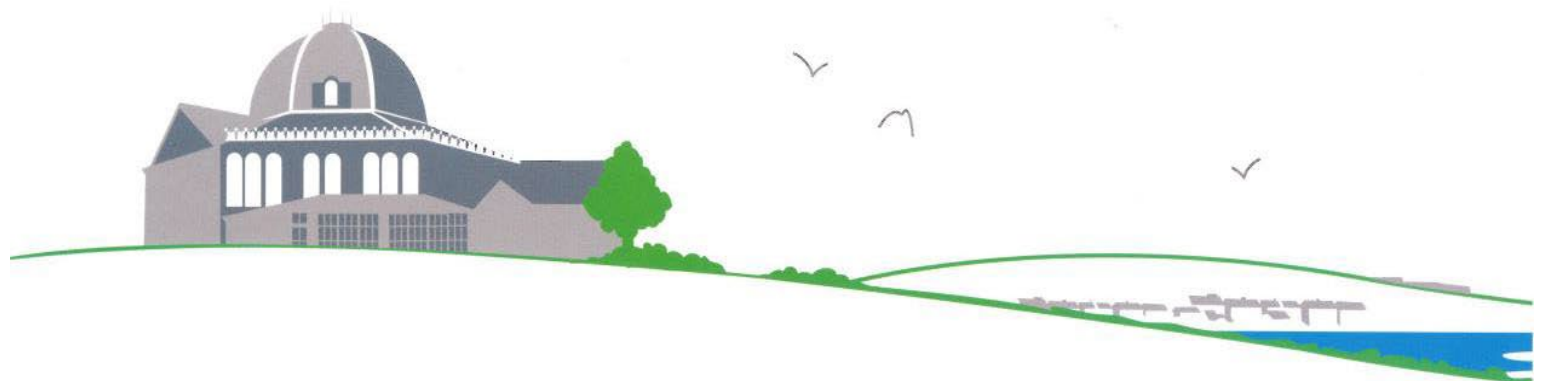




EPIC (NO 1) LTD EDISTON
PLAS COCH RETAIL PARK, WREXHAM
BAT ACTIVITY SURVEY REPORT





EPIC (NO 1) LTD EDISTON

PLAS COCH RETAIL PARK, WREXHAM

BAT ACTIVITY SURVEY REPORT

Penny Anderson Associates Limited
'Park Lea'
60 Park Road
Buxton
Derbyshire
SK17 6SN

Project Manager
Rob Lamb BSc (Hons), MSc, ACIEEM (Senior Ecologist)

Author
Gerard Hawley BA (Hons), MSc, DipPSE (Dist), MCIEEM(rtd) (Principal Environmental Scientist)

May 2022

This project has been undertaken in accordance with PAA policies and procedures on quality assurance.

Signed: _____



CONTENTS

	Page
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Site Description	1
2. METHODS	2
Dusk Emergence Survey	2
Limitations.....	2
3. RESULTS	3
Dusk Emergence Survey	3
Bat Activity on Site	3
4. RECOMMENDATIONS.....	4
Survey Summary	4
Recommendations.....	4
5. REFERENCES	5
6. ABBREVIATIONS	5

TABLE

1	Dusk Emergence Survey Results, 5 th May 2021	3
---	---	---

APPENDIX

1	Summary of the Legislation Relating to Bats
---	---

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Penny Anderson Associates Ltd (PAA) was commissioned by EPIC (No 1) Ltd Ediston to carry out a building inspection for bat roost potential and breeding birds at the former Frankie and Benny's restaurant building, situated within Plas Coch Retail Park, Wrexham (hereafter referred to as the 'site') located at grid reference SJ 3261 5168. The survey had been undertaken at the request of Wrexham County Council's Ecology Officer in connection with a planning application (ref. P/2022/0102) to demolish the building and replace it with customer parking.
- 1.2 As part of the assessment, a desk study was carried out and a request was made to Cofnod¹ for details of bat and bird species recorded within 1km of the site. Records were returned for bat species: five for common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), three for soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), two for brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auratus*) and one for a serotine bat (*Eptesicus serotinus*).
- 1.3 Following the building and tree inspection for bat roost potential (PAA 2022), the building was assessed to have Low potential to support roosting bats. Consequently, in line with best practice guidance (Collins 2016), a further bat activity survey was recommended. This report details the methods and results of this further activity survey and makes any recommendations as required.
- 1.4 A summary of legislation that relates to bats is presented in Appendix 1.

