Birds listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA 1981, for example Barn owl (*Tyto alba*), are afforded a greater level of protection protected also from disturbance.

2.4 Any work that would damage an occupied nest, eggs or young of breeding birds must be avoided; any damage to nests that may occur as a result of the development should be outside of the main breeding bird season (March-August). On occasions nests can become unoccupied during the breeding season but the status of the nest(s) should be determined by a suitably experienced ecologist before any damage takes place.

Policy

2.5 Guidance for Local Authorities: Extract from Office of the Deputy Prime Minister - Circular 06/2005:

"It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision".

2.6 Paragraph 180 of the National Policy Planning Framework (as revised in July 2021) states:

180. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;

b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons63 and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and,

d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

2.7 Policy EN2 of West Lancashire's Local Plan 2012-2027 reflects the above stating:

"b) iii. Where development is considered necessary, adequate mitigation measures and compensatory habitat creation will be required through planning conditions and / or obligations, with the aim of providing an overall improvement in the site's biodiversity value. Where compensatory habitat is provided it should of at least equal area and diversity, if not larger and more diverse, than what is being replaced…"

Policy EN 4 'Preserving and Enhancing West Lancashire's Cultural and Heritage Assets' of the WLLP states that

"all development affecting the historic environment should seek to preserve and enhance the heritage asset and any features of specific historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest."

2.8 Where more detailed surveys are recommended by the Ecologist following a daytime assessment, then the Local Planning Authority, upon the advice of their ecological advisors, should not determine an application until such time that all relevant information is gathered, i.e. - until all required survey work has been completed.

This is in accordance with the obligations placed upon Local Authorities in the exercise of its functions by way of its duties under the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2019 (EU Exit).

2.9 Figure 2.1 is a process model that surmises how ecological issues should be dealt with in the context of the planning process.

