

United Environmental Services Ltd

1 Booths Park,
Chelford Road,
Knutsford,
Cheshire
WA16 8QZ

www.ues.org.uk

enquiries@ues.org.uk

01565 757788



BAT SCOPING SURVEY

At

Bridgeway Centre

Bridge Road
Wrexham
LL13 9QS

NGR: SJ 37793 49421

Prepared for:	FI Facilities Management Ltd
Written by:	Ysobella Cox, UES Graduate Ecologist
Approved by:	Tom Kenwright UES Senior Ecologist

Tom Kenwright

Date: 6th March 2023
UES reference: UES03012/07



CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
1 INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 Author, surveyors and qualifications	4
1.2 Survey objectives.....	4
1.3 Proposed development and previous survey information	4
1.4 Structure of the report	5
2 METHODOLOGY	6
2.1 General.....	6
2.2 Building survey	6
2.3 Survey limitations.....	7
3 RESULTS.....	8
3.1 Habitat assessment	8
3.2 Building survey	8
4 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	10
4.1 Evaluation of results.....	10
4.2 Mitigation and compensation measures	10
5 CONCLUSION.....	11
6 REFERENCES	12
APPENDICES.....	13
Appendix 1 – Site Plan	13
Appendix 2 – Aerial Photographs	14
Appendix 3 – Photographs	15
Appendix 4 – Statutory and planning context.....	16



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is written by Ysobella Cox BSc MBIol, Graduate Ecologist at United Environmental Services Ltd (UES). It provides an assessment of the potential impacts on bats as a result of the proposed development of the Bridgeway Centre, Wrexham.

A bat scoping survey was undertaken on 17th February 2023. The objective of the survey was to establish the suitability of two buildings on site to support roosting bats, based on a site specific survey and habitat assessment. The buildings were searched externally and internally (where accessible) for bat presence and features associated with bat activity, as detailed in Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidance (2016).

The Bridgeway Centre is located within Wrexham Industrial Estate. The habitats on site include commercial buildings, car parking, amenity grassland, introduced shrub and trees. The surrounding areas consists of well-lit commercial units and warehouses. However, the industrial estate also contains pockets of woodland that may provide foraging opportunities for bats. Habitat quality improves in the wider surrounding areas due to the large amount of agricultural land, Redwither Brook and River Clywedog that will provide both foraging and commuting opportunities for bats.

A bat scoping survey was previously undertaken at the Bridgeway Centre by UES on 24th June 2020 (see report reference UES03012/02) and a presence / absence survey was previously undertaken on 22nd September 2020 (see report reference UES03012/03). During these survey, Building 3 was assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats. Building 4 was assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats, however no evidence of roosting bats was observed and no bats were observed roosting during the presence / absence survey.

Following the updated scoping survey, Building 3 was found to be in a similar condition as in 2020 has been assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats, due to the absence of suitable potential roosting features (PRFs) and no evidence of roosting bats. **Therefore, no further surveys, mitigation or compensation measures with regards to bats are required for Building 3.**

Building 4 was found to be in a very similar condition as in 2020 and has been assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats, due to the presence of a small number of low-quality PRFs, all of which could be fully inspected using a high-powered torch or an endoscope. No evidence of roosting bats was found during the scoping survey.

It is considered unlikely that bats are using Building 4 for roosting, however, there remains some residual risk that bats may use the building to roost in the future. **As such, it is recommended that demolition and destructive works to this building should proceed under a non-licensed method statement, to protect bats in the event that they are present at the time of the works. The method statement will outline the mitigation and compensation measures required to safeguard bats.**

The report should be read in conjunction with appendices 1 to 4, which give visual representations of the survey results.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Author, surveyors and qualifications

This report is compiled and written by Ysobella Cox BSc MBIol UES Graduate Ecologist. Other surveyors included:

- Toby Hart BSc MCIEEM PIEMA, UES Managing Director. Toby is licensed by Natural Resources Wales to disturb, take and handle all species other than greater horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* or lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros* under licence number S086508/01.