Site Description

- 1.5 The building is located in Plas Coch Retail Park situated between a large gym and a similarly sized retail outlet. The surrounding area consists of hardstanding, with a customer car park at the front and staff parking at the rear. To the rear of the staff car park there is a boundary fence and a line of trees, behind which are school playing fields.

¹ The North Wales Environmental Information Centre.

2. METHODS

Dusk Emergence Survey

- 2.1 The survey was undertaken by Principal Environmental Scientist Gerard Hawley (MCIEEM(rtd)²) and Consultant Ecologist Paul Fisher on 5th May 2022. Both surveyors have the necessary experience of surveys for protected species, including bats, and are appropriately qualified to carry out this work based on the CIEEM³ competencies for survey (CIEEM 2013).
- 2.2 The surveyors were positioned at vantage points in view of potential roost features and recorded any bat activity heard or seen. Particular attention was focussed on slightly lifted roof tiles that had the potential to be used as daytime roosts by crevice-dwelling species, such as common pipistrelle.
- 2.3 Each surveyor had a hand-held Batbox Duet bat detector to aid detection in the field, and an Anabat Express bat detector to record echolocation calls and enable sonogram analysis for confirmation of species identification. Bat calls recorded by surveyors can be analysed using specialist sound analysis software 'Analook W'. Based on parameters such as peak frequency and call duration, each call can be assigned to a particular bat species to confirm the identification recorded by surveyors in the field.
- 2.4 Following good practice guidance (Collins 2016), the dusk survey commenced over twenty minutes prior to sunset, and continued for just over an hour following, taking into account the typical emergence times for the species considered likely to be present.
- 2.5 Survey times and weather conditions are detailed in the Results section of this report.

Limitations

- 2.6 The emergence survey was undertaken within the peak active bat survey season, in suitable weather and temperature conditions. There were no significant constraints to the survey and the results are considered robust.

² Retired but remains a member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

³ Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management

3. RESULTS

Dusk Emergence Survey

- 3.1 The dusk emergence survey was undertaken on 5th May 2022. The findings of the survey are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 Dusk Emergence Survey Results, 5th May 2021

Species	First Recorded	Notes
Noctule	20:38	Flying high over the site and clearly visible.
Common pipistrelle	21:28	Faint echolocation calls, most likely outside the immediate vicinity of the site. Heard but not seen.
Common pipistrelle	21:46	Faint registration. Heard but not seen.
Start time: 20:25		Sunset: 20:47 End time: 22:00
Conditions: Dry and calm with c.10% cloud cover at the beginning of the survey and c.5% at the end		
Temperature: start 19°C decreasing to 14°C. Humidity: 71% decreasing to 70%.		

Bat Activity on Site

- 3.2 A noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*) bat was observed flying high over the site just before sunset. It is the largest native bat with a characteristically strong and fast flight. They rarely roost in buildings.
- 3.3 Common pipistrelle bats were registered very occasionally during the survey. Calls were generally faint and not close to the site building. No bats were seen to interact directly with the building or potential roost features on site.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Survey Summary

- 4.1 The survey detected very low numbers of common pipistrelle foraging and commuting largely outside the site boundary, with most calls heard but not seen.
- 4.2 No bats were seen to emerge from the building during the activity survey.

Recommendations

- 4.3 No further recommendations are made in respect of roosting bats at this time. In the unlikely event that bats are found during future demolition, works should stop immediately and advice be sought from a professional bat ecologist.
- 4.4 If works have not been undertaken within two years of the date of this survey, then the site should be reassessed for bats to ensure that any decisions or actions taken at that time are based on up-to-date survey data.

5. REFERENCES

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

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

PAA, 2022. *Plas Coch Retail Park Wrexham: Inspection of Building for bats and Breeding Birds*. Report for EPIC (No 1) Ltd Ediston.