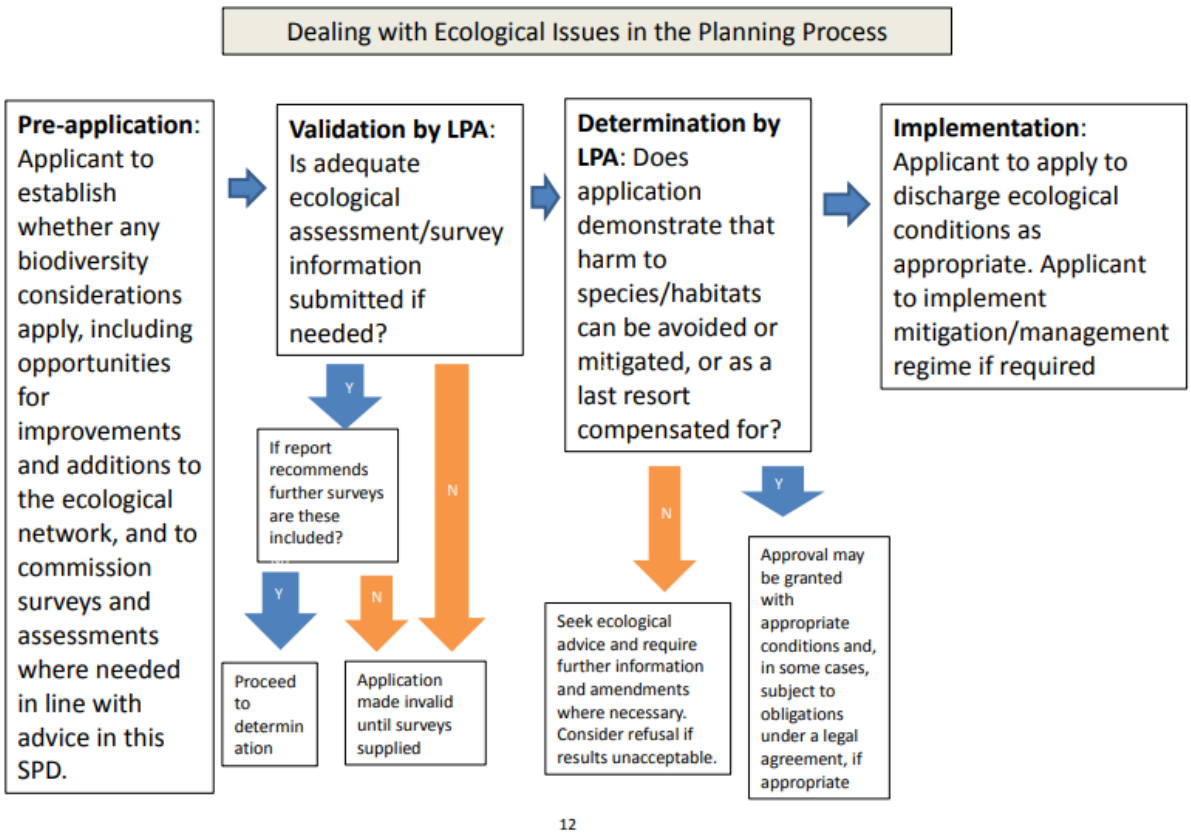

Figure 2.1 - Dealing with ecological issues in the planning process

3.0 Protected Species in West Lancashire

3.1 Up to eleven bat species have been recorded in Lancashire, most of which use built structures notably occupied residential properties for roosting, though also use trees. Bats (*Chiroptera*) feature on the Lancashire BAP and all are fully protected by UK legislation. The most frequently encountered bat species is the Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and its abundant status in Lancashire is reflected throughout the UK.

3.2 Barn owl (*Tyto alba*) are a distinctive, widespread species of protected bird listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended); they are distributed throughout the UK and will use tussock-forming grasslands, rough field margins, ditches and roadside edges for hunting purposes, whilst they typically use barns/abandoned buildings and tree hollows for nesting or roosting use. In rare instances occupied dwellings can support owls. Additional to protection from nest destruction, Schedule 1 listed species nest sites are also protected from disturbance.

4.0 Survey Methodology

4.1 As part of the Inspection & Assessment for Bats & Breeding Birds report, a desk-top and field-based study is conducted. Methods for both components of the appraisal are given below.

Desktop Study

4.2 Prior to a site visit a desktop study was conducted using online resources to obtain information pertaining to any sites afforded statutory (e.g. SSSI) and non-statutory (e.g. LWS) designations within 2.0km of the site boundary. To do so, the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC – provided by DEFRA) was accessed to gather such information; this interactive mapping service was also used to locate any locally granted European Protected Species Mitigation Licenses (EPSML) to further inform conclusions concerning such species in the context of the study site and its proposed development.

4.3 Satellite imagery was reviewed using sources such as Google Earth (© 2020/2021) to determine the nature of adjoining and extending habitats; such information aids in the understanding of how the site might interact with its surroundings ecologically and its value in that context, and how the development may impact at a wider scale.

4.4 A commercial data request to the Local Environment Records Centre serving the area Local Environment Records Network (LERN) serving the area has not been sourced at this time and is justified through application of the following recent guidance:

1) The Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity Data in the UK (CIEEM, 2020) states:

"*It is generally expected that a desk study, including a data search, will be a key part of the ecological surveys or reports produced to inform a planning application. Freely available web-based sources of data and contextual information should always be used; in some cases, it may be acceptable to not undertake a data search with the LERC or other relevant NSS or local interest groups, for example:*

ii) Situations where the data search would be extremely unlikely to provide information needed to inform the assessment, due to the ***scale and location*** *of the proposed development. The appropriateness of excluding a data search will need to be judged on a case-by-case basis as, in most situations, it will be essential to carry out such a search even if the development is very small or is likely to have a low impact. It can be very*

difficult to demonstrate that a data search would not have provided relevant information without obtaining and reviewing those data.

*iii) In some cases for Preliminary Roost Assessments of buildings in **low impact / small-scale scenarios**, such as an extension to a residential property, loft conversions (full or partial), installation of Velux/dormer windows, single modern agricultural or similar building conversion or demolition; however, it should not be assumed that data searches are never required for such scenarios and this must be judged on a case by case basis and justified accordingly.*

2) The Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017) also states:

*"Very occasionally it might be possible to carry out a robust PEA without obtaining LERC/NBDC/CEDaR data; this will usually only apply to low impact or **small-scale projects** (e.g. by virtue of size, extent, duration of works, magnitude and locality), and should be determined on a case-by-case basis."*

4.5 As exemptions as made **bold** above can be applied for the proposals at 9 Derby Street in good practice, it is considered unnecessary to conduct a commercial data request following the desk study effort and daytime assessment at this time which offers a proportionate level of survey effort, however, if a data search is considered to be necessary by the Local Authority to inform the ecological impact assessment following any further surveys recommended in this report, a proportionate data search should be commissioned with results interpreted into the conclusions and recommendations of a re-issued/updated report.