This report has been checked and reviewed by Tom Kenwright BSc MSc ACIEEM, UES Senior Ecologist.

All surveyors have the knowledge, skills and experience identified within CIEEM's "Competencies for Species Survey: Bats" (2013), or were under the supervision of a surveyor with the required competencies.

1.2 Survey objectives

UES was commissioned in February 2023 to conduct site surveys which include the following activities:

- Conduct internal and external building inspections to look for field signs of bats
- Assess the suitability of the buildings for use by roosting bats
- Recommend further surveys, mitigation and compensation, where appropriate

1.3 Proposed development and previous survey information

The proposed development involves the demolition of two commercial units at the Bridgeway Centre, Wrexham, which have been numbered as Buildings 3 and 4 for the purpose of this report (see Appendix 1 – Site Map).

A bat scoping survey undertaken by UES on the 24th June 2020 assessed Building 3 as having negligible potential to support roosting bats and Building 4 as having low potential to support roosting bats. No evidence of roosting bats such as droppings were observed during the inspections of either buildings. As such, it was recommended that works to Building 3 could commence without further mitigation, compensation or surveys, with regards to roosting bats. It was recommended that a single further bat presence / absence survey was undertaken of Building 4 (see report reference UES03012/02).

No bats were found to be roosting during the subsequent bat presence / absence survey of Building 4, undertaken by UES on the 22nd September 2020. As such, it was recommended that works could proceed without further mitigation, compensation or surveys, with regards to roosting bats (see report reference UES03012/03).



1.4 Structure of the report

This report sets out the methodology, results, and recommendations in relation to a specific bat survey. Recommendations are in line with statutory legislation and planning policy objectives.

The report should be read in conjunction with appendices 1 to 4, which give visual representations of the survey results.



2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 General

All surveys were carried out to recognised guidelines, timings and weather conditions, with particular reference to Natural Resources Wales and BCT publications (see references for further information).

The habitats on site and in the surrounding area were assessed during a walkover survey and by studying aerial photographs, in order to gauge their suitability to support roosting, foraging and commuting bats.

2.2 Building survey

Buildings 3 and 4 on site were searched both externally and internally for bat presence and features associated with bat activity, as detailed in BCT guidance (Collins, 2016). This was conducted on 17th February 2023 by Toby Hart and Ysobella Cox.

2.2.1 External inspection

The external inspection was carried out from ground level using binoculars, and also using ladders and an endoscope to investigate suitable gaps. The objective of the survey was to find and record any signs of bat use, for example:

- Bat droppings
- Feeding remains
- Grease staining / urine marks
- Corpses or skeletons

The bat signs listed above are visible from the outside of a building. The following areas were searched, where present:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| • Roof and ridge tiles | • Gaps under felt |
| • Lead flashing | • Cracks / holes in woodwork or behind cladding |
| • Eaves | • Gaps in brickwork and mortar |
| • Boxed soffits | • Air bricks |
| • Fascia and barge boards | • Grills |
| • Window sills and panes | • Vents |
| • Walls | |

2.2.2 Internal inspection

The internal inspection covered all of the accessible rooms and roof spaces within the buildings.

Bats regularly utilise specific areas within roof spaces, which were searched for any field signs of bats using high-powered torches and an endoscope, where considered necessary by the licenced ecologist. The following features were searched, where present:

- Roof beams and junctions



- Gaps under felt
- Dividing walls
- Chimney breasts
- Gaps in brickwork and mortar
- Cracks / holes in woodwork
- Floor or other surfaces on which droppings could accumulate

2.3 Survey limitations

The survey was carried out in February at a time when bats are still spending most of the time in torpor within hibernation sites. For this reason, exposed droppings from summer roosts may not be evident as they are likely to have decomposed or have been washed away.

