Ecological Impact Assessment at

Althrey Hall Farm Barns,

Bangor on Dee,

Wrexham LL13 0DA,

On 28th , 29th and 30th July, 18th , 26th August

and 3rd September 2024, and 2nd and 15th May 2025

Report Completed: 6th July 2025
Ref: ALT0724

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1. Summary

The purpose of the report is to update a previous report with regard to the potential ecological impacts of proposed work at Althrey Hall Farm Barns and advise on any mitigation measures to comply with local planning policy and government legislation.

The proposed scheme involves the renovation and repairs to a set of adjacent barns and conversion to residential accommodation with associated access, gardens and garages.
The building and adjacent land were examined to establish the presence of or evidence of use by protected species of animals. A visual inspection was carried out to assess the potential or actual use by bats and birds, of the exterior and interior of the buildings. Dusk emergence surveys were carried out.
No bats were found to be roosting in the buildings and no evidence of use by bats or birds was found.

There is not considered to be any threat to the conservation status of bats or any significant danger of harm to individuals.
To provide Net Biodiversity Benefit one of the garages will be adapted for use as a as a bat loft and bat boxes will be installed on the converted building as shown on page 26. Bird boxes are also recommended. Approximately 200 m new hedgerow will be plantesd, comprising at least four native species.
Any filling or repair to any crevices should only be done after checking to ensure no bats are present.
If bats are found at any stage of the development then work in that area must stop and a licensed bat worker contacted for advice.

If any birds should gain access to the building and begin constructing nests during the development, then the work in that area must stop until the young have left the nests.

If the recommended mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures are taken there should be minimal impact on the conservation status or danger of harm to any species and no net loss of roosting sites.

2. Introduction

The site comprises a set of barns surrounded by hard standing and short vegetation.
The proposed scheme involves the renovation and conversion of the barns to residential accommodation with associated access, gardens and garages.
The purpose of the report is to identify and address any significant ecological effects which are likely to occur as a result of the proposed work. This is necessary to comply with local planning policy and government legislation and avoid any offence being committed. Also, to describe any compensation, mitigation and enhancement measures which should be taken.
Susan Worsfold BSc (Hons) ACIEEM is an experienced wildlife surveyor, licensed bat worker and voluntary bat roost visitor. Registration number CLS0895 2015-12555-CLS-CLS (CL15 Bat Roost Visitor Level 1) and registration number CLS 0895 2015-12556-CLS-CLS (CL18 Bat Survey Level 2) (Natural England) and S086005/1 (Natural Resources Wales);
Licensed great crested newt worker, registration number 2016-19947-CLS-CLS (NE)
and S086057/1 (NRW)
Craig Thomas is an experienced assistant.

3. Methodology

3.1. Scope of the Assessment

The report incorporates a bat roost and nesting bird assessment, while also searching for use or potential use by any rare, threatened, endemic and non-native invasive species which might be associated with such a site in accordance with:
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and listed in:
Schedule 2. European protected species of animals
Schedule 5. European protected species of plants
The protection of Badgers Act 1992
Protected species which might be associated with such a site include bats and birds.
Dusk emergence surveys were carried out in accordance with *Bat surveys for professional ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edn)* (Collins 2016) and the Interim Guidance Note: Use of night vision aids for bat emergence surveys and further comment on dawn surveys (*Bat Conservation Trust, May 2022*)

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3.2. Desk Study

Wrexham Planning Portal was consulted for a review of previous ecological surveys carried out in the area for the past ten years. No rare or threatened species were identified nearby. Magic Maps was consulted for the presence of designated sites and protected habitats.
An EcIA was carried out in 2019, which found no evidence of use of any of the buildings as a roost.

3.3. Field Survey

The building was examined to establish the presence of or evidence of use by protected species of animals. A risk assessment was made before entering. A visual inspection was carried out to assess the potential or actual use by bats and birds, of the exterior and interior of the buildings. They were searched systematically for any signs of bats, including droppings, rub marks and urine stains at entrances to roosts and insect remains, such as moth or butterfly wings. Crevices were checked where possible.
Powerful lamps (LED Lenser H14 and P7) were used for examination under eaves. Binoculars were used to examine parts which were not otherwise accessible. Photographs were taken of all areas and those of relevance are shown in the appendices.