Field Survey

4.6 In context with the above a diurnal inspection and assessment of the building in relation to bats and breeding birds was conducted on 20th July 2021 in clear, sunshine conditions (26ºC) wind 0/12 (Beaufort scale), 5% cloud, by Mr. M. Pritchard ACIEEM, a multiple protected species licenced Ecologist of Five years (Natural England Class 1 Bat Licence: 2020-5039-CLS-CLS) who is additionally an accredited agent on the Class 2 Natural England bat licence of Mrs. K. Wilding (CLS-14227).

4.7 Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd ed. (2016) states:

"*The guidelines should be interpreted and adapted on a case-by-case basis according to site-specific factors and the professional judgement of an experienced ecologist. Where examples are used in the guidelines, they are descriptive rather than prescriptive."*

4.8 The bat and breeding bird survey was conducted in tandem; the building was inspected for potential places that may be of value to bats or breeding birds, and to determine if evidence of use by either group was present; two loft spaces were present, both accessible and thus investigated with the aid of a high powered torch for evidence of bat use which mainly includes bat droppings and/or prey items, or incidental presence of live or dead animals, for example, and investigated for evidence of breeding birds which broadly involves a search for nesting, presence of pellets or accumulated faeces and/or dead juveniles/hatchlings, for example.

4.9 External elevations were investigated with the aid of high-powered torch and close focus binoculars (where necessary) for places that can be used as a roost by bats or as a means of ingress for bats and birds leading to areas of roosting/nesting potential. These features are typically referred to as potential roost features (PRF) concerning bats.

4.10 The surrounding habitat was also considered in terms of general suitability for bat and bird species associated with the local habitat types.

4.11 No trees have been investigated as part of this study.

4.12 Criteria for roost assessment are based upon the determinants given in the Bat Conservation Trust - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd ed. (2016): (see Figure 4.1).

Table 4.1 Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement.

Suitability	Description Roosting habitats	Commuting and foraging habitats
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions[a] and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation[b]). A tree of sufficient size and age to contain PRFs but with none seen from the ground or features seen with only very limited roosting potential.[c]	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Moderate	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions[a] and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only – the assessments in this table are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for commuting such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions[a] and surrounding habitat.	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by commuting bats such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.

[a] For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance.
[b] Evidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten *et al.*, 2015). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK but ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in large buildings in highly urbanised environments.
[c] This system of categorisation aligns with BS 8596:2015 Surveying for bats in trees and woodland (BSI, 2015).

Figure 4.1 - BCT guidelines extract

4.13 An assessment of the building was conducted when birds are within their breeding season (this is typically March-September inclusive). Elevations were inspected for evidence of birds that show a high dependency upon built structures, many of which are in a state of decline. These might include the following species for example:

- Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*): Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) red status,
- House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*): BoCC red status,
- House Martin (*Delichon urbica*): BoCC amber status,
- Swift (*Apus apus*): BoCC amber status,
- Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*): BoCC green status.

4.14 Additional to the site's capacity to support common species of bird, the area was subject to an assessment for capacity to support specially protected species such as Barn owl, a species protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended).

4.15 The results, conclusions and recommendations of this report are based on a number of factors i.e.

- Skills and experience of the surveyor,
- Knowledge of bat and bird ecology relevant to the site location and geographical range,
- Nature of the immediate and surrounding habitat in relation to shelter, foraging and commuting opportunities

4.16 The results, conclusions and recommendations of this report have been assessed by Mrs. K. Wilding, the Director of Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd, and her assessment is consistent with that of Mr. Pritchard.

5.0 Limitations

5.1 External assessment experienced some visual limitations given the complexity of the building, particularly the roof, which could not be observed from any angle at street level. This was partly overcome during the internal assessment which allowed a greater and thorough investigation of the roof underside, as well as flatter lower levels of the roof from the windows, and was also overcome by the surveyor observing the roof from way off site using binoculars.

5.2 The survey was conducted in July during the active season of bats, at a time when bats are within their active season, thus evidence of their presence can be more frequently observed around roost entrances (i.e. - droppings, staining). Survey timing is not considered a constraint in this instance, and potential roost features can be determined at any stage of the year.

