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Ashfield District Council



# Proposed Redevelopment Works at Hucknall Central Walk and Chapel Street, NG15 7HF

## Daytime Bat Walkover

August 2025

**A report to:**

Ashfield District Council

**Report produced by:**

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**SUMMARY**

<b>Bats</b>	<b>Survey results</b>	The areas to be impacted by the proposals were considered to have negligible bat roosting potential.
	<b>Further survey requirements</b>	No further surveys are required.
	<b>Mitigation, compensation, or enhancement recommendations</b>	No mitigation or compensation is considered necessary.
<b>Birds</b>	<b>Survey results</b>	No active bird nests were identified, although potential locations were noted. However, numerous pigeons were observed in the area under the glass domed roof, and it is understood that pigeons are known to nest in this location.
	<b>Further survey requirements</b>	No further surveys are required (provided the below recommendations are followed).
	<b>Mitigation, compensation, or enhancement recommendations</b>	<p>In terms of undertaking the works, the following recommendations are proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideally the works should take place outside of the bird nesting season (March to September inclusive), as the potential for pigeons to be nesting at this time is reduced.</li> <li>• In relation to the feral pigeons, it is recommended that a specialist contractor should be consulted, as it is possible that the feral pigeons could breed all year round.</li> <li>• It recommended that all potential perching places be removed from within the walkways to reduce the likelihood of pigeons utilising the space. This would include removing all shop signage that has a ledge at the top (potentially replacing all with flat signage). This should be undertaken inside the domed canopy area, but also under the open section with the roof overhang.</li> <li>• The proposals to 'put a flat soffit under the arched walkway canopy' should work, provided all perching areas are removed completely.</li> <li>• The exiting lighting 'globes' should be removed, and replaced with lighting that does not provide a location for pigeons to sit on top.</li> <li>• At either end of the domed canopy occur flat ledges (with netting). It is recommended that the ends of the domed canopy be enclosed fully (with glass or similar solid feature, instead of netting), with no ledges present on the inside of the canopy.</li> </ul> <p>No works should impact the trees off site at Chapel Street.</p> <p>Given the urban location of the site, it is not considered necessary to provide bird boxes as an enhancement within the scheme.</p>

## 1. SITE AND PROPOSALS

### 1.1 Site Location

The site consists of two areas, a shopping precinct, and a large, paved alleyway, located at Central Walk and Chapel Street, Hucknall, NG15 7HF (approximate grid references SK 53474 49254 and SK 53426 49308 and). The areas surveyed includes a pedestrianised area with shops and restaurants with sections covered by an overhang and a domed glass roof, and a paved walkway up to and around a building. The location of the site is shown on Figures 1 and 2 in Appendix 1.

### 1.2 Proposals

The proposals include possible external alterations to shop fronts, wall removal, and resurfacing works (as detailed on Figure 2 in Appendix 1). It is noted that it is proposed to make alterations to the walkways to reduce suitability of the space for pigeons. This includes potentially putting a flat soffit under the arched walkway canopy with recessed lights and alter signage zones on shopfronts to remove any ledges for perching completely.

### 1.3 Survey Brief

This report has been prepared by Morph Ecological Consultants for Ashfield District Council. Morph Ecological Consultants brief was to ascertain whether the works would have an impact on bats. Morph Ecological Consultants was also commissioned to provide recommendations for mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures and further surveys, as appropriate. To meet the requirements of the brief, a daytime bat walkover of the site was carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist. A search for nesting birds was also carried out at the same time.

Legislation relating to the relevant protected species is included within Appendix 2.

### 1.4 Site Description

Central Walk consists of a shopping precinct with covered areas and an open walkway with a seating area outside a restaurant.



Central Walk – Overhang of buildings



Domed canopy over pedestrian walkway

Chapel Street consists of a paved open alleyway leading to and wrapping around a building (B&M Store). A canopy overhangs part of the walkway next to this building.



A site plan is included within Figure 2, Appendix 1.

