



Mr Dafydd Edwards
Blueprint Architectural
Hafod Road
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Wrexham
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5th July 2011

Dear Dafydd

BAT & BIRD SURVEY – BAPTIST STREET, PONCIAU, WREXHAM

Further to our previous correspondence we have now completed a daytime bat and bird scoping survey of the commercial yard on Baptist Street, Ponciau. The findings of the survey are presented below.

INTRODUCTION

J W Ecological Limited were commissioned in June 2011 to undertake a bat and bird survey of a commercial building on Baptist Street, Ponciau, Wrexham.

The aims of the survey were to:

- Identify any evidence of bat usage.
- Assess bat roost potential.
- Identify any evidence of Barn Owl usage.
- Identify any further survey or mitigation requirements.

BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSALS

The proposals will involve the demolition of the existing building and the re-development of the site.

SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site is located on the northern side of Baptist Street, Ponciau.

The site comprises a commercial yard and an L-shaped commercial building (see photographs 1 and 2). The building is of predominantly brick construction with pitched slate roofs. The majority of the building is two-storey with the exception of the southern section. The building is in a generally poor state of repair.

The site is bordered by residential properties and gardens to all sides.

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Photograph 1



Photograph 2



LEGISLATIVE AND PLANNING CONTEXT

All species of bat and their breeding sites or resting places (roosts) are protected under Regulation 41 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under the legislation it is an offence to:

- intentionally kill, injure or handle a bat;
- to possess a bat (whether live or dead);
- disturb a roosting bat;
- sell or offer a bat for sale without a licence;
- damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter, whether they are present or not.

The potential fine for each offence is £5,000. If more than one bat is involved, the fine is £5,000 per bat. An offender can also be imprisoned for up to six months.

Where bats are found to occur on a development site, and there is considered to be a reasonable possibility that a roost may be damaged or destroyed or that bats using a roost will be disturbed, a license must be obtained from the Welsh Assembly.

BAT SURVEY METHODS

A daytime bat survey of the site building was undertaken by Joseph Whittick BSc (Hons.) MIEEM on the 28th June 2011.

Joseph Whittick is an experienced bat surveyor and holds a Countryside Council for Wales Scientific bat license (License Number 18982:OTH:CSAB:2010).

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During the survey the building was inspected on the interior and exterior for evidence of past or present use by bats and its suitability as a bat roost including:

- droppings;
- feeding remains (e.g. moth and butterfly wings);
- potential roosting sites;
- potential entrance points;
- discolouration around entrance points;
- absence of cobwebs in potential roosting points.

Particular attention was paid to the ridge line and gable ends which are favoured roosting sites.

A high-powered torch (1,000,000 candles), close focusing binoculars and a Provision300 endoscope were used to aid in the survey.

BARN OWL SURVEY METHODS

A Barn Owl survey was undertaken by Joseph Whittick BSc (Hons.) MIEEM on the 28th June 2011.

The building was inspected on the interior and exterior for evidence of past or present use by Barns Owls (*Tyto alba*) and its suitability as a nesting site for this species including:

- droppings (white vertical streaks on roof beams and large white splashes on floors);
- pellets. Barn owls generally swallow their prey whole and regurgitate the indigestible parts (bones, fur etc.) as pellets. The colour and condition of pellets can give an indication as to when a site was last used by barn owls;
- feathers. Barn owl nestlings begin their initial moult at 11 months. Adult barn owls tend to shed their largest and most noticeable feathers (wing feathers) in the summer;
- nest debris. Barn owls do not build nests but nesting areas may contain nestling fluff and pellet debris;
- potential entrance points. The minimum entrance hole size required for barn owls to gain access to a building is 7cm by 7cm;
- suitable nesting platforms. Barn Owls need a level area to lay their eggs usually over 3 metres in length and over 3 metres off the ground. Typical nesting places include tops of walls, between bales and attic floors.

A high powered torch (1,000,000 candles) and binoculars were used to aid in the survey.

BAT SURVEY RESULTS

The site building offers suitable potential roosting sites for bats, particularly crevice dwelling species such as the Pipistrelles. Suitable roosting sites exist in the form of gaps in brickwork and gaps beneath roof and ridge tiles. Access for bats into the building is freely available through unblocked window openings, holes in the roof and gaps beneath roof tiles.

During the site survey no evidence of roosting bats was identified on the interior or exterior of the building. Habitats adjacent to the site are sub-optimum as foraging habitat for bats.

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BARN OWL SURVEY RESULTS

No evidence of Barn Owls was found in the building and the suburban location of the building is thought to render it unsuitable as a nesting site for these species.

BIRD SURVEY RESULTS

A number of old bird nests were identified in the building. No active nests were found at the time of survey.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

No evidence of roosting bats was identified on site during the survey. The site building was however assessed as having moderate potential as a roosting site for bats. Given the identified roosting potential additional bat surveys at dusk or dawn in the period mid-May to August are recommended in order to confirm the presence/absence of roosting bats.

No evidence of Barn Owl activity was identified on site at the time of survey. No issues are thought to exist with regard to this species.

A number of old bird nests were identified in the building at the time of survey. If possible demolition works should commence outside of the bird nesting season (the nesting season runs from March to August inclusive) in order to avoid times when nesting birds will be present. If demolition works are to commence during the nesting season a recheck of the building by a suitably experienced person is recommended immediately prior to the start on site. If birds are found to be nesting the nest should be left undisturbed until nesting is complete and young birds have fledged.

If you have any queries regarding the above please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely

Joe Whittick BSc(Hons) MIEEM
Senior Ecologist

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