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**Dwelling and Associated Outbuilding at Dolwar, Coedpoeth.
LL11 3TD**

Preliminary Bat and Nesting Bird Assessment

Produced by P J Ecological Solutions on behalf of Mr Jarvis

March 2022

Version 1

**Report by Matthew Whitehead
Reviewed by Paul Roberts**

Executive Summary

P J Ecological Solutions have been commissioned by Mr Jarvis to undertake a preliminary roost assessment and nesting bird assessment of the dwelling at Dolwar, Coedpoeth, and of the nearby detached outbuilding, to ascertain whether the proposed works thereto have the potential to affect protected species, specifically bats and nesting birds, and to make recommendations as appropriate. The proposed works are for the raising of the roof of the dwelling to incorporate an additional storey, the construction of a single-storey extension to the dwelling's rear (west-facing) aspect, and the removal of the outbuilding.

A records search (1km radius) was undertaken using the interactive mapping applications available on the MAGIC and National Biodiversity Network websites, during which no designated sites were identified. Records were retrieved of common pipistrelle bat (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), although these were >0.6km from the site. A preliminary roost assessment of the buildings was undertaken on the 09th of March 2022, in accordance with the methodology prescribed within the Bat Conservation Trust's (BCT) Good Practice Guidelines (2016). During the inspection of the buildings, notes were made of any evidence of current or historic use by nesting birds.

The dwelling to be affected was assessed as having very low potential to support roosting bats. As such, a single bat activity (emergence) survey of the dwelling will be required before the works can proceed, to demonstrate to reasonable satisfaction that bat roosts are not present therein. If bats are recorded emerging from the building during the survey, an additional two bat activity surveys (including a bat re-entry/dawn survey) will be required, to ensure that sufficient data has been gathered to properly categorise the roosts, and to design appropriate reasonable avoidance measures and mitigation as necessary. In this event, a bat development licence from Natural Resources Wales will be required before site works can commence.

The detached outbuilding was assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats. As such, no further surveys are considered necessary before the proposed removal works can take place.

No nesting birds, evidence thereof, or high-value nesting opportunities for wild birds were found upon or within the dwelling or outbuilding. Should any nesting birds or evidence thereof be found during the bat activity survey/s, which will be undertaken during the nesting bird season, appropriate mitigation and compensation will be required.

Recommendations for suitable biodiversity enhancement measures will be better made following the completion of the bat activity survey/s, which will provide a better understanding of the site's ecology and how it may best be supported.

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1 Introduction

P J Ecological Solutions were commissioned by Ms K Jarvis to undertake a preliminary roost assessment and nesting bird assessment of the dwelling at Dolwar, Coedpoeth, and of the nearby detached outbuilding, to ascertain whether the proposed works thereto have the potential to affect protected species, and to make recommendations as appropriate.

The proposed works are for the raising of the roof of the dwelling to incorporate an additional storey, the construction of a single-storey extension to the dwelling's rear (west-facing) aspect, and the removal of the outbuilding. The dwelling is situated at Dolwar, Park Road, Coedpoeth, Wrexham, LL11 3TD (Grid Reference: SJ28355095; hereafter referred to as 'the site').

The buildings to be affected are situated upon hardstanding, within a residential area on the periphery of the village of Coedpoeth (see Figure 1.1). The village extends to the north, east and south of the site, and agricultural land, featuring a good network of intact native-species hedgerows with trees, extends to the west. These hedgerows will provide good habitat connectivity between the village and local waterways and broadleaved woodlands, including the Afon Clywedog, ~280m west of the site, and Nant Mill Wood, ~680m south of the site.

A detailed desk study of the surrounding area and a preliminary roost assessment and nesting bird assessment of the buildings has been undertaken. The aim of these efforts/this appraisal is to:

- Identify potential and actual habitat and species constraints pertinent to the development proposals.
- Detail further survey requirements and/or reasonable avoidance measures which should be adhered to during the proposed works, as appropriate.



Figure 1.1: An aerial view of the site. The dwelling to be affected is shown in red; the outbuilding to be removed is shown in blue.

2 Method

2.1 Desk Study

2.1.1 Statutory and Non-Statutory Designated Sites

A desk-based study was undertaken to identify nearby habitats of importance and features providing local habitat connectivity, and to identify the presence of statutory designations within the vicinity of the site. These include:

- ***International recognised statutory designations:*** Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Ramsar Sites.
- ***National recognised statutory designations:*** Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and National Nature Reserves (NNRs)
- ***Local level statutory designations:*** Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)

The search (1km radius) was carried out using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website's interactive mapping application, and the Natural Resources Wales (NRW) website's Designated Site Search function.

