

Preliminary Roost Assessment at
Clith House,
Old Road,
Bwlchgwyn,
Wrexham LL11 5UF
Grid Ref. SJ 2655 5265
On 15th October 2021

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1. Summary

The purpose of the report is to assess the potential ecological impacts of a proposed development at Clith House, Bwlchgwyn, Wrexham and advise on any mitigation measures to comply with local planning policy and government legislation.

The proposed scheme involves the conversion of a garage to an annex dwelling.

The site and adjacent land were examined to establish the presence of or evidence of use or potential for use by bats and birds. No evidence was found and there was negligible potential for use by bats and birds.

The impacts which the proposed work might have on birds should be minimal, providing that no nests are occupied or being built at the time the work is done. If 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.

A lighting plan should be designed in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust guidelines: <https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>. 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.

There should not be any significant impact on any protected species or habitat as long as the recommended mitigation and compensation measures are followed.

2. Introduction

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)

This report was commissioned by HDS Architectural Services for the owner.

The site, at Clith House, Bwlchgwyn, Wreham is a one storey breeze block garage.

The proposed scheme involves the conversion of the garage to an annex dwelling.

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 development. 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.

3. Methodology

3.1. Scope of the Assessment

The report incorporates an preliminary bat roost and nesting bird assessment as requested by the client in accordance with:

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and listed in:
Schedule 2. European protected species of animals

3.2. Desk Study

Wrexham Planning Portal was consulted for a review of previous ecological surveys carried out in the area. Magic Maps was consulted for the presence of designated sites and protected habitats.

3.3. Field Survey

The site was examined to establish the presence of any protected species or habitats, and for evidence of use by protected species of animals. The building was assessed for suitability for use by bats and birds and examined to establish the presence of or evidence of use by them. A visual inspection was carried out to assess the potential or actual use by bats and birds, of the interior and exterior of the building. It was 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.

A powerful torch (Ledlenser P7) was 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 survey was carried out in accordance with CIEEM guidelines (CIEEM 2017) on 15th October 2021 by Susan Worsfold BSc (Hons) ACIEEM.

4. Baseline Ecological Conditions/Results

4.1 Designated Sites

The nearest designated site is Ruabon / Llantysilio Mountains and Minera (SSSI) and Berwyn a Mynyddoedd De Clwyd / Berwyn and South Clwyd Mountains (SAC) 700 m south west.

4.2 Habitats

Site: The building is detached and is in use as storage. It is one storey with a large loft area, which is partially boarded but mostly open to the ground floor. Walls were of breeze block, rendered externally. The roof was tiled, with a timber frame, lined with bitumastic hessian felt. There was no potential access under eaves or at gable ends and windows were glazed and intact. Doors were intact with no gaps. There was a small gap between the verge boards at the gable ends and the walls.

Adjacent land: The river Gwenfro is 260 m north. Good network of hedgerows surrounding site with several trees. Small areas of mixed woodland within 500 m. There appears to be one pond within 500 m.

4.3 Species and Species Groups

Birds

None were seen at the time of the survey. No nests were found and there was no access or potential for nesting birds.

Bats

The spaces behind the verge boards could be examined with a torch and no bats were seen to be using the building. No evidence of use of the building as a roost or resting place by bats was found. There was thought to be negligible potential for use as a bat roost. The site is suitable for foraging and commuting bats.

5. Description of the Development

The proposed scheme involves the renovation and conversion of the garage to an annex dwelling. This will involve removal of parts of the roof in order to add dormer windows and roof lights. The total footprint will not increase .

6. Assessment of Effects and Mitigation Measures

Designated Sites:

It is not considered that the proposal will have any impact on any designated sites.

Habitats:

No priority habitat is affected by the proposal and no net loss of potential roosting or nesting sites will occur.

Species:

Birds

The impacts which the proposed work might have on birds should be minimal, providing that no nests are occupied or being built at the time the work is done. If 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.

Bats

The site may be used by foraging and commuting bats. Therefore a lighting plan should be designed in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust guidelines: <https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>. Although the gaps between the verge boards and walls may offer temporary transient resting places to individual bats it will be clear whether any bats are present, and these areas are not to be affected by the work in any case.

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.

Residual Effects

No residual effects anticipated.

7. Compensation

None considered appropriate.

8. Enhancement Recommendations

Bats: A woodcrete/woodstone crevice dwelling bat box to be fitted externally to the building at the south side. Further information is given in the bat box information pack available at <http://www.bats.org.uk/index.php>.

Birds: One woodcrete/woodstone general purpose nest suitable for small birds such as robin, tit species and sparrow to be fitted at the north eside.

Bat and bird box options available from www.nhbs.com and www.wildcare.co.uk among others.

9. Ecological Constraints

None

10. Monitoring

None considered appropriate.

11. Conclusions

No evidence of use of the garage by bats or birds was found. If the recommended mitigation and enhancement measures are taken the overall ecological impacts of the proposed development will be low due to its small scale of the proposal and lack of evidence of any rare or threatened species or priority habitat on site.