The preliminary survey was carried out on 28th June 2024 by Susan Worsfold.
Three sets of dusk emergence surveys were carried out in 2024 and 2025 by Susan Worsfold and Craig Thomas, to cover all aspects of the buildings where potential roost features were identified.
These were done in accordance with *Bat surveys for professional ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edn)* (Collins 2016) and the Interim Guidance Note: Use of night vision aids for bat emergence surveys and further comment on dawn surveys (*Bat Conservation Trust, May 2022*)
Frequency division detectors were used to record any bat sounds in and around the buildings for later analysis on the computer. These were Peersonic RPA3. The whole building was in view of the observers and infrared night vision aids (NVAs) were used alongside observers or to provide extra detail on areas of interest. These were Nightfox Whisker night vision goggles and Canon XA20 camcorder mounted on tripods, with Nightfox XB5 IR torches.

4. Baseline Ecological Conditions/Results

4.2 Habitats

Site: The site is in a rural location 5.5 km north west of the nearest town, Wrexham. The buildings were in varying states of repair. The condition of the buildings had deteriorated since the last survey, with more sections of roof missing and damaged.

The walls are of brick with no cavity. Exteriors were unlined, some interiors were painted or plastered. Roofs were pitched corrugated steel, unlined, with timber rafter and purlin frame. Barn 1 was one storey with a small open loft space. There was damage to the roofs in several places, with large gaps present especially in Barn 1. Most of the windows were missing or broken or unglazed. Doors were of wood with gaps around frames. Some were missing. There were verge boards at some gable ends but no soffits.

Adjacent land: The river is 90 m west. There is a large area of mixed woodland 500 m south east. The nearest pond is 30 m east and there are six more ponds within 500 m. There are few hedgerows surrounding the site and the land is mainly pastoral and arable and the racecourse is 150 m north.

4.3 Species and Species Groups

Plants

Very little vegetation remained on site, there were only a very few successional species including grasses, dandelion (*Taraxicum officianale*), dock (*Rumex* sp.) Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) and nettle (*Urtica dioica*).

Amphibians and Reptiles

None seen during the survey. There was some shelter and a little foraging potential on site. There was a pond 30 m from the site.

Birds

There was no evidence or recent use of any of the buildings by birds.

Bats

There was no evidence of use of the buildings by bats and very little activity during the surveys. No droppings were found in the buildings. Three species altogether were identified during the surveys.

Badgers

[redacted]

5. Description of the Development

The proposed scheme involves the renovation and repair of the barns and conversion to residential.. This will involve removal of some slates and pointing, and loss of the interior as potential habitat for bats or birds.

6. Assessment of Effects and Mitigation Measures

Designated Sites:
It is not considered that the proposal will have any significant impact on any designated sites due to the small scale of the development and distance from the sites.
Habitats:
No priority habitat is affected by the proposal.

Species:

Birds
If any birds should gain access to the building and begin constructing nests during the work, then work in that area must stop until the young have left the nests.

Bats
The proposed work will not lead to the loss of any roosting sites or access, nor disturbance to individuals.
The site is suitable for foraging and commuting bats. Three species of bats were recorded externally.

Residual Effects
None anticipated.

8. Compensation

N/A

8. Net Biodiversity Benefit

One of the garages will be adapted for use as a as a bat loft and bat boxes will be installed on the converted building as shown on page 26.
One woodcrete nest suitable for small birds such as robin, blackbird, tit species and sparrow to be fitted to each gable end of the barns:
House Sparrow Terrace - Wooden (or woodcrete) nest box with 3 sub-divisions to support 3 nesting pairs. To be placed under the eaves. Entrance holes: 32mm diameter. Dimensions: H310 x W370 x D185mm. Also suitable for tits, redstarts and spotted flycatchers. Place at least 2 m from the ground.

Approximately 200 m hedge will be planted along the boundary as shown on page 25. This will comprise native species such as hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, elder, field maple, oak and holly. This will be done prior to the first occupation of the dwelling and it will be maintained by the owners.

9. Ecological Constraints

None identified.

10. Monitoring

Not considered necessary.