6. ABBREVIATIONS

CIEEM Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management

PAA Penny Anderson Associates Ltd

APPENDIX 1

Summary of the Legislation Relating to Bats

SUMMARY OF THE LEGISLATION RELATING TO BATS (WALES)

All wild species of bat are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (amended), which has also been amended by later legislation including the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (amended), and this legislation is applicable to England and Wales. Bats are listed on Schedule 5 of the WCA and are therefore subject to some the provisions of Section 9 which, with the amendments, make it an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection (S9:4b).
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection by a bat (S9:4c).

There are additional offences in relation to buying and selling (S9:5) any live or dead animal of this species or anything derived from them.

Bats species are also listed under Annexes IIa and IVa of EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, also known as the 'Habitats Directive'. Inclusion on Annex IVa means they are consequently identified as European Protected Species (EPS) and protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (amended) states that a person commits an offence if they:

- (a) deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild animal of a European protected species,
- (b) deliberately disturb wild animals of any such species, in such a way as –
 - (i) to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear their young, or
 - (ii) in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate, or
 - (iii) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong;
- (c) deliberately take or destroy the eggs of such an animal, or
- (d) damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal.

Under these Regulations it is an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place, whether the animal is in occupation or not, and protection extends to all life stages of the animal in question. There are additional offences relating to possession, control and sale of a live or dead bat or part of such an animal.

In addition, seven native British bat species, including the soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and the brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*), that are frequently found in buildings, are listed as 'Priority Species' under the 2012 UK Post-2010 UK Biodiversity Framework¹. These Priority Species are also referred to as 'species of principal importance' for the conservation of biodiversity in Wales within Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. More broadly, the Environment Act (Wales) Part 1 sets out Wales' approach to planning and managing natural resources at a national and local level with a general purpose linked to statutory 'principles of sustainable management of natural resources' defined within the Act. Section 6 of the Act places a duty on public authorities to 'seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity' so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions. In so doing, public authorities must also seek to 'promote the resilience of ecosystems'. The duty replaces the section 40 duty in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act 2006), in relation to Wales, and applies to

¹ <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5170>

those authorities that fell within the previous duty. Section 7 replaces the duty in section 42 of the NERC Act 2006. The Welsh Ministers will publish, review and revise lists of living organisms and types of habitat in Wales, which they consider are of key significance to sustain and improve biodiversity in relation to Wales.

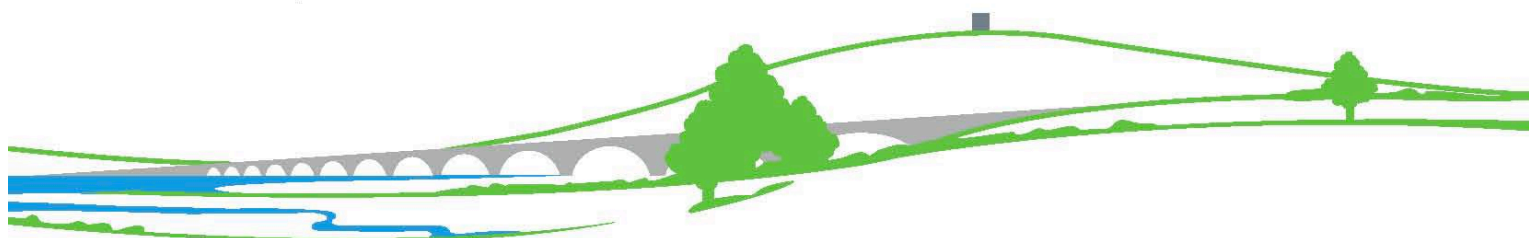
The Nature Recovery Plan for Wales aims to address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by:

- putting nature at the heart of our decision-making;
- increasing the resilience of our natural environment; and
- taking specific action for habitats and species.

It sets out how Wales will deliver the commitments of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the EU Biodiversity Strategy to halt the decline in biodiversity by 2020 and then reverse that decline.

Please note: the above text provides a brief summary of the legislation in relation to bats for England and Wales and the original Acts, Regulations and any amendments should be referred to for the precise wording.

Penny Anderson
Associates Ltd
CONSULTANT ECOLOGISTS



Park Lea, 60 Park Road, Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 6SN