

Ecological Appraisal and Impact Assessment at

Llainwen, Berse Road,

Caego, Wrexham

LL11 6TS

Grid Ref. SJ 3147 5101

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1. Summary

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

The proposed scheme entails the conversion of a brick stable block and garage to a dwelling.

The building and adjacent land were examined to establish the presence of or evidence of use by protected species of animals. A visual inspection was carried out to assess the potential or actual use by bats, of the interior and exterior of the building.

Impacts during the development should be low provided that no bird nests are constructed or occupied while work is taking place. If birds are building nests or any are occupied at any stage of the development work in that area must stop until the young have left the nest. There is not considered to be any significant threat to the conservation status of bats or danger of harm to individuals as the building was not considered to be suitable for use by roosting bats.

A swallow nest was found in one of the rooms and therefore compensatory artificial nests should be installed on the new building.

There is not considered to be any significant impact on any protected species or habitat as long as the recommended mitigation 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 Blueprint Architectural Services, Wrexham for the clients.

The site, at Llainwen, Caego, is a one storey brick garage and stables surrounded by hard standing and short vegetation.

The proposed scheme involves conversion of the building to a 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, while also searching for use or potential use by any rare, threatened, endemic and non-native invasive species which might be associated with such a site in accordance with:

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and listed in:

Schedule 2. European protected species of animals

Schedule 5. European protected species of plants

The protection of Badgers Act 1992

Protected species which might be associated with such a site include bats, owls and other breeding birds. The area around the site might be used by badgers, dormice, amphibians and reptiles, and might contain protected plant species.

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 building was examined to establish the presence of or evidence of use by protected species of animals. A risk assessment was made before entering the building. A visual inspection was carried out to assess the potential or actual use by bats, 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. Crevices were checked where possible.

Powerful lamps (LED Lenser H14) were used for examination of interiors and 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 assessment was carried out on 18th September 2020 by Susan Worsfold.

4. Baseline Ecological Conditions/Results

4.1 Designated Sites

The nearest designated site is Gatewen Marsh (SSSI) 470 m north east.

4.2 Habitats

Site: Semi-rural, on the outskirts of the nearest town of Wrexham. The building is surrounded by short vegetation and hard standing, with some trees nearby. It is of one storey with no loft space. Walls are of brick and breeze block and the roof is of corrugated steel apart from some tiles above the garage section. It is unlined. There are no windows, the stable doors are of wood, while the garage doors are steel. There are no verge boards or soffits.

Adjacent land: The nearest area of woodland is 500 m north east. The river Gwenfro is 300 m south. There are no ponds apparent within 500 m. There are several hedgerows surrounding the site, with some trees.

4.3 Species and Species Groups

Plants

The only vegetation to be affected is short, ruderal vegetation immediately surrounding the building..

Amphibians and Reptiles

None seen during the survey. There are no ponds within 500 m so there is not considered to be any threat of harm or effect on the conservation status of great crested newts. There was limited shelter and foraging potential.

Birds

A swallow nest was found in one of the stables. No evidence of use by owls was seen in the building and it was not considered suitable for use by them.

Bats

There was considered to be negligible potential for use of the building by bats. The site is suitable for use by foraging and commuting bats. No evidence of use of the building as a roost or resting place by bats was found.

Badgers

There were no badger setts, tracks or latrines found on the site or within 30 m of the site.

Dormice

No hazelnuts were found which indicated gnawing by dormice and the site was not favourable for use by them.

No species of conservation value or Schedule 9 species were seen on site.

5. Description of the Development

The proposed scheme involves conversion of the building to a dwelling.

6. Assessment of Effects and Mitigation Measures

Designated Sites:

It is not considered that the development will have any significant impact on Gatewen Marsh due to the small scale of the development and distance from the site.

Habitats:

No priority habitat is affected by the proposal and no net loss of potential roosting or nesting sites should occur if compensation and enhancements are provided.

Species:

Birds

The impacts which the proposed work might have on birds will be small, 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 building nests during the work, then the work in that area must stop until the young have left the nests.

Bats

There is not considered to be any threat to the conservation status of bats or danger of harm to individuals as the building was not being used by roosting bats. However, it is possible that transient bats may temporarily roost in the building in the future, therefore precautions must be taken. No pointing or repairs of any gaps or crevices should take place which cannot be seen to be empty to minimise the possibility of incarcerating bats. 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.

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/>

Reptiles and amphibians

Is is considered highly unlikely that the development would harm any individual GCN, or affect their conservation status.

Residual Effects

No significant residual effects anticipated.

