

Internal /External Bat Survey
Upper Bond Street
Building Hinckley



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1.0. Introduction

A former industrial premises at Upper Bond Street Hinckley was subject to survey in relation to the potential for presence of bat species and roost sites in relation to works, which will result in alteration of existing roof structures (refer to Planning Application).

The brief of this survey was as follows;

- An external/Internal evaluation of the buildings for utilization signs by bat species.
- To determine whether any buildings and trees within the site had potential for use by bats for roosting or as a place of shelter, with consequent implication for development work with respect to Schedule 5 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations (and subsequent amendments)*.
- To determine the presence of any roosts within the site.
- To make an overall assessment of the value of the site as foraging, feeding and commuting areas.
- To make recommendations for the development work to take place including any mitigation/ compensation required.

Background

Bats and the Law

Prior to August 2007, all bat species in the UK were fully protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) through an inclusion in Schedule 5. The amendment of the *Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994*, in August 2007 now is the regulatory protection mechanism. In addition there are obligations within the Conservation of Species and Habitat Regulations (2017) and National Planning Policy Framework (2023) which replaced the former Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS 9).

In England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland all bat species are fully protected by the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations, which defines 'European protected species of animals' (EPS). This gives protection to bats and their roosts.

The Regulations have slightly different amendments in the different countries. Under the regulations it is an offence to:

- a) Deliberately or recklessly to capture, injure, or kill a EPS.
- b) Deliberately or recklessly –
 - i. To harass a wild animal or group of wild animals of a EPS.
 - ii. To disturb while it is occupying a place of shelter (roosts).
 - iii. To disturb while it is rearing its young or caring for its young.
 - iv. To obstruct access to a breeding site or resting place, or otherwise deny the animal use of that site or resting place.
 - v. To disturb a EPS in a manner that is, or circumstances which are likely to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species.
 - vi. To disturb a EPS in a manner that is, or circumstances which are likely to impair its ability to survive, breed or reproduce, or rear or otherwise care for young.

In this interpretation, a bat roost is “*any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection*”. As bats tend to reuse the same roosts, legal opinion is that the roost is protected whether or not the bats are present at the time.

Planning and Development

All British bat species and their roosts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, through inclusion on Schedule 5. They are also protected under the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (which were issued under the European Communities Act 1972), through inclusion on Schedule 2.

The Act and Regulations include provisions making it illegal to:

- ☐ Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture bats.
- ☐ Deliberately disturb bats.
- ☐ Damage, destroy or obstruct access to a roost.

Local Planning Authorities consult the Government’s guidance notes, National Planning Policy Framework (2023) and the Conservation of Species Habitat Regulations (2017) in England, and equivalents in Scotland and Wales, before making a planning decision where there may be protected species on a site.

The presence of a protected species should be a material consideration when considering a development proposal which, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat. If bats use the site, appropriate Statutory Nature Conservation Organization (Natural England, Scottish Natural Heritage or Natural Resources Wales) must be consulted before any work is carried out. Where necessary, a bat expert should visit and assess the site.

If planning permission is being sought from the local authority, any observations of bats should be reported to them and they can be reminded of their obligations within the National Planning Policy Framework (2021). If a bat roost is present and is affected by a proposed development, licensing will be required from the Statutory Nature Conservation Body, in England this is Natural England.

The Legislative Process (England)

In determining whether or not to grant a license Natural England must apply the requirements of Regulation 535 of the Regulations and, in particular, the three tests set out in sub-paragraphs (2)(e), (9)(a) and (9)(b)6 .

(1) Regulation 53(2)(e) states: a licence can be granted for the purposes of “preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment”.

(2) Regulation 53(9)(a) states: the appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied “that there is no satisfactory alternative”.

(3) Regulation 53(9)(b) states: the appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied “that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.”

In determining applications for licenses under the Regulations Natural England is also aware of and, where appropriate, has regard to the following:-

☐ Planning Policy Statement 9 ☐ Circular 06/05 “Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their impact within the Planning System”

☐ Circular 2/2002 New Guidance for Local Planning Authorities on European Protected Species and Changes in Licensing Procedures

☐ the EU Guidance Document on the protection of animal species: February 2007, Managing Natura 2000,

EU Guidance Document on Hunting under Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds (Chapter 3) and The Report of the Article 12 Working Group under the Habitats Committee “Contribution to the interpretation of the strict protection of species (Habitats Directive article 12)”.

