

220 & 222 Wellington Road South,
Stockport
Daytime Bat Survey
2024



RACHEL
HACKING
ECOLOGY

Client Views
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Report Contents

Executive Summary	3
1. Introduction	4
2. Methods	6
3. Results	8
4. Assessment	13
5. Recommendations	14
Appendix 1: Planning Policy & Legislation	15



Executive Summary

Development Details

The client is proposing residential development at 220 & 222 Wellington Road South, Stockport hereafter referred to as the 'site'.

This report describes the potential for roosting bats at the site and assesses potential impacts to bats. Recommendations are provided so that the development is compliant with biodiversity policy and legislation.

Ecological Interest

The site has negligible potential to support a bat roost.

Outcomes

The proposed development is unlikely to result in any impacts to bats or their roosts and no further survey or mitigation are required.

The proposed development offers an opportunity to enhance the site for bats by incorporating an integral bat box. This should be installed at eaves height but not directly above windows or doorways.



1. Introduction

1.1 Project Brief

- 1.1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2023 by Views to carry out a Daytime Bat Survey at 220 & 222 Wellington Road South, Stockport, hereafter referred to as the 'site'. The site is located at O.S. grid reference: SJ 89740 89313 (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. Map showing the location of the site

Description of Development

- 1.1.2 The site is the subject of a planning application (DC/090308) for conversion and refurbishment of 220 Wellington Road South as a 9 bed HMO and 222 Wellington Road South as a 10 bed HMO, together with associated car parking, bin and bike storage.

1.2 Scope of Work

1.2.1 The Client commissioned Rachel Hacking Ecology to carry out the following works:

- Undertake an external and internal assessment of any buildings on the site affected by the development proposals;
- Undertake a ground-level assessment of any trees on the site affected by the development proposals.

1.3 Aims of the Survey

1.3.1 The aims of the survey were to:

- Assess the potential of the site to support roosting bats;
- Identify the requirement for any further detailed surveys.



2. Methods

2.1 Daytime Bat Survey

- 2.1.1 The exterior of the buildings was surveyed from the ground using binoculars and a high-powered torch. Features offering potential access to roosting bats were recorded. Such features may include suitable gaps in roof coverings, gaps behind external cladding/facia and gaps in masonry.
- 2.1.2 Evidence indicating the presence of roosting bats was also searched for. This may include bat droppings on walls, windows or on the ground below roost entrances or staining from fur oil around roost entry points.
- 2.1.3 The interior of the buildings, including the roof voids, was surveyed to identify any evidence indicating use by roosting bats. Such evidence may include bat droppings, feeding remains, urine splashes, live or dead bats and staining from fur oil on timbers.

2.2 Assessment Criteria

- 2.2.1 Interpretation of survey findings and assessment of roosting potential was undertaken using professional judgement and criteria described in published guidance^{1,2}.

2.3 Site Visit Information

Survey Details

- 2.3.1 The survey was undertaken by Austin Rigby (Junior Ecologist) on 22nd February 2024. Austin is trained in undertaking daytime bat surveys.

Site Conditions

- 2.3.2 The weather at the time of the survey was light rain, with an average temperature of 8°C. The site conditions were appropriate for a full assessment to be undertaken.

¹ Collins, J. (Ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists-good practice guidelines*. 4th edn. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

² Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023). UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.

2.4 Mitigation Hierarchy

2.4.1 Mitigation measures should be embedded within the masterplan design and planning application process. Measures during the construction phases should be included in a Construction Environmental Management Plan: Biodiversity (CEMP). This process from proposal to implementation needs to consider the 'mitigation hierarchy' of avoid, reduce, compensate, and enhance:

- Aim to avoid negative effects through the design process.
- Mitigate if negative effects cannot be avoided.
- Use compensation measures to offset residual impacts.
- Identify and implement opportunities to enhance biodiversity.



3. Results

3.1 Survey Constraints

- 3.1.1 Field survey results are valid for a limited duration and no investigation can provide a complete description and characterisation of a site. The composition of habitats and species can change depending on environmental variables and the mobility of species, so the results of a study become less reliable over time. In some cases, surveys that are 3 years old may be acceptable for a project assuming that habitats have not significantly changed in the intervening period, but for protected species it is likely that survey data will need to be no more than 18 months old.

3.2 Habitat Appraisal

- 3.2.1 The site is located in an urban area with few mature trees present nearby the property.

3.3 External Survey

- 3.3.1 The site comprises two connected buildings. The walls are brick and no crevices or gaps in mortar are visible (see Photograph 1).



Photograph 1: Showing exterior to the north.

- 3.3.2 The roof tiles are mostly intact, with a few slipped tiles present (see Photograph 2).



Photograph 2: Showing slipped tiles on roof facing south.

3.3.3 The soffits are fully intact with no gaps between the soffit and the brickwork (see Photograph 3).



Photograph 3: Showing soffits.

3.3.4 Tudor style cladding is present on some of the gable ends, this is all intact with no gaps (see Photograph 4). The window fittings have no visible gaps.



Photograph 4: Showing cladding.

3.3.5 Some gaps are visible between the ridge tiles (see Photograph 5).



Photograph 5: Showing gaps between ridge tiles.

3.4 Internal Survey

- 3.4.1 The roof void is split into multiple sections, the roof is lined with felt (see Photograph 6). The felt has some tears in places, exposing the tiles beneath.



Photograph 6: Showing roof lining.

- 3.4.2 Some gaps are present between the end rafter and wall (see Photograph 7).



Photograph 7: Showing gaps between rafter and wall

- 3.4.3 The roof voids are generally well-sealed, however some small gaps were identified (see Photograph 8).



Photograph 8: Showing daylight visible at the gable apex.

3.4.4 The single storey section to the rear has no roof lining (see Photograph 9),



Photograph 9: Showing unlined roof void.

3.4.5 No evidence of use by bats was recorded during the survey.

4. Assessment

4.1 Interpretation of Results

- 4.1.1 The surrounding habitat is relatively poor and no evidence. The site contains very few features which could be used by bats. The building is assessed as offering negligible potential.
- 4.1.2 The proposed development is unlikely to result in any impacts to bats and no further survey or mitigation is required.



5. Recommendations

5.1 Enhancements

- 5.1.1 Integral bat boxes could be incorporated within the fabric of the building. Alternatively, external bat boxes could be installed on completion of construction. Bat boxes should be installed at eaves height, facing southeast to southwest but not directly above windows or doorways. Bat boxes should not be illuminated by artificial lighting.

General Precautions

- 5.1.2 Briefly It is not always possible to prove absence of roosting bats. Bats can roost in suitable features opportunistically and are not always identified during surveys. It is recommended that roof coverings are removed with due caution. Should a bat/bats be identified at any time, work should stop in that area and a suitably qualified ecologist contacted to attend site and advise how to proceed.
- 5.1.3 This report is considered to be valid for two years. After this, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted to assess its validity. An assessment update may be required.



Appendix 1: Planning Policy & Legislation

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2023) describes the Government's planning policy for England and how it should be applied. Within this framework, the requirements in relation to biodiversity are included within several policies. The two most relevant to individual planning decisions are Paragraphs 180 and 186, shown below:

- 180. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
 - a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
 - c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
 - d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
 - e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
 - f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

- 186. 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 reasons 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.

Legislation

All bat species are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (Amendment) (EU Exit), which make it 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.

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.

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.

