

Preliminary Roost Assessment Report

Job: Cysegr, Holyhead Road, Froncysyllte, Llangollen, Denbighshire, LL20 7PU.

Client: Mr and Mrs Bradbury

Date: February 2014

Grid Ref: SJ 26299 40986

By
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Executive Summary

Scope of Survey

Pearce Environment Ltd was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Bradbury of Cysegr, Holyhead Road, Froncysyllte, Llangollen, Denbighshire, LL20 7PU to conduct a survey to determine the presence or absence of protected species, bats in particular, and potential for the damage or destruction of habitats of ecological value, prior to demolition of the existing outbuilding and subsequent replacement, in accordance with the guidance given The National Planning Policy Framework (2012).

The survey undertaken comprised a preliminary desktop survey to ascertain local species previously recorded, presence of SSSI's, and a preliminary roost assessment survey.

A preliminary roost assessment (PRA) survey to assess the potential impact on protected species was undertaken at the site, OS grid reference SJ 26299 40986 on 6th February 2013, by W Macken BSc(hons) ACIEEM, an experienced biologist, NRW licensed Bats/GCN.

Details of the survey protocol and findings are provided, supported with photographic evidence. The area investigated is outlined in Appendices A, B and C.

A local database search revealed protected species previously recorded within 2km Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) Brown long-eared bats (*Plecotus auritus*), Whiskered bats (*Myotis mystacinus*), Daubenton's bat (*M. Daubentonii*) and Natterer's bat (*M. Nattereri*). No records of Lesser horseshoe bats (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) were found in the vicinity of the site.

Evidence of a roost of *Pipistrellus* sp. and Brown long-eared bat was found within the existing residential accommodation. This building will remain unaffected by the proposals. No evidence of bats was found in the building to be demolished.

No evidence of birds nesting was found within the building to be demolished.

No other protected species were recorded in the vicinity of the building(s).

Opinion

In the opinion of the surveyor, should this development proceed it will not affect the conservation status of any protected species. A Reasonable avoidance measures method statement will be followed to insure no offences are committed.

- Nesting birds: If birds gain access to the building and start nesting during the construction phase, work must cease till young birds leave the nest.
- Bats: If bats are found at any time during the proposed works, all works will immediately cease and the relevant licence will be sought.

1 Instruction

Pearce Environment Ltd was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Bradbury of Cysegr, Holyhead Road, Froncysyllte, Llangollen, Denbighshire, LL20 7PU to conduct a survey to determine the presence or absence of protected species, bats in particular, and potential for the damage or destruction of habitats of ecological value, prior to demolition of the existing outbuilding and subsequent replacement, in accordance with the guidance given The National Planning Policy Framework (2012).

A preliminary roost assessment (PRA) survey to assess the potential impact on protected species was undertaken at the site, OS grid reference SJ 26299 40986 on 6th February 2013, by W Macken BSc(hons) ACIEEM, an experienced biologist, NRW licensed Bats/GCN.

1.1 Project Background

It is understood that planning permission is sought for the demolition of the existing building adjoining the residential accommodation and the subsequent construction of a replacement building. It is understood that the roof line of the proposed building will not impact upon the roofline of the existing residential accommodation, thus having no impacts upon potential roosts/exits/entrances.

2 Objectives

The aim of this type of survey is to locate and describe, as far as reasonably practicable, evidence of use or scope for wildlife including all protected species, bat species in particular, but also badgers (*Meles meles*), barn owls (*Tyto alba*), nesting birds and amphibians such as great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*), otters and water voles in the building and surrounding area, which may be disturbed in the event of development.

This is in accordance with:

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981(as amended) – as listed in:

Schedule 1. Birds protected by special penalties at all times

Schedule 5. Protected animals

Schedule 8. Protected plants

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 – as listed in:

Schedule 2. European protected species of animals

Schedule 4. European protected species of plants

Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

It involves inspection, as necessary, of all accessible areas, including those that are difficult to reach and a desktop study to ascertain reports of protected species in the vicinity of the site and to look for potential for habitats for species such as great crested newts.

Summary recommendations have been made outlining reasonable avoidance measures and the associated habitat creation/management required to offset any impacts associated with the proposed development.

3 Survey Type - Methodology

The buildings were subject to thorough survey recording evidence of use or scope for habitats and of any signs of protected species.

