

Property owner/Developer:

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Our Ref: JH/1511/15.1

Your Ref:

21st April 2015

**Re: Bat and Nesting Bird Assessment;
– Building at Pentre Fron Farm,
Pentre Fron Road, Coed Poeth, Wrexham, LL11 3BU.**

It is understood that, briefly, there is a proposal to demolish the existing Building within the Pentre Fron Farm property and to replace it with a purpose-made Horse stable block.

Full details of the proposed development works may be obtain from Mrs. J. Hurley of Pentre Fron Farm.

On 17th April 2015 I visited Pentre Fron Farm and conducted a survey of the Building for:

- a) the potential for Bats to roost on and/or in the Building;
- b) the potential for Small Breeding Birds to construct their nests on and/or in the Building;
- c) physical evidence of Bats and their roosts on and within the Building; and,
- d) physical evidence of Nesting Birds on the exteriors and within the interiors of the Building.

The Building stands at approximate National Grid Reference 328340, 351950.

An assessment was made of the affect of the proposed development on Bats and Nesting Birds.

A photographic record of the Bat and Nesting Bird Assessment is provided towards the end of this letter report.

Bat Assessment

Bat Legislation

All bat species (*Rhinolophidae* and *Vespertilionidae*) are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

Under this legislation it is illegal to:

- deliberately capture or kill a bat;
- deliberately disturb any such animal;
- damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat;
- keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange, any live or dead bat, or any part of, or anything derived from such a wild animal.
- intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.
- deliberately disturb any bat, in particular any disturbance which is likely to (i) impair their ability to survive, breed, reproduce or to rear or nurture their young; or in the case of hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or (ii) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

A bat roost may be any structure a bat uses for breeding, resting, shelter or protection. Roost sites are protected whether or not bats are in occupation, as they may be re-used by bats.

All species of bat are priority species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (HM Government 1994 et seq.) and are Species of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

A European Protected Species (EPS) Development Licence from Natural Resources Wales may be required for development works affecting bats.

Bat Assessment Method

Bat roosting potential

The Building was assessed for its potential to support bats and the type and number of bat roosts.

This involves consideration of a number of abiotic factors including:

- Access to the interior of the Building or to other suitable roosts
- Age
- Construction fabric
- Habitat context
- Light levels
- Previous use of, and activity within, the Building
- Temperature regime and protection from weather

Physical evidence of bat occupation

The Building was searched, by means of a combination of a borescope (Visual Optics VO18 5.8mm Fibre Optic), endoscope (Provision PV2636-21 5.8mm), a 3.8m Telescopic ladder and a 8.15m Combination ladder.

A search was also made for notable signs of past and/or present bat roost activity, including bat urine stains, fur oil stains, scratch marks and faeces. These may be found around a bat roost entrance, within a roost, and within flight/foraging areas.

Limitations

Historic physical evidence of bats that may have been created within the previous bat-active season may have deteriorated or have been removed (for example by wind and/or rain) prior to the assessment being carried out.

An initial assessment cannot rule out bat presence as bats may roost in areas that are not accessible other than by a destructive search.

Considering the structural fabrics of the Building; the constraints of the above limitations are considered to be negligible.

Building Description

The single-storey Building is comprised of two rooms.

At the time of survey the Building, built of substantial stone and brick walls, had no roof.

The exterior surfaces of the southeast and southwest walls have been rendered and approximately 70% of the render remain intact and *in situ*.

The interior surfaces of the northeast elevation wall, the southwest elevation wall and the northwest elevation wall, and the surfaces of an internal dividing wall have been plastered to eaves level. Approximately 70% of the plaster is intact and *in situ*.

There is a shutter/door-less opening within the northeast elevation wall, three door-less openings within the southeast elevation wall, a door-less opening and a shutter/door-less opening within the interior dividing wall. Timber lintels are present above each opening.

The Building appears to be used for the storage of some bricks but does not appear to be subject to daily disturbance.

Bat Assessment Results

Weather conditions

The assessment was carried out in dry and bright conditions.

There was no breeze.

Potential for Bats

Although in a dilapidated condition (i.e. the roof is missing) the exterior and interior walls are well pointed. There are, however, approximately 10 missing-mortar crevices which may, at first perception, potentially provide bat roosting habitat. However, the crevices are either too-shallow for use by bats for roosting purposes, full of debris or used by mice. Two missing-mortar crevices contain old bird nests.

There are gaps between, and above, the lintels of the shutter/door-less openings. However, these are either too-shallow for use by bats for roosting purposes, covered with cobwebs or in a position exposed to prevailing weather conditions.

At the time of survey the exterior of the northwest elevation wall of the Building had been covered-over with netting; apparently to prevent birds from possibly nesting within the wall.

