Leigh Ecology Ltd

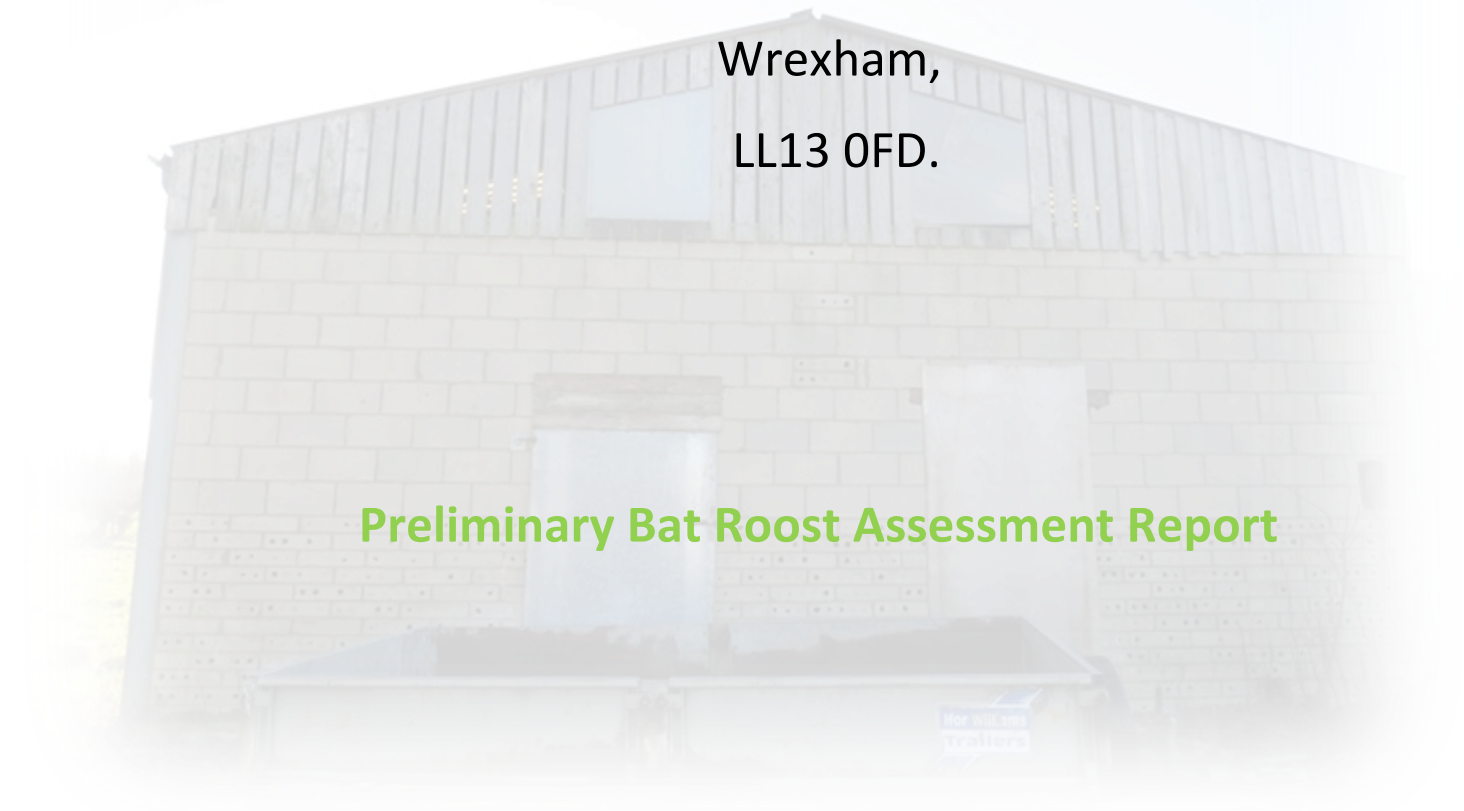
Protected Species and Habitat Surveys

Barn at Bowling Bank Farm,

Worthenbury,

Wrexham,

LL13 0FD.



Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Report

Report Number	DH/001-2025
Author	R. Leigh
Date	10th February 2025
First Check	J. Leigh
Final Technical Check	C. Evans

Office 01606892032 Mobile 07815711678

Directors R S Leigh & J J Leigh. 8 Hall Drive, Marston, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 6DT

IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO READERS

This report has been prepared for Mr Hopkins, in accordance with the terms and conditions of appointment for a protected species survey. Leigh Ecology Ltd cannot accept any responsibility for the use of, or reliance on the content of this report by any third party.

The advice contained in this report is based on the information available and/or collected during the period of study. We cannot completely eliminate the possibility of important ecological features being found through further investigation and/or by survey at different times of the year, or in different years.

Surveys and assessments are undertaken on the understanding that nothing in our reports will be omitted, amended or misrepresented by the client or any other interested party.

Please be aware that the information contained within this report is valid for a period not exceeding two years. After this time, data contained within will require updating.

This report and its contents remain the property of Leigh Ecology Ltd until payment has been made in full.

CONTENTS

Important Information to Readers.....2

1 Summary **4**

2 Introduction..... **4**

2.2 Legislative Framework.....5

2.3 Site Description.....5

3 Methodology **9**

4 Results..... **11**

Internal and external inspection..... **11**

5. Recommendations and Green Infrastructure. **11**

1 SUMMARY

1.1.1 The applicants plan to renovate the barn located at Bowling Bank Farm, Worthenbury.

1.1.2 The building is a breeze block and wood slat structure with a fabricated roof.

1.1.3 Therefore, in order to facilitate the works on the building and inform the planning application, a survey for protected species namely nesting birds and bats *Chiroptera* was undertaken.

1.1.4 No signs of bat presence were recorded during the survey, no current or historical nests were found.

1.1.5 No invasive species were noted on site during the survey.

1.1.6 Therefore, given the results it is suggested that the planned demolition and subsequent works can proceed without constraints.

1.1.7 Some post works enhancements have been suggested.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1.1 A building has been identified for renovation/conversion on the same footprint. A protected species survey was required, namely bat species Chiroptera, in order to inform the planning application.

2.1.2 For development proposals requiring planning permission, the presence of protected species, and therefore the need of a survey is a material planning consideration under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Adequate surveys are therefore required to establish the presence or absence of protected species, to enable a prediction of the likely impact of the proposed development on them and their breeding site or resting places and, if necessary, to design mitigation and compensation methods.

2.1.3 For any development to proceed lawfully at a site where protected species are present, a licence issued by NRW, under the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 2010 (as amended) may be required. Information gathered during the surveys is used to inform such a licence application.

2.1.4 The objective of the study was to identify the presence or potential presence of bat species and nesting birds within the proposal building on site.

2.1.5 A preliminary roost survey and nesting bird survey consisting of an internal and external survey of the target building was conducted on the 16th January 2025.

2.1.6 This report provides the output from the protected species survey undertaken.

2.2 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Bats

2.2.1 There are 17 species of bats in the UK, all of which suffered a decline in population size and distribution during the 20th century; even those species regarded to be the most common suffered a 70% decline between 1978 and 1993 (Mitchel-Jones and McLeish, 2004).

2.2.2 All species of bats are listed under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and Regulation 41 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and are therefore afforded special protection. It is an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bat;
- Intentionally damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a wild bat uses for shelter or protection; and
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bat while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection.

2.2.3 Bats are further protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 which make it an offence to:

- Capture or kill a bat;
- Significantly disturb a bat (in any location); and
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of any bat.

2.2.4 If bats are present on a development site and, as a result of the development there is a likelihood that a roost may be damaged or destroyed, or where there is considered to be a reasonable possibility that bats occupying a roost may be significantly disturbed, or where there would be a requirement to significantly disturb a bat irrespective of its location, the development can only proceed if an European Protected Species (EPS) license is issued by Natural England.

2.2.5 In Wales, the Environment Act 2016 imposes a duty on all public bodies, including local authorities to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the determination of all types of planning applications. The UK Biodiversity Strategy was produced in response to the convention. The strategy contains action plans for species considered to be of conservation priority at a national (under Species Action Plans (SAP) and local scale (under Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs).

2.2.6 The UKBAP lists seven bat species considered as priorities, the relevant LBAP and SBAP (Wrexham) lists several bat and bird species, including Pipistrelle bat (Pipistrellus pipistrellus and P. pygmaeus) on its habitat based plan.

