Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) and Dusk Emergence Survey

Glamorgan Services, Rockfield, Longford Road, Neath Abbey, SA10 7HQ

Survey conducted September 2025, August 2026



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Date completed Version 1	07-10-2025
Date reviewed & approved	25-10-2025
Version 2 completed	05-08-2026
Version 2 reviewed and approved	05-08-2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background/Introduction
• A preliminary roost assessment (PRA) bat and nesting bird survey was carried out of the office building of Glamorgan Services, Rockfield, Longford Road, Neath Abbey, SA10 7HQ (Grid reference SS 73701 97708). • The PRA survey was carried out on the 15th of September 2025, and further dusk emergence surveys were conducted on the 29th September 2025 and a follow up survey completed on the 3rd August 2026.
Building Description
• The property is a two-storey office building plus a basement level. • It is constructed using mainly stone with a pitched, concrete tile roof. • There is a large, unused loft space present lined with bitumen felt.
Site Description
• The office building is located within a hardstanding industrial estate with patches of mature shrubs, some narrow treelines and a railway line nearby. • The property is located near fields, small areas of trees and woodland as well , industrial warehouses and residential homes.
Proposed Development
• The proposed development includes the conversion of the loft space into a third floor for additional office space. • Skylights are to be installed into the existing roof.
PRA Survey Results
• No evidence of bats was found during the internal and external building inspection. • Potential bat access points included gaps under the entire length of ridge tiles, gaps under roof tiles, and gaps under fascia boards. • Potential bat roosting areas included gaps under fascia boards, gaps under felt flashing, the loft space, and gaps between the bitumen felt and roof tiles. • The Bat Roost Trigger Index returned a score of 0.60, falling in the category of 'moderate' roosting potential.
Dusk Emergence Survey Results
• No bats were noted to emerge from the building during either emergence survey. • One common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) was recorded continuously flying up to the soffits at the rear of the building.
Evidence of Nesting Birds
• Bird droppings were found on the external windowsill and on the wall of the front aspect of the property. • Artificial swallow cups are already installed on the rear aspect of the property underneath the soffits.
Recommendations
• No further surveys are needed or recommended.
EPS Licence
• As the building is not a bat roost, a European Protected Species (EPS) licence will not be required from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) prior to any further works conducted on the property.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Grounded Trees & Ecology was commissioned to assess the bat roosting potential of the property to inform a planning application with Neath Port Talbot Council Local Planning Authority (LPA).

A preliminary roost assessment (PRA) bat survey and nesting bird survey was carried out of the office buildings of Glamorgan Services, Rockfield, Longford Road, Neath Abbey, SA10 7HQ (Grid reference SS 73701 97708). The PRA survey was carried out on the 15th of September 2025, and a subsequent dusk emergence survey was carried out on the 29th of September 2025.

1.2 Building Description

The property is a two-storey office building, with the front section being single-storey and the rear section dropping down into a basement level. It is constructed using mainly stone with an external render on the front aspect and half of the side aspects only. The roof is dual-pitched and covered with concrete tiles and concrete ridge tiles. There are uPVC fascia boards on the front and rear aspects, uPVC bargeboards on the gable ends, uPVC cladding on one half of one side aspect only, and uPVC soffits on the rear aspect only. Scaffolding has been erected around the side and rear aspects of the property.

Internally, there is a large loft space lined with bitumen felt with exposed rafters and ceiling joists. The loft space is dark, draughty, and is not used. Due to safety concerns, the loft space could not be thoroughly inspected.

	
Front northwest facing aspect of the property	Rear southeast facing aspect of the property

	
Side southwest facing aspect of the property	Side northeast facing aspect of the property
	