Internal field signs should still be evident at this time of year, as should droppings in sheltered locations.



3 RESULTS

3.1 Habitat assessment

The Bridgeway Centre is located within Wrexham Industrial Estate, south-east of Wrexham. The centre consists of commercial units, office buildings and associated car parking. Other habitats located on site include amenity grassland, introduced shrubs and clusters of trees.

The surrounding area is comprised of similar well-lit commercial units, warehouses and roads that will reduce commuting opportunities for bats. However, there are tree clusters and small pockets of woodland throughout the industrial estate that may provide connectivity and foraging opportunities. Redwither Brook and the surrounding woodland are located approximately 550m east of the site, which will likely support an abundance of invertebrates and provide both foraging and commuting opportunities.

The wider surrounding area consists of further industrial buildings to the north of the site. However, habitat quality improves with agricultural land and hedge-lined fields to the west and south-east of the site. The River Clywedog and associated treelines are located approximately 700m south-east of the site, and Clays Golf Course is located 1.9km north of the site. These habitats will provide both foraging and commuting opportunities.

3.2 Building survey

3.2.1 External inspection

There are 10 buildings on site, but only two are the subject of this assessment. These buildings have been numbered for this report (see Appendix 1 – Site Plan).

Building 3 is a single-storey, rectangular commercial unit. The building has a flat roof which is lined with bitumen felt and contains two skylights (see Appendix 3, Photographs 1 to 4). The roof is in good condition, except for one section of raised bitumen on the south-western aspect that was fully inspected and found to provide no roosting potential for bats (Photograph 5). The building is constructed from corrugated, galvanised metal sheets and there are wooden fascias at the eaves that are well-sealed, except for a section of rotten wood and lifted bitumen on the south-western aspect of the building (Photograph 6). The feature was fully inspected and found to be unsuitable as it is very exposed. The windows are well-sealed on all aspects of the building, however, there is a potential access point on the north-eastern aspect of the building, which is a hole within the galvanised metal sheets (Photograph 7).

Building 4 is a single-storey, rectangular commercial unit with a single-storey brick extension on the south-eastern aspect. The building has a flat roof which is lined with bitumen felt and there are wooden fascias at the eaves of the building (Photographs 8 to 11). Several gaps were identified underneath the fascia boards on the south-eastern aspect of the building (Photograph 12). The first gap was identified underneath a bevel in the fascia board, north of the shutter door on the south-eastern aspect of the building. The feature has a 10cm x 1.5cm entrance and was fully inspected with an endoscope, but there was no evidence of bat activity. The second gap was identified underneath a bevel in the fascia board, south of the shutter door on the south-eastern aspect of the building. The feature has a 25cm x 1.5cm entrance and extends 15cm into the building, before extending downwards 10cm and into a 5cm chamber. It was fully inspected with an endoscope and there was no evidence of roosting bats. An additional gap was identified underneath the fascia board on the south-eastern aspect of the building, south of the brick extension, but upon inspection it was found to be sealed with mortar (Photograph 13).



The building is constructed from corrugated, galvanised metal sheets, but there is one exposed breezeblock wall on the north-western aspect of the building (Photograph 14). The galvanised metal and breezeblock are in relatively good condition, except for a hole on the north-western aspect that reveals a section of red brick with two associated cavities (Photograph 15). The south-western facing cavity extends 15cm into the brickwork and the north-eastern facing cavity extends 5cm (Photographs 16 and 17). Both of the cavities were fully inspected with an endoscope, but there was no evidence of roosting bats. The windows are well-sealed on all aspects of the buildings.

The single-storey brick extension has a flat roof lined with bitumen felt and wooden barge boards at the eaves (Photograph 18). A gap was identified underneath the barge boards on all aspects of the extension, which contains cobwebs but no evidence of roosting bats (Photograph 19).

No bat droppings or other field signs of bats were found during the external building inspection.

