



Leigh Ecology Ltd

Protected Species and Habitat Surveys

75 Hammerton Street,
Burnley.

On Behalf of Mr. Chris Marsden.

Bat Scoping Survey Report

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Author:

C. Leigh

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Approved:

C. J. Evans.

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1 SUMMARY

- 1.1.1 The subject site is a two-storey traditional brick building with a slate tile roof. The building features traditional Lancashire bricks with large cuts of slate atop the roof. The building has suffered from several instances of fire damage across the past several years, which reflects on its internal condition. The site is located at 75 Hammerton Street, Burnley.
- 1.1.2 The building features several instances of exterior damage/displacement, particularly along the rear fascia lining and towards the ridge lining. The upper floor is victim of extensive fire damage, meaning an extensive check for signs of bat usage could not be done in this section, and an extensive assessment of the internal roof space could not be fully undertaken.
- 1.1.3 Therefore, to facilitate the works on the buildings and to inform the planning application, a survey for bat species (Chiroptera) and nesting birds was undertaken on the 5th September 2023.
- 1.1.4 No active signs of bats were located during the survey within the building on site, but an extensive check of the upper floor could not be undertaken.
- 1.1.5 The building contains a number of ideal features for bat entry/exit. The brick walls are thick with several points for potential entry to cavities. The roof and ridge tiles are damaged/displaced in several areas. Any internal lining that previously featured has been impacted by internal fire damage.
- 1.1.6 No trees or amenity features are included within the proposal boundary. A cluster of trees was noted directly opposite and to the rear of the subject building.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1.1 A two-storey brick building has been identified for removal. A protected species survey was therefore required, namely bat species (Chiroptera), in order to inform the planning application.
- 2.1.2 For development proposals requiring planning permission, the presence of protected species, and therefore the need for a survey is a material planning consideration under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Adequate surveys are therefore required to establish the presence or absence of protected species, to enable a prediction of the likely impact of the proposed development on them and their breeding site or resting places and, if necessary, to design mitigation and compensation methods.
- 2.1.3 For any development to proceed lawfully at a site where protected species are present, a licence issued by Natural England, under the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 2010 (as amended) may be required. Information gathered during the surveys is used to inform such a licence application.
- 2.1.4 The objective of the study was to identify the presence or potential presence of bat species within the building identified on-site.
- 2.1.5 A preliminary roost survey, consisting of an internal and external survey of the target building, was conducted on the 5th of September 2023.

2.2 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Bats

2.2.1 There are 17 species of bats in the UK, all of which suffered a decline in population size and distribution during the 20th century; even those species regarded to be the most common suffered a 70% decline between 1978 and 1993 (Mitchel-Jones and McLeish, 2004).

2.2.2 All species of bats are listed under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and Regulation 41 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and are therefore afforded special protection. It is an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bat;
- Intentionally damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a wild bat uses for shelter or protection; and
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bat while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection.

2.2.3 Bats are further protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 which make it an offence to:

Capture or kill a bat;

Significantly disturb a bat (in any location); and

Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of any bat.

2.2.4 If bats are present on a development site and, as a result of the development there is a likelihood that a roost may be damaged or destroyed, or where there is considered to be a reasonable possibility that bats occupying a roost may be significantly disturbed, or where there would be a requirement to significantly disturb a bat irrespective of its location, the development can only proceed if a European Protected Species (EPS) license is issued by Natural England.

2.2.5 In England and Wales, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 imposes a duty on all public bodies, including local authorities to make material considerations to biodiversity conservation in the determination of all types of planning applications. The UK Biodiversity Strategy was produced in response to the convention.

The strategy contains action plans for species considered to be of conservation priority at a national (under Species Action Plans (SAP) and local scale (under Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs).

- 2.2.6 The UKBAP lists seven bat species considered as priorities, the relevant SBAP (Lancashire) lists several bat species, Noctule bat (*Nyctalus noctule*) and Pipistrelle bat (*Pipistrellus Pipistrellus* and *P. pygmaeus*).

Survey Limitations

- 2.2.7 The building's upper floor has been heavily damaged by previous fires, resulting in the upper rooms and internal roof space being inaccessible and unable to be comprehensively assessed during the survey. The upper floor was only assessed from within the confines of the staircase area.

Landscape Assessment

- 2.2.8 Bats use regular commuting and foraging routes; these are usually linear features such as hedgerows and watercourse corridors. The loss and severance of such a feature may have an indirect impact on the bats. Therefore, it is important that if the development impacts on these features, they are assessed. A cluster of planted mixed trees are found on the adjacent side of Hammerton Street, as well as overgrown scrub and further trees to the rear of the subject building. These areas are noted as ideal foraging habitat for local bats and bird species.

Nesting Birds

- 2.2.9 An assessment of potential habitat for breeding birds was undertaken.