Large loft space	Bitumen felt lining

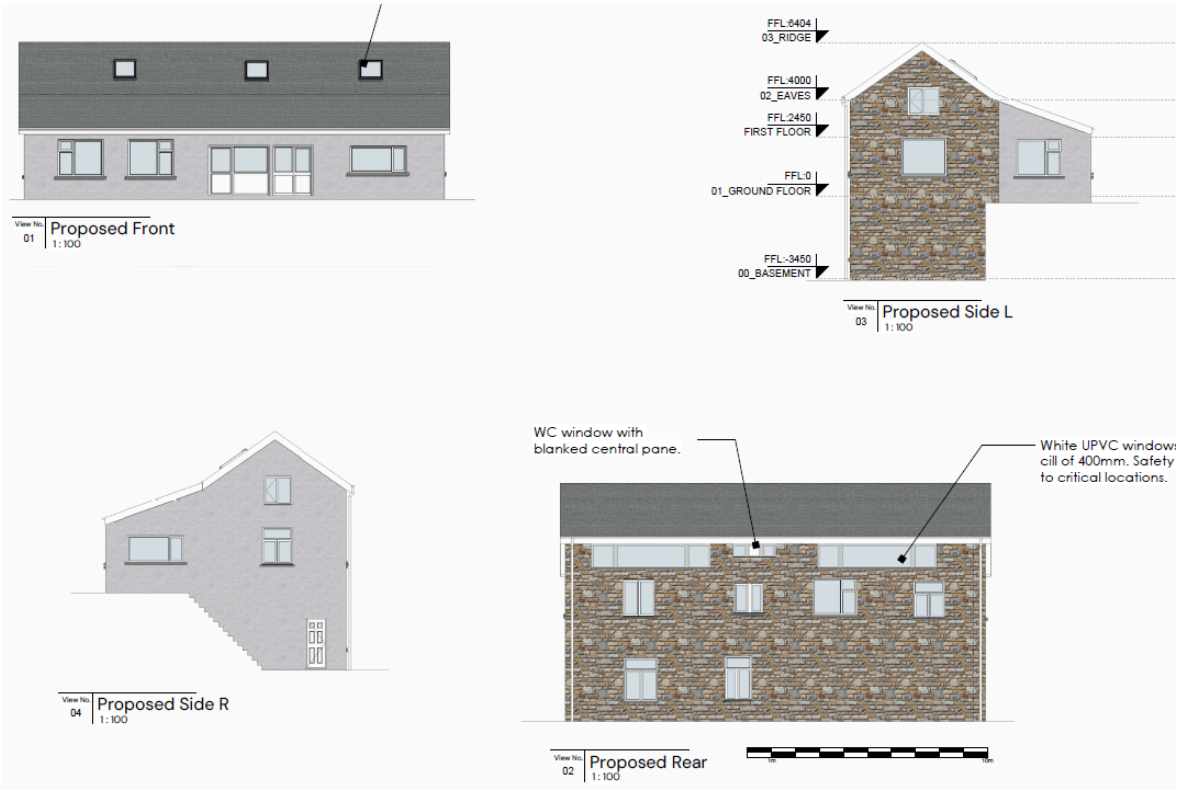
1.3 Site Description

The property is located in an urban area on a hardstanding industrial estate. There are shrubs to the side and rear of the property, narrow treelines and a railway line opposite the front of the office. The industrial estate is located near a high street and is surrounded by residential homes, industrial warehouses, and some fields and nearby small woodlands.

	
Aerial view of the site from Google Maps	Aerial view of the site from Google Maps

1.4 Proposed Development

The plans involve the conversion of the loft space into a third floor of offices. Skylights will be installed into the existing roof.



Proposed elevations

1.5 Aims of the Survey

A preliminary roost assessment survey was conducted to identify signs of roosting bats and assess potential roosting areas within the building. The survey also included a search for nesting birds. An assessment was then made to determine any potential impacts on any protected species.

One dusk emergence survey was conducted at the property to determine whether bats were roosting within the building and to identify any bat species commuting and foraging in the surrounding area (activity surveys). Where roosting was confirmed, the surveys aimed to establish the species present, estimate the number of individuals using the structure, and characterise the type of roost (roost characterisation surveys).

1.6 General information About Bats and Buildings

External features of the building can potentially be used as roosting sites by e.g., Pipistrelle bat species. Pipistrelle bats are the most common bats out of the British species, and they

are known to roost in buildings utilising areas such as cavity walls, soffits and fascia boards and in-between tiles/slates and roofing felt. It is not practical to carry out a full physical examination of such building features, which is why the dusk emergence surveys will have to be carried out during summer months (May-September) when the bats are fully active. Access points as small as 1-2 centimetres can be used by bats to enter and exit their roosting sites. Most dwelling houses will have gaps of such size in roof areas as ventilation of the building would otherwise not be possible.