Mammals

Bats:

Daytime surveys for bats may only identify potential roost sites if bats are not visibly present. Bat species may leave little evidence of their presence. Daytime surveys are conducted with the aid of a borescope, torches and binoculars. Evidence for the presence of bats includes:

- Holes, cracks and rot holes used as roosts, marked by streaks of urine and faeces.
- Smoothed, darkened edges where bats have rubbed and left natural body oils when entering and exiting a space.
- Scratches on wooden beams and joints indicating where certain species of bat may have clung to the wood.
- Faeces under a roof access point, a well used feeding point or a resting spot.
- Feeding signs such as discarded insect wings under a feeding point.
- Lack of cobwebs around eaves, roof spaces, beams or ceilings where routes are kept clear by bats.
- Presence of roosting or dead bats in or behind any object.

Methodology used is in accordance with recommendations by BCT, Good Practice Guidelines (2012).

Badgers:

Daytime surveys for badgers involve looking for

- Scrapings where badgers have dug for food or used as latrines.
- Signs of a sett, including signs of use such as presence of badger hair
- Tracks and prints.

Birds

Barn owls

The use of a building or tree by Barn owls can be determined by looking for signs such as

- Highly distinctive droppings or splats under roosting points.
- Presence of owl pellets/feathers

Other birds

Evidence of other birds using a building, hedge or tree will be from looking for

- Presence of nests
- Collections of droppings and/or feathers

Amphibians and reptiles

The assessment of aquatic habitat is based on the Habitat Suitability Index (Oldham *et al* 2000).

A refugia search is conducted for amphibians and reptiles looking under any logs, large stones and other debris.

4 Site Description

4.1 Location

'Eyfegr' is located on the Holyhead Road (A5) between the settlement of Froncysyllte and Llangollen.



Figure 1, aerial photograph showing location, circled.

4.2 Description

The building to be demolished is comprised of a partly stone built single storey (split level), outbuilding that has been utilised as a small gallery and workshop in recent years.

The remaining walls are block built and clad in well fitted shiplap timber. The roof is clad in tin sheets with an underlying sarking of ply boards.

The interior is mainly comprised of whitewashed stone/bare block walls with no cavity and is open to the ridge. The building is used on a regular basis as gallery/studio/workshop space.

The gallery/workshop adjoins the existing residential accommodation which is comprised of a 19th Century, traditionally stone built cottage, built over two levels, with dormer windows on the rear elevation (south) and an enclosed loft space which runs the length of the property.

The roof is clad in slate with an underlying membrane of bitumastic hessian. It is in a reasonable condition.

The property is surrounded in close proximity by hardstanding (providing parking for gallery visitors), established maintained gardens, and major A road to the north (frontage).

4.3 Description of areas not accessed/Limitations

All areas were accessible for this survey.

5 Survey Results

5.1 Desktop Study

Scrutiny of the OS map (Appendix A) and a walk around the locality showed there are not any significant areas of still water in the vicinity of the site. No further survey with respect to great crested newts is deemed necessary.

A local database search revealed protected species previously recorded within 2km:

- Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)
- Soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*)
- Brown long-eared bats (*Plecotus auritus*)
- Whiskered bats (*Myotis Mystacinus*)
- Daubenton's bat (*M. Daubentonii*)
- Natterer's bat (*M. Nattereri*)

No records of Lesser horseshoe bats (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) were found in the vicinity of the site.

5.2 Phase 1 Observations:

Upon investigation of the building to be demolished, negligible potential for roosting bats was identified.

The construction of the roof (tin sheets with an underlying ply sheet) does not provide a viable opportunity for roosting bats due to the fluctuating temperature regime created by the tin sheets and minimal crevice opportunity offered.

The exterior shiplap cladding was noted as being well fitted with no potential for crevice dwelling bats. The exterior masonry was noted as being in a reasonable condition with pointing being intact.

No evidence of roosting or hibernating bats was identified in this building. This building is considered to have negligible potential to support roosting bats. No evidence of nesting birds was identified on or in this building.

On investigation of the adjoining residential accommodation, it was noted that there were abundant potential access points for bats at the eaves, gables and around dormer windows. No evidence of bats was found on the exterior of the building.

Masonry was noted as being in good condition with all pointing intact. The slate roof cladding was noted as being in a reasonable condition.

