



30 TAILLWYD ROAD, NEATH ABBEY

BAT SURVEY

ISSUE 1, VERSION A

JULY 2024

Bat Survey Report

Document control

Issue	Author	Checked	Approved	Date
1	BE	BE		22/08/24

Contents Amendment Record

This report has been issued and amended as follows:

Issue	Revision	Description	Approved by	Date
1	A	Minor amendments	BE	22/08/24

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is proposed to extend a dwelling to the north east.

An initial bat inspection survey of the site was undertaken on 17th June 2023. No bats or evidence of bats was seen on the exterior or in the interior of the building.

BE Ecological Ltd is of the opinion that the building is of low potential for roosting bats, however, the impacts as a result of the extension are minor (tying in on the gable end only and the installation of roof lights) and as such one activity was undertaken. The survey did not identify the presence of bats.

The garage is of negligible potential for roosting bats.

Further surveys are not considered necessary providing that the work is undertaken in line with a method statement and ecological supervision.

In the unlikely event that any bats or evidence of bats are found, all works will cease, Natural Resources Wales consulted. Works will not recommence until such a time that Natural Resources Wales have provided written confirmation to do so. This may involve further survey effort and/or a European Protected Species Licence being issued.

No evidence of nesting birds were found throughout the course of the survey.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

BE ECOLOGICAL LTD was commissioned by the client to undertake an initial bat inspection survey of a residential building for the potential presence of birds and bats in order to support a planning application to extend the property.

The surveys were undertaken in line with the current guidance on standards for bat surveys (Bat Conservation Trust, 2023).

1.2 Site description

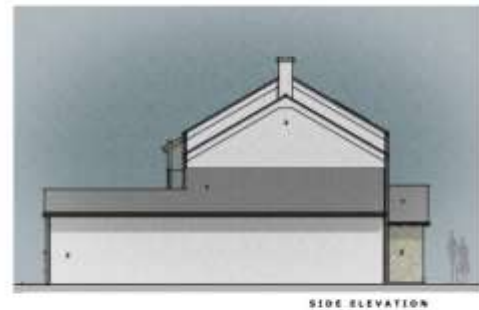
The property subject of this survey is located at 30 Taillwyd Road, Neath Abbey. The property is a stone/brick built rendered structure beneath a slate roof. The main ridge of the property runs from north east to south west. Barge boards and fascias where present are of uPVC and generally well sealed.

There is a small single storey flat roofed garage to the south west. Again fascias are of uPVC.

The property is set within a large garden which backs on to an area of broad-leaved woodland and the River Clydach. Beyond this are fields with mature hedgerows that continue to more extensive woodland beyond this. There is good connectivity to the wider landscape.

1.3 Proposed development

It is proposed to extend the property to the north east along with modifications to the garage.



CONNECTIONS DESIGN ARCHITECTURE & INTERIORS 27 Park View House, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 1SY. T: 01595 544 101. E: info@connectionsdesign.co.uk	Project: Proposed Redevelopment of 30 Tylwyd - Neath	Drawing Title: Proposed Elevations	Scale: 1:100 @ A3	Job No: 224-07 Date: P. 05
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2 LEGISLATION & POLICIES

BATS

2.1 Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) provides safeguards for European Protected Species (those listed under Annex IV Habitats Directive). With regards to bats, this makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately (or recklessly in Scotland) capture, injure or kill a bat
- Deliberately (or recklessly in Scotland) disturb a bat in a way that would (significantly in Scotland) affect its ability to survive, breed or rear young (or hibernate or migrate in England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or (significantly in England, Wales and Scotland) affect the local distribution or abundance of the species.
- Damage or destroy a roost (this is an 'absolute' offence)
- Possess, control, transport, sell, exchange or offer for sale/exchange any live or dead bat or any part of a bat

2.2 Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981

The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is the legislation for England and Wales for nature conservation, making it an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat at a roost
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a roost

2.3 The Environment (Wales) Act 2016

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 requires that all public authorities, when carrying out their functions in Wales, seek to "maintain and enhance biodiversity" where it is within the proper exercise of their functions. In doing so, public authorities must also seek to "promote the resilience of ecosystems". This ensures that biodiversity is an integral part of the decisions that public authorities take in relation to Wales. It also links biodiversity with the long term health and functioning of our ecosystems, therefore helping to align the biodiversity duty with the framework for sustainable natural resource management provided in the Act. In Wales, this legislation replaces and enhances the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) which sought to raise the profile of biodiversity and to make sure that it is considered in all local authority decisions by ensuring that "Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.". Other elements of NERC 2006 may still apply.