11. Conclusions

No bats were seen to emerge from the buildings and no evidence of use of the building by bats was found. If the recommended mitigation and enhancement measures are taken there will be a net gain in biodiversity and no net loss of roosting or nesting sites, nor any danger of harm to any species

12. Bibliography

Bat Conservation Trust available at: http://www.bats.org.uk

BCT and ILP Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting available at: https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/

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Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora available at: jncc.defra.gov.uk

English Nature (2001) *Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines* Peterborough: English Nature

Google Maps available at: https://maps.google.com/maps

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

Mitchell-Jones, A. J. and McLeish, A. P. (2004) *Bat Worker's Manual,* Peterborough: Joint Nature Conservation Committee

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UK BAP Priority Habitats available at: jncc.defra.gov.uk

Wildlife and Habitat Conservation available at: https://www.gov.uk/topic/environmental-management/wildlife-habitat-conservation

Appendix 13.1: Activity Surveys

Survey Conditions

Date	Sunset/ Sunrise	Start Time	End Time	Temp. Start °C	Temp. End °C	Cloud %	Wind 0-6	Rain
28/7/24	21:11	21:00	23:40	20	14	10	0	None
29/7/24	21:10	20:55	22:40	21	15	50	0	None
30/7/24	21.08	20.52	22:40	16	14	40	0	None
18/8/24	20.31	20:15	22:00	14	13	20	0	None
26/8/24	20.13	20:00	21:45	17	16	80	2	None
3/9/24	19.55	19:40	21:25	16	13	10	0	None
2/5/25	20.42	20.29	22.15	12	11	1	0	None
15/5/25	21.04	20.55	22.35	12	9	10	0	None

28/7/24

Bats recorded:
None

Bats observed:
None

29/7/24

Bats recorded:
None

Bats observed:
22.01 1 flew S to N then foraging nearby
22.06 1 flew E to W
22.08 1 foraging nearby

30/7/24

Bats recorded:
None

Bats observed:
21.30 1 flew over roof S to N
21.31 - 21.40 2 foraging near NW end

18/8/24

Bats recorded:
21.24 Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)

Bats observed:
20.56 1 came from W then foraging near southern end
21.02 1 flew W to E near the house

26/8/24

Bats recorded:
20.26 Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)

Bats observed:
20.27 1 came from W then flew into and out of barn
20.35 1 flew west to east
20.41 I foraging near west end
20.43 2 flew N to S then foraging around barns fairly frequently for approximately 15 minutes

2/5/24

Bats recorded:
22.08 Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)
21.32 Noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*)
21.51, 22.19, 22.21 Soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*)
21.52 Common pipistrelle

Bats observed:
None

15/5/24

Bats recorded:
22.11 Common pipistrelle

Bats observed:
None

Appendix 13.2: Aerial Photograph Showing Position of Observers



N



NVA and bat detector

Bat detector, NVA and observer

Appendix 13.2: Aerial Photograph Showing Position of Observers





★ NVA and bat detector

★ Bat detector, NVA and observer

Appendix 13.2: Aerial Photograph Showing Position of Observers





NVA and bat detector

Bat detector, NVA and observer

Appendix 13.3: Photographs











Appendix 13.3: Photographs













Appendix 13.3: Photographs













Appendix 13.3: Photographs From NVAs





Appendix 13.3: Photographs From NVAs





Appendix 13.3: Photographs From NVAs



Appendix 13.4: Plans



Site Plan 1:500

Rev	Date	Detail	Initial

Project:
Proposed residential development at
Bangor on Dee,
Wrexham,
LL13 0DA.

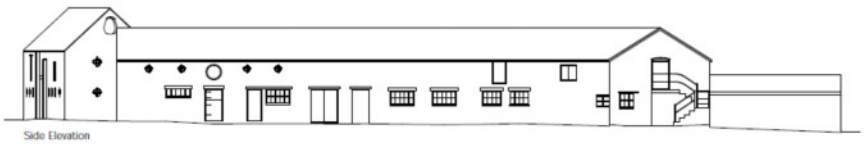
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Site Plan	1:500
Drawn By: E Jackson	Date: Jan 2018
Drawing No: S043/005	Sheet: 1 of 1

