
DAYTIME BAT SURVEY & NESTING BIRD SURVEY

44-46 YORKSHIRE STREET ROCHDALE



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Site Information

- 1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2022 by Paul Butler Associates to undertake a daytime bat survey and nesting bird survey of the property at 44-46 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale OL16 1JW (hereafter referred to as the 'site'). The site is located in Rochdale town centre at O.S. grid reference: SP 1186 7947 (see Figure 1). The site comprises a two-storey building; the ground floor is commercial development, and the upper floors are residential properties. The building is currently occupied. The site is surrounded by residential and commercial properties. The habitats immediately surrounding the site offer limited bat foraging and commuting opportunities.



Figure 1 showing the location of the site

Description of Development

- 1.2 The site will be the subject of a planning application for a proposed development including conversion of the vacant retail premises to a mix of retail and apartments, with an extension to the roof.

Biodiversity in Planning

- 1.3 Biodiversity is a material consideration, and Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) have a requirement to consider biodiversity and protected species when determining planning applications. Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) 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.

Legal Context

- 1.4 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.

- 1.5 All bird species are protected at the nest under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which makes it an offence to:

- Kill, injure, or take any wild bird;
- Take, damage or destroy the nest of any such bird whilst it is in use or being built; or
- Take or destroy an egg of any such bird.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Daytime Bat Survey

- 2.1 A daytime bat survey of the site was undertaken to search for, and to assess the potential for, a bat roost within the building.
- 2.2 An external survey was carried out, 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 survey 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.
- 2.3 A pair of close-focussing binoculars and a high-powered torch were used to search for evidence of bats externally.
- 2.4 The site was also assessed for its potential to support nesting birds. This included a search for evidence of nesting such as nests or accumulations of droppings as well as bird activity including repeated visits, or birds carrying food items or faecal sacs. A pair of close-focusing binoculars was used to inspect the exterior of the site.

Personnel and Seasonal Timing

- 2.5 Kate Reed (Senior Ecologist) carried out the daytime bat and nesting bird survey on the 14th July 2022. Kate is experienced and fully trained in protected species surveys. The weather at the time of the survey was sunny and dry.

Survey Constraints

- 2.6 Daytime bat surveys can be conducted at any time of the year. No limitations affected the survey.

3.0 RESULTS

Site Description

- 3.1 The site comprises two adjoining two-storey buildings. Both buildings are currently unoccupied. Number 44 Yorkshire Street is a former store. It is of brick construction with a stone frontage and a flat roof (see Photograph 1). Number 46 Yorkshire Street is a residential building of brick construction with a flat roof (see Photograph 2).

External Assessment

- 3.2 The brickwork and masonry are in good condition; some spalling and minor weathering was recorded but no missing bricks or mortar were identified. The windows of the first floor have been sealed. Wooden bargeboards are present; these are tightly fitted to the brickwork (see Photograph 3).



Photograph 1 showing the front of 44 Yorkshire Street



Photograph 2 showing the rear of 46 Yorkshire Street



Photograph 3 showing the bargeboards

- 3.3 The roof covering both properties is flat and covered with felt (see Photograph 4).



Photograph 4 showing the flat roof

Internal Assessment

- 3.4 No roof void is present. There is an open hatch leading to the roof on the first floor and evidence of use by feral pigeons.



Photograph 5 showing the interior of the first floor

- 3.5 The ground floor and basements of the buildings are in-tact and finished.



Photograph 6 showing the interior of the ground floor

Nesting birds

- 3.6 No evidence of nesting birds was recorded, although feral pigeons had accessed the first floor via the open hatch. Anti-bird spikes are present on the windowsills and shop signage.

4.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

- 4.1 No evidence indicating use by roosting bats was recorded during the survey. The site is assessed as offering negligible potential to support roosting bats. This is due to the absence of suitable features and the urban location of the site.
- 4.2 No evidence of nesting birds was recorded. Evidence of use by feral pigeons was identified on the first floor.

Recommendations

- 4.3 The proposed development is not likely to result in any impacts to bats or their roosts and no further bat surveys or mitigation are required.
- 4.4 Should feral pigeons be present and nesting within the building during the proposed development, a suitable pest control contractor should be consulted. Feral pigeons can be controlled by an approved person under a general licence.
- 4.5 Should the proposed development not commence within two years of the date of this survey, an update assessment should be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist.

5.0 REFERENCES

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