Developers need to be aware that:

- Assessment of current use, likely effects and mitigation or habitat enhancement should be incorporated into development proposals at an early stage.
- Where changes in land use could affect bats, the implications to bats should be considered and advice sought.
- When considering planning applications, authorities are required to take account of protected species, including all bats, and their habitats.

Bat feeding habitats can be some distance from their roost sites, therefore, bats seen in flight may roost nearby or some miles away. Bats use a range of sites for roosting, including buildings and trees. Signs of roosts, which are visible from the outside, include bats emerging from the roost (timing varies from before sunset to up to about an hour after) and bat droppings on surfaces near emergence points.

1.1. Site Location

Upper Bond Street building LE10 1QQ . All internal and external areas were available for survey. The building sits in the Druid Street Conservation Area.





1.2. General Site Description and Status

The site comprises two structures,

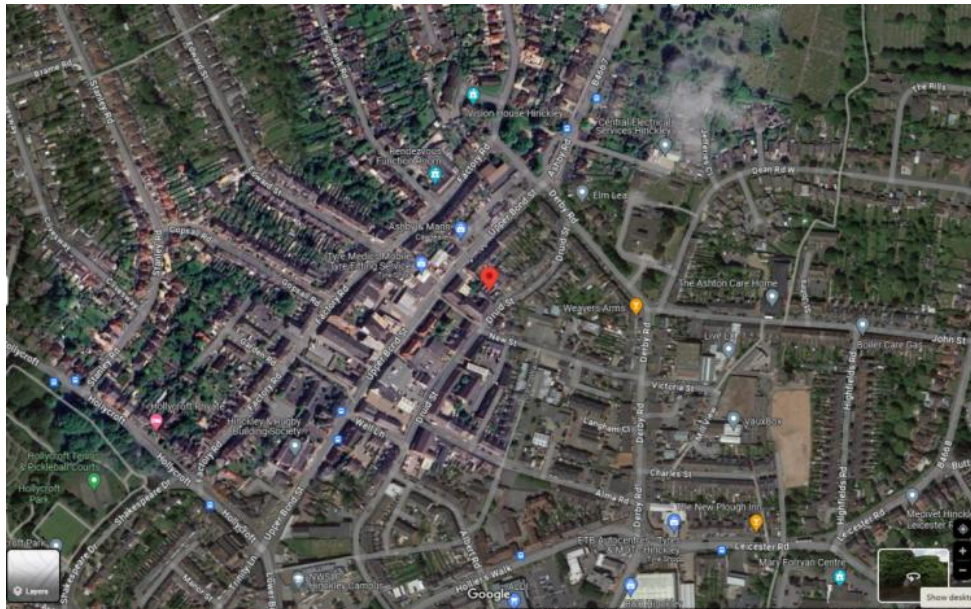
Building 1 is a three storey factory building in solid brick with no loftspace or cavity wall. The roof is slate tile lined with wooden board beneath. Broken windows at various levels. It has a cellar area lit by window at ground floor level.

Building 2 (conjoined) is a two storey, factory building in solid brick with no loftspace or cavity wall. The roof is slate tile lined with wooden board beneath. Broken windows.

These form an L shape with a courtyard in between, with a brick flat roof structure, partial open asbestos sheet roofed structure and spiral metal staircase,, in addition to entranceways beneath the buildings.

1.3. Wider Landscape Context in Relation to Bats

The site lies in an urban location, with some limited features such as a small number of public open spaces providing low bat roosting and foraging opportunities Appendix 1 and below shows aerial photographs and Appendix 2: site images.



1.4. Bat Ecology (a Summary)

Where do bats build roosts?

Different species of bat prefer different places; some creep into tiny spaces, cracks and crevices. Only occasionally do they hang free or are easily visible.

Outside they may roost:

- Under weather boarding or hanging tiles
- Above soffits and behind fascia and barrage boarding
- Between window frame and wall brickwork
- In gaps behind cladding tiles or wood
- Between underfelt and boards or tiles
- Inside cavity walls

Inside roof spaces they may roost

- Along the ridge beam
- Around the gable end
- Around the chimney breast

Looking for the evidence

Bats do not make nests or cause structural damage. The most obvious sign of their presence is droppings.

