Sensible Ecological Survey Solutions
The Ecology Consultancy that Makes Sense

Tel: 07759 534354 email: mail@sensibleecologicalsurveysolutions.co.uk
Web: www.sensibleecologicalsurveysolutions.co.uk

Address: SESS Ltd, 1 Red Gables, Pepper Street, Appleton Thorn, Warrington, WA4 4SB

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” LLWYN AFFON”, BRON Y GARTHL, OSWESTRY'

BUILDINGS PROTECTED SPECIES SURVEY & BUILDINGS APPRAISAL FOR BAT ROOST POTENTIAL REPORT

Introduction

Sensible Ecology Survey Solutions was instructed to complete a protected species survey of a garage outbuilding and adjoining residential building located at a location (Figure 1) referred to as: -

"Llwyn Affon, Bron y Garthl, Oswestry, SY10 7ND"

This report presents the findings of a standard 'External and Internal Protected Species Survey' of the structures, supported by an appraisal of the potential of the buildings to support protected species, and in particular roosting bats. The survey also included an inspection and appraisal of any buildings, trees and other features present in close proximity to the target buildings.

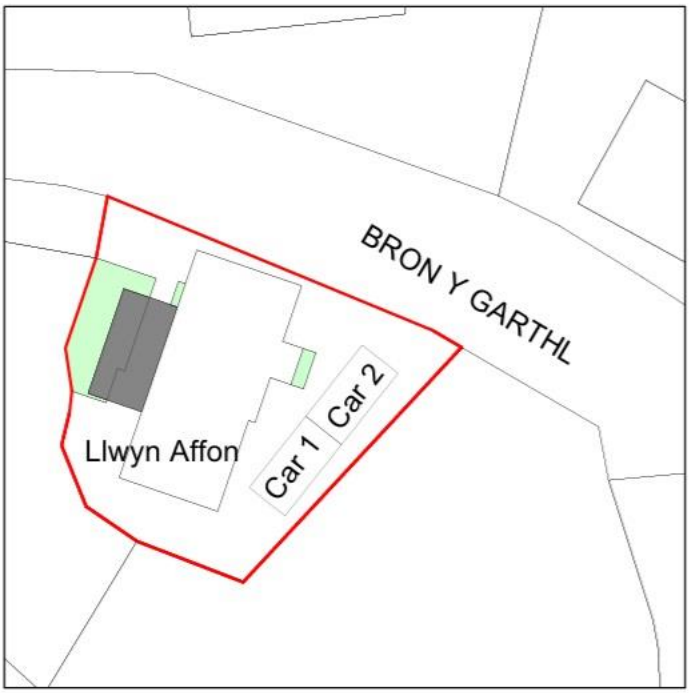
The garage outbuilding is currently used for miscellaneous storage. The structure is scheduled for demolition to facilitate an extension to the adjoining residential building. The residential building had already been subject to extensive internal renovation works at the time of survey.

The proposed works to the buildings could be harmful to protected species, if they were to be currently dependent on the structures. It is therefore normal for Local Planning Authorities to ask for Buildings Protected Species Surveys in these situations prior to granting planning approval.

<u>Figure 1:</u> Plan showing the current layout of residential and outbuilding.
Note: The red line shows the total site area subject to planning approval.



<u>Figure 2:</u> Plan showing the proposed layout.
Note: The former garage outbuilding (green shading) will be lost to accommodate an extension to the west facing frontage of the residential building (grey shading).



<u>Figure 3:</u> Aerial view of Surveyed Buildings & Immediate Surrounds.
Note: North is to the bottom of the image in this case. The small site is surrounded to three sides by improved grassland, and a road passes to the immediate north.



General Description of Target Buildings

The building to be subject to demolition works is a detached single storey garage type structure of brick and stone construction with pitched tile covered roofing (Photographs A & B). The roofing is supported internally on an exposed timber frame work (Photographs F & G). A small annexe structure is attached to the rear of the main outbuilding and is of brick construction with a semi flat roof covered in cement corrugated panels (Photographs E & H). The main outbuilding measures approximately 5.5m x 3.5m x 3.5m high (to roof apex); the attached annexe structure measures approximately 3.5m x 1.5m x 2.0m high.

The outbuilding is accessed via large timber swing doors (Photograph B). The tile roofing is exposed internally, and there are no enclosed roof chambers. The outbuilding is current used for general storage, including miscellaneous building materials associated with the ongoing restoration works on the adjoining residential building (Photograph F).

The outbuilding is in good general repair and well-sealed with no opportunities for direct access by bats or birds into the internal chamber detected. The tile roof and associated ridge tiling are in good repair and no viable opportunities for external bat roosting with identified (Photographs C & D). The roof overhang is directly into guttering, the guttering mounted on timber barge boards which are well sealed to the top of the walls (Photographs C & D).

Approximately 1.5m to the east of the outbuilding is found the west facing frontage of the adjoining detached residential building (Photographs A & I). Demolition of the outbuilding is a prerequisite to the proposed building extension works to its western frontage (Figure 2). The residential building had already been subject to extensive internal restoration works at the time of survey (Photograph L). The building is of stone construction with pitched slate covered roofing and measures approximately 12.5m x 5.0m x 5.0m high (to roof apex).