## 2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Daytime Bat Walkover

A preliminary roost assessment was carried out in accordance with the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Collins 2023<sup>1</sup>). The survey involved a licenced ecologist searching the buildings on the site for evidence of roosting bats, such as bat droppings, feeding remains as well as looking for live bats. The survey also assessed the buildings for their potential to support roosting bats, which involved identifying features such as cracks, crevices, holes or voids, which could support roosting bats. High powered torches and ladders were used where necessary to aid the investigation to determine if features may support roosting bats.

Each building has been categorised as recommended by the Good Practice Guidelines. If a roost is confirmed to be present, then the categories are still allocated as other roosts may be present but undiscovered. The categorisation assesses the potential suitability for the features to support bats, which are applied using professional judgement.

Suitability	Typical Characteristics	Further Survey Requirements
Negligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of potential roosting features for bats</li> <li>Situated within very poor bat foraging habitat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No further surveys required</li> </ul>
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small number of features that could be used by individual bats opportunistically</li> <li>Potential roost sites are unlikely to provide appropriate conditions for use on a regular basis by a larger number of bats (e.g. hibernation or maternity)</li> <li>Generally poor surrounding habitat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One bat emergence survey</li> </ul>
Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several potential roosting features</li> <li>Features have potential to support larger numbers of bats or bat usage on a regular basis, but unlikely to be those of high conservation status</li> <li>Situated near moderate/good foraging habitat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two bat emergence surveys</li> </ul>
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many potential roosting features, which have the potential to support larger numbers of bats on a regular basis</li> <li>Generally situated within good quality foraging habitat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three bat emergence surveys</li> </ul>
Confirmed Roost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of bats present during the survey (e.g. sighting of bats, bat droppings, feeding remains, existing record of roost)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roost characterisation required which typically involves up to three bat emergence surveys</li> </ul>

### 2.2 Nesting Bird Survey

A survey was also carried out of the buildings to search for evidence of nesting birds. This involved searching for nesting material and other signs including aggregations of droppings and feathers. Features were assessed for the potential to support nesting birds. As the survey was carried out during the bird nesting season (March to September inclusive) bird activity in and around the site was noted as well as listening to sounds of young begging for food.

### 2.3 Survey Details

The survey was carried out by Steve Ralph MSc MCIEEM (bat licence number: 2019-43882-CLS-CLS) and Jasmine Greenaway BSc on the 11<sup>th</sup> of August 2025.

<sup>1</sup> Collins, J. 2023 *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4<sup>th</sup> Edition)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

## **2.4 Survey Constraints**

### **2.4.1 Access**

There were no access constraints noted during the survey.

### **2.4.2 Survey Limitations**

It is worth noting that a lack of evidence of a protected species does not necessarily indicate an absence of the species. Due to the transient and discrete nature of bats, there is always the potential that a negative outcome of a bat surveys, does not guarantee the absence of protected species.

### **2.4.3 Length of Data Validity**

To ensure that survey data remains current and as bats move roosting sites frequently, if works have not commenced within a year from the survey date, an update may be required to fully assess the impacts of the proposals on bats.

### 3. SURVEY RESULTS

#### 3.1 Daytime Bat Survey

##### 3.1.1 Central Walk

No evidence of bats was recorded within the area and there were limited features considered suitable for bat roosting.

The roof of the overhang (along the front of the Range shop) was covered with flat fibre tiles. A small number of gaps in the timber on the underside of the overhang were identified, however these did not lead to a cavity and the gaps were cobwebbed. Any gaps in the soffits on the underside of the overhang did not lead anywhere due to a second board behind the external ones. A gap was identified at the end of the ridge of one sloped roofs (on the northern side) where the lead did not meet the tile. It was noted that the area was likely to be well-lit due to street lights within the urban environment.



Front of the Range – showing overhang



Gap behind timber on underside of overhang



Northern end of Central Walk



Gap under lead

##### 3.1.2 Chapel Street

No evidence of bats was recorded within the building in this area and no features were considered suitable for bat roosting.

Gaps were noted along the edges of the canopy (where the metal panels were corrugated); however, these were considered to be too open for bats to use as a roosting feature.