No suitable bat roosting crevices are apparent within the northwest elevation wall and, therefore, the netting is not considered to have prevented bats from roosting within the northwest elevation wall.

Physical evidence of Bats

No physical evidence of bats was found on the exterior of the Building.
No physical evidence of bats was found within the interior of the Building.

Nesting Bird Assessment

Nesting Bird Legislation

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), all birds are protected while breeding. It is an offence, with certain exceptions to:

- intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird;
- intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built;
- intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.

Nesting Bird Assessment Results

Two old and unused bird nests, similar to those used by Tits, were found within crevices within the southwest elevation surface of the internal dividing wall.

Conclusion

Bat

a) Survey results

The Building at Pentre Fron Farm does not have bat summer or winter (hibernation) roosting potential.

No physical evidence of bat was found on or within the Building.

Bats do not impose a constraint on the proposed demolition of the Building.

It is not considered necessary for further bat survey work to be carried out to inform the proposed development.

It is not necessary for a European Protected Species Licence for bats to be granted by Natural Resources Wales to allow the proposed development to lawfully proceed.

Should the proposed development not be carried out within two years of the date of this document – another bat assessment may be required.

b) Mitigation

Bats do not impose timing or work method constraints on the proposed development.

c) Enhancement

In order to encourage bats to reside at Pentre Fron Farm in the future: it is recommended that woodcrete (or similar) purpose-made bat roost boxes are installed within the Pentre Fron Farm property.

Bat Boxes may be placed at the apex of proposed gables of the new proposed Horse stable block. Ideally Bat Boxes should be positioned in areas of low future disturbance and Bat Boxes should be installed more than 3m height above the ground.

Specially designed Bat Boxes are available that may be built into walls or encased by exterior weather boarding, as appropriate.

Recommended designs are the Schwegler 1FR and 2FR Bat Tubes which provide maintenance-free roosting opportunities, the Schwegler N27 Bat Box, and Wienerberger EcoSurv Bat Boxes.

These Bat Tubes and Boxes may be aesthetically unobtrusive if sympathetically integrated into the finished design of the proposed development.

It is recommended that a minimum of either:

- one Schwegler 1FF Bat Box;
 - or,
 - one Schwegler 1FD Bat Box (or similar alternatives)
- are installed within Pentre Fron Farm property post-development.

External Lighting:

In order to avoid any unnecessary disturbance to bats in the future, any external lighting to be installed at Pentre Fron Farm should be low powered and on short-timed Passive Infrared (PIR) sensitive to large objects only.

Lighting should not be in the vicinity of, or shine towards, bat roost openings (i.e. (the) bat box(es)).

Nesting Bird

a) Survey results

Historic evidence of nesting birds was found.

b) Mitigation

Ideally, development work should not be started between 1st March and 1st October (inclusive).

Should it not be possible to time development work to avoid disturbance to nesting birds, potential access points to bird nesting locations should be closed off with mesh or fabric barriers, in order to prevent birds from nesting.

Should it be required that development works commence between March and September, the buildings should be inspected by a suitably qualified ecologist for evidence of nesting birds.

No works may commence if birds have started to build, or if they already occupy, nests.

If birds start nesting on or in the Building - prior to or during the construction phase - delays will be inevitable up to the moment when the young birds leave the nest.

c) Compensation/Enhancement

In order to encourage small nesting birds to nest within the Pentre Fron Farm property: it is recommended that woodcrete (or similar) purpose-made bird nest boxes be installed within the Pentre Fron Farm property.

Ideally nest box placement and construction of nesting features should be undertaken outside the bird breeding season (March-September inclusive).

Nest boxes may be placed under the eaves of the existing Pentre Fron Farm dwelling.

Ideally nest boxes should be positioned in areas of low future disturbance.

It is recommended that a minimum of:

- a) two Tit nest box (e.g. Schwegler 2M woodcrete bird box); and,
- b) one generic bird species open-fronted nest box (e.g. Schwegler 2H woodcrete open fronted nest box).

be installed at Pentre Fron Farm post-development.

Dr. R. M. Jones MCIEEM

Natural Resources Wales Bat Licensed surveyor 60079:OTH:CSAB:2014.

If any protected species is found at any stage of the property development, work should immediately cease and Natural Resources Wales should be consulted (Telephone 0300 065 3000).

Another assessment will need to be conducted if no building works are carried out on the Building at Pentre Fron Farm within two years from the date of this document.

Assessment photographs



Building Exterior.
Left: Northeast elevation.
Centre and right: Northwest elevation.



Building Exterior.
Left and centre: Northwest elevation.
Right: Southwest elevation.



Building 'Interior'.
View of the northeast-end room.
Looking southwest from northeast.



Building 'Interior'.
View of the southwest-end room.
Looking northeast from southwest.