- Bat droppings consist largely of insect remains and crumble easily between your fingers to a powder of semi-shiny fragments.
- Rodent droppings are smooth and plastic, quickly becoming hard. They cannot be crumbled.
- Bat droppings do not present any known health hazards.
- Droppings may not always be readily visible in a loft.
- Large accumulations may reflect use over a number of years rather than large numbers of bats at any one time.

When do bats use buildings?

Bats use buildings at any time, but are most often found in houses between May and August.

- Mother bats have only one baby a year, suckling it for several weeks. The mothers gather in maternity roosts to have their young in summer, and this is the time they are most likely to be seen using buildings.
- The bats move away when the young can fly and feed themselves, and have usually left by September.
- Immature individuals, adult males and non-breeding females will occupy a variety of roosts, individually or in small groups, at any time of year.
- Disturbance or the use of chemicals at maternity roosts in houses can have a major impact on bat populations gathered from a wide area.
- Bats do roost in houses in winter, usually individually, but are difficult to see.

Which bats use buildings?

All UK species have been recorded in houses, but some very rarely. Pipistrelles and Long-eared bats are the species most usually found.

Pipistrelle bats

There are three different species of Pipistrelle; the common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle and the rarer Nathusius' Pipistrelle. They sometimes use houses as maternity roosts, choosing confined spaces. These are usually on the outside of buildings, such as under the soffits or behind barge boards or hanging tiles, where the bats can rarely be seen.

Brown long-eared bats

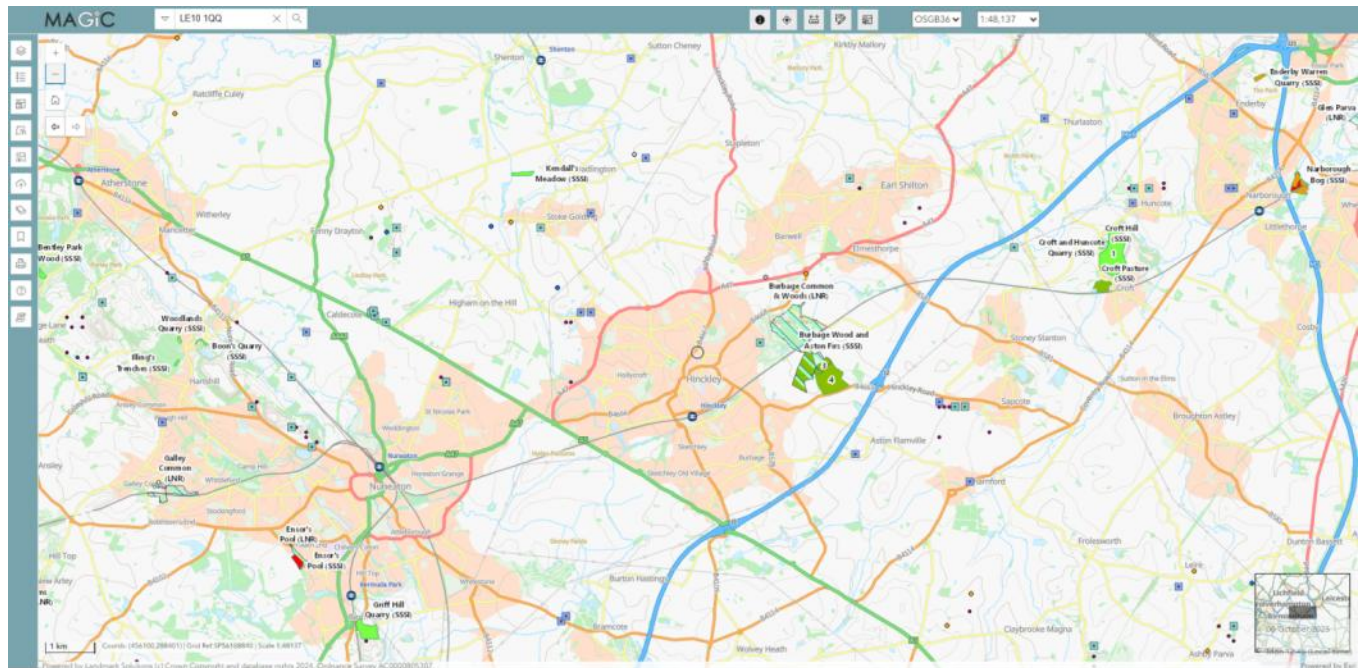
This species mostly prefers older houses with large roof spaces. Small clusters may be seen at junctions of roof timbers or under the ridge. It is the bat most frequently seen inside lofts, small numbers may stay longer than the other species.