Internal areas such as loft spaces can potentially be utilised by bat species such as e.g. Brown Long-eared bats or Serotine bats, as these types of bats are known to commonly roost inside loft spaces. This can generally be discovered via droppings inside the loft, as the droppings will stay protected from weather elements.

Lesser and Greater horseshoe bats also roost inside buildings and generally require a larger sized opening for entry to the interior. They are more commonly found inside disused buildings and outbuildings.

1.7 Legislation Informing Planning Policy

All uk bat species and their roosts are strictly protected under UK law, including:

- **Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)** – It is a criminal offence to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure, disturb or capture bats or to damage, destroy or obstruct access to their roosts.
- **Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended by the 2019 EU Exit Regulations) ['CHSAEU']** – Strengthens legal protection by requiring mitigation measures for development projects affecting bats.
- **Planning Policy (National and Local)** – Local Planning Authorities must consider the presence of protected species, such as bats, when assessing planning applications.

Additionally, all wild birds and their nests are protected under the **Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)**, making it an offence to disturb active nests during the breeding season.

Developers must ensure compliance with these laws, and where bat roosts are identified, a **European Protected Species (EPS) Licence** from **Natural Resources Wales (NRW)** will be required before any work begins.

For further guidance, refer to:

- **Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists (Collins, 2023)**
- **Natural Resources Wales Guidance on EPS Licensing**

2. METHODOLOGY

The survey was carried out in accordance with the methods described in the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2023).

2.1 Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) Methodology

A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) bat survey of the building was carried out on the 15th of September 2025 by Lee Gwyther and Bethan Lygo, searching for evidence of bats in the form of live or dead bats, droppings, urine staining and insect feeding remains, e.g. moth and butterfly wings.

An LED Lenser L7 spotlight was used to illuminate the internal space and check possible bat droppings. The exterior of the building was surveyed for bat roosting potential and for droppings on walls and window ledges. The building was examined internally and externally using zoom photography to identify structural features that hold bat roosting potential. An endoscope (Teslong TD40S) was used for spot checks of internal and external gaps. A telescopic ladder was used as necessary.

2.2 Bat Roosting Suitability

The bat roosting suitability was assessed according to the scale negligible, low, moderate or high. This assessment was used then to determine the number of surveys conducted for the buildings.

To support our professional judgement and provide additional justification for our assessment, we also applied the Bat Roost Trigger Index (TI) (Underhill-Day, Swift Ecology, 2017) - a numerical value that corresponds to a property's suitability for bats, falling between 0 (no suitability) and 1 (highly suitable). The TI quantifies factors such as the property's location, surrounding habitat and environmental context, as well as internal and external features that may offer potential roosting opportunities for bats.

Negligible **< 0.5**	This category describes buildings of a simple structure where all structural features can easily be surveyed with a visual inspection or investigated with an endoscope. For example, a simple wooden garden shed, a corrugated metal barn or precast concrete modular garage may fit this category.
Low **0.5 - 0.6**	This category is used to describe simple structure buildings that have very few potential bat roosting features, but all areas cannot be surveyed visually or investigated with an endoscope.
Moderate **0.6 - 0.7**	This category is used to describe buildings that have some potential to support roosting bats, but the structure is considered less than ideal in some way. Some but not all modern industrial and agricultural buildings may fit this category if they are of a simple structure with single layer walls and unlined roof areas

High **> 0.7**	This category is used to describe buildings with multiple internal and external structural features suitable for roosting bats. Most brick built dwelling houses, timber or stone barns will be covered by this category. Features that may be used by bats are e.g. loft spaces and other smaller roof voids, gaps in-between clay tiles or slates and the roofing felt, cavities under ridge tiles, under soffits fascia and barge boards, by the brickwork of chimney stacks, under lead flashing, inside cavities of flat roofs, under wall hanging tiles, behind wooden cladding, inside cavity walls or other smaller wall cavities, in gaps and cracks of stone walls, and inside mortise and tenon joints of wooden structural beams
Confirmed	This category is used to describe buildings where evidence of bats such as live or dead bats or bat droppings are present, or where there are records of a bat roost in the building within the last 5 years

2.3 Survey for Nesting Birds

A visual search was undertaken for active bird nests, as well as any signs which might indicate either past or current nesting, such as inactive nests, bird skeletons, guano, birds carrying nesting material, food items, eggshells and calling chicks.