3.2.2 Internal inspection

Building 3 has no internal loft void and reaches a maximum height of approximately 4 metres (Photograph 20). The internal walls are constructed from brick and there are metal support beams and brick columns throughout the building (Photograph 21). There are some potential access points into the building, but the internal conditions are cool and bright due to the skylights (Photographs 22 and 23).

Building 4 has no internal loft void and reaches a maximum height of approximately 4 meters. The internal walls are constructed from a combination of brick, breezeblock and wooden boards (Photographs 24 and 25). There are some potential access points into the building, but the internal conditions are light, cool and stable. Mouse *Mus musculus* droppings were identified within the building (Photograph 26).

No bat field signs were found during the internal building inspection.



4 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Evaluation of results

4.1.1 Qualitative assessment of foraging habitats

The Bridgeway Centre is located within Wrexham Industrial Estate. The surrounding areas consist of well-lit commercial units and warehouses that reduce connectivity for commuting bats. However, the industrial estate also contains pockets of woodland and tree clusters that may provide foraging opportunities for bats.

Habitat quality improves in the wider surrounding areas due to the large amount of agricultural land with hedge-lined fields, Redwither Brook and River Clywedog that will likely support an abundance of invertebrates and provide both foraging and commuting opportunities for bats.

4.1.2 Qualitative assessment of roosting habitats

Building 3 has been assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats, due to the lack of suitable PRFs. There is no internal loft space within the building and the internal conditions were cool and well-lit. No bat droppings or other field signs indicating current or historic use by bats were found in Building 3.

Building 4 has been assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats, due to the presence of a low number of predominantly external PRFs such as wall cavities, gaps underneath the fascias and wooden barge boards. All PRFs are shallow and could be fully inspected using a high-powered torch and an endoscope. There is no internal loft space within the building and the internal conditions are cool and well-lit. Mouse droppings were identified within Building 4. No field signs of bats were observed within the building, suggesting no historic or present use by roosting bats.

4.2 Mitigation and compensation measures

No evidence of bat activity was observed in Building 3 during the scoping survey and there are no PRFs suitable for use by roosting bats. Therefore, the building has been assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats and no further surveys, mitigation or compensation measures are required for Building 3 in relation to bats.

Building 4 was found to be in a very similar condition as in 2020 and has been assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats, due to the presence of a small number of low-quality PRFs, all of which could be fully inspected using a high-powered torch or an endoscope. No evidence of roosting bats was found during the scoping survey.

It is considered unlikely that bats are using Building 4 for roosting, however, there remains some residual risk that bats may use the building to roost in the future. As such, it is recommended that demolition and destructive works to this building should proceed under a non-licensed method statement, to protect bats in the event that they are present at the time of the works. The method statement will outline the mitigation and compensation measures required to safeguard bats.



5 CONCLUSION

The Bridgeway Centre is located within Wrexham Industrial Estate. The surrounding areas consists of well-lit commercial units that reduce connectivity for commuting bats. However, the industrial estate also contains pockets of woodland and tree clusters that may provide foraging opportunities. Habitat quality improves in the wider surrounding areas due to the large amount of agricultural land, Redwither Brook and River Clywedog that will provide both foraging and commuting opportunities for bats.

Building 4 was found to be in a very similar condition as in 2020 and has been assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats, due to the presence of a small number of low-quality PRFs, all of which could be fully inspected using a high-powered torch or an endoscope. No evidence of roosting bats was found during the scoping survey.

It is considered unlikely that bats are using Building 4 for roosting, however, there remains some residual risk that bats may use the building to roost in the future. As such, it is recommended that demolition and destructive works to this building should proceed under a non-licensed method statement, to protect bats in the event that they are present at the time of the works. The method statement will outline the mitigation and compensation measures required to safeguard bats.



6 REFERENCES

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2013). *Competencies for Species Survey: Bats*.

