



Template Method Statement to be used within a Bat Development Licence Application

This template Method Statement is to be used to form part of your Licence Application for a European Protected Species Development Licence. It will be used to determine the impact of the application on the favourable conservation status of the species concerned (Regulation 55(9) (b) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017). It must be prepared by a consultant ecologist or other suitably qualified person. You are strongly advised to refer to the Bat Mitigation Guidelines¹, and The Bat Survey Guidelines (3rd Edition). Please submit your Application and supporting Method Statement electronically to the contact details provided below.

Please note as of the 1st March 2018 the declaration box found at the end of this template must be included on any Method Statements submitted in support of a licence application, and must be signed and dated by the applicant and ecologist. Any application containing a Method Statement without this declaration will be rejected.

Contact Details

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Method Statement Title:	Caewern House
Method Statement Version Number:	Version 1
Method Statement Issue Date:	December 2025
Site Address:	Caewern House, Dwr Y Felin Road, Caewern SA10 7RH

¹ Bat Mitigation Guidelines (IN136) available to download from the Natural England website

Background and Supporting Information

Executive Summary

This method statement has been prepared to inform a licence application to Natural Resources Wales (NRW) for the proposed renovation of the building at Caewern House, Neath.

Bat emergence surveys undertaken in August/ September 2024 and May 2025 identified a day roost within the building; five common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* were observed emerging from the building. The roost was determined to be a day roost, used by a small number of bats. Given the size of the roost present and the species using it, it is deemed to be of 'Site Importance'.

Surveys undertaken in August and September 2022 identified a roost in another part of the building; a peak count of four soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* were observed emerging. The roost was determined to be a day roost, used by a small number of bats. Given the size of the roost present and the species using it, it is deemed to be of 'Site Importance'.

The proposed works (demolition of the building) will impact the sections of the building where the roost has been identified; this will result in the destruction of resting places of both common and soprano pipistrelle. Consequently, a European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licence from NRW will be required prior to works commencing on site.

Compensation for the loss of the roost will be provided, by means of replacement bat access tiles, and the development would enhance the site for bats by including planting which will increase invertebrate foraging available for bats. Bat boxes will also be installed onto suitable retained trees within the wider site boundary to increase roosting opportunities for bats.

To avoid repetition, references have been made to the Bat Survey Report (ref: **17269_R02a_Bat Survey Report_19052025_HM**) prepared by Tyler Grange Group Ltd to support a planning application at the site.

Introduction

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council is reviewing the proposed development of Caewern House (Planning Reference: P2024/0301), to include the demolition of the building on site.

The demolition of the building, expected to commence October 2025, is required to facilitate the construction of 36. no affordable residential flats in five 3-storey blocks with associated infrastructure and landscaping. The building is currently in a state of disrepair and has been subject to extensive vandalism. It has also been confirmed as containing asbestos so in its current state represents a significant risk to public health and safety as it is the target of anti-social behaviour. Security measures have been put in place to prevent access; however, access to the building is still considered to be a concern.

The proposed demolition of the building will result in the destruction of a common pipistrelle day roost, first identified in 2016 and reconfirmed on 17th September 2024, as well as a soprano pipistrelle day roost, identified on 25th August 2022. A licence from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is therefore required to allow the destruction of resting places of both common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle.

Survey and site assessment

Existing information on the bat species at the survey site

A common pipistrelle day roost was identified in the building during an emergence survey undertaken by Solty Brewster Ecology in 2016. A soprano pipistrelle day roost was identified in the building during an emergence survey undertaken by I&G Ecological Consulting Ltd on 25th August 2022. The full methodology and results of the emergence surveys undertaken on the building in 2022 are detailed in the Bat Survey Report produced by I&G Ecological Consulting Ltd in November 2022 (ref: **Bat Survey Report_IG2022CaewernHouse**), appended to this application.

Statutory sites notified for the species (SSSIs or SACs) within 10km

There are no statutorily designated sites within 10km of the site designated for common pipistrelle or soprano pipistrelle.

Objectives of the survey

Following the PRA/assessment of the building as having suitability to support roosting bats, and in light of the proposed demolition of the building, bat emergence surveys were undertaken to determine the presence or absence of roosting bats.

Emergence/re-entry surveys undertaken in 2016 identified a day roost of a single common pipistrelle and those undertaken in 2022 identified a day roost of a four soprano pipistrelle. The updated emergence surveys undertaken in 2024 aimed to confirm whether or not roosting bats were still present, and to locate and characterise the nature of any identified roost.