2.1.2 Species Records Pertinent to the Assessment

At this stage of the project, due to the scale of the proposed development, it is considered that a full records search from COFNOD is not required, however a records search (1km radius) was undertaken using the interactive mapping applications available on the MAGIC and National Biodiversity Network (NBN) websites. This approach is consistent with the Guidelines for Accessing and Using Biodiversity Data in the UK (CIEEM, 2020).

2.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment

A preliminary roost assessment of the buildings was undertaken on the 09th of March 2022 by Paul Roberts UCert (license number: S088763/1) and Matthew Whitehead BSc (Hons) AMRSB, both of whom are experienced bat surveyors. The potential roosting features were accessed using a suitably tall ladder and inspected using a Clulite CB2-L2 high-powered torch. A detailed inspection of the exterior and interior of the buildings was carried out in accordance with the methodology prescribed within the Bat Conservation Trust's (BCT) Good Practice Guidelines (2016). Each building was then categorised in accordance with Table 4.1 of that document.

During the inspection, note was made of the number and nature of any potential roosting features, and/or of any points of entry/exit, such as:

- Cracks or crevices within walls; lifted paintwork, render, plaster, felt, or lead flashing; loose or lifted roof tiles or ridge tiles; loose windowsills and window frames, gaps behind fascias, soffits, bargeboards, weatherboard or hanging tiles; exposed eaves or wall plates; aged or badly fitted wooden roof supports; or thick vegetation cover.
- Holes within the walls or roof; broken/missing doors or windows; gaps between the walls and fascias, soffits or bargeboards; exposed eaves or wall plates; basement grills; broken ventilation outlets; or points of vegetation penetration.

A search for bats or evidence thereof (such as droppings, claw marks, or oil or urine staining) was undertaken, paying especial attention to:

- Gaps behind furnishings, such as curtains, pictures, and posters; accessible cupboards; peeling paintwork; chimneys accessible from fireplaces; loose wooden panelling; lintels above doors; roof timbers and beams (especially within mortise and tenon joints and where ridge and hip beams meet); at the top of gable end walls, connecting walls, and chimney breasts; and behind roofing felt.

During the inspection of the buildings, notes were made of any evidence of current or historic use by nesting birds.

The inspection was undertaken in accordance with the advice provided in the document *Guidance on Ecological Survey and Assessment in the UK During the COVID-19 Outbreak (Version 4)*, produced by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2021).

3 Results

3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1 Statutory and Non-Statutory Designated Sites

A review of the information retrieved during the desk study identified no designated sites within a 1km radius of the site. As such, and due to the nature of the proposals and the size of the project, no impacts are expected upon any designated sites or any other local habitats of importance because of the proposed development (see Figure 3.1).