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

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

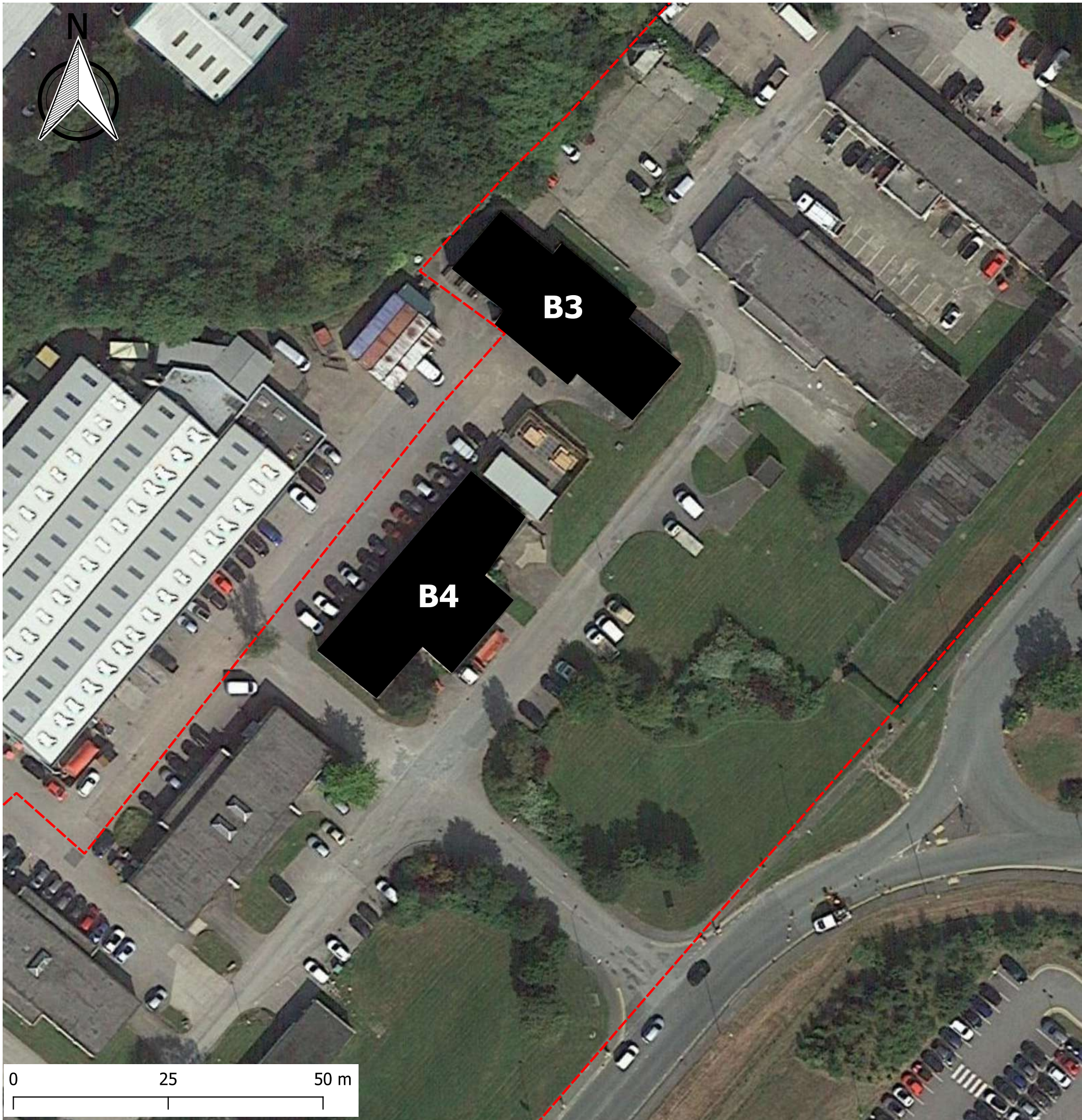
Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. (2004). *The Bat Workers Manual*. (3rd ed.) JNCC

Welsh Government (2021). *Planning Policy Wales*. 11th Edition.



APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Site Plan



Bat Scoping Survey

Site: Bridgeway Centre,
Wrexham
NGR: SJ 37793 49421
Author: Ysobella Cox
Date: 23/02/2023



Key

- Buildings
- Survey boundary

Map data © 2023 Google, Imagery © 2023 Google

THIS PLAN IS ISSUED BY UNITED ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES LTD SUBJECT TO THE CONDITION THAT IT IS NOT COPIED EITHER IN WHOLE OR IN PART OR DISCLOSED TO THIRD PARTIES UNLESS PRIOR WRITTEN AUTHORISATION IS GIVEN.



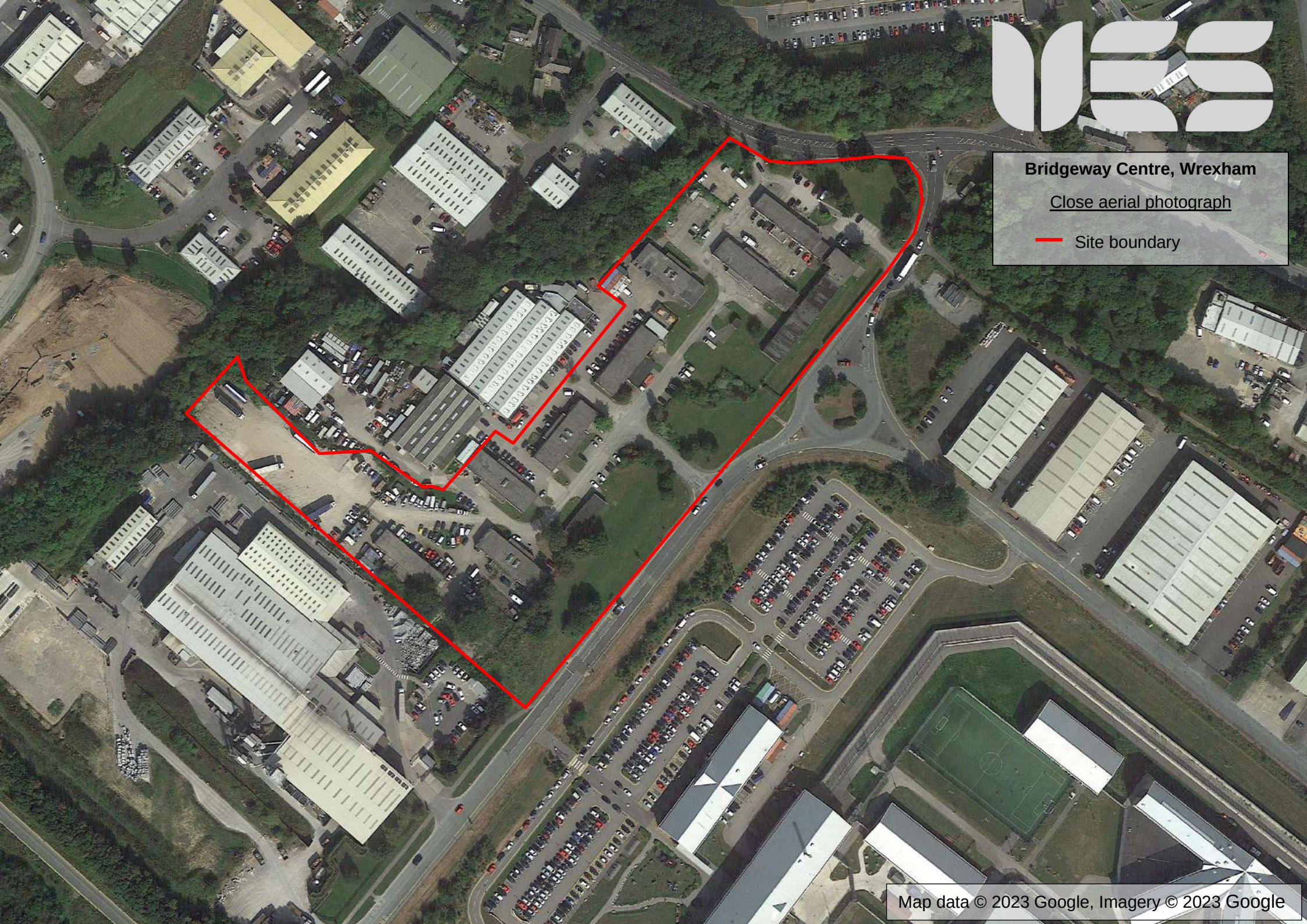
Appendix 2 – Aerial Photographs



Bridgeway Centre, Wrexham

Close aerial photograph

— Site boundary





Bridgeway Centre, Wrexham

Wide aerial photograph



Site location





Appendix 3 – Photographs



Photograph 1. The south-western aspect of Building 3.



Photograph 2. The south-eastern aspect of Building 3.



Photograph 3. The north-western aspect of Building 3.



Photograph 4. The north-eastern aspect of Building 3.



Photograph 5. Raised bitumen felt on the south-western aspect of Building 3.