Scaled plan/map of survey area

The location of site is shown in Figure 1 below, as well as on the Site Location plans produced by Tyler Grange Group Ltd in January 2025 (ref: **17269/P03** and **17269/P04**), appended to this application. The location of the identified roost is shown in Figure 2 below and on the Bat Survey Plan produced by Tyler Grange Group (ref: **17269/P01**), also appended to this application.



Figure 1: Site boundary shown by a red line

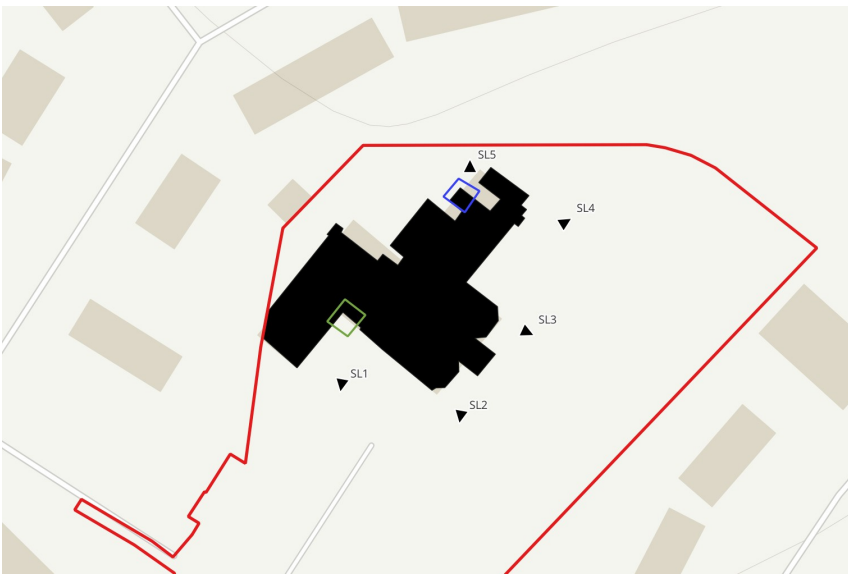


Figure 2: Location of the common pipistrelle roost (shown by a green box), soprano pipistrelle roost (shown by a blue box) and surveyor locations (shown by black triangles) on Caewern House

Site/habitat description

Habitats within the site are suboptimal for foraging and commuting bats, although there are a number of trees along the eastern and southern boundaries which offer suitable habitat and provide some connectivity to suitable habitat in the wider landscape to the east of the site. Although the building itself is not brightly lit, due to being abandoned, the existing bright artificial lighting associated with the residences and roads surrounding site limits the suitability of the site for light-sensitive species such as horseshoe bats. The site is more suitable for species such as common pipistrelle which have been recorded foraging on insects attracted by lighting (Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP), 2023).

The wider landscape which, shown in **Figure 3** below and Site Context Plan (ref: **17269_P05**) (appended to this application), primarily comprises residences and associated roads and gardens. The greenspace to the south and east of the site, notably the wooded areas, offer habitat of higher suitability

for foraging and commuting bats, particularly rarer species, compared to the site. During the roost emergence surveys it was noted that the bat activity in the site was low overall. Therefore, on balance the site is considered to be of low suitability for foraging and commuting bats.



Figure 3: Location of the site (shown by a red line) within the suburban area of Neath, surrounded by residences and gardens with some greenspace including fields and wooded areas to the south and east, approximately 0.2 km north of a railway line.

Field surveys

An emergence survey undertaken in 2016 identified a day roost of a single common pipistrelle and emergence/re-entry surveys undertaken in 2022 identified a day roost of soprano pipistrelle, with a peak count of four individuals. The full methodology and results of the emergence surveys undertaken on the building in 2022 are detailed in the Bat Survey Report produced by I&G Ecological Consulting Ltd, appended to this application.

Two updated bat emergence surveys of the building were undertaken on 20th August and 17th September 2024. These surveys were lead by Hazel Murrells who is an experienced ecologist. A further update survey was undertaken in May 2025.

The full survey methodology, including timings, details of weather conditions and the equipment used, can be found in Sections 2 and 3 of the Bat Survey Report prepared by Tyler Grange Group Ltd in February 2025 (ref: **17269_R02a_Bat Survey Report_19052025_HM**), appended to this application.

Survey Results

Five common pipistrelle were observed emerging from the southwestern elevation of the building on 17th September 2024; the roost location from which the bat was observed emerging is shown below in **Photograph 2**, as well as on the Bat Survey Plan (ref: **17269/P02**) appended to this application. The soprano pipistrelle roost location identified in 2022 differs from the common pipistrelle one and is also shown on plan **17269/P02**. The full results of the surveys are summarised in Section 3 (paragraphs 3.4 – 3.6) and detailed in Tables 3.2 and 3.3 of report **17269_R02**.



