

BRITISH STANDARD 5837

TREE SURVEYS ARBORICULTURAL IMPLICATION STUDIES

TPO/PLANNING ADVICE/ PROJECT MANAGEMENT

TREE INVENTORIES AND RISK ASSESSMENTS

WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLANS

TREE PLANTING SCHEMES

TPO RE-SURVEY



23 Patch Lane,
Bramhall

Bat Scoping Survey Report

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Kingdom Ecology have carried out a bat scoping survey of a detached house located at 23 Patch Lane, Bramhall, Stockport, SK7 1HX (National Grid Reference SJ 888 840). Proposals are to demolish the building and to construct two new dwellings at the site.

Field surveys comprising of a daytime bat inspection were undertaken on the 23rd March 2022. Surveys were carried out by Richard Roe (BSc, MSc, MIEEM, CEnv). Richard has extensive experience of undertaking bat surveys as a professional ecological consultant with over twenty years' experience. Richard is also a licensed bat worker (Level 4 Class License and Bat Mitigation Class License).

1.2 Purpose of Report

This report provides and outlines the findings of field surveys undertaken at the site.

The field surveys examined habitats present with a focus on the affected building's suitability to support roosting bats. Survey also examined the suitability of the site to support breeding birds. Survey comprised of a daytime assessment examining the interior and exterior of the building.

Following a description of the survey findings and an evaluation of habitats at the site, the report goes on to make recommendations for further works, mitigation and ecological enhancement measures where relevant.

1.3 Protected Species Legislation

1.3.1 Bats

All British bat species are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and through their inclusion in Schedule II of the Habitats Regulations 2010 which transpose Annex II of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora ("EC Habitats Directive") which defines European protected species of animals.

British bats species are afforded further protection by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Taken together, this legislation makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture bats.
- Deliberately disturb bats, whether at roost or not.
- Damage, destroy or obstruct access to bat roosts.
- Possess or transport bats, unless acquired legally.
- Sell, barter or exchange bats.

A bat roost is interpreted as “any structure or place, which any wild bat uses for shelter or protection.” (Bat Conservation Trust 2016¹). A bat roost is protected whether or not bats are present at the time.

All species of British bat are considered a European Protected Species (EPS). The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations (2010) provide derogation against certain offences which could potentially affect an EPS through the EPS Licensing system.

1.3.2 Birds

All wild birds in England and Wales are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird, or take, damage or destroy the nest (whilst being built or in use) or its eggs.

¹ Bat Conservation Trust (2016) ‘Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines 3rd Edition’

2 Field Survey Methods

2.1 Survey Aims and Objectives

Survey comprised of a site visit and inspection of the building. The survey aim was to assess the site as to its suitability to support roosting bats and to identify suitable habitats for any other protected species including breeding birds.

Survey also aimed to identify opportunities for ecological enhancement and to inform potential mitigation measures if required to ameliorate any negative impacts attributable to the proposed works.

2.2 Survey Methods

2.2.1 Daytime Bat Inspection

The building was assessed as to its suitability to support bats following standard methodologies prescribed in English Nature's *Bat Mitigation Guidelines* (Mitchell-Jones 2004)² and the Bat Conservation Trust's *Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines* 3rd Edition (BCT 2016)³.

Survey, comprising of an inspection of the interior and exterior of the building, was undertaken during daylight conditions using binoculars, endoscope and a high-powered torch. The survey was undertaken during daylight hours on the 23rd March 2022.

In addition to searching for evidence of an actual bat roost the survey also aimed to assess the suitability of each building to support bats and consequently the likelihood of a bat roost being present but with no obvious field signs.

Survey assessed the building's roost suitability by examining structural features and the surrounding habitat. Structural features that will influence the suitability of a building to support roosting bats include the presence of a roof void; access points into a building including gaps beneath barge boards, gaps under lead flashing, gaps within masonry, loose tiles etc, complexity of any roof void, daytime light levels in roof void etc.

² Mitchell-Jones, A.J. 2004. *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature, Peterborough.

³ Bat Conservation Trust (2016) '*Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines* 3rd Edition'

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Important habitat features surrounding the structures which could influence roost potential include: whether the structure is in a semi-rural or parkland location, proximity to a significant linear feature (e.g. watercourse, mature hedgerow, wooded lane) or an area of woodland etc.

Taking account of these architectural and habitat features, the building was assigned a level of roost suitability based upon professional judgement.

3 Survey Results

3.1 Site Description and Habitats

The study site comprises of a detached, two-story house located on Patch Lane, Bramhall. The house is currently occupied.

