
Mr and Mrs Warburton

Bat Method Statement and Biodiversity Enhancement Plan

Small 1st floor extension
Roselyn Cottage, Marchweil

16th August 2023



Produced by



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Report Version	Date	Completed by:	Checked by:	Approved by:
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The information we have prepared is true and we confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

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C O N T E N T S:

- 1.0 Executive Summary
- 2.0 Rationale
- 3.0 Results
- 4.0 Details of Proposed Development Works
- 5.0 Mitigation & Compensation
- 6.0 Biodiversity Enhancement Plan

Appendices

- A1 Relevant Legislation & Planning Policy

Figures

Fig 1 – Building Plan

Fig 2 – Site Location Plan showing bat box locations

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 An existing ground floor extension is proposed to be raised to include a first floor bedroom. The new roof will join the existing roof at a lower level to existing ridge line. The two roofs will remain separated by existing roof felt.
- 1.2 An internal and external Visual Assessment was conducted on 3rd May 2023 and a single nocturnal bat survey carried out on 25/5/23. Three potential roost features were identified within the building. No roosts were identified during the nocturnal survey and activity was very low. Pipistrelle sp. Bat droppings were found within the loft space that the new roof will abut to.
- 1.3 All of Britain's bat species and their roosts are protected under regulation 41 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended by The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019) and Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (Appendix A1). Under this legislation a European Protected Species (EPS) licence from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is required for any works resulting in the loss or damage to a roosting site or for any works likely to result in disturbance or harm to roosting bats.
- 1.4 Wrexham Council have agreed with recommendations within Wildbanks Conservation Bat and Bird Survey Report dated May 2023 that the development can proceed following a set of Reasonable Avoidance Measures Method Statement.
- 1.5 This Method Statement produced by Wildbanks Conservation details measures to ensure that bats are safeguarded throughout the works period and how these works can legally proceed without the need for an EPS licence. The method statement also details how bat roosting opportunities will be retained and how new roosting opportunities will be created as part of the development.
- 1.6 A Biodiversity Enhancement Plan that meets Wrexham Council Local Guidance Note No32: Biodiversity and Development is included within the Report also.

2.0 RATIONALE

- 2.1 All of Britain's bat species and their roosts are protected under regulation 41 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended by The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019) and Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (Appendix A1). Under this legislation, EPS licences from NRW are required for any works resulting in the loss or damage to a roosting site or for any works likely to result in disturbance or harm to roosting bats.
- 2.2 Due to the presence of droppings within the loft space that the extension will abut to it is not possible to definitively rule out that the proposed development will comply with legislation. This Method Statement aims to ensure bats and any roost are safe guarded throughout the development by providing specific methods of work that must be adhered to so that no illegal activity with regards to bats is undertaken.
- 2.3 The proposed development site is in a rural setting in Marchwiell, Wrexham. The site consists of a 19th century cottage which has been subject to various extensions, including a single-story section on the north-eastern aspect (the subject of this planning application). The original section of cottage and extension sit perpendicular to each other. The original cottage is rendered and painted on the exterior walls and has a slate roof in good condition. The extensions comprise two main sections; a two-story building (Building B1) set perpendicular to the original cottage and a single-story extension (Building B2) which sits against the north-eastern aspect of the two-story extension. See Figure 2 for configurations. A detached garage exists to the north-west of the main property and well maintained gardens are present to the south-east. Beyond the boundary of the property are farm fields with hedgerows in all directions, small woodlands and a small number of other properties along Cock Bank Lane.
- 2.4 The property has been subject to a bat Preliminary Roost Assessment survey on 3rd May 2023 by Mick Smith BSc, MCIEEM (NRW bat licence number: S086043/1) and Joe Hark MSc, (ACIEEM) of Wildbanks Conservation. As well as one nocturnal surveys (25/5/23). Evidence of bats using the building was seen during the Visual Assessment through the presence of iro 30 bat droppings within the loft space adjacent to the construction area. Roosting opportunities for bats are very limited within the building and are limited to a gap under lead flashing by the western chimney, two small sections of missing mortar beneath ridge tiles and a section of missing mortar within the verge on the western aspect of Building B1. No other roosting opportunities were seen and overall the building is very well sealed to bats