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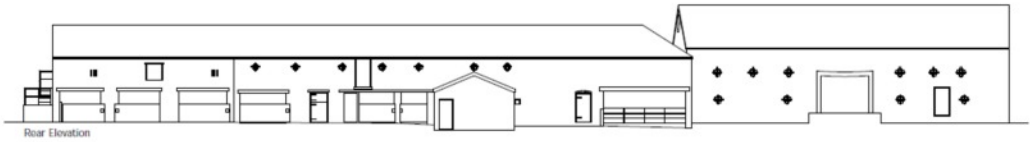
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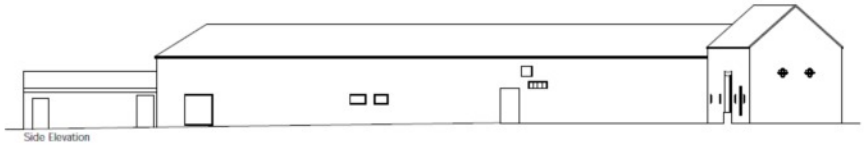
Front Elevation



Side Elevation



Rear Elevation



Side Elevation

Rev	Date	Detail	Initial

Project:
Proposed residential development at
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Wrexham,
LL13 0DA.

Title:	Scale: (A1)
Existing: Elevations	1:100
Drawn By: J Felgate	Date: Dec 2017
Drawing No: S064/001	Sheet: 4 of 4

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Appendix 13.4: Plans



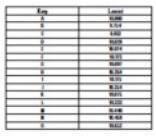
First Floor Plan

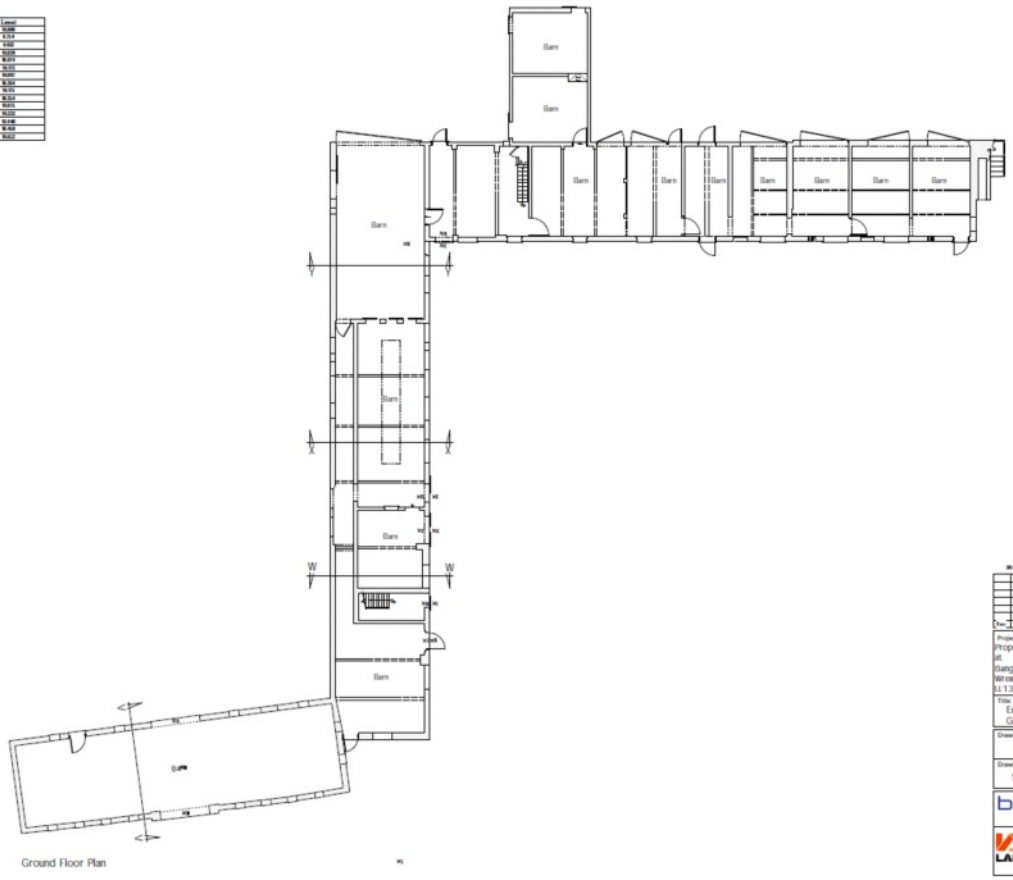
Project:
Proposed residential development at
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Wrexham,
LL13 0DA.