1.5. Description of Works

Refer to Planning Application. Conversion of former hosiery factory into 25 one bedroom apartments | Former Factory Works.

1.6 Bat Species Records

In relation to bat species the following were recorded from various web based data sources, the authors own records,) and other sources, presented here with the approximate distances of the nearest record. In addition, a number of Ecological survey reports within the area have been interrogated for protected species records. All records are post-2000 unless otherwise stated. In this case, all records derive from the Natural England 'MAGIC' web site accessed on 5th October 2025



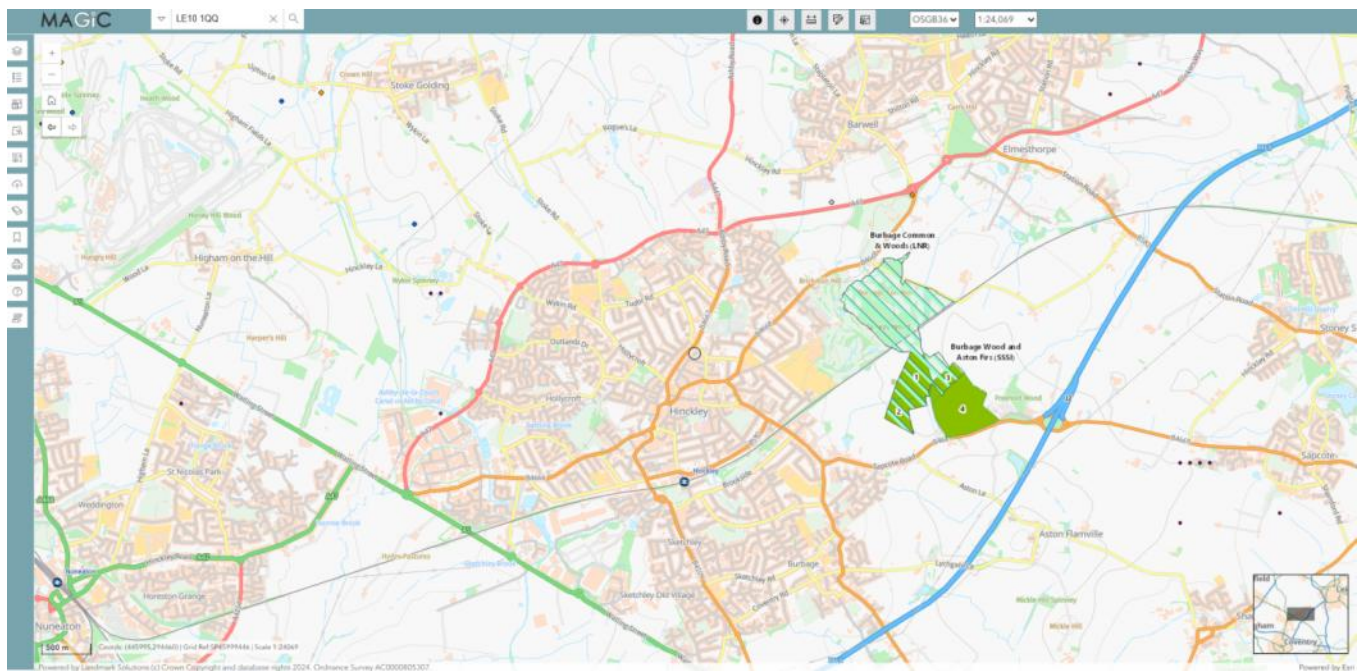
EPSM Search (Source: Magic)

An EPSM search revealed that there are roosts of 3 bat species Common pipistrelle, Brown long eared bat, Natterers bat within 3km. See above (blue squares are bat roosts). Great crested newt recorded just within 2km E.

Statutory protected sites: (Source: MAGIC)

The nearest Statutory protected site is Burbage Common and Woods LNR which lies within 5 km

E. (see below).



There are no bat species previously recorded on or near the site and in addition, no protected sites likely to be impacted by the development. The site is within a 'Swift Alert Area' due to the presence of this species within the close proximity to the site. This requires certain development proposals to provide conservation efforts in relation to this species.