The site is surrounded by urban habitat with an elder tree (*Sambucus nigra*) and cherry tree (*Prunus* sp.) located behind a wall bordering the site on Chapel Street. Neither tree were noted to support features suited to roosting bats (i.e. no rot holes or cavities noted).



Canopy to the rear of the B&M store



Canopy over walkway



Gaps along edge of canopy



Offsite tree next to survey area

### 3.2 Nesting Bird Survey

#### 3.2.1 Central Walk

Numerous feral pigeons (*Columba livia domestica*) were observed in the area under the glass domed roof. It was noted that birds were perching on a flat area at the northern end, and although no active nests were noted, this area proposed potential for nesting. It was noted that bird spikes were present on some of the ledges, on the top edge of shop signage, and on top of lights within the covered walkway. However, it was apparent that the spikes were not deterring the pigeons (as shown in the photographs below). Netting was present at either end of the domed walkway.



Ledge offering potential nest location



Signage along the front of shops



*Pidgeon on top of light (with spikes)*



*Spikes on lighting, on top of shop signage and edge of canopy*

### 3.2.2 Chapel Street

No evidence of nesting birds was recorded in this area, however the gaps along the edge of the canopy in this area may be suitable for smaller nesting birds. The adjacent trees and vegetation (all off site), also offer potential for nesting birds.

## 4. EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1 Bats

The areas to be impacted by the proposals were considered to have negligible bat roosting potential. The urban location of the site, with numerous street lights within the areas surveyed. As no evidence of roosting bats was found and no features were considered suitable for roosting bats, it is considered that no further survey work or specific mitigation will be required. An EPS (Bats) Licence from Natural England will not be required before the works begin.

In the extremely unlikely event of a bat/bats being found during this or any other works, the work should stop immediately and Morph Ecological Consultants should be contacted for further advice.

As bats can change roosting sites frequently and throughout the year, the negative result of the survey should only be considered reliable for a short period of time.

Given the urban location of the site, it is not considered necessary to provide bat boxes as an enhancement (as it is considered very unlikely that they would be used).

### 4.2 Nesting Birds

In Central Walk, it was noted that numerous pigeons were observed in the area under the glass domed roof, and it is understood that pigeons are known to frequently nest in this location. In Chapel Street, gaps along the edge of the balcony in this area were considered suitable for smaller nesting birds, however, no locations suited to nesting pigeon were noted.

In terms of undertaking the works, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Ideally the works should take place outside of the bird nesting season (March to September inclusive), as the potential for pigeons to be nesting at this time is reduced.
- In relation to the feral pigeons, it is recommended that a specialist contractor should be consulted, as it is possible that the feral pigeons could breed all year round.
- It recommended that all potential perching places be removed from within the walkways to reduce the likelihood of pigeons utilising the space. This would include removing all shop signage that has a ledge at the top (potentially replacing all with flat signage). This should be undertaken inside the domed canopy area, but also under the open section with the roof overhang.
- The proposals to '*put a flat soffit under the arched walkway canopy*' should work, provided all perching areas are removed completely.
- The exiting lighting 'globes' should be removed, and replaced with lighting that does not provide a location for pigeons to sit on top.
- At either end of the domed canopy occur flat ledges (with netting). It is recommended that the ends of the domed canopy be enclosed fully (with glass or similar solid feature, instead of netting), with no ledges present on the inside of the canopy.

No works should impact the trees off site at Chapel Street.

Given the urban location of the site, it is not considered necessary to provide bird boxes as an enhancement within the scheme.

## **5. FURTHER SURVEY REQUIREMENTS**

### **5.1 Further Bat Surveys**

No further surveys required.

### **5.2 Nesting Bird Survey**

See above recommendations in relation to nesting birds.