2.3 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.3.1 The proposal site is a single storey block and wooden slat barn building, set within a semi-rural location.

2.3.2 The building is open to the elements through the gaps in the wooden slat configuration.

2.3.3 The roof is metal fabricated pitched roof, no loft or roof space occurs in the building. The building is configured in an open space used for storage of various materials.

2.3.4 The site grid reference is SJ 422460.

2.3.5 The proposed development will see the building renovated/converted in order to facilitate the development of a dwelling.

2.3.6 The following figures and narrative provide a description of the target buildings.



Fig 2: The target building, east gable, note the base construction concrete block, and the upper wall construction, wooden slat.



Fig 3: The side wall is of similar construction, with a steel fabricated pitched roof.



Fig 4: The front of the building with steel access doors.



Fig 5: The inside of the barn is of an open configuration allowing wind through the building. No potential bat roosting habitat is evident.



Fig 6: The internal areas were thoroughly searched for signs of bat droppings and feeding remains, none were noted.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 The internal and external roost survey was undertaken by Mr Roy Leigh – NRW licence 58580-OTH CSAB -2014 and Natural England licensed surveyor NE licence 2015/15883-CLS.

3.1.2 Survey methods were based-upon the standard and specification detailed in the BCTs Bat Surveys-Good Practise Guidelines (BCT, 2016). The building was inspected internally and externally on 16th January 2025.

External Inspection

3.1.3 The objective of the survey was to locate any signs of bat activity, for example:

- Bat droppings;
- Feeding remains;
- Grease staining/ urine marks;
- Corpses or skeletons;
- Potential access points to internal roosts.

3.1.4 The bat signs listed above are visible from the outside of the building. The following areas were searched using binoculars:

- Ground floor casing;
- Rendering;
- Any cracks/ holes in brickwork/ woodwork;
- Between wall cavities at window points;
- On external brickwork.

Internal Inspection

3.1.5 Bats regularly utilise specific areas within roof spaces/open roof configurations (see below), which were searched as a priority for any bat field signs:

- Dividing walls;
- Beneath hip joints and junctions;
- Staining above/ around gaps;
- Within cobwebs;

- Staining around tile gaps;
- In cavities of walls within the roof wall joints;
- Timber / wall joints.

3.1.6 The internal building survey covered all rooms, both ground and upper floors.

3.1.7 The surveys were undertaken using a 168-lumen flashlight and 10x42 Swarovski binoculars.

3.1.8 Ladders were used to access elevated areas with potential for bat signs.

Survey limitations

3.1.9 All areas of the buildings were fully accessible, and care was taken, therefore the survey was considered comprehensive.