The house is likely to be of late-20th century origin. The building is constructed of brick and has a part-hipped/part-gabled roof. The roof is clad in concrete tiles. The house has a flat-roofed, single-story extension at its west face and a conservatory to the rear.

The house has lawned gardens to the front and rear. Within the rear garden, the borders are planted with ornamental shrubbery and there is a mature weeping willow and a semi-mature cherry tree present. The garden boundaries are marked with cypress, beech and privet hedges. There is a short section of hawthorn hedgerow located at the front of the house where it faces onto Patch Lane. There are also three mature oak trees in front of the house on Patch Lane itself.

None of the trees within the gardens were observed to support any obvious features suitable for roosting bats. The trees and shrubbery could support nesting birds during the breeding season. The oak trees on Patch Lane are considered to be features of high ecological value.

The study site's location is shown on Figure 1 in the Appendix. Photographs of the site are also provided in the Appendix.

The site is located within a suburban setting on the southern edge of Bramhall. Surrounding habitats comprise of further residential housing within established gardens. Areas of open countryside are located approximately 180 m to the south of the site between the housing and the Manchester Airport Eastern Link Road. Surrounding habitats are considered to be of relatively 'low' value for foraging bats.

3.2 Protected Species

3.2.1 Bats

The house is roughly L-shaped in layout and is arranged over two stories with a loft space running above the upper floor rooms. The loft space is approximately 2.5 m in height and extends over approximately 15 m. The internal face of the roof is lined in tightly fitted bitumen hessian felt. The loft is insulated with fibrous loft insulation. The loft space was observed to be lightly cobwebbed including along the ridge and with cobwebs extending across the internal void space. An old wasp's nest was identified at the east face of the loft space. No obvious potential bat access points to the loft space were identified.

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Externally, the house was observed to be intact and in good condition. The concrete roof tiles are all intact and ridge and hip tiles are well mortared in place.

The house has UPVC soffits running beneath the eaves. These were observed to be tightly fitted with no crevices between the soffits and the masonry walls. The house has a north facing gable; the verge mortar at the gable is well sealed and intact. The gable itself is clad in tightly fitted wooden boarding with no obvious crevices or gaps. The house has a dormer window at the east face of the gable; there are some small areas of raised lead flashing beneath the dormer window. However, these were inspected with a powerful torch and binoculars. The raised areas were observed to be cobwebbed indicating no recent usage by bats. Other than this location, the house is well sealed with no other obvious potential bat access points or potential bat roosting locations.

No field signs indicative of roosting bats were found either externally or internally associated with the house.

Taking the survey findings into account, the house was assessed as offering a '**negligible**' bat roosting potential.

The house does not support any suitable features for nesting birds.

4 Recommendations

4.1 Summary & Recommendations

The study site comprises of a detached, two-story house located on Patch Lane, Bramhall.

The site is located within a suburban setting with surrounding habitats comprising of further residential properties with associated gardens.

No field signs indicative of roosting bats were found either externally or internally associated with the house.

The building is well sealed with tightly fitted roof, ridge and hip tiles; tightly fitted UPVC soffits and with well-pointed masonry and verges.

The house has a large loft space, however no obvious potential bat access points to the loft were identified.

The house has a dormer window at its east face; there are some small areas of raised lead flashing beneath the dormer window. However, these were inspected with a powerful torch and binoculars and the raised areas were observed to be cobwebbed indicating no recent usage by bats.

Other than the minor area of raised lead flashing, no other obvious potential bat access points or bat roosting locations were identified.

Taking the above into account, the building was assessed as being of '**negligible**' suitability for roosting bats.

Nevertheless, as a precaution, it is recommended that the lead flashing beneath the dormer window is carefully removed by hand prior to demolition of the house. In the unlikely event that any evidence of roosting bats is found, works should immediately stop and further advice should be sought from a licensed bat ecologist.

Habitats within the front and rear gardens of the site are considered to be of limited biodiversity value. However, the trees and shrubbery present offer suitable nesting habitat for breeding birds. Therefore, it is recommended that any works to remove or manage any tall vegetation takes place outside of the breeding bird season (March-August inclusive). Where this is not possible, a check for nesting birds should be completed by an appropriately qualified ecologist prior to the start of works.

The mature oak trees located on Patch Lane are considered to be features of biodiversity importance and should be retained and protected as part of any future development of the site.

4.2 Site Enhancements

It is recommended that that the overall development be enhanced for bats and breeding birds. This can be achieved through the installation of bat boxes (recommended model Habibat 003) and sparrow nest boxes (model Schwegler 1SP) into the proposed new buildings at the site.