The residential building was also subject to survey and assessment, with special attention given to its west facing frontage and roofing which will be directly impacted by the proposed extension works. The building and its slate roofing are in good overall repair and well-sealed (Photographs I & K). The external stone work mortar fill to the west facing frontage is, in places, in need of repair (Photograph J) however no cracks or holes of sufficient size or depth were recorded to have potential to accommodate external bat roosting.

The buildings sit within a small residential plot which is surrounded to three sides by fields of improved grassland pasture; the fourth (northern) frontage opens directly onto a tarmac surfaced road. The nearest building to the target buildings is a small open fronted stone shed with corrugated metal roofing located approximately 7m to the west (Photograph M). Further residential buildings are found to the east and north of the site, none of these buildings are within a 10m radius of the surveyed buildings.

<u>Photograph A:</u> General view of front (north facing) to outbuilding to be demolished, with the residential building to the extended to the immediate rear.



<u>Photograph B</u>: General view of front and east side to outbuilding.
Note: The pitched tile covered roofing, and the close proximity of the residential building (to left of image).



<u>Photograph C</u>: View of east facing frontage to outbuilding.
Note: The simple roof overhang directly into guttering. The guttering mounted on timber barge boarding located approximately two metres above ground level.



<u>Photograph D</u>: Sample view of the tile roofing found on the outbuilding.
Note: The tile roofing and associated ridge tiling are in good overall repair and well-sealed.



<u>Photograph E:</u> View of the south facing gable end to the outbuilding.
Note: The small extension to the fore, with its flat corrugated cement board roofing.



<u>Photograph F</u>: General internal view looking along the length of the outbuilding from the northern entrance.
Note: The building is currently used for storage of miscellaneous items, and building materials associated with the restoration works within the adjoining residential building.



<u>Photograph G</u>: Close up sample internal view of the roofing.
Note: The exposed tiles are bedded in mortar on supporting timber struts, there is an absence of internal backing material. No daylight penetration through the roofing and at the roof/wall interfaces was recorded, and opportunities for bat or bird access through the roofing into the chamber was assessed as negligible.



<u>Photograph H</u>: Internal view of the flat roof extension to the rear of the garage outbuilding.
Note: The exposed cement board corrugated roofing panels. There is a general absence of internal hiding opportunities for bats or birds.



<u>Photograph I</u>: General view of the south and east facing frontages to the residential building.
Note: Internal restoration works within the building were already underway at the time of survey.



<u>Photograph J</u>: View of the west facing frontage to the residential building which will be subject to extension works.
Note: The stone facing to the building was subject to inspection and although irregular in nature it was assessed to be in fair repair with no viable cracks or holes detected which might allow bats to gain access behind.



<u>Photograph K</u>: View of the slate roofing on the west facing frontage to the residential building.

Note: The slate roofing and ridge tiling look newly fitted and are in good repair and well-sealed. The chimney stack is also well sealed.



<u>Photograph L</u>: General internal view of the residential building.

Note: The building is currently subject to internal restoration works and has been stripped back to allow for completion of structural work.



HISTORICAL RECORDS FOR BAT SPECIES RECORDED IN THE LOCAL AREA

The following bat species records are listed in the National Biodiversity Network Gateway web site database, for a 5 km radius around the site:

Common Pipistrelle	***Pipisterellus pipistrellus***	**widespread**
Soprano Pipistrelle	***Pipsitrelleus pygmaeus***	**widespread**
Lesser Horseshoe	***Phinolophus hipposideros***	**widespread**
Daubenton's	***Myotis daubentonii***	**scattered**
Natterer's	***Myotis nattereri***	**scattered**
Brown Long-eared	***Plecotus auritus***	**scattered**
Noctule	***Nyctalus noctule***	**scattered**

Given the nature of the buildings the bat species most expected to be roosting in the structure (but only if they are they be able to gain access to suitable roosting locations) would be Common Pipistrelle and Soprano Pipistrelle.

Survey Details

Surveyor Experience

The survey was completed by Dr David Bell, Director, Sensible Ecological Survey Solutions Limited, Warrington. Dr Bell has forty years' experience as a professional ecologist, and has completed many similar buildings protected species surveys at sites across North West England and the wider United Kingdom.

He is a long-standing full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM).

Survey Procedures & Limitations

<u>The survey of the target building was completed on 15th November 2024.</u>

The buildings were surveyed externally, using binoculars as required to inspect high level features. The internal chambers were inspected for signs of bats using a high-powered lantern. No invasive search for bats was undertaken.

***Survey Limitations*: Views could be had of all building elevations externally. Internally there was full surveyor access to the open chambers. No enclosed roof chambers were present.**

The survey was completed outside the bird breeding season (1st March - 31st August inclusive); however, evidence of former internal nesting activity would still have been expected to be evident internally.

The survey was completed outside the active bat survey period (late April to early September). However, evidence of former bat presence such as droppings and staining would still have been expected to be evident internally.

