

ROGER BURROWS

25 WERN ROAD, SKEWEN

BAT BUILDING INSPECTION REPORT

09 June 2022



Telephone:- 07969146776
e-mail:- davidrees220@hotmail.com

ROGER BURROWS

25 WERN ROAD, SKEWEN

BAT BUILDING INSPECTION REPORT

Document Ref: Doc 01 – 09/06/2022

Issue	Revision	Stage	Date	Prepared by
1		DRAFT FOR REVIEW	09/06/2022	David Rees

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Methodology

Desk study
Daytime Inspection Survey

3.0 Results

Desk study
Daytime Inspection Survey

4.0 Legislation, Policies and Plans

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

References

Appendix I Site Locations

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Bay Ecology was commissioned by Roger Burrows to undertake a building inspection with particular regard to the likely presence of roosting bats and nesting birds at No 25 Wern Road located in Skewen. The structure is proposed to be renovated.
- 1.2 An external and internal inspection of the structures was undertaken on the 31st May 2022 by David Rees whom is a suitably experienced ecologist¹. The property is a two storey on its southern elevation, which is rough cast structure with a pitched roof and bay window located on the eastern extent of the ground floor. However, the northern elevation is three storey with presence of two storage areas on the ground floor due to the change in levels. The northern elevation also possessed a two storey flat roof annex. The structure was immediately surrounded by residential properties and their curtilages, with Skewen Cricket pitch located approximately 50m south of the site.
- 1.3 This report provides a summary of the daytime inspections undertaken May 2022, and includes recommendations on any ecological constraints/ opportunities associated with the proposed renovation works.

¹ Full Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management with 5+ years experience in bat survey work & NRW bat licence holder S090295/1.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 In order to establish the baseline ecological conditions on site and in the adjoining habitats, a combination of desk-based consultation and building inspection was undertaken in May 2022.

Desk study

- 2.2 This element of the work primarily involved an internet search and review of Bay Ecology bat activity reports within close proximity to identify any known records of bats or nesting birds onsite or within the surrounding area (within 2km and 0.15km radius respectively) that could require consideration as part of any development proposal (i.e. to inform constraints/opportunities).

Daytime Inspection

- 2.3 The ecological appraisal comprised of an external and internal inspection of the structures. In order to establish the potential presence of roosting bats (or nesting birds) at the building, the survey aimed to identify:
- if bats are, or have been, present within the building and, if so, which species are present;
 - the type of roost (e.g. day roost, feeding perch, night roost, hibernaculum);
 - how bats use the buildings (e.g. location of, exit and entrance points to potential roosts);
- 2.4 External surveys at the site involved the use of binoculars and ladder to identify possible access/entry points into the buildings and aimed to identify any evidence of use by bats such as droppings, staining, prey remains etc. No access to the internal roof void was possible at the time of the survey due to the theft of the property's key from a key safe box. The internal survey searched for similar evidence of current or historical use by bats.
- 2.5 The surveyor searched for roost evidence (droppings, staining, scratch marks, etc.) as described above and an assessment of the buildings potential to support nesting birds was also undertaken. The scope of the bat inspection survey was based on guidelines published by the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT)(2016).

3.0 RESULTS

Desk study

- 3.1 The internet species data search confirmed that there were no records of bats onsite. However, multiple records of foraging bats were identified within 2km of site. The majority of the records were contributed to foraging and commuting Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus sp.* recorded during surveys. However, two records of Daubenton's Bat *Myotis daubentonii* exist and were the result of Water Way surveys conducted at the Tennant Canal. The above records of crevice dwelling bat species were considered to be of some relevance to site.
- 3.2 A number of roof nesting birds were identified within 0.15km of site including House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* that was considered the species of most relevance to the structures due to their nesting preference.

Day-time inspection

- 3.3 The results of the day-time inspection are summarised in the following sections.

External Inspection No.25 Wern Road

- 3.4 The southern elevation of No. 25 Wern Road was a two storey rough cast building with a pitched roof and a bay window located on the eastern extent of the ground floor (Cover & Photo 1). The front access porch was located on the eastern elevation and possessed mono pitch roof (Photo 2). The northern elevation of the building was three storey due to the change in level (Photo 3), with a two storey flat bitumastic roof annex located on the elevation (Photo 4). The ground floor possessed two storage rooms located beneath the habitable upper floors (Photo 5). The structure possessed uPVC windows frames, doors, porch cladding, fascias, soffits and rainwater goods (Photo 6). No evidence of roosting bats (droppings, staining etc.) was identified externally. However, potential multiple potential bat roosting features were associated with the roof, including missing ridge tiles (Photo 7) and missing ridge mortar (Photo 8), as well as soffit gaps (Photo 6).

Photo 1: Southern and western elevations (view looking north east).



Photo 2: Access porch located on eastern elevation (view looking north).



Photo 3: Three storey northern elevation (view looking south).



Photo 4: Two storey rear annex on northern elevation (view looking west).



Photo 5: Two ground floor storage rooms (view looking south west).



Photo 6: uPVC soffit with gaps on eastern elevation.



Photo 7: Missing ridge tiles on rear roof elevation (view looking south).