Title: Existing: First Floor
Scale (A1): 1:100
Drawn By: J Felgate
Date: Dec 2017
Drawing No: SO64/001
Sheet: 2 of 4

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Ground Floor Plan

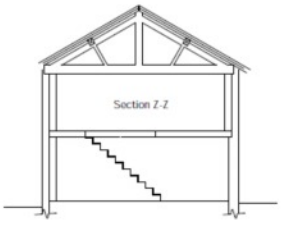
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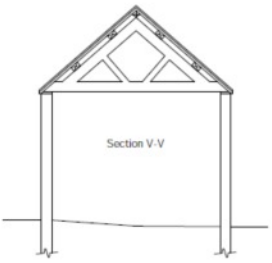
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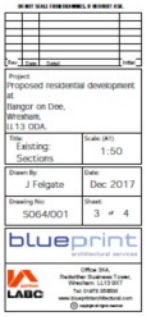
Appendix 13.4: Plans

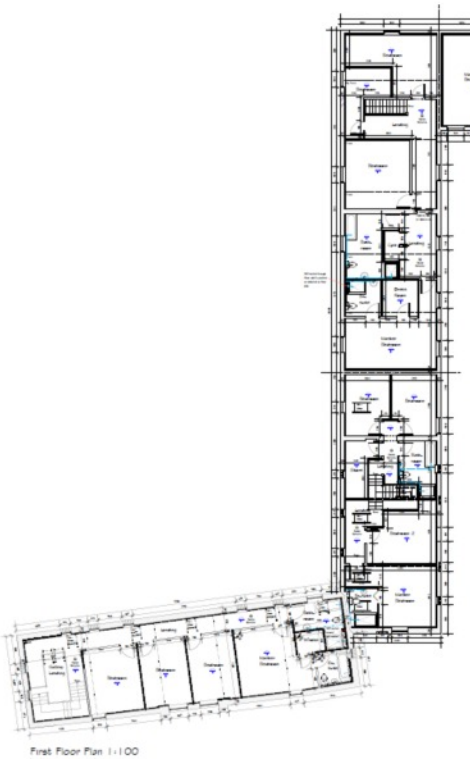


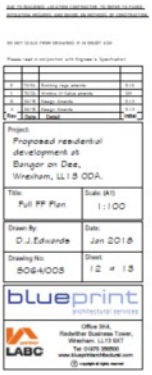




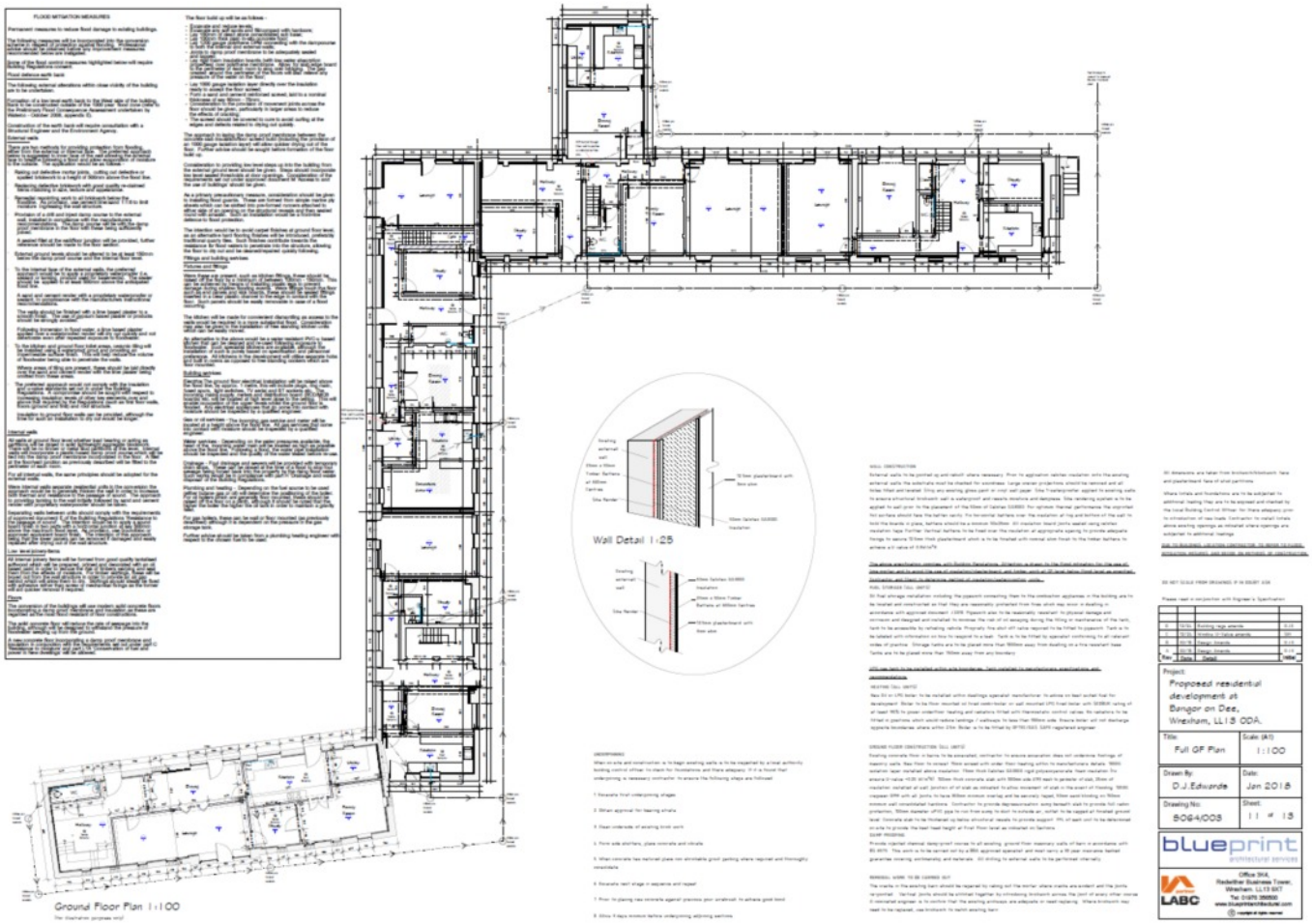




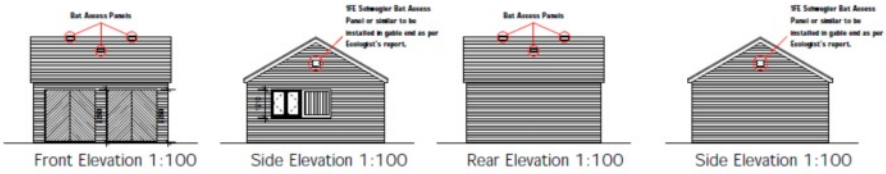




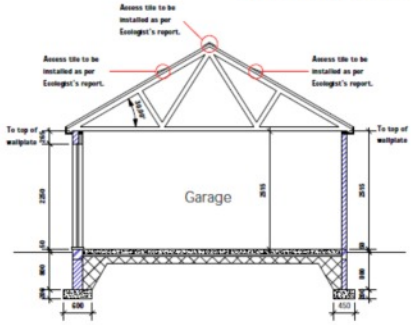
Appendix 13.4: Plans



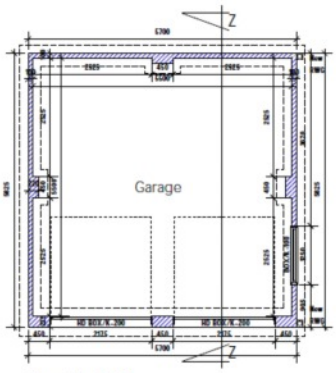
Appendix 13.4: Plans Showing Proposed Positions of Bat and Bird Boxes



Front Elevation 1:100 | Side Elevation 1:100 | Rear Elevation 1:100 | Side Elevation 1:100



Section Z-Z 1:50



Floor Plan 1:50

SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE

Rainwater to be collected in 100mm wide half round uPVC and 65mm diameter Cast iron downpipes. Water to discharge to Marley rainwater gullies. Soakaways to be 1000mm diameter x 1000mm deep filled with 50mm nominal clean stone up to 300mm minimum of finished ground level, covered with visqueen membrane and back filled up to surrounding finished level with top soil. Soakaways to be at least 5m away from structure within lower ground.

