



ARBOR VITAE

ECOLOGY • FORESTRY • LAND USE



PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT

YEW TREE COTTAGE

Project name: Yew Tree Cottage, Horsemans Green, Whitchurch, SY13 3DU

Grid Reference: SJ44424096

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO DEVELOPMENT

Planning permission will be sought for alterations to the second-floor loft space of an existing residential property, to provide additional living space, at Yew Tree Cottage near Whitchurch.

1.2 SCOPE OF SURVEY

Arbor Vitae were commissioned by Base Architects to undertake a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PBRA) to establish the potential of the buildings to be used by roosting bats.

- Bats and their roosting sites are legally protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

The survey was also designed to assess the presence of any breeding birds using the buildings.

- All wild nesting birds, their nests and eggs are legally protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

1.3 KEY PRINCIPLES

All ecological surveys conducted by Arbor Vitae Environment Ltd are underpinned by the following key principles, as outlined by CIEEM (2018):

Avoidance - Seek options that avoid harm to ecological features (for example, by locating on an alternative site).

Mitigation - Adverse effects should be avoided or minimized through mitigation measures, either through the design of the project or subsequent measures that can be guaranteed – for example, through a condition or planning obligation.

Compensation - Where there are significant residual adverse ecological effects despite the mitigation proposed, these should be offset by appropriate compensatory measures.

Enhancements - Seek to provide net benefits for biodiversity over and above requirements for avoidance, mitigation or compensation.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 LOCATION, LANDSCAPE, AND BACKGROUND

The property is located within the village of Horsemans Green, accessed from the A525 west of Whitchurch. The property comprises a detached residential house, detached garage, access and driveway, extensive lawned garden and a pond.

The proposals will seek to install three new dormer windows on the rear facing side of the property and alterations to the second floor space.

2.2 BUILDING DESCRIPTION

The property is set over three floors and is a detached brick building with single storey flat roof extensions at the rear (west elevation). These extensions all have transparent roof coverings and are surrounded by paving.

The roof of the main house is covered with slate and there are clay ridge tiles cemented in place. There are five sky lights and one light tunnel installed in the west facing slope of the roof, all of which are sealed in place with lead flashing. The verges of the roof are flat and cemented, with brick detailing at the top of the wall plate.

The eaves of the property have been sealed, first with brick detailing and also PVC fascia boards. These are fixed around all eaves features of the house. PVC gutters and downpipes are attached over the top of the fascia boards. All windows and doors are fitted with double glazing with stone lintels above and there is a small chimney stack rising from the south gable end.

The loft space has been largely converted previously and consists of two main rooms, which have been boarded and plastered. The ceiling is boarded up to the eaves and there are small residual storage areas over the eaves.

Within these areas, there are numerous timber joists present. Insulation boards have been fitted between all rafters and plywood boarding has been fixed to the floor.

There are several planted broadleaved trees present within the gardens, including silver birch, field maple, crack willow and a number of fruit trees.

3 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

3.1 DESKTOP STUDY

An initial desk study was composed to gain background information regarding any protected species or designations within the area. The main sources of information were MagicMap, Data Map Wales and NBN Atlas.

3.2 PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT

One visit was made to survey the property on 09/03/2023.

The objective of the survey was to find and record any signs of use by bats, for example:

- Droppings, sometimes in concentrations below roost sites,
- Feeding signs such as butterfly and moth wings,
- Staining of timber, brickwork around access points.

The general structure of the building was assessed for its potential to provide bats with roosting opportunities.

The surrounding landscape and links to other nearby habitats were also taken into consideration during the assessment.

3.3 BREEDING BIRDS

The building was assessed for its potential to provide birds with nest sites, and to record any existing evidence of previous nesting.

3.4 PERSONNEL

The survey was carried out by Phillipa Stirling MSc ACIEEM: Ecologist. Natural Resources Wales bat licence number: S091037-1 and GCN licence number: S089109-1.

3.5 CONSTRAINTS

There was a light covering of snow over the house at the beginning of the survey but this did not restrict the surveyor's ability to externally assess the structure on site.

