

PLANNING APPLICATION ASSESSMENT SURVEY – PENUEL CHAPEL, PANDY.

Site: Penuel Chapel
Pandy hafod Y garreg
Glyn Ceiriog
Wrexham
LL20 7NT

Client: Mr. Mark Patterson
29 New Road
Brentford
Middlesex
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Job No: 0746 – Penuel Chapel Report – v1

Introduction:

We have been instructed to undertake a planning application assessment survey with regard to the proposed conversion and associated works at the former Penuel Chapel. Pandy, Wrexham. The survey and report will address the requirements as set out in the Welsh Assembly Government Technical Advice Note 5, 'Nature Conservation and Planning' and Local Planning Guidance Note No.32 - Biodiversity & Development, to enable an assessment of impacts and mitigation to negate impact as a consideration, material to the determination of planning consent..

A survey was undertaken by a competent ecological surveyor and assistants to conform to the planning requirement.

Historical Data:

No records are available for the survey site. Records are available for the Ceriog Valley for hibernation sites for Lesser Horseshoe bats, breeding roosts for Pipistrelle and individual records for Natterer's. All of the records are within 2.5 km of the site.

The valley has records for Otter both up and down stream of Pandy on the main river. No records are available for the Afon Teirw. Slow worm are recorded up stream of the site on the Afon Teirw and within the village of Glyn Ceiriog. Badgers are recorded within the upper areas of the Ceiriog valley, no local records are available

Designated Protected Sites

European Natura 2000 sites, including all SACs designations in the proximity of the development, the following desk top survey has identified the following adjacent designated sites.

Sites to the north and west of the site:

SSSI: Pandy Quarries

Within the Pandy area three tuff horizons (the Cwm Clwyd, the Swch Gorge and the Pandy Tuffs) are exposed, two of which have their type localities in this region. These tuff horizons were the product of explosive volcanic activity during Caradoc times and accumulated through fall and flow processes. The nearest boundary is to the north of the site at approximately 80m on the opposite side of the road.

Site Description:

Penuel Chapel stands on the northern bank of the Afon Teirw within the village of Pandy. The Chapel is a single storey building built on raised ground between the road and the river bank, with a small boiler room basement adjacent to the river. The Chapel is constructed in solid masonry with a slated roof finish over a traditional roof construction. The masonry is in a good condition with raised pointing. The chapel has a traditional interior with partially sloping ceilings and a raised collared ceiling to the centre. The Chapel has two slated louvered openings in both gables to vent the small loft space. The inner faces of the vents have been meshed to prevent access by birds or bats. The roof has a close boarded sarking over hang to the eaves. The verges have a similar overhang with a fixed soffit. Some of the soffits have become unattached and sagged.



Fig 1 – Aerial Photograph of the site

The immediate garden is limited, typical of chapel properties, the western side of the chapel has a sunken building which is flush with the road at roof level but is of a single storey height adjacent to the river. This area has direct flight access, to both storage areas. The adjacent habitats are formed by the road to the north with domestic properties and gardens beyond, adjacent properties to both the west and east. The southern boundary is formed by the river with a wooded embankment beyond.

Methodologies:

A evening walk over survey of the site was undertaken on 06 August 2012, followed by an emergence survey, to record habitats and assess potential impacts on any recorded protected and biodiversity species, to include Otter, Nesting Bird, Bat, and Reptile.

Survey Results:

Due to the limited loft access and sloping ceilings and the locality of the building, it was decided that an emergence survey needed to be carried out as well as a visual inspection of the building. The building masonry walling is in a good condition and is tightly pointed to the underside of the eaves and verges and offers little to no potential for access by either bat or bird. The roof is finished with thin tight fitting slates, with a socketed clay ridge tile. The emergence survey did not identify any emergence by bats, which was to be expected by the tight construction finishes identified on site.

The boiler room has a small gap over the doorway; however on inspection to both the boiler room area and the open semi-basement outside stores, no evidence of use by bat was identified at the time of survey.

The garden area is limited with the area over the stores being concrete. The garden has limited potential for use by reptile due to over shading and lack of refuge. No evidence of otter was recorded at the time of survey however is highly likely that otter will run the river system which flows in to the main river. No evidence of holts or setts were identified within or adjacent to the site at the time of survey.

No evidence of use by other protected or biodiversity species was identified at the time of survey.

Some of the soffit boards to the gables and at the abutment to the eaves have sagged or have slight decay offering a potential for nesting birds. One individual Blue Tit was noted roosting on an outside cable under the eaves on the northern side of the building during the emergence survey. No active nests were identified either in the building or the immediate abutting habitats to the building.