7. Compensation

Swallow nests - H110mm x W250mm x D140mm. Two should be placed at the eaves, leaving a gap of at least 6 cm between the top of the nest and the roof. Bird boxes and artificial nests should be placed on the north or north east side of the building.

8. Enhancement Recommendations

A bat box e.g. Schwegler 1FF to be fitted externally to the converted building. Further information is given in the bat box information pack available at <http://www.bats.org.uk/index.php>.

Bat boxes should be placed in a south east to south west facing position if possible.

One woodcrete nests suitable for small birds such as robin, blackbird, tit species and sparrow to be incorporated into the converted building.

House Sparrow Terrace - Wooden (or woodcrete) nest box with 3 sub-divisions to support 3 nesting pairs. To be placed under the eaves of buildings or incorporated into walls. Entrance holes: 32mm diameter. Dimensions: H310 x W370 x D185mm. Also suitable for tits, redstarts and spotted flycatchers. Place at least 2 m from the ground.

9. Ecological Constraints

None identified

10. Monitoring

None recommended

11. Conclusions

If the recommended mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures are taken the overall ecological impacts of the proposed development will be low due to its small scale and lack of evidence of any rare or threatened species or priority habitat.

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/>

Collins J. (Ed) (2016) *Bat surveys for professional ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edn)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London

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

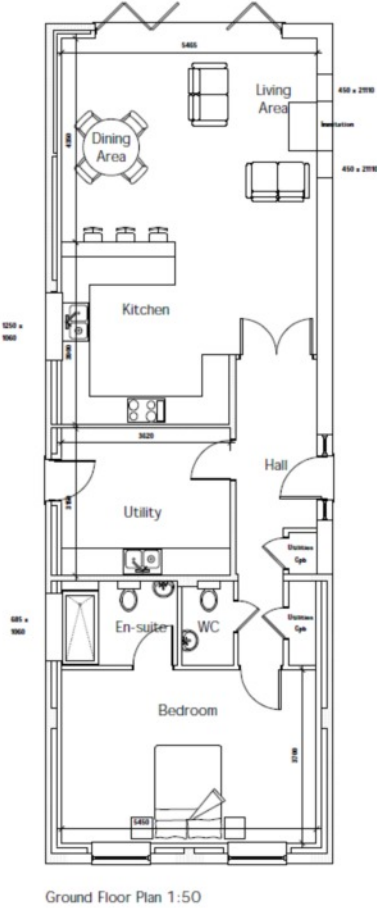
Natural Resources Wales available at: <https://naturalresources.wales/?lang=en>

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>

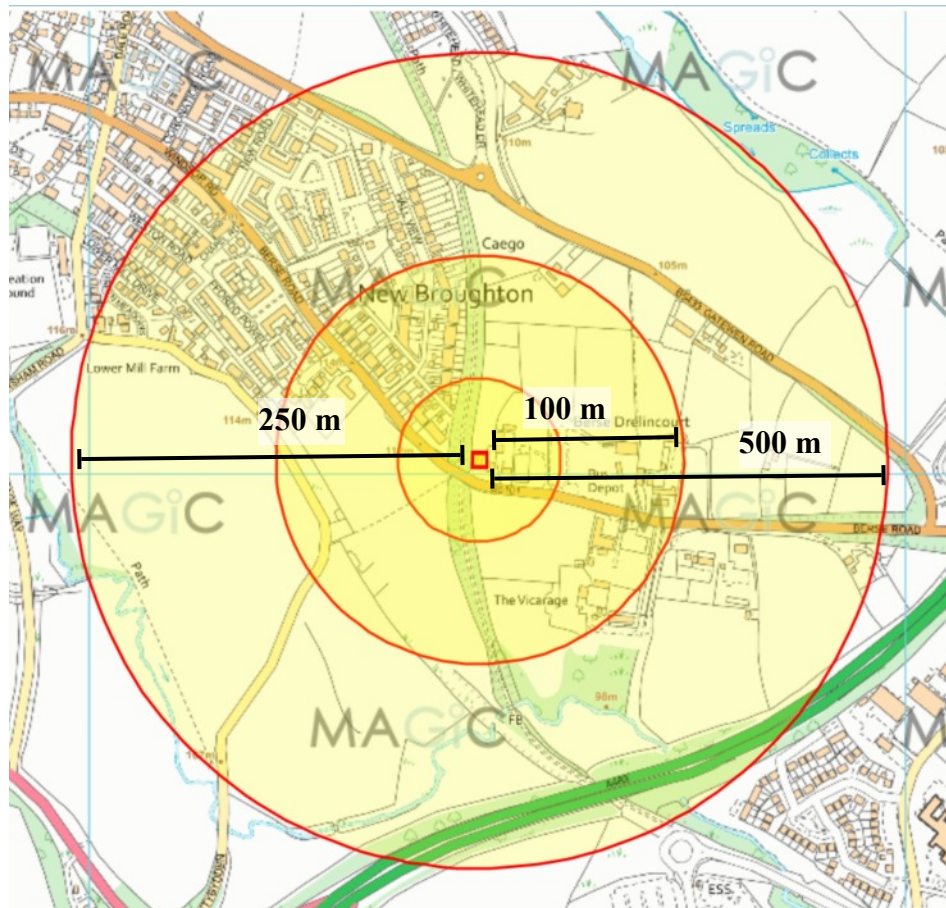
Wrexham Council Planning Portal available at:
<http://planning.wrexham.gov.uk/Planning/lg/GFPlanningSearch.page>

