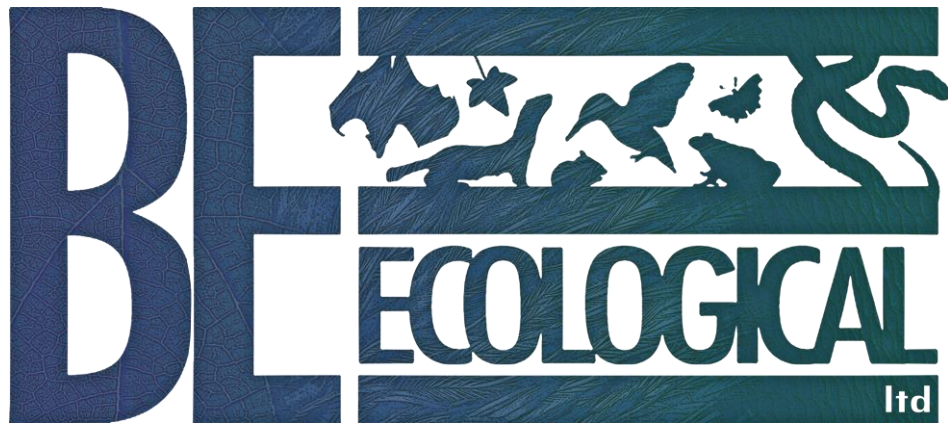




**CAEDRAW PRIMARY SCHOOL, 7 CAEDRAW ROAD, MERTHYR
TYDFIL**

**BAT SURVEY
ISSUE 1, VERSION A**

AUGUST 2022

MTCBC

Caedraw Primary School

Bat Survey Report

Document control

Issue	Author	Checked	Approved	Date
1	BE	BE		03.08.22

Contents Amendment Record

This report has been issued and amended as follows:

Issue	Revision	Description	Approved by	Date
1	A	Minor amendments	BE	03.08.22

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is proposed to remove a metal sheet classroom and replace it with an extension at Caedraw Primary School, Merthyr Tydfil.

An initial bat inspection survey was undertaken in May 2022. The results indicated that the areas of the building to be affected by the proposed development are of low potential for roosting bats and as such a single emergence survey was undertaken.

The surveys identified bats roosting within the main school building, however, the areas to be affected by the proposed extension will not impact on these roosts. No bats were identified in close proximity to the area where proposed classroom extension will be erected.

A European Protected Species Licence will not be required in this instance unless bats or evidence of bats are discovered during the works. To safeguard this unlikely eventuality, works to the roof will be carried out in accordance with a method statement and supervision by an experienced licensed bat ecologist.

No evidence of breeding birds was found on the exterior or interior of the building.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

BE ECOLOGICAL LTD was commissioned by MTCBC to undertake an initial bat inspection survey and subsequent activity survey of a garage at Caedraw Primary School, Merthyr Tydfil in support of a planning application to convert the building to a residential dwelling.

This report includes the findings of the aforementioned bat activity surveys undertaken in the appropriate season.

The surveys were undertaken in line with the current guidance on standards for bat surveys (Bat Conservation Trust, 2016¹).

1.2 Site description

The building subject of this survey is located at Caedraw Primary School, Merthyr Tydfil (Figures 1 and 2). The property is a typical 1970's/1980's brick/block built school beneath a felted flat roof.

The area that will be affected by the proposed plans (boxed yellow) is to the north east of the school. Generally the building is in good order, fascias are of uPVC. There is currently an existing metal sheet add on to the school that is bolted to the wall at eaves level.

The property is situated within enclosed school grounds with mature trees surrounding the boundaries of the site. The River Taff is found to the south and west of the school. There is good connectivity to the wider landscape.