Photo 8: Missing ridge mortar on front of roof (southern elevation).



Internal Survey

- 3.5 No internal access was available to the main property and roof void due to the theft of the property's key from a key safe on an external wall. However, the two rear ground level storage rooms were inspected for evidence of roosting bats. Both storage rooms were constructed from brick that had been painted and were dark and draught free (Photos 9 & 10). The rooms contained the possessions of the former property owner with large accumulations of spiderwebs. The rooms were only accessible via the wooden doors and no evidence of roosting bats was identified internally with limited potential roosting features identified.

Overall

- 3.6 The property possessed multiple bat roosting features associated with the roof and as such was considered to be of moderate bat roosting potential (BCT, 2016).

Photo 9: Internal of eastern ground level storage room.



Photo 10: Internal of western ground level storage room.



4.0 LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND PLANS

- 4.1 The following international, national and local legislation and planning policies pertaining to bats, nature conservation and biodiversity are considered of some relevance to the renovation works at the No. 25 Wern Road.

Legislation Pertaining to the Protection of Bats

- 4.2 Under Annex II of the *Council Directive 92/43/EEC 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora* (EC Habitats Directive) some bat species are listed as of Community Interest, the conservation of which requires designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs); Under Annex IV of the EC Habitats Directive all bat species are listed as of Community Interest, in need of strict protection. In England and Wales, the EC Habitats Directive has been transposed into law in 1994 and, following recent amendments is set out in the *Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulation 2010* to give bats, their breeding sites and resting places a high level of strict protection making it an offence (subject to certain specific exceptions) to deliberately capture or kill/injure a bat, to damage or destroy a place used for shelter or protection or to deliberately disturb a bat in such a place.
- 4.3 Bats are also afforded protection within England and Wales under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended); Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.
- 4.4 Case Law² has placed an onus on local planning authorities to satisfy 'three tests' under the Habitats Directive when determining applications that could affect European Protected Species. Essentially, these three tests are: i) that there is no satisfactory alternative; ii) that the proposed development is in the over-riding public interest (including those of a social or economic nature) and iii) the proposed development would not adversely affect the Favourable Conservation Status of the species locally.

Legislation Pertaining to Birds

- 4.5 Under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) all wild birds are protected against killing or injury and their nests against damage or destruction whilst they are being built or contain eggs/dependent young.

² Wooley vs. East Cheshire (2009) and Morge vs. Hampshire County Council (2010)
Roger Burrows
25 Wern Road, Skewen
[Bat Building Inspection Report](#)
Doc 01

Planning Policy Wales (2016)

- 4.6 This document set out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) with Chapter 5 dealing with Conserving and Improving Natural Heritage and Coast. The advice contained within PPW is supplemented for some subjects by Technical Advice Notes (TAN), with TAN 5 addressing Nature Conservation and Planning (September 2009).

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 5 – Nature Conservation and Planning

- 4.7 Under Section 2.4 within the TAN 5, *‘when deciding planning applications that may affect nature conservation local planning authorities should’*:
- Protect wildlife and natural features in the wider environment, with appropriate weight attached to priority habitats and species in Biodiversity Action Plans;
 - Ensure that all material considerations are taken into account and decisions are informed by adequate information about the potential effects of development on nature conservation;
 - Ensure that the range and population of protected species is sustained;
 - Adopt a step-wise approach to avoid harm to nature conservation, minimise unavoidable harm by mitigation measures, offset residual harm by compensation measures and look for new opportunities to enhance nature conservation;

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The daytime inspection undertaken at No. 25 Wern Road conducted on the 31st May 2022 identified no evidence of roosting bats externally (No internal access was possible to inspect the loft space). However, multiple potential bat roosting features were associated with the roof and as such the building was considered to be of moderate bat roosting potential (BCT, 2016).
- 5.2 No 25 Wern Road will require further bat activity survey to ascertain the presence/absence of bats in the structure and to inform the requirement for any European Protected Species Licensing and mitigation to enable the refurbishment/renovation works. These surveys will need to be conducted between May and September, with at least one of the surveys conducted between May and August, during the main activity period for bats. The building will require two surveys to be conducted at least two weeks apart (moderate bat roosting potential), with at least one dusk emergence and dawn re-entry survey conducted.

Other considerations - birds

- 5.3 Additional considerations for the refurbishment works relates to the likelihood that nesting birds are potentially present within the roof structure. All nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife Countryside Act 1981 and the timing of the roof works between October and February inclusive would limit potential conflict with the bird nesting season. In the event that refurbishment works were undertaken in the nesting season, a visual check of the structure would be conducted prior to site works. In the unlikely event an active nest were discovered during these works, activity would stop immediately and the project ecologist contacted.

REFERENCES

- Bat Conservation Trust (2016). *Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines*. Third Edition. Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- EUROPA. (2007). *Guidance document on the strict protection of animal species of Community interest under the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC; Final version, February 2007.*
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/index_en.htm
- Mitchell-Jones, A.J, & McLeish, A.P. Ed., (2004), 3rd Edition Bat Workers' Manual, 178 pages b/w photos, softback, ISBN 1 86107 558 8

DRAFT