The emergence survey recorded a negative at the time of survey. The observers recorded foraging activity for three species, 45 kHz Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, 55 kHz Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and a single Daubenton's *Myotis daubentonii*. Though recorded within the Llangollen valley area this is the first record for Pandy for this species.

Recommendations and Reasonable Avoidance:

The proposed conversion and associated works are within the existing building foot print and will not impact on the adjacent habitats which are to remain as recorded during the construction works. The proposals are to retain the existing roof structure and under clad the existing ceilings to improve the insulation properties of the building. The existing roof is to be retained other than repair to the soffits and fascias. The emergence and the visual survey did not identify any actual use of the building by bat or bird at the time of survey, however there is a small potential for use by nesting bird and individual bats.

As a general note, most buildings offer potential for over wintering and single seasonal occupancy for individual bats. This use can be spasmodic during the season and actual presence through emergence survey methodologies cannot be fully confirmed. It is therefore recommended that the following precautionary generic recommendations are undertaken as good working practice if any of the repair works affect the following areas of the building during the construction phase:

1. Ridge tiles or finishers should be removed by hand to ensure that no torpid or hibernating bats are injured during the conversion works.
2. Abutment flashings should be removed with similar care to ensure that no torpid or hibernating bats are injured during the conversion works.
3. Door frames and window frames should be removed with care to ensure that no torpid bats or hibernating bats are injured during the conversion works.
4. Defects to structural masonry should be lowered to prevent torpid bats or hibernating bats being injured during the conversion works.
5. Structural members, lintel bearings, purlins, or wall plates should be removed with care to ensure that no torpid bats or hibernating bats are injured during the conversion works.
6. Replacement of soffits, fascias and sarking boards should be done with care to ensure that no torpid bats, hibernating bats or roosting birds are injured during the repair works.

If it is found that at any time during the works torpid or hibernating bats are uncovered, the works must cease immediately and further advice should be sought.

Birds

The historic nests recorded are for wren above the open window of the store area. There is at present direct flight access to the underside of the damaged/decaying soffits for the likes of sparrow, starling, blue tit etc. It is likely that during the repair works these areas will be lost. It is therefore recommended that sparrow boxes and blue tit boxes are fixed on the north and eastern elevations of the buildings. The nest boxes should be fixed beneath the eaves/gutters.

As a general note, all wild birds, their nests and their eggs are protected by the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. It is an offence (with certain exceptions), to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird (this includes chicks); to take, damage or destroy any wild bird's nest while it

is use or being built; and to take or destroy the egg of any wild bird. The definition of a wild bird is 'any bird of a kind which is resident in or a visitor to Great Britain in a wild state'.

The typical nesting season for birds in Britain runs from early-March to early-August, however recent seasonal weather patterns have recorded nesting activity for Thrush in February and third brood nests for Swallow into September. If works are to be undertaken within these periods, then secondary check surveys should be undertaken immediately prior to undertaking the works, i.e. within 24 hrs to ensure no nests have been built since the survey. Potential nesting areas, deemed clear of activity should be protected to prevent access during the construction phase by birds, where feasible.

Nest Times

- Wren - late March through to end of August
- Sparrow - late March through to mid September

Extract from 'A Field Guide to Monitoring Nests – BTO'

Mitigation:

The proposed impacts of the development are considered to be negligible with no adverse impacts being identified for either locally or nationally recorded protected or biodiversity species. Based on the assessment no mitigation is deemed to be required.

Conclusion:

It is the surveyor's opinion that the proposed conversion, if carried out in a bat and bird friendly manner and in accordance with the recommendations given will have no long term impact on the favorable conservation status for the species recorded.

Tim Hodnett.
August 2012

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Site Photographs



Photo 1 - Photograph of the site looking south east.



Photo 2 - Photograph of the site looking south west.

APPENDIX 1: Emergence Data

Sunset:	20.58
End Civil Twilight (dusk)	21.40
Emergence survey start	20.57
Air Temp	14.6 degrees
Humidity	70%
Wind (Beaufort)	0 (still)
Wind (direction)	N/A
Cloud Cover	Overcast
Rain	None

Both 45 and 55 KHz Pipistrelle recorded foraging around the building to the north. A single Daubenton's bat recorded foraging over the river and to the east of the building.

Emergence Completion	21:55
Air Temp	14.0 degrees
Humidity	58%
Wind (Beaufort)	0 (still)
Wind (direction)	N/A
Cloud Cover	Overcast
Rain	none

The survey was ended due to poor light levels and no further observation which could confirm emergence was feasible.