- 2.5 One nocturnal survey was carried out in optimal conditions by Mick Smith and Chris Gosset (NE bat license holder), both experienced bat surveyors with the aid of Anabat Walkabout detectors and a thermal imaging camera. No bats were seen emerging from the property. Furthermore, overall activity levels were low
- 2.6 Although roosting features and access points within the building are limited to 4 locations, droppings were found within the building adjacent to the construction area indicating that the building has been used by bats in some way.
- 2.7 The loft space of building B1 is constructed of bitumen F1 felt over traditional timber construction roof (not Trusses) with slates.

3.0 DETAILS OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WORKS

- 3.1 Full planning permission has been applied for to add a first floor onto a ground floor extension. The roof will be removed and walls raised and the new roof tied into the existing roof of Building B1, but will not 'break through' into the loft space. No works to any other area of the property will take place.
- 3.3 **Timings of Works:** There are no restrictions to the timing of works with regards to bats. Works are planned to commence in Spring 2023 and would take approximately 10 weeks to complete.

4.0 REASONABLE AVOIDANCE AND PROTECTION MEASURES

- 4.1 The below measures will be adhered to throughout the development, failure to adhere to these measures may result in an offence being committed under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
- 4.2 Wildbanks Conservation will provide a suitably experienced ecologist to be retained for the duration of the project.

Personnel

- 4.3 The onsite ecological supervision will be managed by Mick Smith BSc MCIEEM, Director of Wildbanks Conservation – NRW bat licence number S08944/1 (plus NE bat licence 2015-15175 -CLS-CLS). Mick has 15 years experience in ecological consulting conducting bat surveys and has/does hold 14 EPS mitigation licenses for

bats (5x NRW and 9x NE) and highly experienced Ecological Clerks of Works on development projects.

Guidance documents

4.4 Bat Conservation Trust Handbook Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2016)

4.5 Reasonable Avoidance Measures

- When planning external lighting, consideration is to be given to the commuting and dispersal routes used by bats. External lighting is to be directed away from the potential roosting features and commuting routes. The lighting scheme is designed in consideration of the guidance jointly published by the Institution of Lighting Professionals and Bat Conservation Trust; Guidance Note 08/18: Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK.
- Prior to the commencement of works a toolbox talk will be provided to on site personal by a NRW licensed ecologist or Accredited Agent. The talk will include information regarding the protection of species, habitats, legal implications, their responsibilities and what to do if a protected species are encountered. All contractors will read and sign this document prior to starting works. It will be the responsibility of the Mr and Mrs Warburton that this is carried out.
- A copy of this Method Statement and Tool Box Talk must remain available on site at all times
- Any works that will effect a potential roost feature will be carried out under “soft works” technique by hand. A licensed ecologist will provide a watching brief during these works and will be available throughout construction on an ‘on call’ basis.
- The slates of Building B1 will be removed by hand with Ecologist present on Site. The underfelt will not be disturbed during this process and will be maintained during all works to create a separation between the construction area and the loft of Building B1. The new roof structure will be constructed to sit on top and abut up to the existing membrane.
- If bats or nesting birds are found, works must stop immediately, and the site ecologist will be contacted, and advice sought.

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5.0 MITIGATION

5.1.1 *Permanent Roost provision*

One month prior to the development commencing one bat box, e.g., 2F Schwegler bat box or similar will be installed on a suitable tree on the eastern boundary of the property within the clients ownership to provide alternative roosting features during the construction phase. It will be placed a minimum of 3m in height and in south, east or west orientation. See Figure 2 yellow star for its location



2F Schweglar bat box

Unexpected discoveries

5.2.1 In the unlikely event that bats are discovered during construction works, all works will stop and the ecological clerk of works consulted immediately. The ecological clerk of works contact information will be made available to all personnel involved in the work.

5.2.2 If bats are found they will be caught by hand and retained in a secure box or calao bag and the licensed bat ecologist will determine if they should be released into the erected bat box or retained by the licensed bat ecologist until the evening and released. If a group of more than 5 bats are found no further works will take place until NRW have been consulted.