BIRDS

In Britain, all naturally occurring species (including hawfinches) are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The legislation protects all birds, their nests and eggs, and it is an offence to:

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

In addition, birds listed on Schedule 1 of the above legislation, such as the red kite (*Milvus milvus*), are afforded further protection, and it is an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly disturb the bird whilst nest building or while at (or near) a nest with eggs or young; and
- Disturb the dependant young of such a bird.

Some birds however are exempt from this protection for certain purposes.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Survey Objectives

- To carry out an initial bat inspection survey the building
- To present the above details and if necessary further surveys, recommendations for mitigation, future research and compensation within this report.
- To carry out a scoping survey for breeding birds

3.2 Survey Summary

The bat survey comprised of three parts:

- Initial bat inspection survey of building (including birds)
- Single activity survey

3.3 Surveyor Information

The inspection survey was undertaken by Beth Evans. Beth is the owner of BE ECOLOGICAL LTD and has a postgraduate degree in Environmental Biology: Conservation & Resource Management, specialising in British bats. Beth has 11 years' experience of ecological surveys, both in a small scale and large multi-disciplinary context. Beth also holds Natural Resources Wales and Natural England bat licences to disturb and handle bats. Beth was assisted during the activity surveys by Michael Rogers. Michael Rogers has been working with/training towards his bat licence for the last three years. He works with BE Ecological Ltd and a number of other consultants within the local area.

3.4 Internal & External Inspection

An initial inspection survey was carried out on 13th July 2024 to search the building, both internally and externally to identify potential bat roosting areas and signs of bat use including; live bats, dead bats, droppings, urine staining, grease marks and discarded prey items. The buildings and all areas/items of interest were recorded and photographed. Extension ladders/steps were used to safely access areas where no safe access was available the survey was conducted using, close focus binoculars and/or a high powered lamp.

3.5 Survey limitations

Any survey for bat species can only be a series of snapshots in time. Bats are highly mobile, long lived creatures (capable of living up to 30 years, sometimes longer) with complex social structures and utilising multiple roost sites within a year. The implications of this are that surveys and surveyors have to make informed assumptions based on observations, recorded data, local information and a detailed knowledge of the species.

The front elevation could not be viewed by the thermal camera due to narrow access restrictions however, surveyors were positioned in such a way that any bat emerging from the front elevation would have been noted.

Activity Surveys (emergence/re-entry surveys)

Building 'emergence' and 're-entry' surveys were carried out on the following dates, times and weather conditions. Climatic conditions including rain, wind, temperature and cloud cover were recorded for each survey using a hand held Kestrel 4500 weather station.

Survey 1- 13th July 2024

A dusk survey was carried out on 13th July 2024 using surveyors positioned in such a way that as much of the building was visible to surveyors as possible. Surveyors were equipped with Batlogger M detectors and thermal cameras.