Photograph 6. The rotten wood and lifted bitumen on the south-western aspect of Building 3.



Photograph 7. A hole in the corrugated, galvanised metal on the north-eastern aspect of Building 3.



Photograph 8. The south-western aspect of Building 4.



Photograph 9. The north-western aspect of Building 4.



Photograph 10. The north-eastern aspect of Building 4.



Photograph 11. The south-eastern aspect of Building 4.



Photograph 12. The gaps underneath the fascia board on the south-eastern aspect of Building 4.



Photograph 13. The sealed gap in the fascia board on the south-eastern aspect of Building 4.



Photograph 14. A breezeblock wall on the north-western aspect of Building 4.



Photograph 15. A hole within the corrugated, galvanised metal on the north-western aspect of Building 4.



Photograph 16. The south-western facing cavity in the brickwork on Building 4.



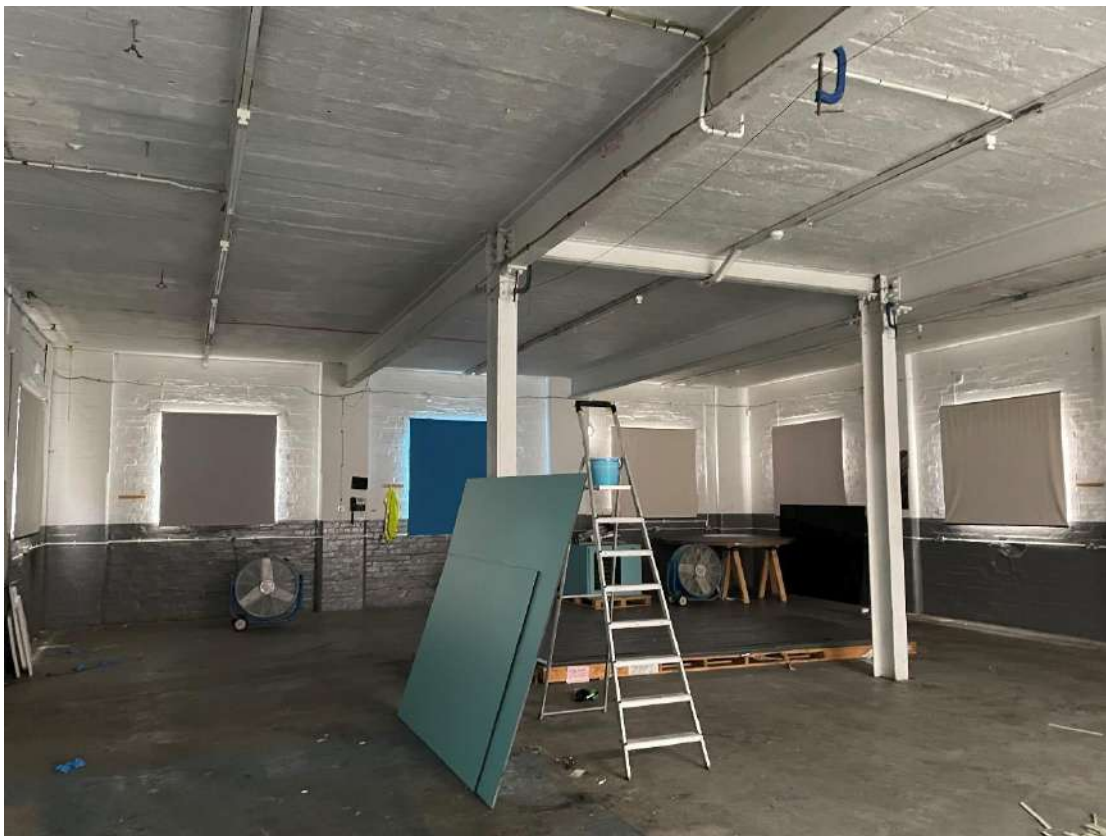
Photograph 17. The north-eastern facing cavity in the brick work on Building 4.