Post development population monitoring

5.3 No post development monitoring is required

Nesting birds/ Timing of works

- 5.4 No active nests were observed during the survey period.
- 5.5 If construction works start during the bird nesting season (1st March to 31st August) the ecological clerk of works will confirm that nesting birds are absent prior to the commencement of the development. If nesting birds are identified prior to the development commencing, works to these areas will be postponed until the chicks have fledged (as confirmed by subsequent survey work by appropriately trained ecologist).
- 5.6 If nesting birds are unexpectedly encountered during the renovation works all works will stop and the ecological clerk of works will be consulted immediately.

6.0 BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT

- 6.1 The development proposals are for the addition of a first floor on top of an existing ground floor room. No extension beyond the existing footprint of the property will take place. There will be no loss of habitats through the proposed development. The works area surrounding the property that will be used throughout the construction zone is hardstanding. The works undertaken to inform the Bat Report dated May 2023 by Wildbanks Conservation did not identify any bat roosts that will be lost through the development, nor did it identify any bird nesting sites. In the absence of mitigation the biodiversity loss through this development will be negligible.
- 6.2 Wrexham Council Local Guidance Note No32: Biodiversity and Development states the importance of Biodiversity and details the requirement to mitigate and compensate for any loss of Biodiversity and that “Encouragement will be given to proposals which improve the biodiversity value of Sites”, Policy PS11. The below recommendations fully meet this requirement and will provide long term biodiversity gains proportionate to the scale of the development.

Bats

- 6.3 One wall mounted bat box will be installed (in addition to the 1 bat box installed on the tree to the east of the site) on the southern gable end of the original cottage over looking Cock Back Lane (marked blue star on Fig 2). This will provide additional

features within the location where bats were seen commuting during the nocturnal surveys. The box to be either



Lela Bat Box



Beaumaris Bat Box Maxi

Birds

- 6.4 Three replacement nesting boxes (one Schwegler 1N Deep general bird nesting box and two Schwegler 1B or similar) will be installed within the site. These will be positioned nearby in vegetation between 2-4 in height and facing between north and east. (marked pink star on Fig 2).



Schweglar 1N bird box



Schweglar 1B bird box

Long term roost maintenance

- 6.5 Mr and Mrs Warburton will provide written assurance that the bat boxes will remain in perpetuity at the property. The bat box choice and location is such that ongoing maintenance is negligible. No maintenance is expected.

REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust (2007)

Bat Mitigation Guidelines. Natural England

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

Natural England Technical Information Note TIN092; Bat Roosts and Timber Treatment Products

A1 APPENDIX – RELEVANT LEGISLATION & PLANNING POLICY IN RELATION TO BAT SPECIES

Relevant Legislation

- A1.1 Due to recent declines in bat species’ populations within the United Kingdom, all bat species and their roost sites in Britain are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). They are also included on Annex IV of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21st May 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (known as the Habitats Directive). As a result of the United Kingdom ratifying this directive, all British bats are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. Under this legislation it is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or capture or intentionally (or recklessly in England and Wales) disturb bats or obstruct access to, damage or destroy bat roosts.
- A1.2 Under the law, a bat roost is any structure or place used for shelter or protection e.g. a building, bridge or tree. Bats use many roost sites and feeding areas throughout the year and since they tend to re-use the same roosts for generations these sites are protected whether bats are present or not.
- A1.3 Any activity resulting in a contravention of the legislation described above would require a licence from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to avoid committing an offence. NRW issue licences for the purposes of:
- “preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial”.
- A1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out how the planning system should contribute to and enhance nature conservation and the local environment. This is to be achieved through a combination of local planning policies as well as through the determination of planning applications with the aim of minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.
- A1.6 As such it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent to which they are affected by proposals is established prior

to planning permission being granted. Furthermore, where protected species are present and proposals may result in harm to the species or its habitat, steps should be taken to ensure the long-term protection of the species, such as through attaching appropriate planning conditions for example.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act)

A1.7 *Biodiversity: Section 40*

Under this legislation all local authorities have a legal duty to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity (as defined in the Town and Country Planning Act (1990), Part 11). It also further refines the definition of biodiversity conservation, stating that it includes restoring or enhancing a population or habitat.