2.0. Survey Methodology

The survey consisted of two elements:

- A day-time visual external assessment of the buildings and their potential in relation to use by bats as roosts.
- A day-time visual internal assessment of the buildings and their potential in relation to use by bats as roosts

2.1. Personnel

The survey was conducted by Dr. Stefan Bodnar, assisted by Dr. Louise Sutherland. Dr. Stefan Bodnar is a full time member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, an experienced ecologist with over 38 years experience of bat surveys, working under Natural England class license: Level 2, survey: bats.

2.2. Visual External Assessment

The external building inspection (from the ground using binoculars) focused particularly on roof areas, soffits, areas of wall with cracks and apertures, vents, openings into the building and the overall structure of the buildings including any features such as crevices or cavities that may be suitable for bats to roost in. Evidence of roosting such as droppings or staining around entrances was also recorded. Where appropriate gaps and cavities were checked using an endoscope.

The date of site visit was 30th September 2025

Methods of survey used have been based on those outlined in Joint Nature Conservation Committee's Bat Workers Manual (Mitchell-Jones & McLeish, 2004), Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists (4th Edition) , BCT (2023), and English Nature's Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Mitchell-Jones, 2004).

2.3. Visual Internal Assessment

The interior of the building was examined on 30th September 2025

3.0. Results

3.1. External Visual Assessment

The assessment was carried out using the guidance provided within the publication: **Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists (4th Edition), BCT (2023)**, which states:

Bat Conservation Trust

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.

Potential suitability	Description	
	Roosting habitats in structures	Potential flight-paths and foraging habitats
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).
Negligible ^a	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions ^b 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 and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats ^c).	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths 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 with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions ^b and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is 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 flight-paths 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 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 ^b and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight-paths 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 Negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant'. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute). b For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance. c 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 <i>et al.</i>, 2016 and Jansen <i>et al.</i>, 2022). Common pipistrelle swarming has been observed in the UK (Bell, 2022 and Tomlinson, 2020) and winter hibernation of numbers of this species has been detected at Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland (National Trust, 2018). 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 prominent buildings in the landscape, urban or otherwise.		

The site comprises two structures,

Building 1 is a three storey factory building in solid brick with no loftspace or cavity wall. The roof is slate tile lined with wooden board beneath. Broken windows at various levels. It has a cellar area lit by window at ground floor level.

Building 2 (conjoined) is a two storey, factory building in solid brick with no loftspace or cavity wall. The roof is slate tile lined with wooden board beneath. Broken windows.

These form an L shape with a courtyard in between, with a brick flat roof structure, partial open asbestos sheet roofed structure and spiral metal staircase,, in addition to entranceways beneath the buildings.



B1:



B2:



Building description 1

- Three storey building, in solid brick. Windows with broken glass to first and second floor
- No roofspace, tight lining of slate with wood boarding, 2-3 holes in tile roof
- All roof gaps inspected from interior via ladders and endoscope
- No suitable gaps in external brickwork (intact)

Main structure

The building has many potential access points, though it is well lit internally and there are no cavity or loftspace. Large numbers of feral pigeons roosting and evidence of nesting from 2025 (none at time of survey). There is no evidence of bats (current or historic) or breeding birds present.

Building description 2

- Two storey building, in solid brick. Windows with broken glass to first and second floor
- No roofspace, tight lining of slate with wood boarding, 1 minor hole in slate tile roof
- All roof gaps inspected from interior via ladders and endoscope
- No suitable gaps in external brickwork (intact)

Main structure

The building is in a reasonably intact condition, with broken windows as potential access, but no suitable bat roost features internally. Large numbers of feral pigeons roosting and evidence of nesting from 2025 (none at time of survey). There is no evidence of bats (current or historic) or breeding birds present.

Courtyard structures: all have negligible bird breeding and bat roost potential. Evidence of feral pigeon roosting in areas beneath entranceways.

Internal Visual Assessment for birds and bats:

Overall categorization for buildings at Upper Bond Street Building, Hinckley is:

B1 The survey determined that the building had no evidence of being used as a bat roost site. The building overall was categorized as negligible bat roost potential (BRP) in respect of access and potential use by bats but with a residual small risk of crevice dwelling species of bats forming occasional or intermittent day roosts in the occasional gaps where they might access the space between the board lining and the tiles. In addition, no birds' nests were found. Although the level of risk identified does not require further surveys, it is proposed that the works would require a level of precaution and of mitigation.