**APPENDIX 1: FIGURES**

**Figure 1: Site Location Plan**

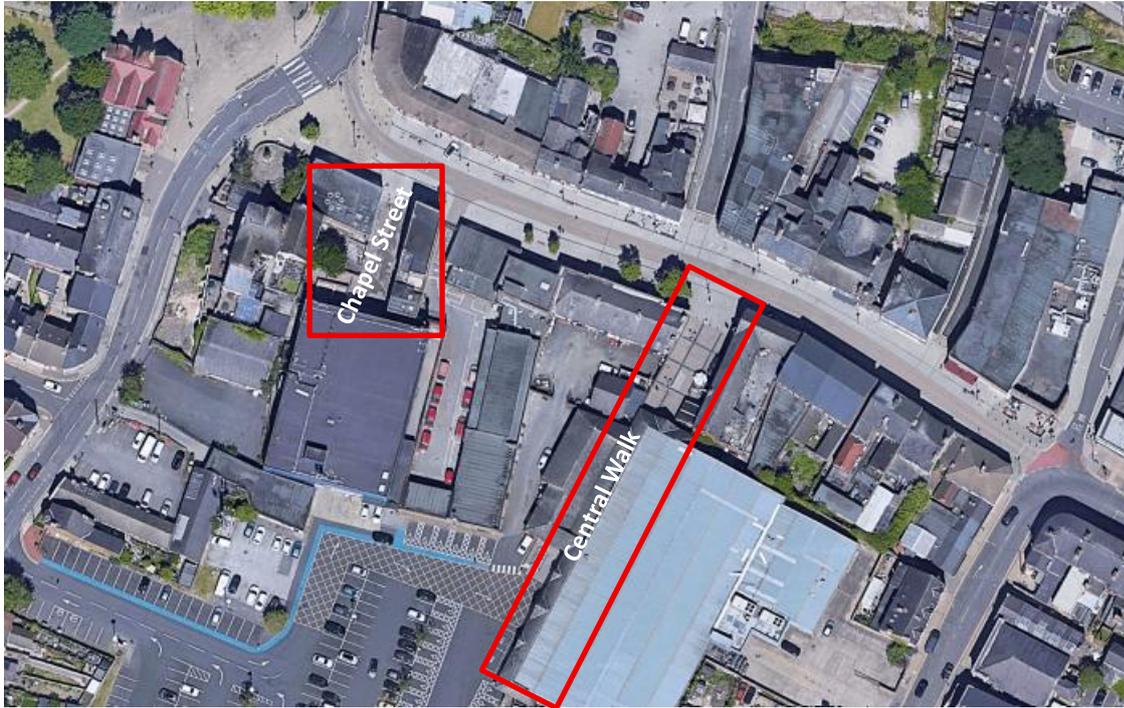
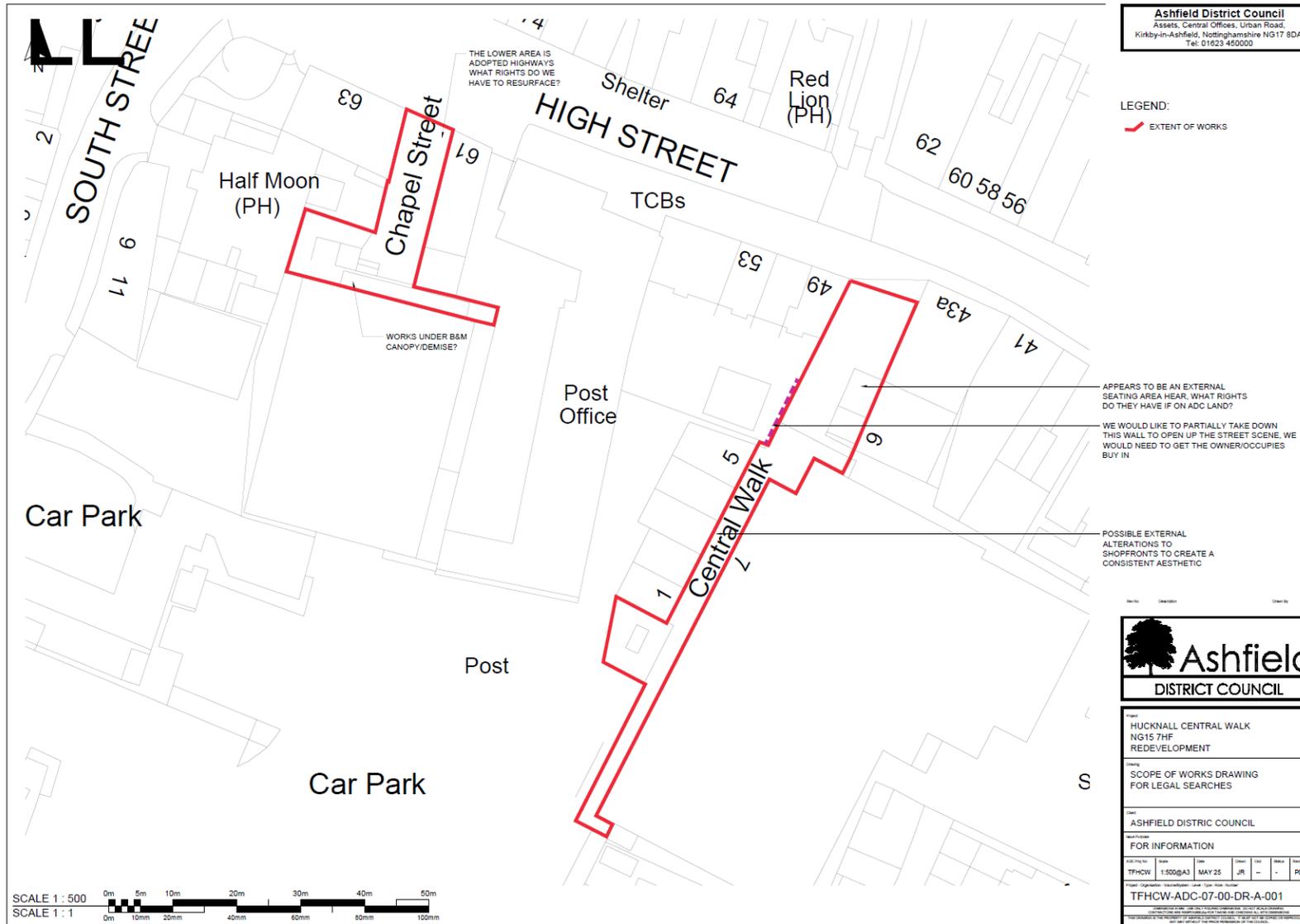