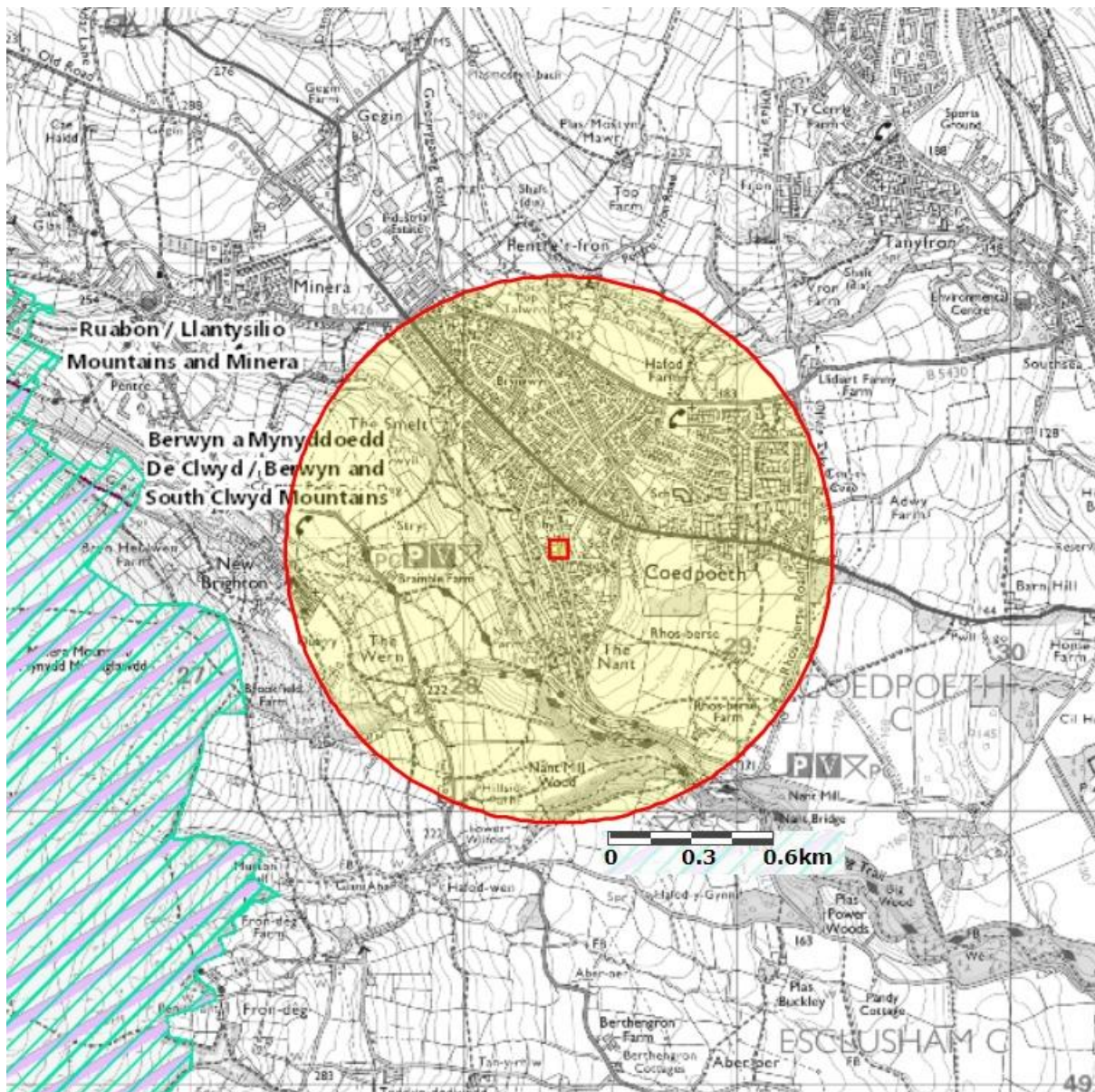


Figure 3.1: A 1:25,000 map view of the site relative to local designated sites.

3.1.2 Species Records Pertinent to the Assessment

A review of the information retrieved during the desk study identified records of common pipistrelle bat (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) ~630m east of the site. Due to the nature of the proposals and the size of the project however, no impacts are expected upon the favourable

local status of the above species, or any other species of importance, so long as all bat roosts and bird nests present upon or within the buildings to be affected have been identified, and compensatory roosting/nesting opportunities have been provided as necessary.

3.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment

3.2.1 The dwelling

A description of the dwelling to be affected by the proposed works is provided in Table 3.1, below.

Table 3.1: The dwelling to be affected.

Structure	- The building is a detached single-storey rectangular structure with a converted loft area. - It has a symmetrically pitched hip roof, the apex of which runs north to south.
Walls	- The exterior walls are constructed of brick/block and are partially covered with pebbledash render, with no gaps or crevices present within the mortar which could be utilised by roosting bats. - The interior walls are covered in a smooth coat of plaster, with no gaps or crevices which could be utilised by roosting bats. - The building's wall plates are not accessible from its interior or from its exterior.
Roof	- The roof is constructed of flat Marley tiles, only a few of which have visibly slipped, and features curved ridge tiles, only a few of which have visibly lifted. - There is a dormer window situated on the southern section of the building, which features hanging ceramic tiles fitted above the window, the gaps between which might be utilised for roosting bats. - The building features no roof void.
Soffits, fascias and bargeboards	- The building features uPVC fascias and soffits, all of which are tightly fitted and provide no opportunities suitable for roosting bats. - There are uPVC bargeboards upon the dormer window, which are also tightly fitted. - There was a single small gap present between the soffit and west-facing wall of the building which could provide bats access to the interior of the soffits.
Windows, doors, and other points of access	The windows and doors are all tightly fitted and provide no opportunities for bats to access the interior of the building.
External lighting	There is no artificial light spill onto any section of the building or its immediate surrounds.
Vegetation upon or immediate to the building	No vegetation is growing upon or immediate to the building.
Evidence of bats or bat roosts	No bats or evidence thereof was found during the external or internal inspection of the building.
Evidence of nesting birds	No nesting birds or evidence thereof was found during the external or internal inspection of the building.

Summary: Of importance, it was noted that there are a small number of slipped roof tiles, a small number of lifted curved ridge tiles, and there are some gaps present beneath the hanging ceramic tiles which are fitted above the dormer window. There is also a single gap present between the otherwise-tightly fitted soffits and the walls on the west-facing aspect of the building.