5.3 The survey took place within the breeding bird season (typically March-August), therefore incidental breeding bird behaviour has a greater probability of being encountered. Evidence of breeding birds has a good chance of being found where birds have been breeding successfully, accumulated faeces, dead specimens/hatchling/juveniles, for example.

5.4 Despite the visual constraints to the roof, no access limitations were experienced on site and the surveyor was able to conclusively assess the building for field signs at an appropriate time of the year; therefore, having considered possible survey constraints, no significant limitations were experienced that might adversely influence the results, conclusions, and recommendations of this report.

6.0 Desk Study Results

6.1 9 Derby Road (referred to as “the application site”) is situated in the dense urban centre of Ormskirk within 100 metres of the Ormskirk train station.

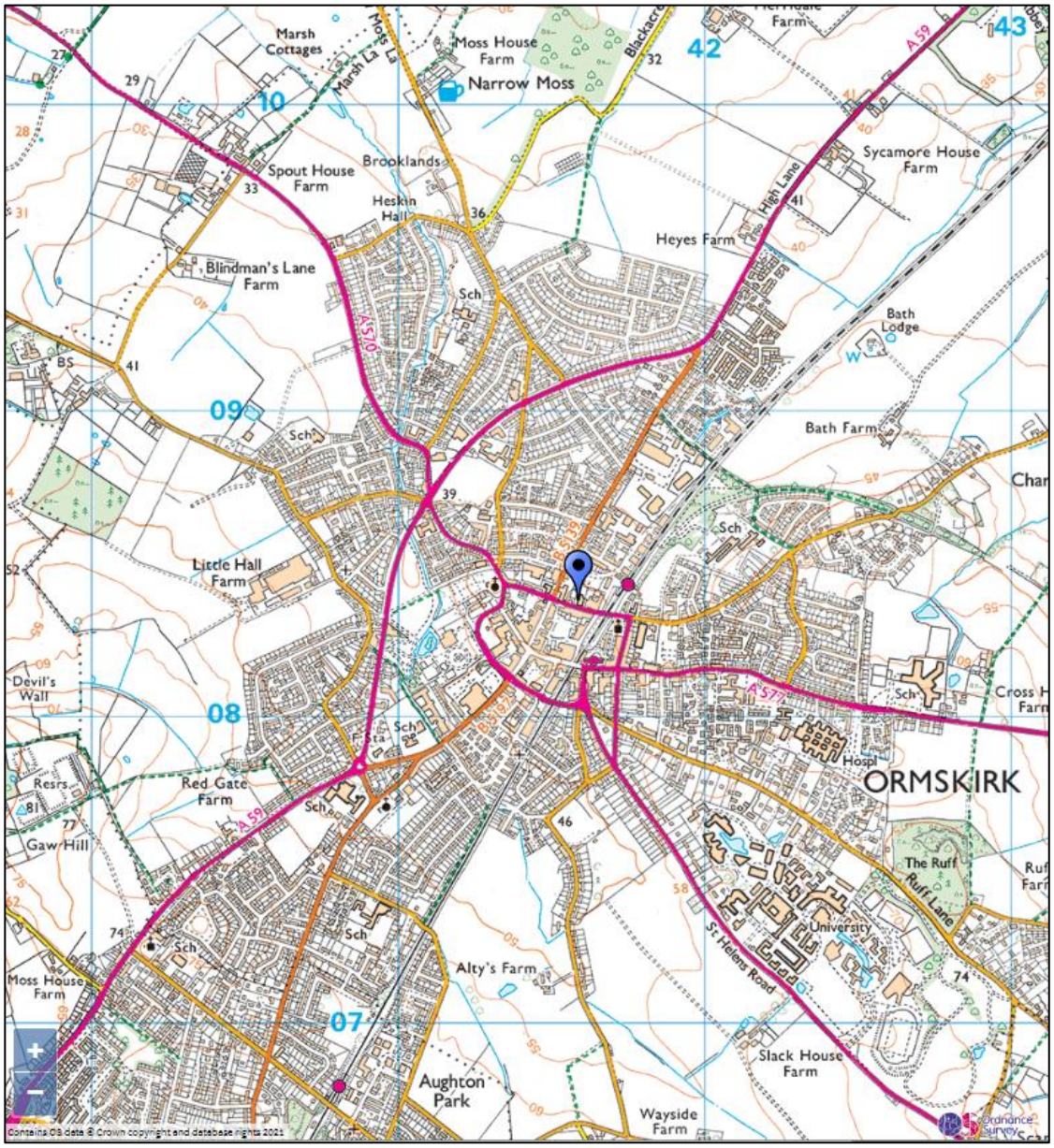

Figure 6.1 - Location of the building within the landscape (Source: OS Maps 2021)