Photograph 2: Location of common pipistrelle roost on the southwest elevation of Caewern House

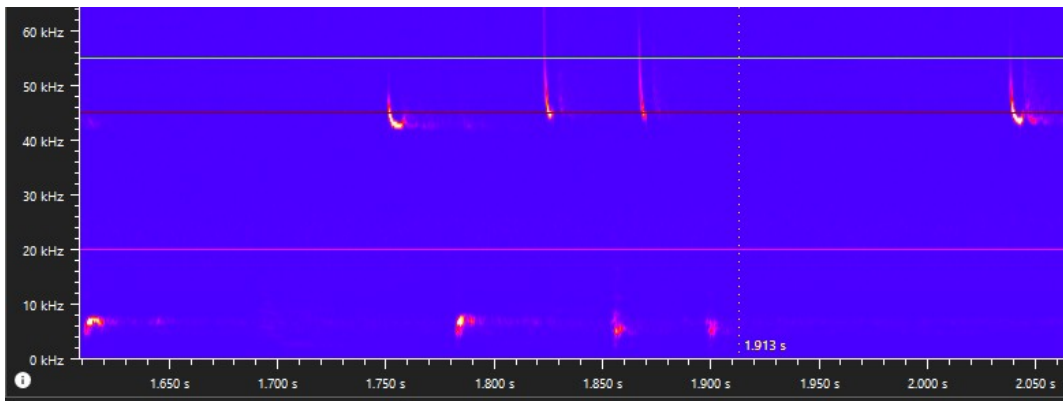


Figure 4: Sonogram of a common pipistrelle observed emerging from the building at 19:38 on 17th September 2024.

Interpretation/evaluation of survey results

A peak count of five common pipistrelle were observed emerging from the identified roost. As only a small number bat was found using the roost, it was determined that this roost is a non-breeding day roost. Due the roost being used by common pipistrelle, a common and widespread species, the roost can be classified as being of 'Site Importance', as defined in the CIEEM Bat Mitigation Guidelines (2023).

Impact assessment

Short-term impacts: disturbance

Considering the proposed demolition of the building, the following potential impact to bats, in the absence of mitigation, have been identified:

- Disturbance of individual bats with potential for injury in the event of them being present during demolition.

Long-term impacts: roost loss

The proposed demolition of the building will result in the loss of a day roost, supporting at least five common pipistrelle bats, as well as a day roost supporting at least four soprano pipistrelle. Although the roosts are considered to be of 'Site Importance', their loss – due to their nature (day roosts) and low number of bats it supports (peak count of five observed) – is not expected to impact the conservation status of these species at a local level.

Long-term impacts: fragmentation and isolation

Due to the nature of the identified roosts (day roosts supporting a low number of individual bats), there are no anticipated long-term impacts regarding the fragmentation or isolation of these species' populations or roosts.

Post-development interference impacts.

A sensitive lighting strategy for bats, as per best practice guidance (ILP, 2023), will be implemented to ensure the value of the site for bats is maximised during and after the works to the building. The lighting scheme (a Pre commencement planning condition against planning ref P2024/0301) will maintain dark, unlit areas by avoiding the illumination of known bat foraging and commuting habitats that are not already subject to illumination, particularly the retained trees in the east and south of the site, as well as newly planted vegetation.

Mitigation, compensation and monitoring

Works to be undertaken

Capture and exclusion

Prior to the demolition of the building, a licensed bat worker will need to supervise a roof strip and removal of tiles (prior to the demolition of the building) and act accordingly in the event of a bat being found during the works.

The methods set out below will be implemented during the roof strip/tile removal:

- There will be no working at night or use of illumination during works, which might otherwise disturb roosting bats;
- All works are to be overseen by a NRW licensed bat worker (LBW);
- There is no seasonal restriction to the timing of works given only a day roost has been recorded previously (i.e. non-breeding roosts);
- Prior to commencement of works the LBW will conduct a tool box talk with contractors to detail the protection afforded to bats, consequences of triggering the legislation and details within this method statement;

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

- Where possible, immediately prior to commencement of roof works, PRFs and areas in the immediate vicinity and the discrete roof locations where works are planned will be inspected by the LBW from scaffolding or a Mobile Elevating Work Platform (MEWP), using an endoscope;
- All removal of roof materials, including in the re-roofing area and where discrete roof works /installations are needed, will be conducted by hand, under supervision of the LBW with roof coverings lifted carefully to allow inspection for the presence of bats by the LBW before removal;
- In the event a bat is discovered during the works and a NRW mitigation licence is in place, the bat would be moved by gloved hand by the LBW to a pre-erected bat box located on a tree within the site grounds (see plan **17269/P06**, appended to this application, for suggested locations); and
- Bat boxes will also be erected on trees within the grounds, prior to the demolition of the building, to provide enhanced roosting opportunities, as shown on plan **17269/P06**.