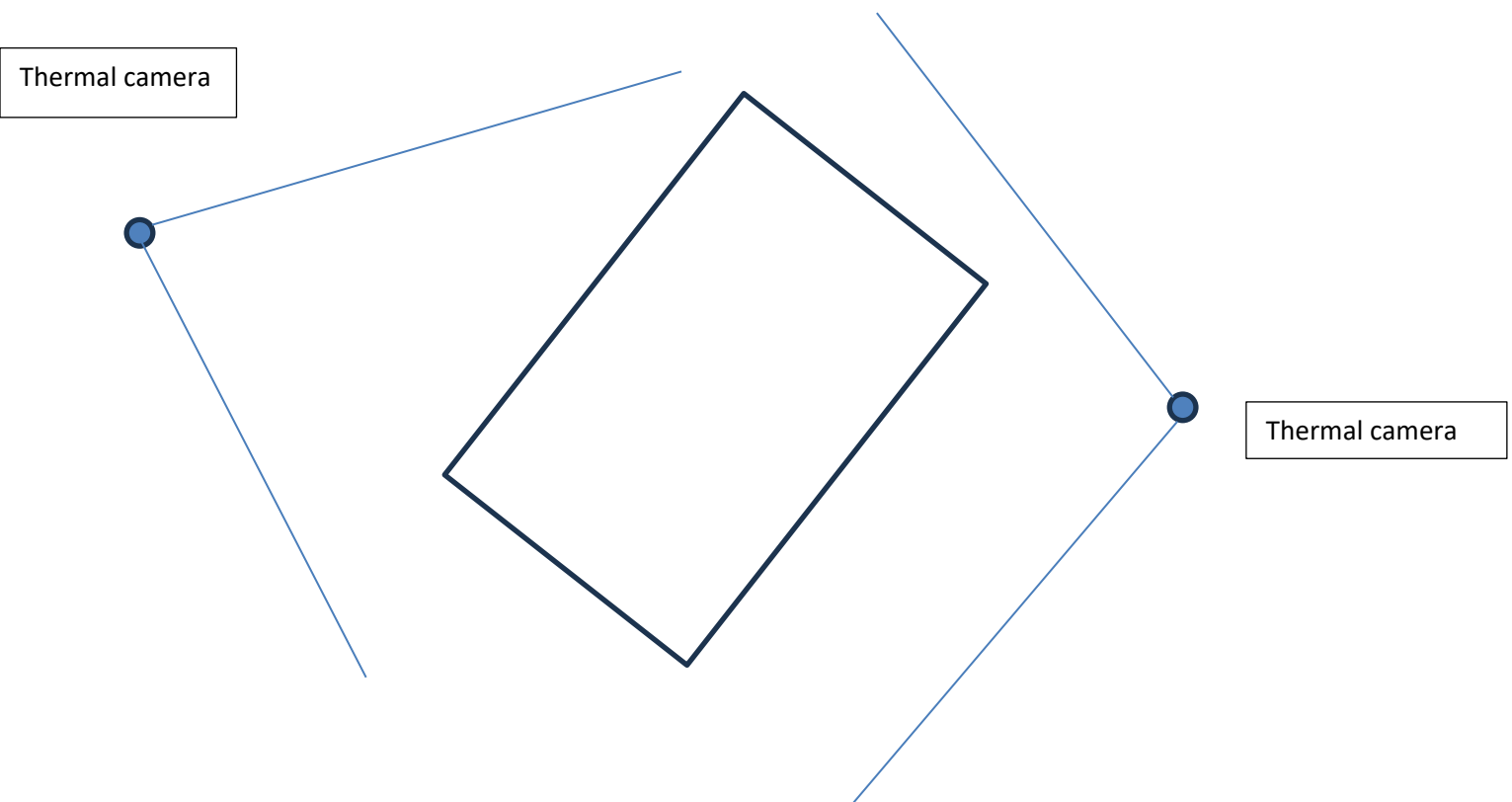


Figure 3: Surveyor/camera location

4 RESULTS

4.1 Inspection survey

4.1.1 External survey results

The survey carried out by BE Ecological Ltd revealed no droppings or evidence of bats on the exterior of the buildings. The barge boards/fascias/soffits of the building are relatively tight to the render with no obvious access points for bats at this location in a number of locations.

The tiles are generally tight fitting, however, there are a potentially a small number of gaps on the pitches of the rooves where tiles have slipped over time.

There is a single storey garage to the south west of the property. The garage has a flat roof. There are a very small number of gaps present beneath fascias, however this combined with the garage interior resulted in the building being of negligible potential for roosting bats.

No evidence of nesting birds was seen on the exterior.

Please see appended plates for photographs of the building exterior.

4.1.2 Internal survey results

Internally there is a roof void present, however, access was not possible for health and safety reasons.

Activity surveys

The surveys were undertaken as per the table below:

Survey Schedule and Weather Conditions

Table 1: Schedule and weather conditions

Visit	Date (sunrise) (sunset)	Start End	Time	Temp C	Wind	Cloud Cover	Notes
Survey 1 13/07/24	21:26	Start	21:10	18	Low	30%	Dry evening, insects flying
		End	23:00	15	Low	15%	

Activity Survey Results

Survey 1- 26th June 2024

The first bat heard was a common pipistrelle approximately 20 minutes post sunset. The bat was seen flying through the garden of the property. A total of only five bat calls were heard throughout the survey. Calls were heard but bats were largely not seen. Activity at the site was much lower than that expected given the surrounding habitats.

No bats emerged from or interacted with the property on this date.