6.2 The immediate habitat, which is represented largely by urban infrastructure, includes commercial premises of varying size and age, residential buildings, educational facilities and a busy road network; semi-natural habitat features are limited and restricted to short lines of broadleaf scattered trees and single standing trees of varying maturity.

6.3 The extending habitat is fairly consistent with that of the immediate to 1.0 kilometre radii before the landscape / primary land use becomes more semi-rural and agricultural. Connectivity to wider environs is achieved through a nearby rail-link expanding north x south, broadleaf woodland near Derby Street, as well as occasional gardens, sports fields, church grounds/graveyards and further thinly distributed tree cover.

6.4 No statutorily designated sites feature within 2.0 kilometres. No EPSML data is present within 2.0 kilometres.

6.5 The protected species most typically associated with the habitats described is the Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) bat, frequently associated with using buildings in sub-urban settings, this species presence in the landscape is reasonably likely based on distribution data and local knowledge.

NB: *Where quality connective habitat is present close to buildings then the percentage use of those buildings, by bats, increases given that roost opportunities are available and vice versa.*

7.0 Field Study Results

Bats

7.1 9 Derby Street is a complex two-storey building; the front south-facing region of the structure is formed of smooth stone and was until fairly recently operated as a bank for TSB, whilst part of the rear section is made of brick and is more of a residential dwelling by construct, previous use unknown. The building now sits redundant and underutilised save for storage of minor office supplies. The roof is complex formed by four slate pitched types centrally, a dormer facing east and one slate hipped type with abutments to the southern section, with two lower flat roofs to the northern section (the latter roof types proposed for demolition). In respect of condition the building was found to be in a favourable and safe to access structural state with no significant damage, dilapidation or vandalism observed during the survey.

7.2 The general interior comprises two separate sections described as Section A and Section B for the purposes of this study.

Internal assessment

Section A

7.3 Accessed via the western side elevation from access road, this area is two-storied with two loft spaces present.

7.4 Internal conditions in halls, rooms and landing, can be broadly described as fully illuminated via natural light, warm, sealed and draught-free, as well as fairly spacious for the most part save for minor compact rooms. The general interior is unsuitable for bats given a sweeping absence of potential roost features, with bare walls to all areas and absence of damage/cracks/crevices/holes. No evidence of/or suitability for bats was noted.

7.5 Both loft spaces are pitch dark, warm, sealed and draught-free, as well as spacious; the loft conditions are suited to the maternity requirements of loft-dwelling species such as the Brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*) (BLE) bat; BLE are a localised species which favour dark, spacious loft spaces without disturbance, fairly consistent temperatures and freely available flight space, though by habitat they are rarely encountered in urban settings and more commonly associated with park and pasture, woodland, and rural areas with barns. No evidence of loft-dwelling bats was found such as droppings, staining or prey items, and risks to this group of bats can be accurately determined as negligible.

7.6 In both loft spaces Bitumen underfelt is present below the roofing slate fitting by battens; presence of roof linings typically improve a structures value to bats, notably for crevice-dwelling bats of the *Pipistrellus* genus, whereby the bats roost between the linings and the roof cover material given external opportunities exist, whilst on the flip-side an absence of

roof linings can lower a structures value in that respect. Bat access opportunity to the roof lining, or indeed to ridge beam, wall plate and roof verges, can often be revealed to the surveyor by encountering fingers of sunlight entering a loft space, or through draughts attesting to holes in the roof; none of these features were found and both loft spaces appeared to be conclusively sealed from the external environment. Cobwebs were also present in fair abundance attesting to absence of bats. No evidence of bats was found - it should be stated however that evidence of crevice dwelling bats is often circumstantial given their preferences for roosting in crevices.