On inspection of the loft spaces above the property, evidence of bats was found. In the eastern section of the roof space, a large accumulation of bat droppings commensurate in size with that of *Pipistrellus sp.* was identified. Distribution was concentrated around the internal gable that separates the eastern and western roof voids. The amount of droppings identified would suggest a small maternity roost of *Pipistrellus sp.*

Conversation with the client revealed a possible exit/entrance point on the rear elevation (south) adjacent to the dormer window (see photograph).

Upon investigation of the western roof void, a small accumulation of droppings commensurate in size and form with brown long-eared bat was identified immediately above the loft hatch. In total approximately 20 old droppings were discovered in the vicinity of the internal gable separating the eastern and western loft spaces. The abundance of droppings would suggest that they are the result of a single or low numbers of non-breeding brown long-eared bats.

No evidence of hibernating bats was found in either loft space.

The client was unaware of any existing entrance/exit points from this loft. (This is probably due to behavioural ecology of brown long-eared bats emerging at least 30 minutes after sunset).

It should be noted that the property lies within a well-connected habitat comprised of woodland, pasture and riparian habitat, providing excellent foraging for bat species.

5.3 Evaluation of Results for species recorded

Consideration of Conservation status of species

Species	Justification	Impact
Brown long eared bat	Evidence of a roost of single/small numbers of bats within residential accommodation.	Will not be affected by proposals. No impact.
<i>Pipistrellus Sp.</i>	Evidence of a possible maternity roost of <i>Pipistrellus</i> sp within residential accommodation.	Will not be affected by proposals. No impact.

Bats

All British bat species are protected by law under UK and European legislation: They are listed under schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

It is an offence to:

1. Deliberately* capture, injure or kill a bat
2. Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats
3. Damage or destroy or obstruct access to a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
4. Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat
5. Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost

*In a court, 'deliberately' will probably be interpreted as someone who, although not intending to capture/injure or kill a bat, performed the relevant action, being sufficiently informed and aware of the consequence his/her action will most likely have.)

In this instance the roost is within the existing residential accommodation and will not be affected by the proposals. Negligible potential for roosting bats was identified in the building to be demolished. Works on site will follow a strict method statement to insure the existing roost remains unaffected by development.

The method statement will include retention of suitable access points, roost area, timing of works and consideration of lighting around the site. The aim is to ensure the continued use of the buildings by bats and enhance the environment for them.

If bats are found at any time during development, including demolition, all works will immediately cease and the relevant licence from NRW will be sought.

5.4 Concluding remarks

In the opinion of the surveyor, should this development proceed it will not affect the conservation status of any protected species. A Reasonable avoidance measures method statement will be followed to insure no offences are committed.

- **Nesting birds: If birds gain access to the building and start nesting during the construction phase, work must cease till young birds leave the nest.**
- **Bats: If bats are found at any time during the proposed works, all works will immediately cease and the relevant licence will be sought.**

6 Recommendations

6.1 Bats

All works on site will adhere to the following method statement which has been designed to protect the bat roosts within the existing residential accommodation. The method statement will also inform of the action to be taken in the highly unlikely event that bats are found during development.

Reasonable Avoidance Measures Method Statement

1. A copy of this method statement will be available on site at all times and will be read by all contractors.
2. Demolition of the existing gallery building will be carried out by hand, using hand tools only.
3. If bats are found during demolition works, all works will immediately cease, Pearce Environment will be contacted, and the relevant licence from NRW will be sought.
4. No impact will be made upon the roof of the existing residential property containing the bat roosts.
5. The roof of the new gallery building will be no less than 400mm below the existing roof line, thus allowing no potential ingress/egress points to be obstructed in this area.
6. No works shall be carried out on the roof of the existing property unless agreed by Pearce Environment Ltd.
7. A Schwegler 1FR bat tube will be incorporated into the new gallery building; this will be located on the southern elevation at a height of no less than 4metres.



Figure 2, Schwegler 1FR, available from www.schwegler.co.uk

8. Crevices will be created under the gables of the proposed gallery building onto the wall plate using 15mm battening beneath sections of barge board/soffit.
9. A ridge tile will be left slightly raised (15mm gap) at each end of the ridges allowing access to the ridge gap.
10. The ridge gap will be left unfilled as far as possible providing a void between the felt and ridge tile suitable for pipistrelles and brown long eared bats.
11. Lighting around the site will be of the Passive Infra Red type, set on a short timer and orientated towards the ground. Vegetation in the vicinity of the building will remain unlit.