4 SURVEY RESULTS

4.1 DESKTOP STUDY

The desk study revealed that there are no statutorily designated sites within 1km of the site boundary. The search included: SSSI, SAC, SPA, Ramsar, AONB, LNR and NNR.

Species	Protection	Distance
Common pipistrelle Whiskered/Brandt's Brown long-eared	The Conservation of Habitats and Species 2017 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	1km

4.2 PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT

Externally, the property is very well sealed. The brickwork is all intact as are the cemented verges of the roof. The ridge tiles and slates are evenly bedded with no visible gaps or holes. The eaves of the property are bricked up to the underside of the roof and are additionally sealed with PVC fascia boards. No Potential Roosting Features exist in association with the exterior of the house.

Internally the main rooms are entirely sealed with boarding and plaster. The small eaves loft spaces were closely inspected for any sign of bat species and none were found. Furthermore, no potential access points or holes were identified during the loft inspection.

The property provides 'negligible' potential as a bat roost and no further survey work is required.

None of the trees present within the surroundings of the house provide suitable potential roosting features which may be used by crevice dwelling bat species.

4.3 BREEDING BIRDS

The property provides very little opportunities for breeding birds or nest building. No evidence of previous nesting was found during the inspection.

5 EVALUATION OF RESULTS AND IMPACT

5.1 BATS

The structures on site provide 'negligible' potential as a bat roost and there is no evidence to suggest that bats have ever used the house.

The proposed works will have no impact upon bat species or their roosting sites nor any indirect impacts.

The proposals will have no impact on nearby habitat features nor will it result in any inadvertent consequences for bats in the landscape. There are no mature trees with bat roosting potential within 30m of the site and therefore additional lighting on site is unlikely to have any impact on individual bats in the landscape.

No further survey work is needed and therefore a European Protected Species Development Licence will **not** be needed for works to proceed.

5.2 BREEDING BIRDS

The proposed work will have no impact upon breeding birds and no further survey work or mitigation is required.

6 MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENT

6.1 BATS

The proposed development will have no impact on bat species and mitigation will not be required.

6.2 BREEDING BIRDS

The proposals will have no impact upon breeding birds or habitats which provide suitable nesting opportunities. Mitigation is not required.

6.3 ENHANCEMENT

In order to provide opportunities for protected species on site, the following is recommended:

- One general purpose Woodcrete bat box will be installed onto the side of the garage on site. The box will be at least 3m from the ground.
- One general purpose Woodcrete bird box with 28mm hole will be installed into a nearby tree. The box will be at least 2m from the ground.

7 SUMMARY

Planning permission will be sought for alterations to the second-floor loft space of an existing residential property, to provide additional living space, at Yew Tree Cottage near Whitchurch.

Arbor Vitae were commissioned by Base Architects to undertake a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PBRA) to establish the potential of the buildings to be used by roosting bats.

The survey was also designed to assess the presence of any breeding birds using the buildings.

The structures on site provide 'negligible' potential as a bat roost and there is no evidence to suggest that bats have ever used the house.

No further survey work is needed and therefore a European Protected Species Development Licence will not be needed for works to proceed.

The proposed work will have no impact upon breeding birds and no further survey work or mitigation is required.

In order to provide opportunities for protected species on site, the following is recommended:

One general purpose Woodcrete bat box will be installed onto the side of the garage on site. The box will be at least 3m from the ground.

One general purpose Woodcrete bird box with 28mm hole will be installed into a nearby tree. The box will be at least 2m from the ground.

8 REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust (2018) Bats and artificial lighting in the UK. *Bats and the Built Environment series*, Guidance Note 08/18. Institution of Lighting Professionals.

Collins, J. (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Hundt L (2012) Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines, 2nd edition, Bat Conservation Trust.

Mitchell-Jones, T., 2004. Bat mitigation guidelines. External Relations Team, English Nature.