Bat roosts and habitat

New roost creation

In order to ensure no detriment to the maintenance of the local population of common and soprano pipistrelle bats at a favourable conservation status, a minimum of nine bat access tiles (model) are to be incorporated into the proposed building, as a means of compensation for the loss of a day roost of common pipistrelle and loss of a day roost of soprano pipistrelle. The access tiles will be incorporate in the roof on the southwestern to southern elevations.

The site will be enhanced further for bat species through the provision of five extra Schwegler 2F Universal Bat Boxes (made of woodcrete, 160mm by 330mm, with a 17mm by 40mm entrance) with a 'Double Front Panel' (with two textured wooden boards providing space for 'crevice-loving' species such as common pipistrelle), which would be installed on additional trees retained within the site, on a southwest or south aspect, as shown on plan **17269/P06**.

Maintenance and/or modification of new and existing habitat

Some areas of existing vegetation within the site are to be retained as part of the proposed works, namely some of the broadleaved trees in the east and south of the site. Planting of a species-rich flowering lawn as well as native tree, shrub and hedgerow planting, including wild privet *Ligustrum vulgare* and fruit trees including sweet cherry *Prunus avium*, in the site will offer an enhancement, increasing the amount of invertebrate forage available for bats. Other native species proposed to be planted include field maple *Acer campastre*, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, silver birch *Betula pendula* and Scot's pine *Pinus sylvestris*.

Scaled maps/plans

The proposed landscape strategy is shown in the following document, appended to this application: **TC22110 LA1 Landscape Strategy v7 (18.12.2024)**.

The locations of the proposed bat boxes and bat access tiles are shown on plan **17269/P06**, also appended to this application.

Mechanisms for ensuring delivery of mitigation and compensation measures

Tyler Grange Group Ltd are instructed by the applicant to implement the strategy as per this method statement. Tyler Grange will ensure the measures are completed as per this licence, in line with their code of conduct under the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

Mitigation contingencies

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

In the unlikely event that additional bat species or a different type of common pipistrelle or soprano pipistrelle roost are discovered during the roof strip/removal of tiles, the LBW would make immediate contact with NRW to agree an appropriate approach. In addition, the contractors will be given the number of the Tyler Grange project manager to enable them to answer queries when the LBW is not present on site, or in the case of unexpected finds.

Post-development site safeguard

Habitat/site management and maintenance

The client will be responsible for the ongoing management and maintenance of the grounds.

Population monitoring and monitoring of roost usage

In line with the mitigation guidelines (Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023)), no monitoring is required, given the conservation status of the roost.

Timetable of works

The demolition of Caewern House will be completed between March 2026 (once licence received) and June 2026.

I Declaration

I declare that should a licence be granted, the work as proposed in this Method Statement will be strictly adhered to. I understand that any deviation from the works as proposed in this Method Statement without agreement from NRW would result in a breach of the licence.			
<i>NB. Applicants should note that it is an offence under regulation 59 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 to knowingly or recklessly provide false information in order to obtain a licence.</i>			
Signature of the Applicant		Date	02/12/25
<i>For electronic submissions please insert an electronic signature above or place an x in the box opposite to confirm agreement with the declarations above.</i>			☒
Full name in BLOCK LETTERS	JONATHAN COUZENS		
Signature of the Ecologist		Date	08/12/25
<i>For electronic submissions please insert an electronic signature above or place an x in the box opposite to confirm agreement with the declarations above.</i>			☒
Full name in BLOCK LETTERS	JULIAN ARTHUR		

References

Institution of Lighting Professionals. 2023. Guidance Note 08/23: 'Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night' ILP Guidance Note. Available at: <https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland, version 1.1, CIEEM, Winchester

Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023). UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats. Version 1.1. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.

Annexes

Reports

- 17269_R02a_Bat Survey Report_19052025_HM
- Bat Survey Report_IG2022CaewernHouse

Plans

- 17269_P02_Bat Survey Plan_28012025
- 17269_P03_Site Location Plan_1_10,000_28012025
- 17269_P04_Site Location Plan_1_25,000_28012025
- 17269_P05_Site Context_28012025
- 17269_P06_Proposed Bat Box Location Plan_28012025
- TC22110 LA1 Landscape Strategy v8 (20.12.2024)