***NB**: The breeding roosts of Pipistrelle bats are proportionally higher in occupied residential dwellings were the warm, dry conditions favour the requirements of a maternity colony but other structures are also used, especially for hibernation or by male bats which do not need the same conditions as a maternity colony.*

Section B

7.7 Accessed via the former entrance to the bank (southern elevation), this area is two-storied with a cellar, no loft space. Internal conditions can be broadly described as 90% dark with dim light entering via glazed windows, warm, sealed and draught-free, as well as fairly spacious for the most part save for minor compact side rooms. The general interior is unsuitable for bats given a sweeping absence of potential roost features, with bare walls to all areas and absence of damage/cracks/crevices/holes. No evidence of/or suitability for bats was noted.

7.8 The cellar, accessed via narrow staircase, is pitch dark, much cooler, draught-free and restricted for space; formed internally of brick painted smooth white with a bare flat roof, wall components including a network of pipes presented no roost viability, and the general interior was absent of damage/cracks/crevices/holes. No evidence of/or suitability for bats was noted.

External assessment

7.9 During external assessment, all stonework to the building fabric in the south of the building was deemed to be in near optimal state with no deep chips, cracks or crevices identified; window frames and other decorative features were equally devoid of any ingress opportunities. Brickwork to the central and northern sections was equally intact in favourable state with no deep cracks, holes or crevices in the mortar, including all door and window frames.

7.10 The western aspect of the building offered the most interest in concerning bats; here localised historic gutter pipes offer very minor crevice potential where they sit ‘just off flush’ to the brickwork, and a fascia with gaps below runs along the partial-length of the wall plate, western aspect. This area of the building is heavily shaded given its aspect faces slightly north-west and shaded by the adjacent building, creating cold conditions consistently, and with no connectivity features at all nearby. Other elements to the western aspect have timber features with no bat roost suitability.

NB: *Where quality connective habitat is present close to buildings then the percentage use of those buildings, by bats, increases given that roost opportunities are available and vice versa.*

7.11 The two extending flat roof elements to the northern elements, which includes a car port, were absent of any potential roost features, as described.

7.12 All findings considered, 9 Derby Road offers 'Negligible' bat roost suitability in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd ed. (2016).

Breeding Birds

7.13 In relation to WCA Schedule 1 specially protected bird species such as Barn owl, no evidence was found to suggest any form of site use or historic nesting; the building is wholly unsuitable for this species breeding requirements; equally there are no viable trees which could support this species for nesting/breeding and the site generally offers very low suitability for this species hunting requirements being contained within a urban setting as opposed to open country available in the wider environment. Equally no evidence of any other specially protected bird species was encountered.

7.14 In relation to more common bird species, no evidence of recent or historic nesting was encountered anywhere within the building or exterior regions, and opportunities to nest are fairly absent.

8.0 Conclusions & Recommendations

8.1 Based upon the findings of the survey covered through sections 6.0-7.0 of the report and supported by Appendix I, whilst following best practice guidance, 9 Derby Road offers 'Negligible' bat roost suitability in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd ed. (2016), whilst the immediate environment also offers a fairly hostile, unfavourable environment for foraging and commuting bats. No further surveys are required at the building at this time, and the proposals will not result in any impacts to bats, bat roosts or loss of bat roost opportunities, in all reasonable judgement.

Table 4.1 Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement.

Suitability	Description Roosting habitats	Commuting and foraging habitats
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats.

Figure 8.1 - *Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) extract on negligible bat roost potential*

8.2 Bats are a transient species and buildings can deteriorate over time. In the highly unlikely event that bat(s) are found, or evidence of bat(s) during the scheme of proposed works then as a legal requirement the work at the site should immediately cease and an Ecologist be contacted for further advice. If bat(s) or their roost(s) will be affected, then an EPSML may be required to legally commence with the works. See Figure 8.1 for indicative evidence of bats.

8.3 No impacts are applicable in relation to any Sch.1 (WCA) specially protected bird species such as Barn owl (*Tyto alba*) and no further surveys or recommendations are necessary in relation to specially protected birds at this time. Equally, at this site, no impacts are anticipated as a result of the proposals to birds, and no timing restrictions are recommended on this basis.

Figure 8.1 - *Evidence of bats - droppings, left / Common Pipistrelle bat, right - indicative*

8.4 As a means of enhancement and aiding the design of the scheme in keeping with local and national planning policy considering biodiversity net-gain principles, the proposals may consider incorporating wildlife friendly provisions such as:

- Native species only when landscaping / re-planting,
- Bat, bird and invertebrate provisions,

Further information is provided within Appendix II.