Appendix 13.1: Plan as Proposed

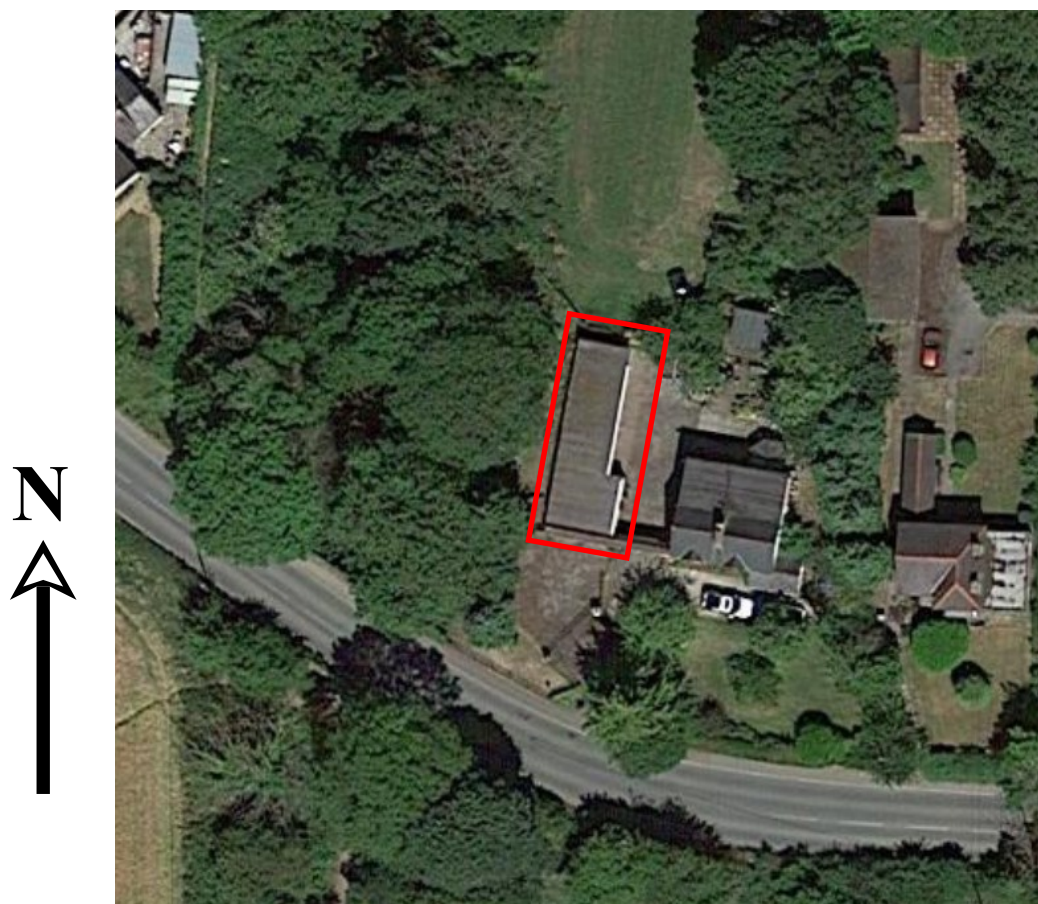


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Rev	Date	Detail	Notes
Project:			
Proposed alterations at Llailwen, Berse Road, Caego, Wrexham, LL11 6TS			
Title:		Scale (A2):	
Proposed		1:50 & 1:100	
Drawn By:		Date:	
J Felgate		June 2020	
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M114/002		1 of 1	
			
			
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Appendix 13.2: Location Map, Designated Sites and Zones of Influence



Appendix 13.3: Aerial Photograph



Appendix 13.4: Photographs of the Site



View from the south east



View from the north east



View from the north west



View from the south west

Appendix 13.4: Photographs of the Site

Building interiors with swallow nest



Appendix 13.5: 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.