4.2 Identified Roosts

Survey 1

The building was not identified as a bat roost on this date.

4.3 Conclusion & Recommendations

BE Ecological Ltd is of the opinion that the building is of low potential for roosting bats, following an activity survey, the property was not identified as a bat roost. Due to the low scope of works (tying in to the south western barge board and installation of roof lights only) further surveys will not be required providing that the work is undertaken in line with a method statement and ecological supervision.

In the unlikely event that any bats or evidence of bats are found, all works will cease, BE Ecological Ltd and Natural Resources Wales consulted. Works will not recommence until such a time that Natural Resources Wales have provided written confirmation to do so. This may involve further survey effort and/or a European Protected Species Licence being issued.

4.4 Breeding Birds

No evidence of breeding birds was found throughout the survey. If a birds nest is identified within the building during the works, it will be left until such a time that the birds have left the nest of their own accord.

5 INTERPRETATION & IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 Active Season Usage

The property has not been identified as a bat roost.

5.2 Hibernation Season Usage

It is extremely unlikely that bats will use the building for hibernation due to no roosts being identified. In addition to this, the works are minor and unlikely to disturb the majority of the existing roof.

5.3 Ecological Impacts of development

The impacts of the development have been assessed using the current information of the proposed works. Should any changes be made to the proposed works, the assessment will need to be reviewed and amended as necessary.

The building has not been identified as a bat roost and as such impacts on roosting bats are unlikely to be present. However, the work will be undertaken in line with a method statement and ecological supervision to safeguard the unlikely presence of bats and birds.

No mitigation is required.

6 ENHANCEMENT

6.1 Bats

A bat box will need to be erected on the site. The box will be positioned at least 3m in height and away from windows on the north eastern elevation of the new extension.

6.2 Birds

A bird box will need to be erected on the site. The box will be positioned at least 3m in height and on the north eastern elevation of the new extension.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1.1 Timing

N/A

7.1.2 Timber/roofing materials

N/A

7.1.3 Lighting

Bat features will not be directly illuminated. All external lighting will face downwards and be set on timers to ensure that bats can use the area should they wish. – In addition to this, any onsite lighting will conform to the following guidelines:

<https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

7.1.4 Bat Licensing

A European Protected Species Licence obtained from Natural Resources Wales will not be required before any works commence. If at any point bats or evidence of bat is found, all works must cease and NRW consulted. Further surveys and/or a licence may be required prior to works recommencing

7.1.5 Supervision

Supervision for the tying in of the extension will be required.

7.1.6 Compliance

Following completion of the project, the ecologist will visit the site to verify the correct installation of the enhancement measures (see below). E-mail confirmation will be issued to the LPA.

8 METHOD STATEMENT

1. A suitably licensed and experienced ecologist will be on site/call for the duration of the works.
2. Before any work begins on site, a briefing for contractors and other site-staff 'toolbox talk' will be given by an ecologist. The briefing will cover the issues in respect of protected species they may encounter on site, where they might find them, methods of working, and what they need to know to avoid committing an offence. Every briefing attendee will be provided with a copy of a Method Statement and the contact details of an ecologist and Natural Resources Wales.
3. Before any work commences on the building, the building will be checked by the ecologist for the presence of bats and birds.
4. All suitable bat roosting features will need to be removed by hand (tiles/barge boards for tying in)) and inspected by the onsite bat ecologist (including any cavities with an endoscope)
5. The features will also need to be removed manually, one at a time, with the bed and underside inspected for bats/sign of bats by the onsite ecologist before moving onto the next.
6. Only when the onsite bat ecologist is happy that there is no further potential for bats, may he/she leave and the works continue with no supervision. A licensed bat ecologist will be on call for the remainder of the works. In the unlikely event that bats are found during a period that the licensed bat ecologist is not present on site, all works must cease and the licenced bat ecologist engaged.
7. If bats or their signs are found, a EPS licence may be required before works can legally resume.

9 REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust. (2023) *Bat Surveys - Good Practice Guidelines*. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. (2004) *The bat workers' manual (3rd Edition)*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004). *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. Natural England

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (HMSO).

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) (as amended) (HMSO).

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (HMSO).

APPENDIX A- PHOTOGRAPHS

Plate 1- Photograph of gable that extension is to be attached



Plate 2- street view of property



Plate 3- rear of property



Plate 4- opposite gable of property