2.4 Dusk Emergence Surveys Methodology

Two dusk emergence surveys of the building were conducted, lasting two hours, by one surveyor - Fynley Lygo - on the 29th of September 2025, and by the same surveyor on the 3rd August 2026.

The surveys started half an hour before the official sunset and were completed 1½ hour after sunset. The roof areas and other potential access points were observed, with bat passes recorded with Anabat Scout bat detectors. A combination of patrolling and stationary surveying was used to be able to view the roof areas from different angles and to get as close as possible to all potential access points around the building. Observations of the building and roof areas were made from different angles with the surveyor moving closer to the walls as it got darker as some species (Brown long-eared bat) calls can only be recorded from approximately 3-5 metres away.

Table 1: Weather Conditions

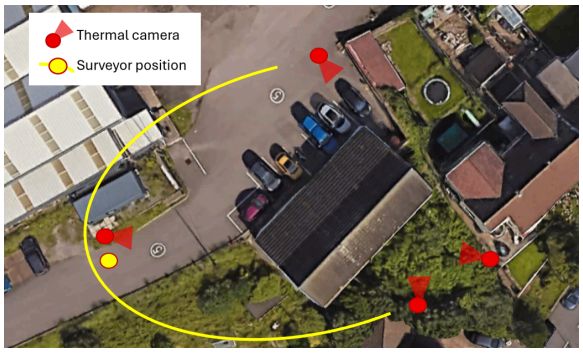
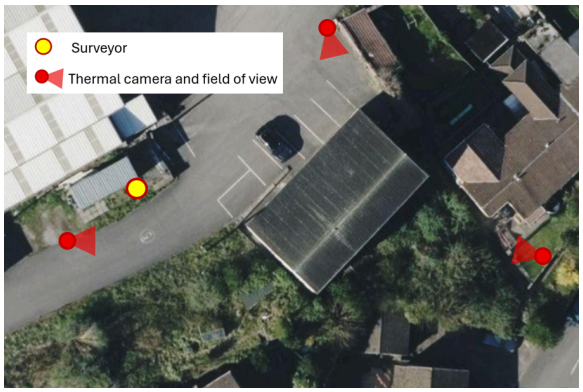
Date	Sunset	Cloud Cover	Rain	Wind Speed	Start Temp	End Temp
29-09-25	18:58	90%	0%	2 mph	13 °C	12 °C
03-08-26	21:02	40%	0%	3 mph	22 °C	21 °C

2.5 Infrared Video Camera Equipment

Night vision aids were used in adherence with interim professional guidance. The guidance justifies the use of dusk surveys only (no dawn re-entry surveys needed), providing that sufficient information has been gained from the surveys. All aspects of the building, including all potential rooting features and potential access points were covered by a camera's field of view and remained visible on camera screens following sunset. Each camera was paired with a bat detector to match emergences with bat calls for species identification.

Night Vision Aids used on surveys for continuous recording throughout the evenings	
Guide TK612 Thermal Cameras	Thermal Master DV2 Thermal Cameras

Surveyor and Camera Positions

	
Surveyor and camera position 29th September	Example of camera view, 29th September
	
Surveyor and camera position 3rd August	Example of camera view, 3rd August

2.6 Sound Analysis

The bat sound recordings made during the surveys were analysed using Anabat Insight software v2.3. All bat call recordings were compared to published reference material such as

British Bat Calls Jon Russ (2012) and to a private reference library of previous recordings made from known bat species.