6.2 Birds

If birds gain access to the building and start nesting during the construction phase, work must cease till young birds leave the nest.

6.3 Protection of the roost in perpetuity

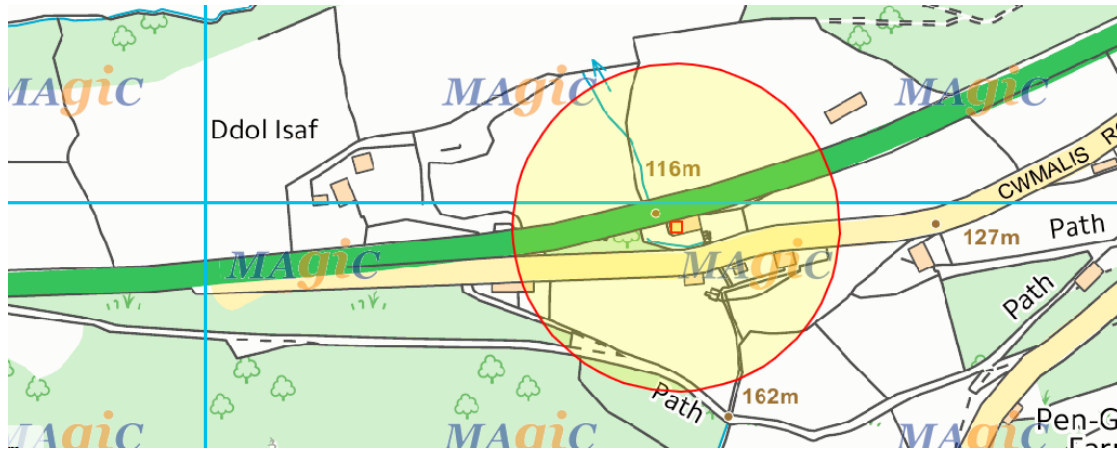
Should the property be sold or the site with the Schwegler bat box be sold, the purchasers must be made aware of the presence of bats, the purpose of the bat boxes and bat provision and the appropriate legislation protecting the roost sites.

7 Other

- This report may not be reproduced other than in full. The report should be read in its entirety.
- Questions arising from the survey report should be directed to the author of this report, who will be pleased to clarify any technical issues raised.
- Whilst the surveyors make every reasonable effort, Pearce Environment cannot guarantee that all protected species have been identified and survey results are definitive.
- Surveys are valid for 1 year after which a check should be made for the change of status of protected species.
- Records of Protected/priority species will be submitted to the local records centre.

Appendices

A Ordnance Survey Map Abstract / Environmental Maps



Environmental map for proposed works from "<http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>".

This shows that the site is not in the vicinity of an SSSI as notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. No effects are anticipated outside of the site boundary due to the localised nature of the works.