FIGURE 1 LOCATION. 1:50,000

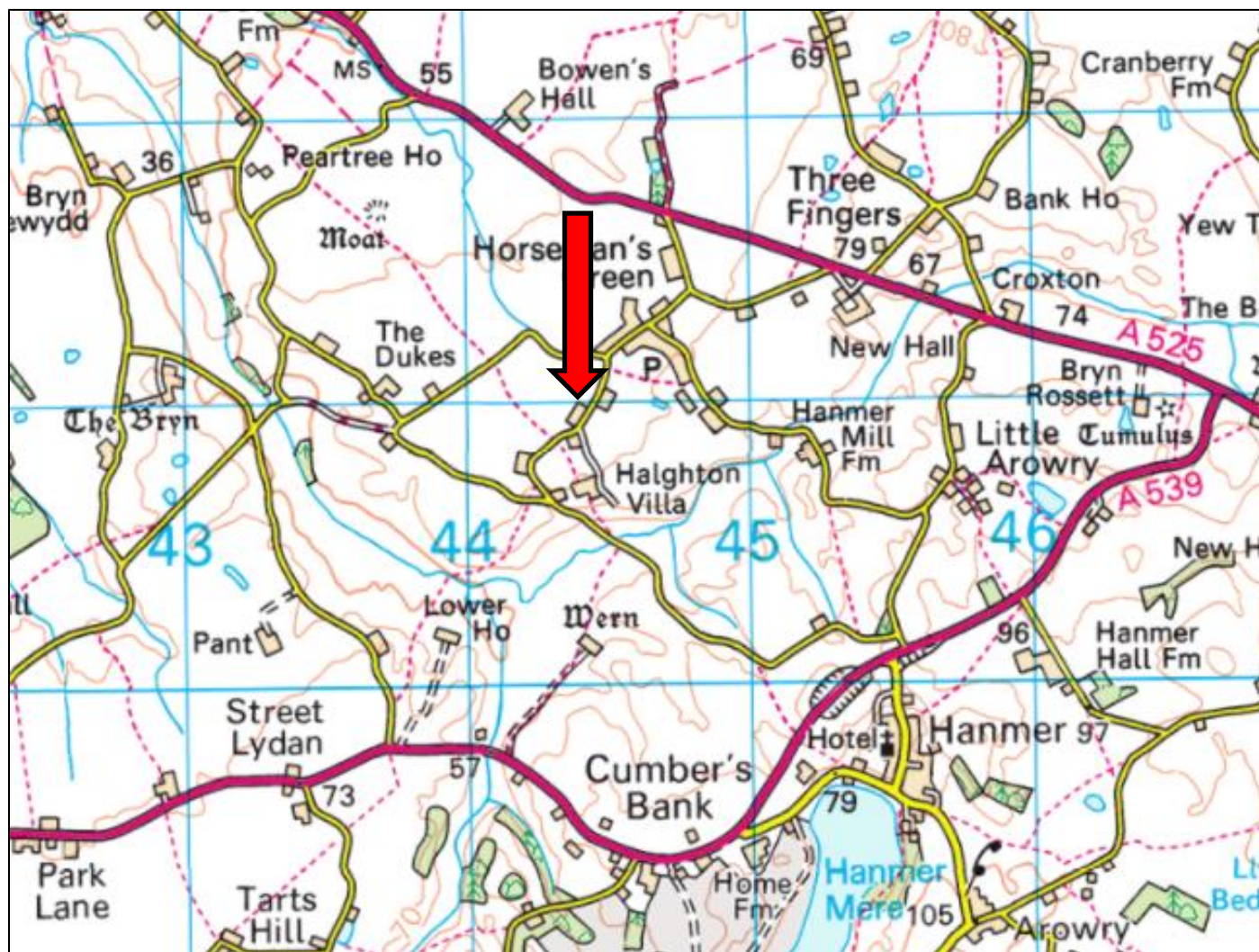


FIGURE 2 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH



APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS



West elevation.



Interior 2nd floor space.



Interior eaves space.



Interior eaves space.



Eaves detail.



Verge detail.