ELECTRICAL WORKS

All electrical works are to be completed by a competent person registered with an electrical self-certification scheme and to take full responsibility to ensure that new works are in compliance with BS7671:2001. On completion the client should receive certification signed by the designer, installer and person responsible for testing of the new electrical system.

WINDOWS / GLAZING

All windows are to comprise sealed double glazed units set within good quality Timber frames to match dwellings and to local authority approval. Sealed double glazed units are to have 16mm minimum air gap and Low-E (soft-coated) glass to styles generally as indicated. Glazing in critical locations, such as within 800mm of floor level to windows, within 1500mm of floor level to doors, and windows adjacent to doors are to consist of laminated toughened safety glass in accordance with BS 6206 and permanently marked.

ROOF CONSTRUCTION

Roof coverings to be slates to match dwellings to Local Authority approval. Slates to be fixed to 47x25mm treated softwood battens on Monarflex SF Bituminous Roofing Underlay (or similar) as per Ecologist's report, laid on softwood roof trusses designed and manufactured by specialists in accordance with BS 5268:1985 and set at 600mm maximum centre's. Access tiles to be installed within roof construction as per Ecologist's report. Trusses to be braced longitudinally between all unsupported node points and diagonally to underside of top chord of trusses. Bracing to be out of 100x25mm sawn softwood double nailed at each fixing point. Trusses are to bear onto 100x50mm softwood wallplates and are to be fixed by means of galvanised mild steel truss clips. Wallplates are to be anchored to walls at 1000mm centre's with 30x5mm mild steel straps. Straps are to be of sufficient length to be fixed to masonry of supporting walls, fixings are to be screwed or plugged and screwed. *Further depth and positioning of wallplates may vary following Truss Manufacturer's specification.* Gable wall straps to be 1350mm long x 30mm x 6mm galvanised mild steel and positioned at rafter and ceiling level at 1800mm centres.

WALL CONSTRUCTION

Walls are to comprise of 225mm thick blockwork and 100mm thick blockwork with timber face as indicated on elevations to local authority approval. Provide Keystone lintels over all openings as specified on floor plans. Keystone lintels can be supplied by Rumi Gray (01978 264269). All lintels are to have a minimum of 150mm end bearing length. 1FE Schwegler Bat Access Panel or similar to be installed in gable end as per Ecologist's report as indicated on elevations.

Walls below finished ground level to be constructed using concrete common brickwork. Walls above finished ground level to be constructed using facing brick to local authority approval. All walls to be constructed centrally on supporting foundations.

GROUND FLOOR CONSTRUCTION

100mm thick concrete slab on 1200G visqueen DPM with all joints to have 300mm minimum overlap and be securely taped. 50mm sand blinding on 150mm minimum well consolidated hardcore.

FOUNDATIONS

Provide 600mm wide x 200mm deep concrete strip foundations beneath 215mm walls with 450mm wide x 200mm deep foundations beneath 100mm thick walls. Contractor to ensure strip foundations are increased in width where supporting piers are present. Foundations to be cast onto suitable load bearing strata. Foundations are to be put down in one pour to prevent joints in concrete. Contractor to ensure new foundations do not undermine existing foundations of dwelling on site. Concrete can be supplied by Rumi Gray (01978 756763).

PLANS HAVE NOT YET GAINED LOCAL AUTHORITY APPROVAL AND MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

DO NOT SCALE OFF DRAWING. If in doubt, ask.

Rev	Date	Detail	Initial

Project:
Proposed residential development at Bangor on Dee, Wrexham, LL13 ODA.