Figure 2: Site Plan



## APPENDIX 2: LEGISLATION

### *Bats*

All bat species are afforded full protection under UK and European legislation, including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Together, this legislation makes it illegal to:

- Intentionally or recklessly take, kill or injure a bat;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to bat roosts; and
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats.

A bat roost is defined in the legislation as “any structure or place which a bat uses for shelter or protection”. Roosts are protected whether or not bats are present at the time.

If a development activity is likely to result in disturbance or killing of a bat, damage to its habitat or any of the other activities listed above, then a licence will usually be required from Natural England.

### *Birds*

The bird breeding season generally lasts from early March to September for most species. All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This legislation makes it illegal to intentionally:

- Kill, injure or take any wild bird;
- Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is being built or in use;
- Take or destroy the eggs of any wild bird; and
- Possess or control any wild bird or egg unless obtained legally.

Birds listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) are afforded additional protection, which makes it an offence to disturb a bird while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

# Quality Assurance

## Quality Information

<b>Project</b>	Proposed Redevelopment Works at Hucknall Central Walk and Chapel Street, NG15 7HF
<b>Contract Number</b>	2050-1
<b>Description</b>	Final Report
<b>Prepared by</b>	Jasmine Greenaway BSc & Helen Chambers MSc ACIEEM
<b>Checked by</b>	Steve Ralph MSc MCIEEM
<b>Date Sent</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> August 2025

## Revision History

<b>Revision</b>			
<b>Revision Date</b>			
<b>Details</b>			
<b>Prepared by</b>			
<b>Checked by</b>			

## Disclosure

The information, data, evidence, advice and opinions which have been prepared and provided are true, and have been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

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