Protected Mammal assessment

- 2.2.10 No suitable environment for other mammal usage is included within the site boundary.

2.3 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.3.1 The proposal site accommodates a single two-storey brick building. The position of the target building is identified within figure 1 below.
- 2.3.2 The building is located on hard standing, within Burnley city Centre, and in an area dominated by mixed residential housing and commercial units.
- 2.3.3 The site grid reference is SD838325.
- 2.3.4 The proposed development will see the building demolished, as the structural integrity is faltering. A replacement dwelling is to be added to the footprint of the current building following the removal work. The adjacent chimney building is to remain in place during the works.
- 2.3.5 The site map below shows the scope of the survey and maps the position of the target building.



Fig 1: Scope and location of the site named 75 Hammerton Street, Burnley.

(Chris Marsden, 2023).



Fig 2: An internal view of the lower floor within the target building. The lower floor features extensive fire damage to the ceiling (circled).



Fig 3: An internal view from the accessible staircase leading to the upper floor. The hard boarding that features beneath the roof has been extensively damaged by previous fires. Day light is clearly seen from within across several sections of the roof.



Fig 4: The upper floor of the subject building. The structural integrity of the upper floor is poor, meaning an extensive check could not be undertaken.



Fig 5: A rear view of the subject building. The building features several differing roof sections and smaller chimneys.



Fig 6: A closer view of the rear of the building. A differing brick section which has likely been added more recently is in fair condition. The fascia lining of the main building is in poor condition (circled).



Fig 7: A view of an external wall of the building. The large brick composition creates ideal openings leading to internal wall cavities.



Fig 8: A view of the southern face. The twin fascia lining is in fair condition.



Fig 9: A further view of the rear of the building. The roof features several scattered tiles across the upper apex. The ridge lining is in fairly poor condition in places.



Fig 10: A front view of the subject building. The differing sections of the building can be seen. Extensive boarding across windows to deter vandalism was noted during the survey.



Fig 11: An amenity grassland patch features on the adjacent side of Hammerton street; this patch contains a cluster of mature trees ideal for potential bat foraging.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 The internal and external roost survey and assessment was undertaken by Natural England Level 2 Bat surveyor Christian Leigh 2022-10863-CL18-BAT.

3.1.2 Survey methods were based-upon the standard and specification detailed in the BCTs Bat Surveys- Good Practise Guidelines (BCT, 2016). The buildings were inspected internally and externally on 5th September 2023.

External Inspection

3.1.3 The objective of the survey was to locate any signs of bat activity, for example:

Bat droppings;

Feeding remains;

Grease staining/ urine marks;

Corpses or skeletons;

Potential access points to internal roosts.

3.1.4 The bat signs listed above are visible from the outside of the building. The following areas were searched using binoculars:

Ground floor casing;

Any cracks/ holes in steel sheet walls;

At door opening points;

Joint between walls and roof.

Internal Inspection

3.1.5 Bats regularly utilise specific areas within roof spaces/open roof configurations (see below), which were searched as a priority for any bat field signs:

Beneath hip joints and junctions;

Staining above/ around gaps;

Within cobwebs;

In cavities of walls within the roof wall joints;

3.1.6 The internal building survey covered the whole of the lower floor area.

3.1.7 The surveys were undertaken using a 168-lumen flashlight and 10x42 Swarovski binoculars.

3.1.8 Ladders were used to access elevated areas with potential for bat signs.

Survey limitations

3.1.9 The upper floor of the building has suffered from extensive fire damage and the condition of the flooring reflects this. Therefore, a check for bat usage was not conducted comprehensively on the upper floor.

4 RESULTS

Internal and external inspection

- 4.1 The results of the bat scoping survey suggest that the target building on site offers moderate bat roost potential. The building features several instances of ideal entry/exit points suitable for bat species. Several roof tiles were noted scattered and damaged atop the main section. Fascia linings found on the southern and rear faces are in fairly poor condition also. Large brick walls create ideal gaps between bricks that lead to wall cavities. Despite the site being within Burnley city centre, the site has direct links to adjacent tree lines and ideal foraging habitat. It was noted that street lighting is found directly outside of the target building at near fascia level.
- 4.2 No signs of bat usage were noted within the building on site.
- 4.3 Only one ancient bird nest was noted on the lower floor of the building near to the rear entrance.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The results of the bat scoping survey indicate that the target building offers moderate bat roost potential. No signs of activity were located during the survey.
- 5.2 Therefore, two further bat activity surveys are to be undertaken within the active bat season (May-September) to ascertain the presence or absence of bats within the building.
- 5.3 A single ancient bird nest was noted within the rear doorway of the building; therefore, **any removal/demolition required to facilitate the development should be done outside the breeding season. The scheme should monitor this and request advice if/when required.**

6 REFERENCES

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016). Bat surveys for professional ecologists: Good practice guidelines. 3rd edition. Bat Conservation Trust. London.

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