Bat Detectors Used
Anabat Scouts

2.7 Night Vision Video Recordings

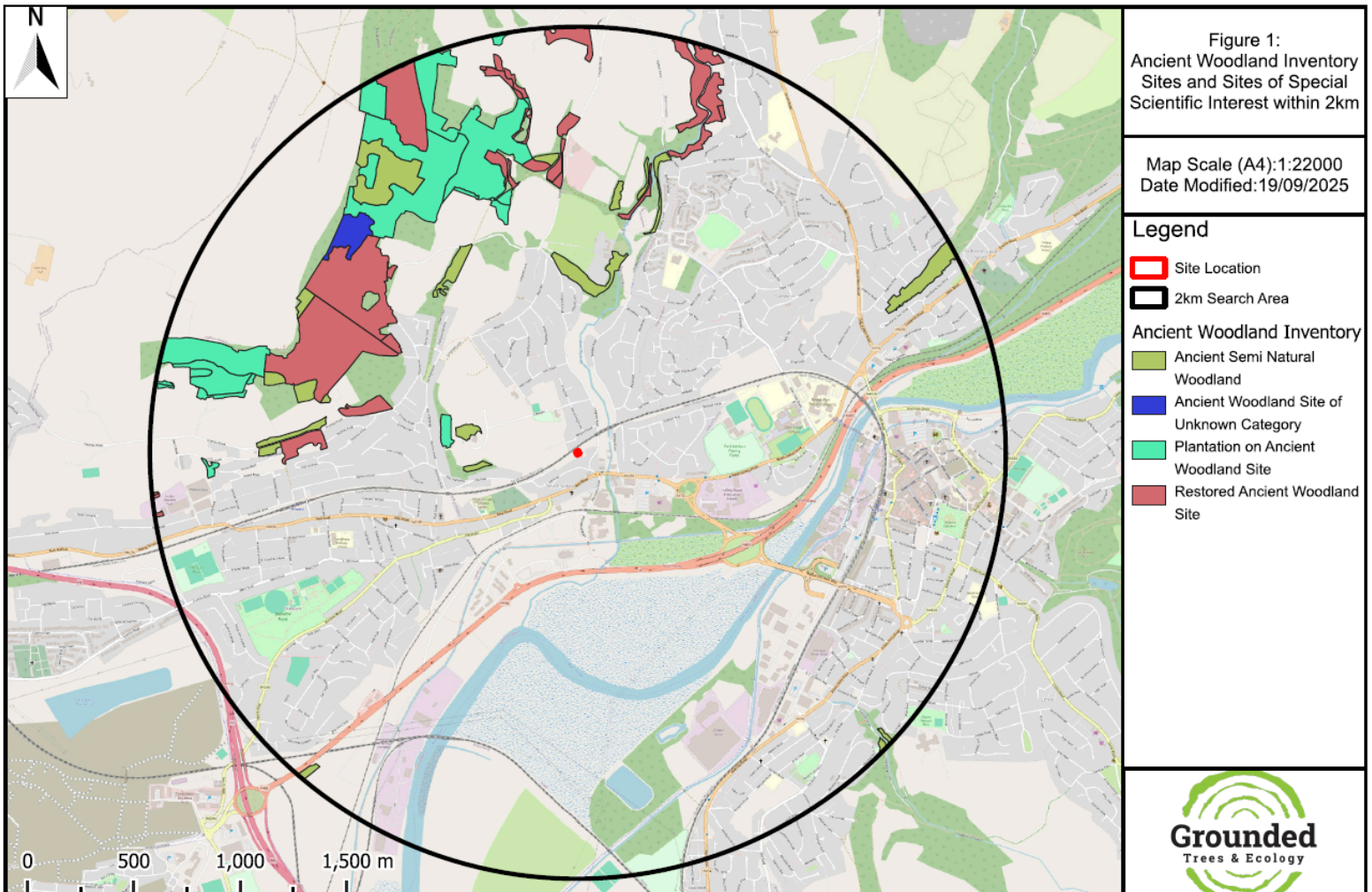
The video footage was reviewed on a PC screen at a later stage using VLC Media Player to confirm emergences and access/egress points identified by patrolling surveyors as well as to identify any emergences not spotted during the evening survey. All of the footage was checked for the whole recording with close review for any late emerging species during the darker part of the surveys. Camera footage is reviewed manually by an experienced surveyor. Motion detection software is not used due to the inaccuracy of such softwares.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Protected Sites

There are no SSSi or SACs designated for bats within 10km and no other SSSi or SACs within 2km.

Statutory Protected Sites Within 2km:



Ancient Woodlands

There are parcels of ancient semi natural woodland, ancient woodland of an unknown category, plantations on ancient woodland sites, and restored ancient woodland sites within 2 km.