¹ *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists - Good Practice Guidelines* (Collins, J (Ed). BCT, 2016)



Figure 1: Detailed view of the school (arrowed red) (area to be affected by development boxed yellow) (Google maps 2022)

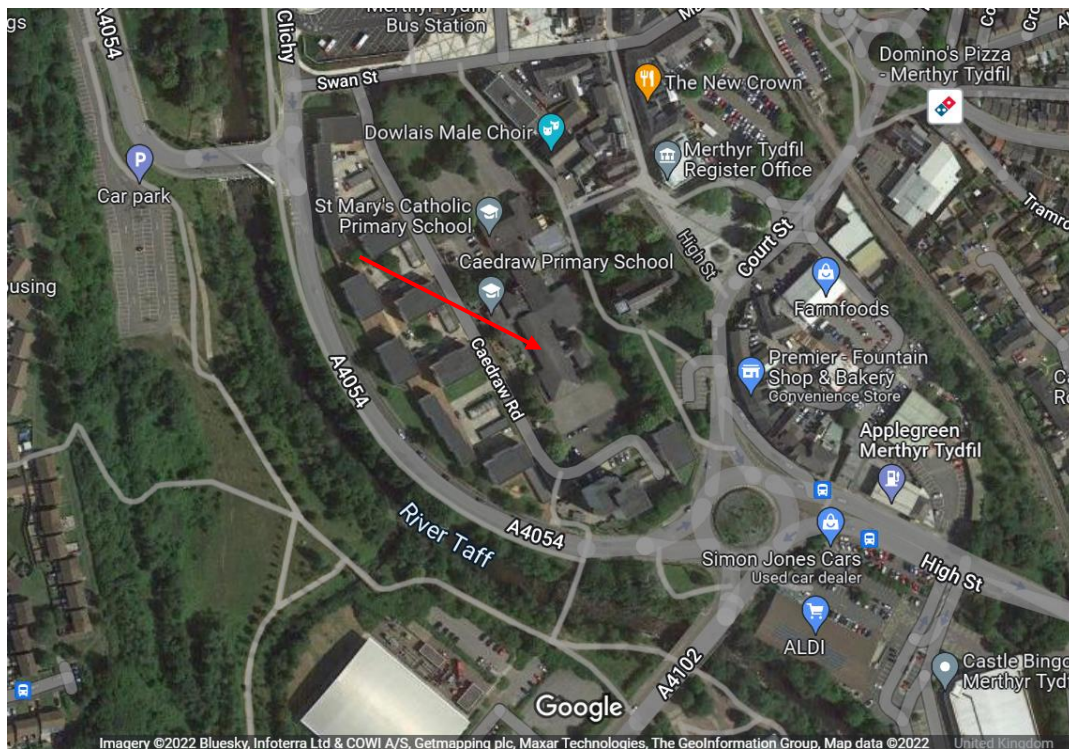
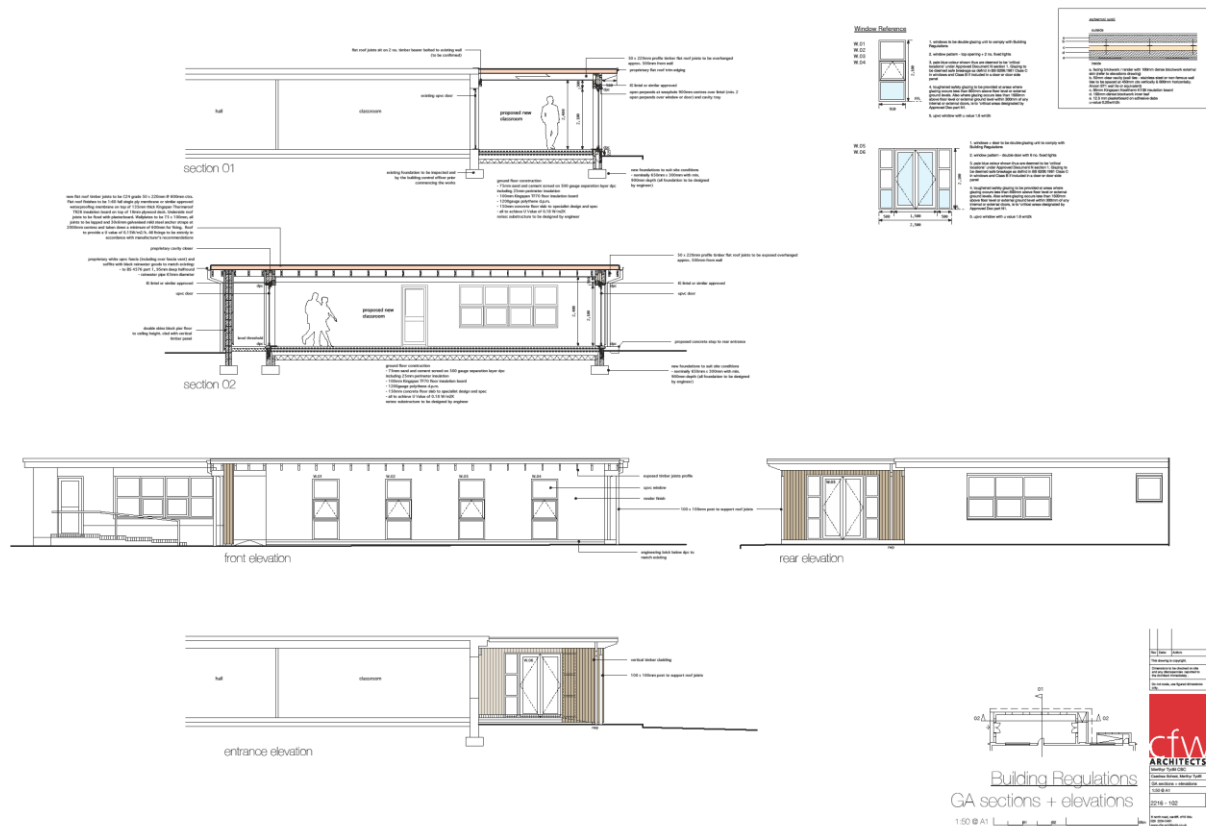