B2: Negligible bat roost potential (BRP). (following inspection) The survey determined that the building had no evidence of being used as a bat roost site. The building overall was categorized as negligible bat roost potential (BRP) in respect of access and potential use by bats but with a residual small risk of crevice dwelling species of bats forming occasional or intermittent day roosts in the occasional gaps where they might access the space between the board lining and the tiles. In addition, no birds' nests were found. Although the level of risk identified does not require further surveys, it is proposed that the works would require a level of precaution and of mitigation.

Natural England guidance on what type of gap has potential to provide a bat roost feature is given in their standing advice to householders Natural England Technical Services Wildlife Licensing (EPS) standard roost visitor letter. ‘ Gaps which are larger than 8mm by 20mm, where the back end of the gap cannot be seen may give access/be used by roosting bats. ‘

The same guidance states that for provision of access: Leave small gaps (of 15-20mm wide by at least 50cm long) where the bargeboard joins the wall.

In this case the only PRFs comprise as stated ‘a small number of raised tiles/missing tiles’. Note that only a proportion of these will fit into the NE classification as some of the tiles raised at the end will have ends that can clearly be seen, i.e. will extend only part-way under the tile in question. Therefore this very limited number of PRFs affected will form at best, shallow features of low bat roost quality, which may be used rarely/intermittently by single bats. Standard emergence surveys are unlikely to detect such activity should it be present. Note is made that the area concerned is urban with poor foraging and commuting features for bats, and highly lit at night via street lighting. Taking all these elements into consideration it is considered that this falls under the classification of negligible ‘a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.

4.0. Conclusion

The survey determined that the building had no evidence of being used as a bat roost site. The building overall was categorized as negligible bat roost potential (BRP) in respect of access and potential use by bats but with a residual small risk of crevice dwelling species of bats forming occasional or intermittent day roosts in the occasional gaps where they might access the space between the bitumen felt lining and the tiles. In addition, no birds' nests were found. Although the level of risk identified does not require further surveys, it is proposed that the works would require a level of precaution and of mitigation.

For birds, it is strongly recommended that the building is de-risked prior to works, by shuttering the broken windows to prevent breeding birds (in this case feral pigeons). If this does not take place, an ecological survey for breeding birds will be required if works commence during the peak bird breeding season (1st March to 31st September of any year).

The precaution would be either works undertaken outside the peak bat active season (i.e. outside of March 31st to September 31st of any year), when bats would not be present, or if within this higher risk time period, ecological supervision of strip of any potential roost features (such as a raised tile) when works are undertaken.

In both cases mitigation in the form of 2 x bat boxes and a further house sparrow terrace will compensate for any loss of bird nesting and bat roost potential. Bat box and bird box types shown below:



5.0. Mitigation/Compensation

In relation to the National Planning Framework (2024) there will be the previous conditions in relation to precautions and mitigation followed in the works. In addition, external lighting should be restricted and should conform with BCT guidelines (Appendix 3 has a summary) though more recent guidance 'Bats and External lighting, BCT, 2018', updated in 2023 should be followed.

6.0. References

Bats in Roofs. A guide for surveyors. English Nature, Peterborough, Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004).

Bat Mitigation Guidelines. English Nature, Peterborough, Mitchell-Jones, A.J.& Mcleish, A.P. (Eds)(2004).

Bat workers Manual, 3rd Edn. Joint Nature Conservation committee, Peterborough.

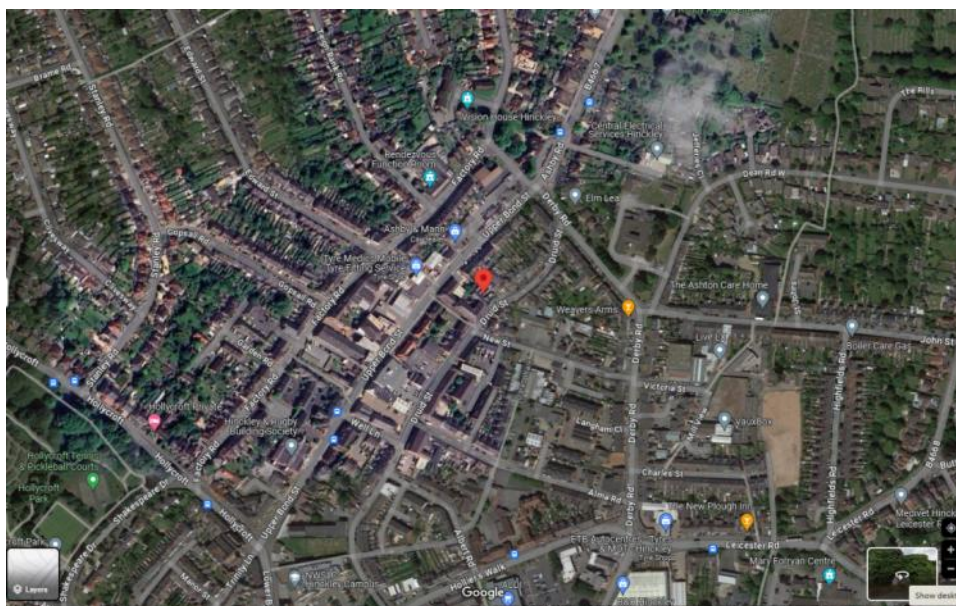
Bat Survey guidelines (2023), Bat Conservation Trust