9.0 Bibliography

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Appendix I: Site Photographs

Plate 1 – Front, south facing elevation

Plate 2 – Rear with car park, north facing elevation

Plate 3 – Rear with car park, north facing elevation, alternative

Plate 4 – Side with access road, west facing elevation

Plate 5 – Side with access road, west facing elevation brick segment - view of features

Plate 6 – Side with access road, west facing elevation stone segment

Plate 7 – View of the flat roofs proposed for removal

Plate 8 – General interior of upper levels

Plate 9 – General interior former bank section

Plate 10 – General interior upper rooms, typical

Plate 11 – Loft space 1

Plate 12 – Loft space 1 alternative

Plate 13 – Loft space 2

Plate 14 – Loft space 2 alternative

Plate 15 – Cellar of the former bank section

Appendix II: Biodiversity Enhancement Recommendations

Bats

Bats - Integrated bat box

The Habibat Bat Box is a solid box made of insulating concrete with internal roosting space. The box blends seamlessly into brick-built properties and may be incorporated into the fabric of buildings, being best placed on gable elevations.

Bats - Externally fitted boxes

A large number of externally fitted box models for bats exist for buildings and trees. Suitable models for both buildings and trees may include the Eco Kent Bat Box.

Birds

Breeding Bids - House Sparrow

The Sparrow Terrace has been designed to help redress the balance of falling House Sparrow numbers. The current UK population is now half of what it previously was in 1980 and this is widely attributed to habitat destruction and lack of suitable nesting spaces. House Sparrows are social birds and like to nest in company, therefore, this terrace provides ideal nesting opportunities for three families. The terrace can be fixed on to the surface of a suitable wall or incorporated into the wall. It is suitable for all types of buildings.

Breeding Birds - Other

This traditional design has proved to be highly effective in attracting Robins, as well as other small species such as Black Redstart, Spotted Flycatcher and Wren. It is designed to be installed on the walls of houses, barns, garden sheds or other buildings and should be hung so that the entrance is to one side (at an angle of 90° to the wall). The front panel can be easily removed for cleaning.

This type of box should not be made conspicuous on a tree or bush because small predators can enter through the unprotected opening. By hanging on a wall, predators won't be able to reach the box. Alternatively hide the box in Ivy, Honeysuckle or other climbing plants.

Invertebrates

Invertebrates - Bee bricks

The Bee Brick can be used in place of a standard brick or block in construction to create habitat for solitary bees. Alternatively, it can be used as a standalone bee house in your garden or wild patch. It will provide much needed nesting space for solitary bee species such as red mason bees and leafcutter bees, both of which are non-aggressive.

Each Bee Brick contains cavities in which solitary bees can lay their eggs before sealing the entrance with mud and chewed-up vegetation. The offspring will emerge the following spring and the cycle will begin again. Each cavity goes part way into the brick, which is solid at the back. Bee Bricks should be placed in a warm sunny spot on a south-facing wall at a minimum height of 1m, with no vegetation obstructing the holes. It is highly recommended that bee-friendly plants should be located nearby so that the bees using the bricks have food, otherwise it is unlikely that the brick will be used.

Available in a choice of four colours: white grey, dark grey, yellow and red.

Specification
* Material: Concrete
* Origin: Cornwall, UK
* Dimensions: W 215mm x D 105mm x H 65mm
* Weight: 2.9kg
* Colours: White grey, yellow, dark grey and red

Native Planting and/or Landscaping

New feature landscaping should incorporate native woody plants as opposed to non-native species that are of significantly less benefit to biodiversity. Species such as Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*), Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), Guelder-rose (*Vibernum opulus*) and Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) are native and will provide a valuable resource for a myriad of wildlife as opposed to non-native, exotic species which are generally much less effective, particularly to pollinator groups including bees, butterflies and moths.

Trees	Woody Shrubs
English Oak (Quercus robur)	Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna)
Rowan (Sorbus aucuparia)	Honeysuckle (Lonicera periclymenum)
Wild Service Tree (Sorbus torminialis)	Guelder Rose (Vibernum opulus)
Silver Birch (Betula pendula)	Elder (Sambucus nigra)
Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)	Wild Privet (Ligustrum vulgare)
Goat Willow (Salix capraea)	Blackthorn (Prunus spinosa)
Beech (Fagus sylvatica)	
Wild Cherry (Prunus avium)	