B Site Plan

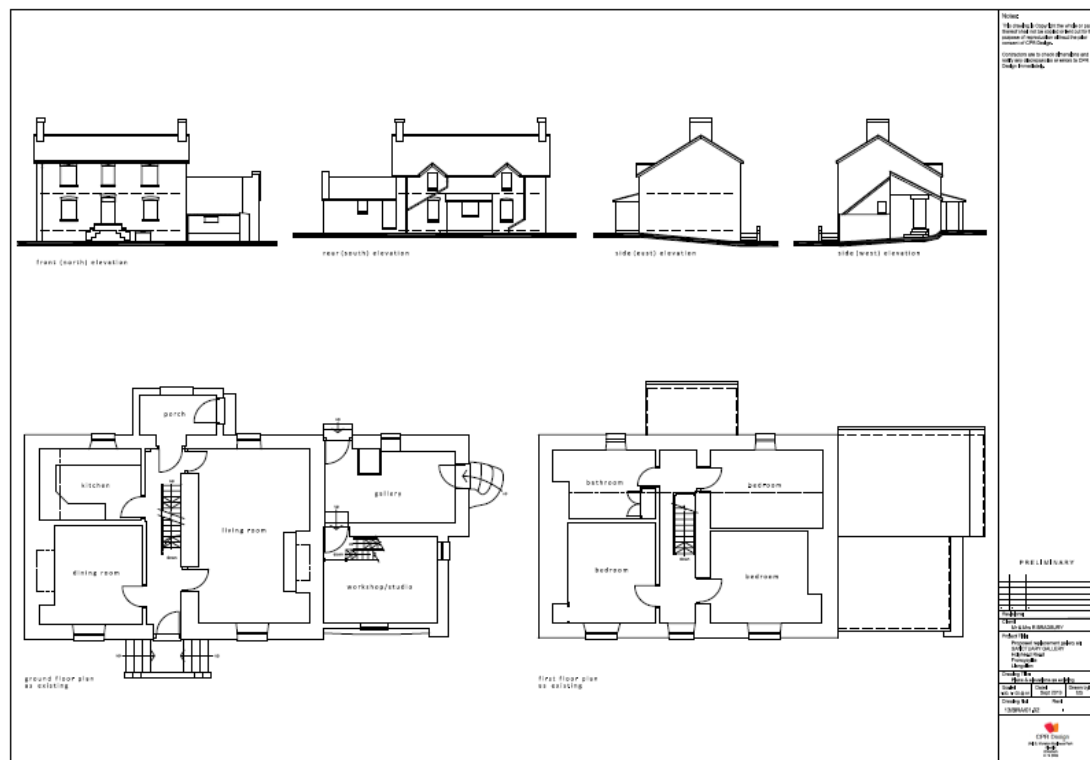


Figure 3, existing plans.

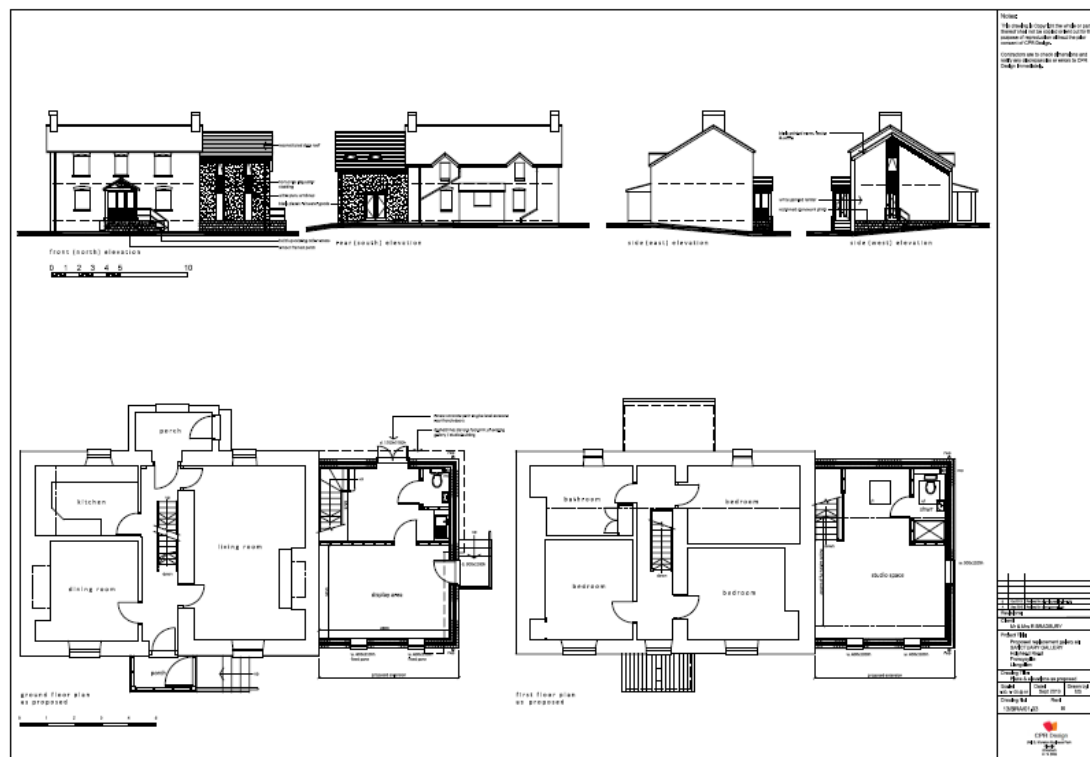
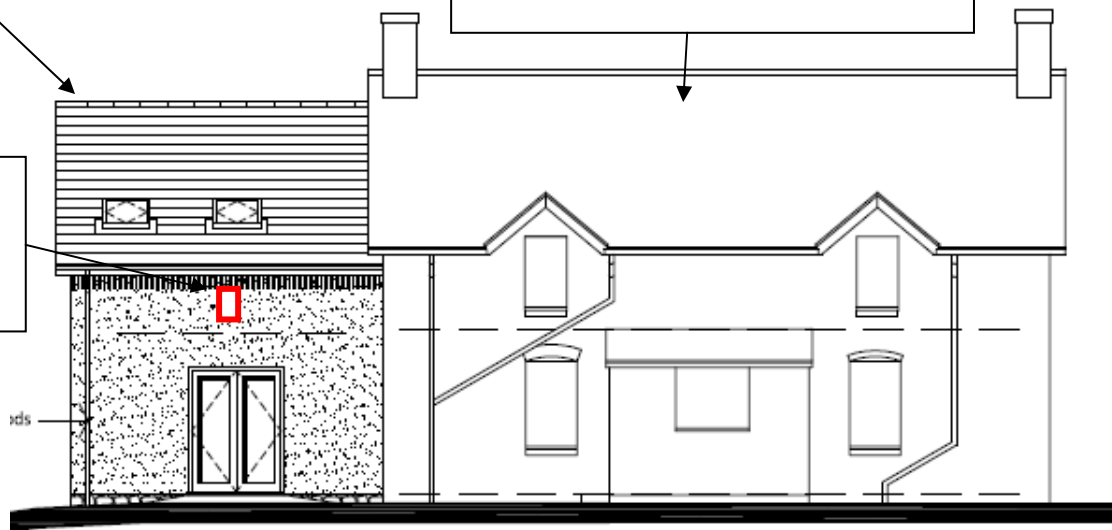