NPPF, 2024

Appendix 1: Aerial Photographs: detail of area and location, existing layout



Wider landscape context



Appendix 2: Site images

External and internal images:



Building 2 external note 2/3 gaps in tiles on roof, flashing and brickwork intact



Brickwork intact



Bay window intact



B1 and B2 interface



B1 exterior intact



B1 (gaps are just broken windows, roof edge is corballed, no soffits)



View from Druid Street



Intcat roof Druid street



Entranceway



Gable end of 3 storey



Interface of building 2 with adjoining building: intact





Rear view of roof B1



Courtyard area



Concretious asbestos structures in courtyard



Courtyard: intact brickwork



Intact roof internally to 2 storey structure



Roof intact, ventiation feature leads directly to second storey level (no void)



Evidence of birds roosting in entranceway



Cellar area



Cellar area: no bird or bat evidence



Evidence feral pigeons



Roof lining Building 1: evidence of feral pigeon



Roof lining Building 2: evidence of feral pigeon



Roof lining Building 2: evidence of feral pigeon

Appendix 3: External lighting guidance

MITIGATION OF LIGHTING IMPACTS ON BATS

- **FORAGING AND COMMUTING** Type of lamp (light source) The impact on bats can be minimised by the use of low pressure sodium lamps or high pressure sodium instead of mercury or metal halide lamps where glass glazing is preferred due to its uv filtration characteristics.
- **Luminaire and light spill accessories** Lighting should be directed to where it is needed and light spillage avoided. This can be achieved by the design of the luminaire and by using accessories such as hoods, cowls, louvres and shields to direct the light to the intended area only. Planting can also be used as a barrier or manmade features that are required within the build can be positioned so as to form a barrier. **Suitable examples shown below:**

Double Asymmetric Luminaire



Simple Hood



- **Lighting column** The height of lighting columns in general should be as short as is possible as light at a low level reduces the ecological impact. However, there are cases where a taller column will enable light to be directed downwards at a more acute angle and thereby reduce horizontal spill. For pedestrian lighting this can take the form of low level lighting that is as directional as possible and below 3 lux at ground level.
- **Light levels** The light should be as low as guidelines permit. If lighting is not needed, don't light. Timing of lighting The times during which the lighting is on should be limited to provide some dark periods. Roads or trackways in areas important for foraging bats should contain stretches left unlit to avoid isolation of bat colonies. These unlit stretches should be 10 metres in length either side of commuting route.
-
- **SECURITY LIGHTING** Power It is rarely necessary to use a lamp of greater than 2000 lumens (150 W) in security lights. The use of a higher power is not as effective for the intended function and will be more disturbing for bats.
- **Movement sensors** Many security lights are fitted with movement sensors which, if well installed and aimed, will reduce the amount of time a light is on each night. This is more easily achieved in a system where the light

unit and the movement sensor are able to be separately aimed. Timers If the light is fitted with a timer this should be adjusted to the minimum to reduce the amount of 'lit time'.

- Aim of light The light should be aimed to illuminate only the immediate area required by using as sharp a downward angle as possible. This lit area must avoid being directed at, or close to, any bats' roost access points or flight paths from the roost. A shield or hood can be used to control or restrict the area to be lit. Avoid illuminating at a wider angle as this will be more disturbing to foraging and commuting bats as well as people and other wildlife.
- Suitable types shown below (note that these are wall mounted and directed downwards)

Circular Louvre



Cowl & Louvre



Cowl (or Hood)



References: Bats and lighting BCT guidance and Guidance notes for the reduction of obtrusive lighting.