Survey Findings

BATS

Detection of Bats

No evidence of bats was recorded in association with the target outbuilding or the adjoining residential building

Appraisal of Potential of Buildings to support Bats

The target buildings are assessed as having 'negligible' potential to support roosting bats.

The assessments of negligible potential are based on the following factors: -

1) **The good overall external state of repair of the building's frontages with no opportunities for external roosting identified.**
2) **The good overall state of the respective tile and slate roofings with no opportunities for bats to gain access to external roof associated roosting identified.**
3) **The well-sealed roof overhangs with no viable access opportunities for external roosting identified at wall/roof interfaces.**
4) **The absence of internal roof chambers in either building.**

SPECIALLY PROTECTED BIRDS

No evidence of nesting or roosting by specially protected bird species, such as barn owl (*Tyto alba*) was recorded in association with the target buildings.

The buildings were assessed as unsuitable as roosting or breeding site for barn owl.

OTHER BREEDING BIRDS

No evidence of former external or internal breeding bird activity was recorded externally or internally for the outbuilding to be demolished; no evidence of former breeding bird activity was recorded for the residential building to be subject to extension works.

THE WIDER SITE & IMMEDIATE SURROUNDS

The site is accessed directly off a 'Bron Y Garthl' tarmac surfaced road which passes to the immediate north (Figures 1 & 3, Photograph N); the road hard standing has negligible nature conservation interest. The site is surrounded to the south, east and west by small fields of improved grassland pasture of poor species diversity and low nature conservation interest.

A stone shed out building with corrugated metal panel roofing is located approximately 8m to the west of the outbuilding to be demolished (Photograph N); the shed was assessed to have negligible potential to support roosting bats, and no evidence of former breeding bird activity was recorded. The site is surrounded by a scattering of residential and agricultural building all at least 10m from the site, and therefore the risk of harm to protected species which may currently be dependent on the structures is assessed as negligible.

There are no mature trees or other natural features in close proximity to the building, assessed to have potential to support roosting bats.

Photograph M: View of small stone shed located approximately 8m to west of site.
Note: The garage outbuilding and residential building can be seen behind the shed to the fore.



Summary, Conclusions & Recommendations

BATS

No evidence of bat roosting activity was recorded in association with the surveyed outbuilding to be demolished and the adjoining residential building to be subject to extension works. The buildings were assessed as having 'negligible' overall potential to support roosting bats. The assessment made in accordance with current national assessment guidance (*Bat Conservation Trust, 2016*), was primarily due to the building's overall good state of repair in combination with the structure's unsuitability internally due to lack of enclosed roof chambers (as reviewed in more detail earlier in the report).

There are no further buildings, structures or trees present in close proximity to the target building identified as having potential to support roosting bats.

Follow-up Phase 2 bat surveys are not currently considered to be justified.

No special bat mitigation measures are recommended.

BIRDS

No evidence of roosting within the site by any specially protected bird species was recorded. The buildings were appraised as having negligible potential as roosting or breeding sites for barn owl.

No evidence of former or current breeding bird activity was recorded for either building, externally or internally. The buildings were appraised as having poor overall potential to support breeding birds and risk from the proposed works is assessed as low.

Recommendation
If works on the buildings are to commence during the bird breeding season (May – August inclusive) checks for bird nesting activity should be completed immediately prior to commencement of works. If an active nest is detected then works should be delayed until the nest is confirmed as abandoned, or alternatively a standoff of at least 4 metres maintained from the nest site to avoid harmful disturbance.

OTHER PROTECTED OR BIODIVERSITY TARGET SPECIES

The risk to hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*) from the proposed demolition works is assessed as low. The species is widespread in the local rural area and the grassland surrounding the site on three sides could currently offer foraging opportunities and the species could be attracted to seek refuge in close proximity to the buildings. The species is also known to be attracted to newly disturbed ground associated with active construction sites, and individuals can then become entrapped in open excavations.

Recommendation

To reduce the risk to hedgehogs to negligible level, searches of the outbuilding margins should be completed prior to commencement of demolition works. Recovered individuals to be translocated to an appropriate safe receptor area nearby. Demolished materials should be quickly removed off site or stored in skips to minimise the risk of hedgehogs seek refuge with the arisings. To prevent the entrapment of hedgehog associated with excavation works, temporary escape ramps should be fitted leading out of excavations during nocturnal hours and when the site is abandoned for extended periods.

The risk to badgers (*Meles meles*) is again assessed as low, however the measures to prevent entrapment of hedgehogs in excavations stated above are equally applicable for badgers.

The following common amphibian species can be expected to be present within the local area and may be attracted to the building margins: frog (*Rana temporaria*), toad (*Bufo bufo*) and smooth newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*).

Recommendation

The risks to amphibian species are similar to those reviewed above for hedgehogs. The same search and recovery procedures prior to commencement of building demolition works should apply.

References:

Bat Conservation Trust (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists. Good Practice Guidelines. Bat Conservation Trust, London

Prepared by:

Dr David Bell
Director
Sensible Ecological Survey Solutions Limited

Registered Office:

Sensible Ecological Survey Solutions
1 Red Gables
Pepper Street
Appleton Thorn
Warrington
WA4 4SB

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