Figure 4, proposed plans.

Ridge incorporating access.

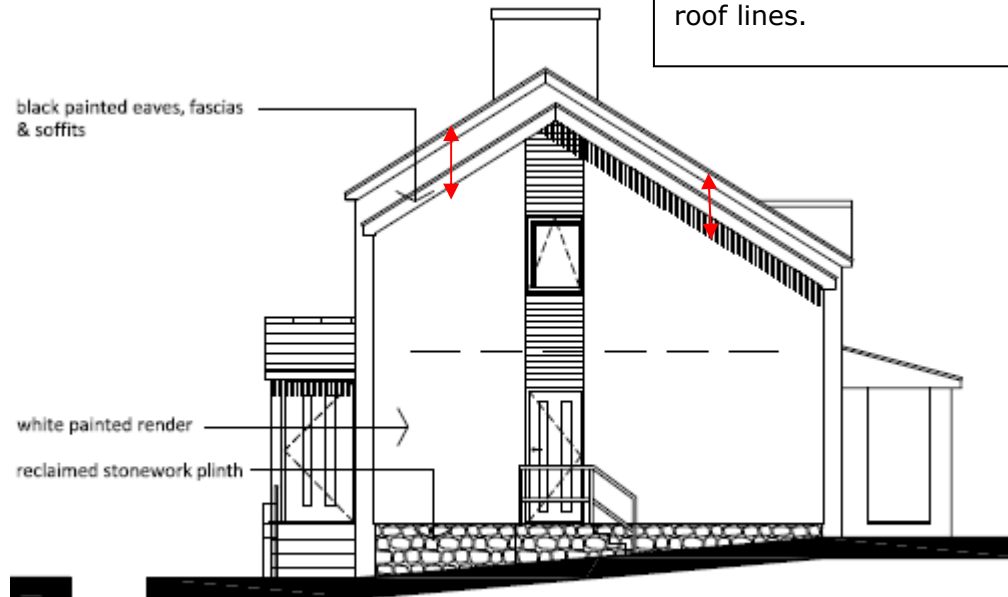
Existing roof to remain unaffected.

Proposed position of Schwegler 1FR. 4m+



rear (south) elevation

400mm min to be maintained between roof lines.



side (west) elevation

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Ecological Survey – Cysegr FEB 2014

C Photographic Evidence



Showing residential property and existing gallery building.



Existing gallery building, note well maintained pointing, well sealed building.



Interior of existing gallery building, negligible crevice potential.



Showing roof structure, tin sheets on sarking.



Loft space above existing residential accommodation.



Typical accumulation of *Pipistrellus* sp. droppings found in loft of residential accommodation.



Scattered brown long-eared bat droppings commensurate with single/small numbers of bats, found within loft space of residential accommodation.



Showing roof line on existing to remain unaffected.

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