Figure 2: View of wider landscape surrounding the building (property arrowed red)

1.3 Proposed development

It is proposed to erect a classroom extension.



2 LEGISLATION & POLICIES

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

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) 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.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Data Search

The South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBReC) were formerly requested to supply a Bat and Roof-nesting Birds (BARB) survey for the site (0223-327). The survey to provide; bat records within a 2km buffer, roof nesting birds within 150m buffer plus a list of all Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and sites of Special of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designated for bat species within a 10km site buffer.

3.2 Survey Objectives

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

3.3 Survey Summary

The bat survey comprised of three parts:

- Part 1- Initial bat inspection survey
- Part 2- A data search
- Part 3- A single activity survey

3.4 Surveyor Information

The survey was run 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 six 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 Evans was assisted during the activity surveys by Stephen Shutt and Sylvia Sanyalou. Stephen is an experienced licensed ecologist and Sylvia has undertaken a number of surveys with BE Ecological Ltd and is currently training to be an ecologist.

3.5 Internal & External Inspection

An initial inspection survey was carried out on 7th May 2020 to search all buildings, both 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 roof areas and fascia boards etc; where no safe access was available the survey was conducted using, close focus binoculars and/or a high powered lamp.

3.6 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.

3.6.1 Survey 1- 5th July 2022

A dusk survey was carried out on 5th July 2022 using two surveyors ,positioned in such a way that as much of the building was visible to surveyors as possible. Surveyors were equipped with cameras and Batlogger M detectors.



Figure 3: Approximate surveyor locations

3.7 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.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Data Search

There site is not within 10km of either a SSSI or SAC that has been designated for bat species within Wales.

A total of 98 records were returned within the data search. The closest roosting record is of a pipistrelle and brown long-eared bat roost approximately 800m from the site. Other records in the wider vicinity include species such as pipistrelle, myotis sp., noctule, lesser horseshoe and daubentons.

23 bird records were returned within the data search. The closest of which refer to swift, pied wagtail and great tit, approximately 250m from the site.

4.2 Inspection survey

4.2.1 External survey results

The survey carried out by BE Ecological Ltd revealed no droppings or evidence of bats on the exterior of the building, however, access and roosting potential for bats was identified in the form of:

- Potentially small gaps beneath fascia and felt overhang

Please see appended plates for photographs of the property exterior. Other than these areas, the building is well sealed with no obvious gaps. Please note whilst there are small gaps present, there is a timber batten beneath the felt and fascias at eaves level, preventing ingress into the building (area to be affected by the proposals) at the majority of locations. There were no suitable access points within the metal classroom to be dismantled.