3.2 Artificial Lighting Levels

The site is assessed as being within rural zone E2 of low district brightness (Institute of Lighting Professionals, 2021). This zone is described as: village or relatively dark outer suburban location. Although located in an urban area, the industrial estate is not well lit with streetlights. There are motion sensor security lights on the front aspect of the building.

3.3 Evidence of Bats

No evidence of bats was found during the internal and external building inspection.

3.4 Potential Bat Access Points and Roosting Areas

Identified potential bat access points included gaps under ridge tiles along the entire length of the roof, gaps under concrete roof tiles, and gaps under fascia boards.

The gaps under the fascia boards on the front aspect of the property were endoscopically inspected. Inspection revealed relatively deep crevices that act as potential bat roosting areas. Crevices were relatively clean, with cobwebs appearing fresh. Other potential bat roosting areas included gaps under the felt flashing, the loft space, gaps in the stonework on the rear aspect of the property, and gaps between roof tiles and bitumen felt lining. A draught could be felt in the loft space.

Examples of Potential Bat Access Points:



Gaps along ridge tiles and under roof tiles



Gaps under fascia boards



Gaps under fascia boards



Lifted felt flashing



Gaps in stonework

3.5 Bat Roost Trigger Index

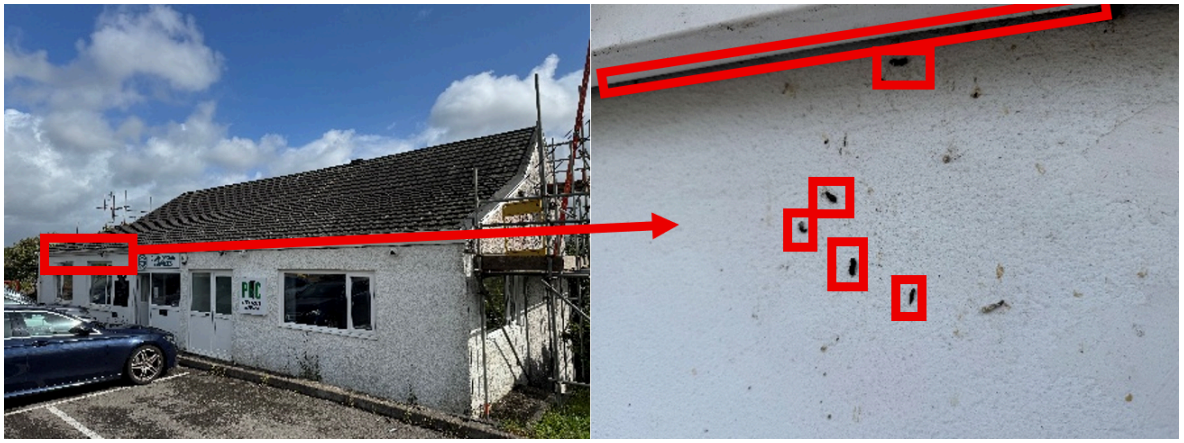
The Bat Roost Trigger Index for the property returned a score of 0.60, falling in the category of ‘moderate’ bat roosting suitability.

3.6 Evidence of Birds

Bird droppings were found around the windowsill and on the wall below a crevice between the fascia and the wall on the front aspect of the building. Several artificial swallow cups are already installed on the rear aspect of the property, underneath the soffits.



Artificial swallow cups on rear of the building



Example of bird droppings found on the front of the building

3.7 Dusk Emergence Survey Results

Table 2: Summary of Dusk Emergence Survey Results

	Survey 1: 29-09-2025	**Survey 2: 03-08-2026**
Emergences	No bats were recorded emerging from the building.	No bats were recorded emerging from the building.
Commuting/ Foraging Routes	Common pipistrelles (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) were recorded foraging to the rear of the property. One common pipistrelle continually flew up to the soffits at the rear of the property.	Common pipistrelles were recorded foraging at the rear of the property. Common and soprano (*P. pygmaeus*) pipistrelle passes were recorded at the front of the property. A noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*) overhead pass was recorded later into the evening.
Bat Activity	Overall, low levels of bat activity were noted throughout the survey.	Overall, moderate levels of bat activity were noted throughout the survey.