4 RESULTS

Internal and external inspection

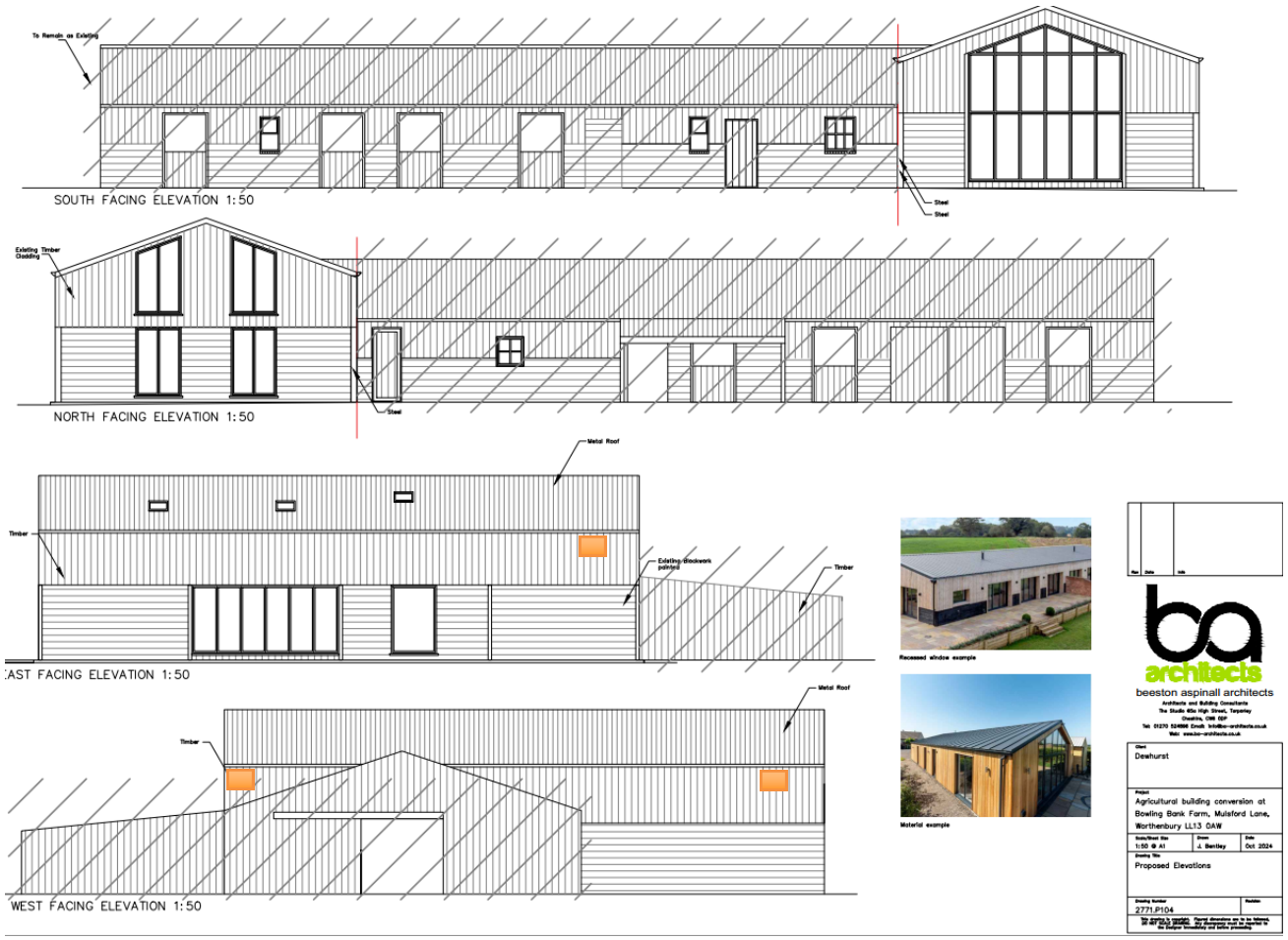
4.1.1 The brick block and wooden slat barn building is considered to be of negligible potential for roosting bats; the structure, including roof support, are open to the elements.

4.1.2 The building is located adjacent to some wooded areas, which may offer some foraging habitat.

4.1.3 No invasive plant species were noted in the vicinity of the building during the survey.

5. Recommendations and Green Infrastructure.

Given the building offers poor bat roost potential, some enhancement of the proposed new build is recommended, through the use of purpose-built bat boxes.



Positions of external bat boxes



- Location of bat boxes on the building.



5.1.1 Green infrastructure recommendations are shown above, the gardens have native planting hedgerow and a locally sourced tree planted in the corner. This is designed to provide linear features linking the barn to the adjacent woodland areas.

5.1.2 It is also suggested that given the bat friendly surrounding habitat, the rooves of all proposed structures should be lined with bat friendly membranes.

5.1.3 Where lighting is necessary in areas of tree/shrub planting this will be low wattage, directional, low level and/or shaded to minimise light spill (<1Lux) onto potential flight lines and foraging habitat to ensure that the overall impact caused by lighting the site is negligible. The lighting scheme will be designed with regard to guidance such as the Bat Conservation Trust Statement on the impact and design of artificial light on bats, and the Institution of Lighting Professionals Guidance Notes, to minimise disturbance to bats and other wildlife due to artificial lighting.

REFERENCES

Collins, J. (ed.) (2023). Bat surveys for professional ecologists: Good practice guidelines. 3rd edition. Bat Conservation Trust. London.

Bat Conservation Trust (2016). Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Mitchell-Jones, A. J. and McLiesh, A.P. (2004) Bat Workers Manual. 3rd ed. JNCC, Peterborough.

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

page not in use