A1.8 Out of the eighteen bat species known to occur in the UK, seven of those species are listed as Species of Principal Importance, these include; Barbastelle bat *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein's bat *Myotis bechsteinii*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*, greater horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, and lesser horseshoe bat *R. hipposideros*.

A1.9 Defra has produce guidance for local authorities on the implementation of biodiversity duty. This document echoes policies set out in Planning Policy Statement 9, the accompanying good practice guide and PAS2010. Of relevance to developers is that it encourages local planning authorities to:

- (i) provide screening advice to developers prior to the submission of a planning application;
- (ii) require relevant biodiversity information to be submitted with a planning application in order for the application to be considered valid;
- (iii) use of planning conditions and obligations to impose mitigation and enhancement measures if such measures are not included at an appropriate level in the development proposal;
- (iv) monitor the implementation of planning conditions and obligations relating to biodiversity conservation and to take action if these conditions are not met;

- (v) actively seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity, in addition to statutory requirements to protect designated sites, habitats and species.

A1.10 The guidance also suggests that planning obligations could be used to secure financial payments to ensure improved and ongoing management of nature conservation sites as mitigation for habitat loss within the development site.

FIGURES



Figure 1: Roselyn Cottage. Yellow box showing single storey extension (Building B2) to have second floor added to it. Building B1 shown in red.

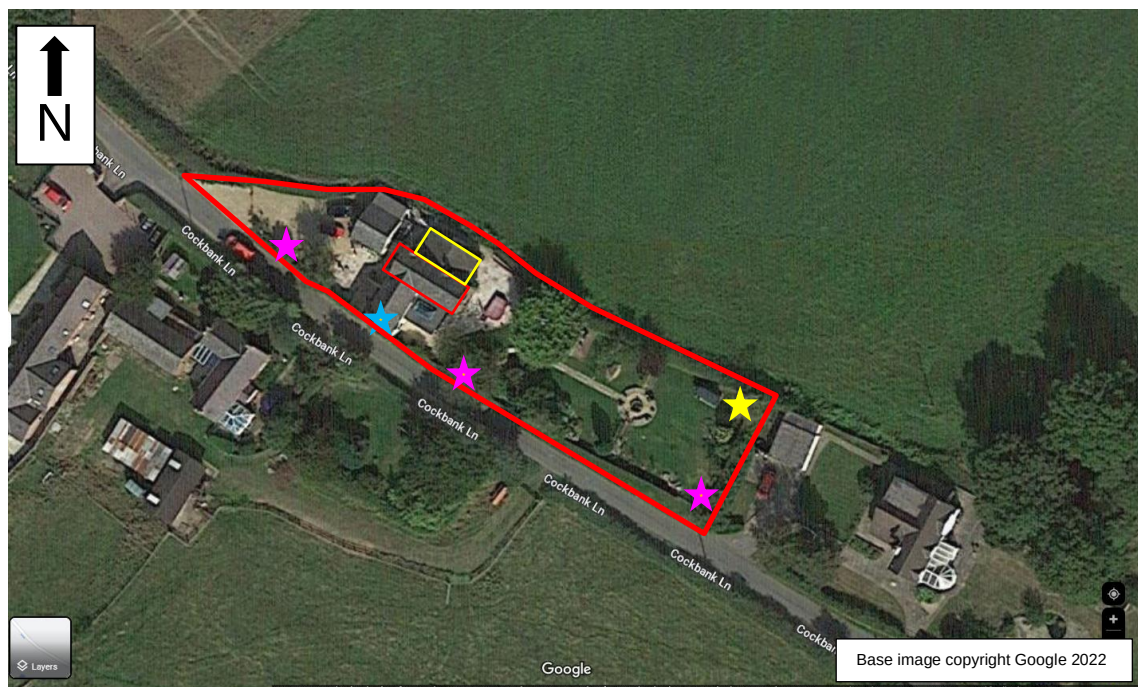


Figure 2: Showing location of proposed bat and bird box installation

★	Bat box on tree
★	Bat box on gable wall of property
★	Bird boxes