Title: Working Drawings: Garage (Plot 1)
Scale: (A2) 1:50 & 1:100

Drawn By: J Felgate
Date: Jan 2020

Drawing No: S064/007
Sheet: 1 of 1

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Appendix 13.5: Lighting Guidance

(Appropriate Luminaire Specifications:
Guidance Note GN08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night (*ILP 2023*))

• All luminaires should lack UV elements when manufactured. Metal halide, compact fluorescent sources should not be used
• LED luminaires should be used where possible due to their sharp cut-off, lower intensity, good colour rendition and dimming capability
• A warm white light source (2700Kelvin or lower) should be adopted to reduce blue light component
• Light sources should feature peak wavelengths higher than 550nm to avoid the component of light most disturbing to bats (Stone, 2012)
• Internal luminaires can be recessed where installed in proximity to windows to reduce glare and light spill
• Waymarking inground markers (low output with cowls or similar to minimise upward light spill) to delineate path edges
• Column heights should be carefully considered to minimise light spill and glare visibility. This should be balanced with the potential for increased numbers of columns and upward light reflectance as with bollards
• Only luminaires with a negligible or zero Upward Light Ratio, and with good optical control, should be considered - See ILP GN01
• Luminaires should always be mounted horizontally, with no light output above 90° and/or no upward tilt
• Where appropriate, external security lighting should be set on motion sensors and set to as short a possible a timer as the risk assessment will allow. For most general residential purposes, a 1 or 2 minute timer is likely to be appropriate
• Use of a Central Management System (CMS) with additional web-enabled devices to light on demand
• Use of motion sensors for local authority street lighting may not be feasible unless the authority has the potential for smart metering through a CMS
• The use of bollard or low-level downward-directional luminaires is strongly discouraged. This is due to a considerable range of issues, such as unacceptable glare, poor illumination efficiency, unacceptable upward light output, increased upward light scatter from surfaces and poor facial recognition which makes them unsuitable for most sites. Therefore, they should only be considered in specific cases where the lighting professional and project manager are able to resolve these issues.
• Only if all other options have been explored, accessories such as baffles, hoods or louvres can be used to reduce light spill and direct it only to where it is needed. However, due to the lensing and fine cut-off control of the beam inherent in modern LED luminaires, the effect of cowls and baffles is often far less than anticipated and so should not be relied upon solely.

Appendix 13.6: Legislation Relating to Bats

All species of bats in the UK are European Protected Species (EPS). It is against the law to damage or destroy a bat's breeding site or resting place (known as a roost), or deliberately to capture, kill, injure or disturb a bat

Bats are the only mammals which can fly. They are warm blooded, they suckle their babies and are intelligent, social animals. British bats feed only on insects, of which they consume vast numbers to sustain their energetic lifestyles. A pipistrelle bat can eat up to 3000 midges in a single night!

We have 12 species of bat breeding in Wales. Many of these have suffered severe declines, not just in Britain but throughout Europe.

All British bat species are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, known as the 'Habitats Regulations'. Bats have a unique relationship with humans, sometimes sharing our homes for part of the year. For this reason, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) deals with many hundreds of bat enquiries each year from householders.

Under the Habitats Regulations, it is an offence if you:

deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild animal of an EPS
deliberately disturb wild animals of any such species
damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal
Disturbance includes, but is not limited to, any disturbance which is likely:

1. to impair their ability –
to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or
in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or

2. to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

Defra and the Welsh Government will publish a joint guidance document on the interpretation of the offences relating to disturbance, and to damage and destruction of breeding sites and resting places.

There are other offences relating to possession, transport and sale.

NRW issues licences under Regulation 55 of the Habitats Regulations to allow you to work within the law.

If you are a householder and have concerns about bats at your property (other than queries related to planning applications or a development), contact the NRW Enquiry Line for advice, telephone 0300 065 3000

Appendix 13.7: Legislation Relating to Birds

All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected. It is an offence to intentionally:

- kill, injure or take any wild bird,
- take, damage or destroy the nest of a Golden Eagle, White-tailed Eagle or Osprey (even if disused),
- take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is in use or being built,
- take, damage or destroy an egg or any wild bird,
- possess any live or dead wild bird or the egg of any wild bird, or any derivative

Many rare birds are listed on Schedule 1, which makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- disturb a Schedule 1 bird while it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young; or
- disturb dependent young of such a bird

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) issues licences for specific purposes, so that you can undertake legitimate work without breaking the law. See ‘Bird licensing’ for more information.