As such, the property was categorised as being of low potential for roosting bats and further emergence/re-entry surveys were recommended.

A single sparrow was seen on the roof of the main house.

4.2.2 Internal survey results

There is no internal space to inspect. The ceilings inside the flat roof area that the extension will be tied into are suspended. There is no access into the void above. The metal sheet classroom is open from floor to ridge and currently used as a temporary classroom. No bats or evidence of bats were found at this location.

4.3 Activity surveys

The surveys were undertaken as per the table below:

4.4 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 15.07.22	21:26	Start	21:05	18	Low	30%	Dry evening, insects flying
		End	23:30	18	Low	15%	

4.5 Activity Survey Results

4.5.1 Survey 1- 15th July 2022

A total of three species were heard throughout the survey, noctule, common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle.

The first bat heard was a common pipistrelle, the bat was seen exiting from beneath the fascia of the flat roof, a level above the area that the proposed classroom will be tied in to. This was shortly followed by a further two common pipistrelles.

Soprano and common pipistrelle activity was intermittent throughout the course of the survey with bats flying back and forth the tree line to the north east and the boundaries of the site. No bats emerged from any of the areas to be affected by the proposed works on this date.



Figure 4: Location of identified common pipistrelle roost and flight lines

4.6 Identified Roosts

4.6.1 Survey 1

The school was identified as a roost for three common pipistrelles on this date. However, the area to be affected by the proposed works was not confirmed as a bat roost.

4.7 Conclusion

Overall levels of bat activity at the site were relatively high at the site with noctule, common and soprano pipistrelle bats heard. Whilst there are common pipistrelles roosting within the main building, the areas to be affected by the proposed classroom extension are minimal. No bats were observed roosting in this location. The new building will not destroy or dismantle any of the existing school roof, it will only overlap on the north eastern elevation only.

Based on the current evidence, it is considered that mitigation and an NRW development licence will not be required unless bats or evidence of bats are encountered during the works.

In addition to the above, the proposed works do not impact any of the potential access points identified. The work is only to replace the existing roof lights with dormer windows and the tie in an extension on the north western pitch.

As such it is considered that the works can proceed providing they are undertaken in line with a method statement and ecological supervision.

4.8 Breeding Birds

No evidence of breeding birds was found throughout the property.

5 INTERPRETATION & IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 Active Season Usage

It is considered that the school is a roost for up to three common pipistrelles, however, the area that will be affected by the proposals

5.2 Hibernation Season Usage

It is unlikely that bats will use the property for hibernation purposes (area to be affected by the proposed works) due to a lack of access points.

5.3 Breeding Birds

No evidence of breeding birds was found throughout the property.

5.4 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.

It is considered unlikely that the property is a bat roost and no evidence of nesting birds was found throughout the property. As such bats and birds are unlikely to be affected by the proposed development.

Mitigation will not be required.

6 ENHANCEMENT

6.1 Bats

A Schwegler 1FF bat box will be attached to the south eastern elevation of the school Should the 1FF prove difficult to source, an eco bat box (crevice box) <https://www.nhbs.com/title?slug=eco-bat-box> will be installed in its place.

6.2 Birds

A Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace or the following <https://www.nhbs.com/sparrow-terrace-nest-box> will be attached to the south western elevation of the property.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1.1 Timing

It is considered that the building is not a bat roost, as such, the work can be undertaken at any time of year.

7.1.2 Timber/roofing materials

It is considered that the building is not a bat roost, as such, restrictions on roofing materials are not required.

7.1.3 Lighting

Potential access points and bat boxes 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 removal of the existing metal sheet classroom and for the tying in of the new extension will be required.

8 METHOD STATEMENT

1. A suitably licenced 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. All suitable bat roosting features will need to be removed by hand (where necessary) and inspected by the onsite bat ecologist.
4. The area that the extension is to be tied into will be checked for the presence of bats by the onsite ecologist.
5. 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.
6. If bats or their signs are found, a EPS licence may be required before works can legally resume.

9 REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust. (2016) *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 (as amended) (HMSO).

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

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

APPENDIX A- SITE PHOTOGRAPHS