Photograph 18. The single-storey brick extension on the south-eastern aspect of Building 4.



Photograph 19. The gap underneath the wooden barge boards on the extension of Building 4.



Photograph 20. The interior of Building 3.



Photograph 21. The brick columns inside Building 3.



Photograph 22. An access point into Building 3.



Photograph 23. A skylight on Building 3.



Photograph 24. The interior of Building 4.



Photograph 25. The interior of Building 4.



Photograph 26. Mouse droppings inside of Building 4.



Appendix 4 – Statutory and planning context

Ecological assessments

Ecological assessments play an important part within the planning context; they include an initial assessment which highlights any specific interests of a site. From the initial site assessment, the surveyor assesses the suitability of habitats within the site to support protected species and makes recommendations for further survey works if required. The following paragraphs provide a brief interpretation of the legislative protection that is relevant to the findings of this report.

Bats

In the United Kingdom, all species of bat and their roosts are afforded full protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (known as the “Habitats Regulations”). The Wildlife and Countryside Act is the domestic implementation of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (the Bern Convention) and was amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. This makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or capture a bat
- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection
- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a bat uses for shelter or protection (even if the bat is not present at the time)
- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange any live or dead bat, any part of a bat or anything derived from a bat

Under UK law, a bat roost is *any structure or place which any wild [bat] ... uses for shelter or protection*. As bats often reuse the same roosts, legal opinion is that a roost is protected whether or not the bats are present at the time of the activity taking place.

Penalties for offences include fines of up to £5000, plus up to six months imprisonment, for each offence committed.

If an activity is likely to result in any of the above offences, a licence can be applied for to derogate from the protection afforded. These licences must provide appropriate mitigation and are issued by National Resources Wales (NRW).

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 lists the following bat species as species of principle importance under Section 41:

- Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*
- Bechstein’s bat *Myotis bechsteinii*
- Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*
- Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*
- Brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*
- Greater horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*
- Lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*

Section 40 requires every public body in the exercising of its functions ‘have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity’ (all biodiversity and not just section 41 species and habitats); therefore making these bats a material consideration in the planning process and requiring a detailed ecological bat survey before planning permission can be granted.

Planning Policy

National planning guidance is issued in the form of Planning Policy Wales (PPW - 2018). The most relevant sections are included in Chapter 6: Distinctive and Natural Places. This chapter details the policies on issues such as the protection of trees, woodlands, species, and designated sites. The document is free and available to view online.