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/>

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

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

Magic Maps available at: <http://magic.defra.gov.uk>

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

Natural Resources Wales available at: <https://naturalresources.wales/?lang=en>

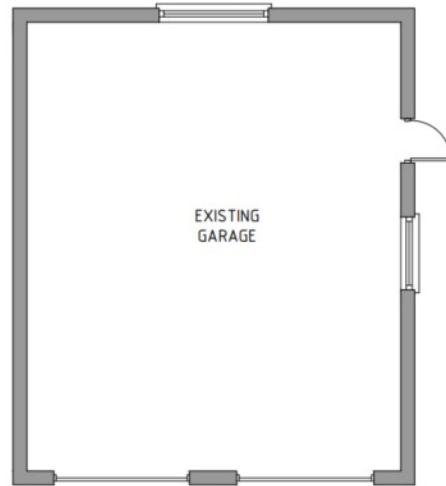
Wrexham Council Planning Portal available at:
<http://planning.wrexham.gov.uk/Planning/lg/GFPlanningSearch.page>

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: Floor Plan and Elevations as Existing

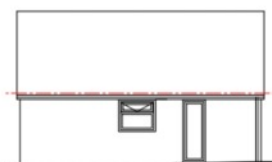
Ground floor plan 1:50



Front Elevation



Rear Elevation



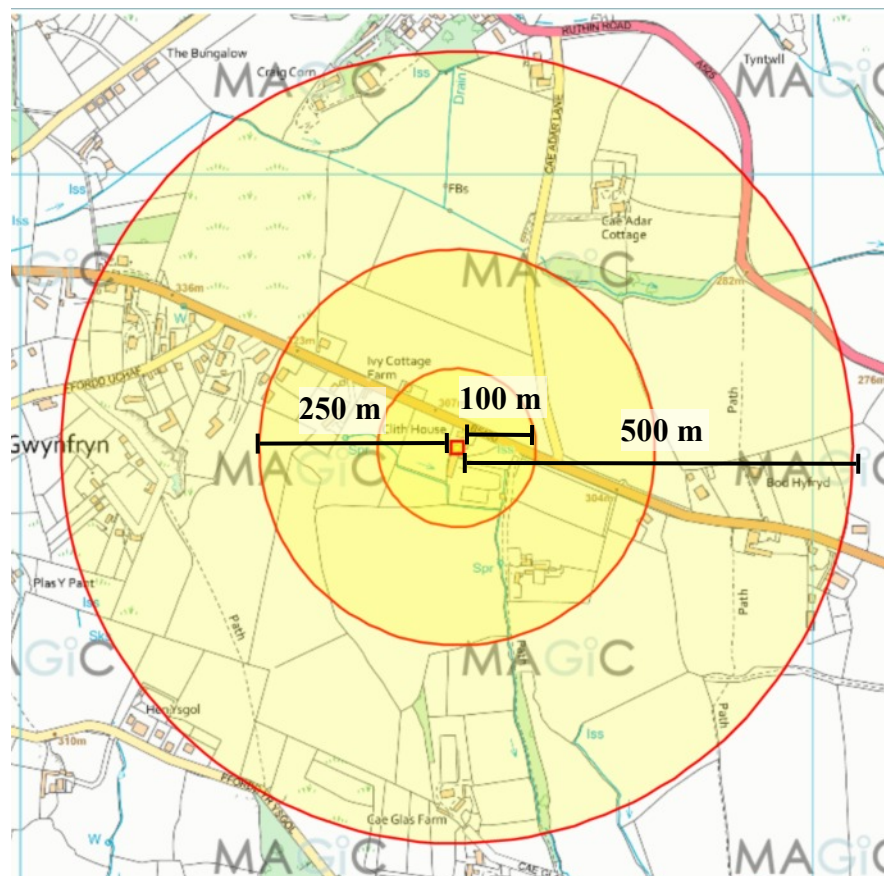
Side 01 Elevation



Side 02 Elevation



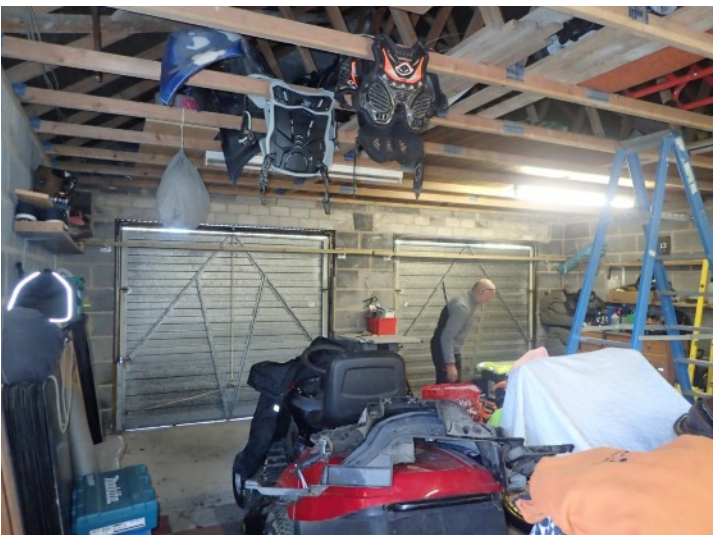
Appendix 13.2: Location Map, Designated Sites and Zones of Influence



Appendix 13.3: Aerial Photograph



Appendix 13.4: Photographs of the Building



Appendix 13.5: 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 13.6: 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.