4. EVALUATION

4.1 Discussion of Results

No evidence of bats was found during the internal and external building inspection. Numerous potential bat access points were identified, including gaps under the entire length of ridge tiles and gaps under roof tiles. Potential bat roosting areas included large gaps

under fascia boards that were relatively clean, indicating the possibility of recent usage. Other potential bat roosting areas included the large loft space, in which a draught could be felt, indicating the presence of gaps into the loft space.

As such, the property was deemed to have moderate bat roosting potential, supported by a TI score of 0.60.

No bats were noted to emerge from the property during the dusk emergence surveys. One common pipistrelle was recorded interacting with the rear of the building, flying up to the scaffolding and the soffits on the rear aspect of the building.

Based on the results of the surveys, the building is not deemed to be a bat roost.

4.2 Suitability for Summer Roosts

The bat roosting suitability of the stables was assessed according to the scale negligible, low, moderate or high (or confirmed bat roost) and the building was deemed to have moderate bat roosting potential.

Suitability for different types of bats:

- Moderate suitability for use by crevice-dwelling bats, as there were several crevices that could act as roosting areas.
- Moderate suitability for use by bats that roost inside loft spaces, as the property had a large, undisturbed loft space with access points.
- Negligible suitability for use by horseshoe bat species that require large access points to fly through, as the property had no such large access points.

4.3 Suitability for Winter Roosts

The property was deemed to have hibernation potential in gaps in the stonewalls. However, it was not deemed practical to conduct surveys on this part of the building.

Hibernation is deemed to be less likely if a building is not identified as a summer roost.

4.7 Constraints

Survey Constraints: Due to safety concerns, the loft space could not be thoroughly inspected.
The scaffolding already erected around the office building partially obscured the view of cameras used throughout the dusk survey. The rear of the roof could not be observed throughout the dusk emergence survey due to its height.

Biological Records Data Search: In line with CIEEM's Guidelines for Accessing and Using Biodiversity Data (2020), a local records search from the last 10 years was conducted within 2 km of the site.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The building was not deemed to be a bat roost. As such, no further surveys are deemed necessary.

5.1 Longevity Period of Report

This report is valid for 18 months. A licence or planning application should ideally be submitted within this time and always using the most up to date survey data. Following Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2023), an updated survey may be required if there is evidence and or conditions have changed since the last survey was completed.

5.2 Requirement for a European Protected Species licence

As the building is not deemed to be a bat roost, a European Protected Species (EPS) licence will not be required from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) prior to any further works conducted on the property.

6. REFERENCES

BCT (2022). *Interim Guidance Note: Use of night vision aids for bat emergence surveys and further comment on dawn surveys.* Bat Conservation Trust, London.

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7. Surveyor Experience

Lee Gwyther – Lee holds a Class 2 bat licence in both Wales (NRW Ref: S095579/1) and England (NE Ref: 2020-46267-CLC-CLS) and has personally held EPS licences for a wide range of species including Natterer's, whiskered, Brandt's, Daubenton's, serotine, brown long-eared, lesser horseshoe and soprano and common pipistrelle bats. He has also been named on EPS licences for barbastelle, Bechstein's and greater horseshoes. He has extensive experience of all surveying methods and making assessments of a wide range of building types from domestic to commercial and agricultural. Experience of subterranean cave and mines as well as other structures such as bridges and hibernation and swarming sites. Lee has designed, implemented and installed mitigation for a range of bat species. As an experienced tree climber has partaken in long-term monitoring schemes of maternity roosts bat roosts in trees for barbastelle and bechstein's and has handling experience of 15 of the UK's bat species. Lee has been a registered bat carer with BCT for the past six years, covering South and West Wales.

Bethan Lygo (preferred name: Fynley) - Fynley is a graduate ecologist, holding a first class with honours Bachelor's degree in zoology from Swansea University. Throughout their degree, they have conducted bat dusk emergence surveys in South Wales and have volunteered with local bat monitoring schemes. They have been working for Grounded Trees & Ecology, frequently conducting PRA building inspections and dusk emergence surveys for the past year, and are working towards earning a bat licence.

End Of Report