Given the limited number and poor-quality of the potential roosting features identified upon the dwelling's exterior and the absolute lack of access to the building's interior, the building is categorised as having only low potential to support roosting bats.

Photographs showing the above features and findings are included below (see Figures 3.2 to 3.8).



Figure 3.2: The front (east-facing) aspect of the dwelling.



Figure 3.3: The rear (west-facing) aspect of the dwelling.



Figure 3.4: The east-facing roof of the dwelling with a lifted ridge and slipped tile.



Figure 3.5: The tightly fitted soffits of the dwelling.



Figure 3.6: The gaps present on the hanging tiles fitted onto the dormer window.



Figure 3.7: The single gap present between the soffits and the wall of the dwelling.



Figure 3.8: The interior of the dwelling. The building's loft space has been converted. The building does not feature a roof void.

3.2.2 The detached outbuilding

A description of the detached outbuilding to be removed is provided in Table 3.3, below.

Table 3.1: The detached outbuilding to be removed.

Structure	• The building is a detached single-storey rectangular structure, with a single-pitched roof, the apex of which runs west to east.
Walls	• The walls are constructed of brick and are unrendered, with no gaps or crevices present within the mortar which could be utilised by roosting bats. • The building's walls are mortared to its roof, thereby preventing access to its wall plates from its interior or exterior
Roof	• The roof is constructed of metal sheeting, which appears in a good state of repair and features no gaps or crevices which could be utilised by roosting bats. • The roof is supported by several timber supports and is unlined.
Soffits, fascias and bargeboards	• The building features no fascias, soffits or bargeboards. The building's roof is mortared to its walls.
Windows, doors, and other points of access	• The windows and doors are all tightly fitted and provide no opportunities for bats to access the interior of the building.
External lighting	• There is no artificial light spill onto any section of the building or its immediate surrounds.
Vegetation upon or immediate to the building	• No vegetation is growing upon or immediate to the building.
Evidence of bats or bat roosts	• No bats or evidence thereof was found during the external or internal inspection of the building.
Evidence of nesting birds	• No nesting birds or evidence thereof was found during the external or internal inspection of the building.

Summary: Given the absolute lack of potential roosting features present upon the exterior of the outbuilding, and the absolute lack of access to its interior, the outbuilding was categorised as having negligible potential to support roosting bats.

Photographs showing the above features and findings are included below (see Figures 3.9 to 3.12).



Figure 3.9: The front (south-facing) aspect of the outbuilding to be removed.



Figure 3.10: The single-pitched roof and the western section of the outbuilding to be removed.



Figure 3.11: The interior of the outbuilding to be removed.



Figure 3.12: The wooden supports and roof-wall join of the interior of the outbuilding to be removed.

4 Evaluation

All species of British bat are afforded full protection under Schedule 5, Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and under Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). Under these acts, it is an offence to deliberately or recklessly disturb, capture, injure or kill bats; impair their ability to survive, breed, reproduce, hibernate or migrate; affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong; or damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of that species.

All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), this makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird; take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built; take, damage or destroy the egg of any wild bird; or to have in one's possession, or control, any wild bird (dead or alive) or egg or any part of a wild bird or egg.

The dwelling to be affected was assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats. As such, a single bat activity (emergence) survey of the dwelling will be required before the works can proceed, to demonstrate to reasonable satisfaction that bat roosts are not present therein. If bats are recorded emerging from the building during the survey, an additional two bat activity surveys (including a bat re-entry/dawn survey) will be required, to ensure that sufficient data has been gathered to properly categorise the roosts, and to design appropriate reasonable avoidance measures and mitigation as necessary. In this event, a bat development licence from Natural Resources Wales will be required before site works can commence.

The detached outbuilding was assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats. As such, no further surveys are considered necessary before the proposed removal works can take place.

No nesting birds or evidence of or opportunities for nesting birds were found upon the dwelling or outbuilding. No attempt at providing an impact assessment of the proposed works upon nesting birds is made at this point, as such an assessment would be better made following the bat activity surveys, which will take place in summertime when any nesting birds which are utilising the building would be expected to be present.

No nesting birds, evidence thereof, or high-value nesting opportunities for wild birds were found upon or within the dwelling or outbuilding. Should any nesting birds or evidence thereof be found during the bat activity survey/s, which will be undertaken during the nesting bird season, appropriate mitigation and compensation will be required.

Recommendations for suitable biodiversity enhancement measures will be better made following the completion of the bat activity survey/s, which will provide a better understanding of the site's ecology and how it may best be supported.