The bat and bird boxes can be built into the brick walls of the proposed buildings so as to remain visually unobtrusive.

The precise location, model and number of bat and bird boxes should be determined by an appropriately qualified ecologist.

5 Appendix

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph 1- Front face of the house



Photograph 2- Rear face of house



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Photograph 3- View of tightly fitted soffits



Photograph 4- Dormer window showing raised lead flashing



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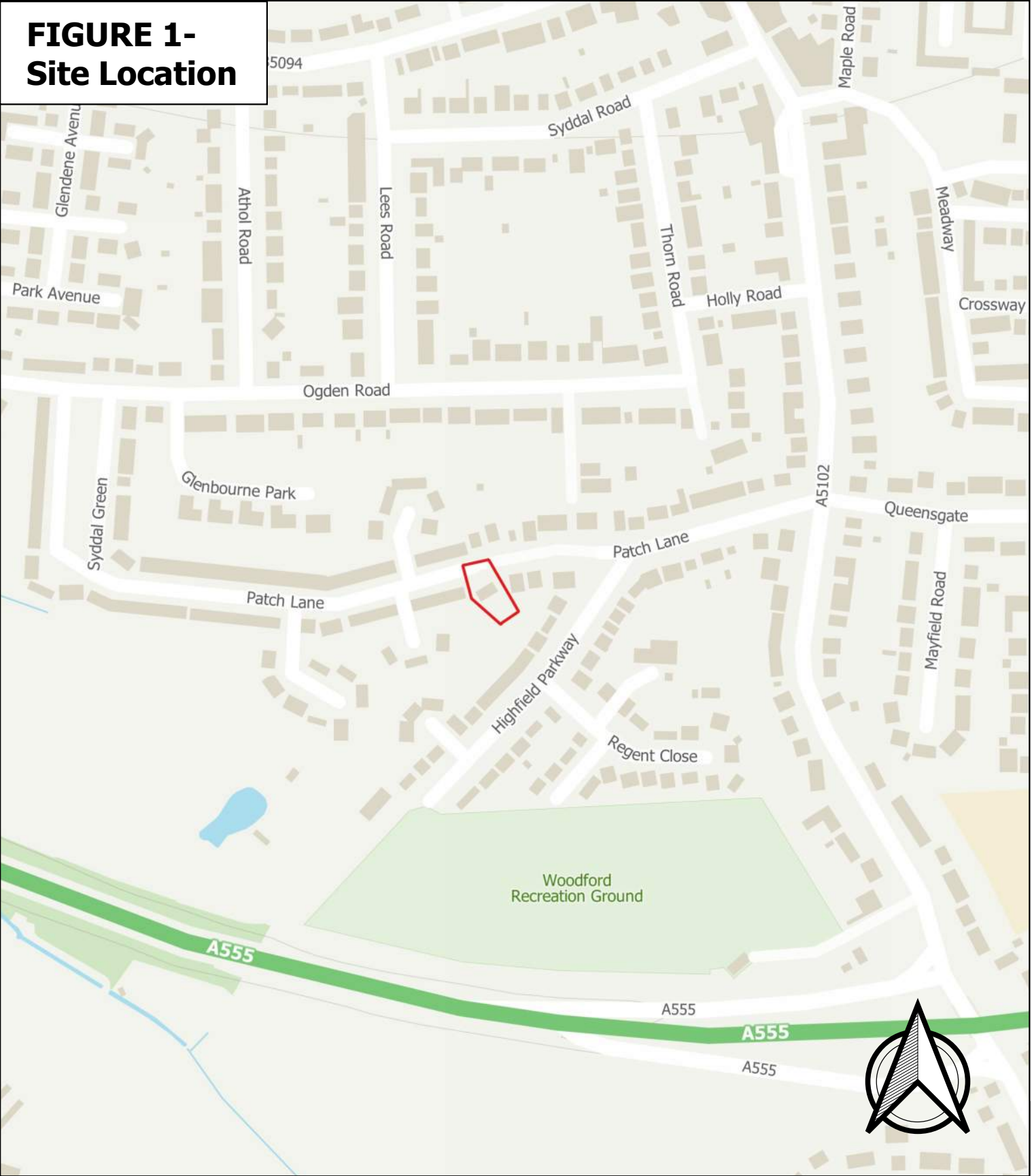
Photograph 5- Loft space of house



Photograph 6- Rear garden at site



**FIGURE 1-
Site Location**



KEY

 Study Site

