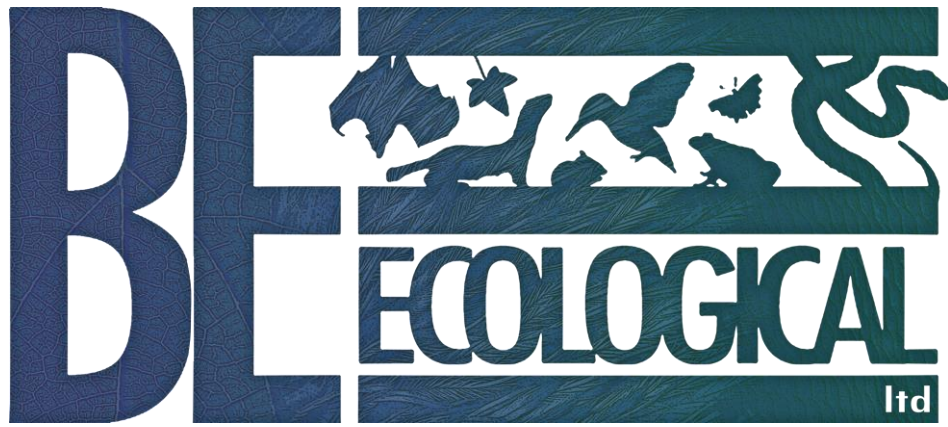




**PROPOSED EXTENSION AT BEDLINOG PRIMARY SCHOOL,
HYLTON TERRACE, BEDLINOG, TREHARRIS, MERTHYR TYDFIL**

**BAT SURVEY
ISSUE 1, VERSION A**

JULY 2021

MTCBC

BEDLINOG PRIMARY SCHOOL**Bat Survey Report**

Document control

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is proposed to extend Bedlinog Primary School, Bedlinog, Merthyr Tydfil

An initial bat inspection survey was undertaken on 22nd June 2021. The results indicated that the area of the main school building to be affected (existing extension) by the proposed works is of low potential for roosting bats and as such a single emergence survey was undertaken. Areas of the main school building which although will not be affected by the development directly, were included within the survey to check for bat activity which may be indirectly affected by the developed. There will be a number of existing windows altered to create doorways and access, however, these do not provide any roosting potential for bats.

In addition to the above, an existing storage unit and a timber shed will be re-roofed and removed respectively. There w

The surveys failed to identify any bats roosting within the buildings to be affected by the proposed works.

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 buildings to be affected.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

BE ECOLOGICAL LTD was commissioned by Mark Evans to undertake an initial bat inspection survey and subsequent activity survey of Bedlinog Primary School in order to extend the building.

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

Bedlinog Primary School is a typical turn of the century stone built structure which has been modified and extended over the years. The modifications have been primarily the replacement of windows with uPVC units and a brick built extension to the north eastern elevation.

The building has a slate roof, the ridge of which is oriented north west to south east. The roof of the school is complex (figures 1& 2).

The extension to the north east is a brick built structure, in the centre of the rear elevation. It is square, approximately 9x9m with a hipped slate roof. Soffits and fascias where present are of uPVC.

The rear of the extension is approximately 1m away from the boundary fence which is set on a stone wall, approximately 2m high.

There is a timber garden shed and a storage unit to the south east of the extension. The storage unit is a pebble dashed panel structure under a corrugated asbestos roof. Fascias where present are of timber.

The surrounding land to the north and north east is typical "fridd" habitat with areas of dense scrub amongst the bracken, tall ruderal vegetation and semi improved grassland. The area directly to the south east and south west of the building is dominated by tarmaced playgrounds with improved grassland, dense scrub and fridd habitat beyond.

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



Figure 1: Detailed view of the school (proposed extension location arrowed red)



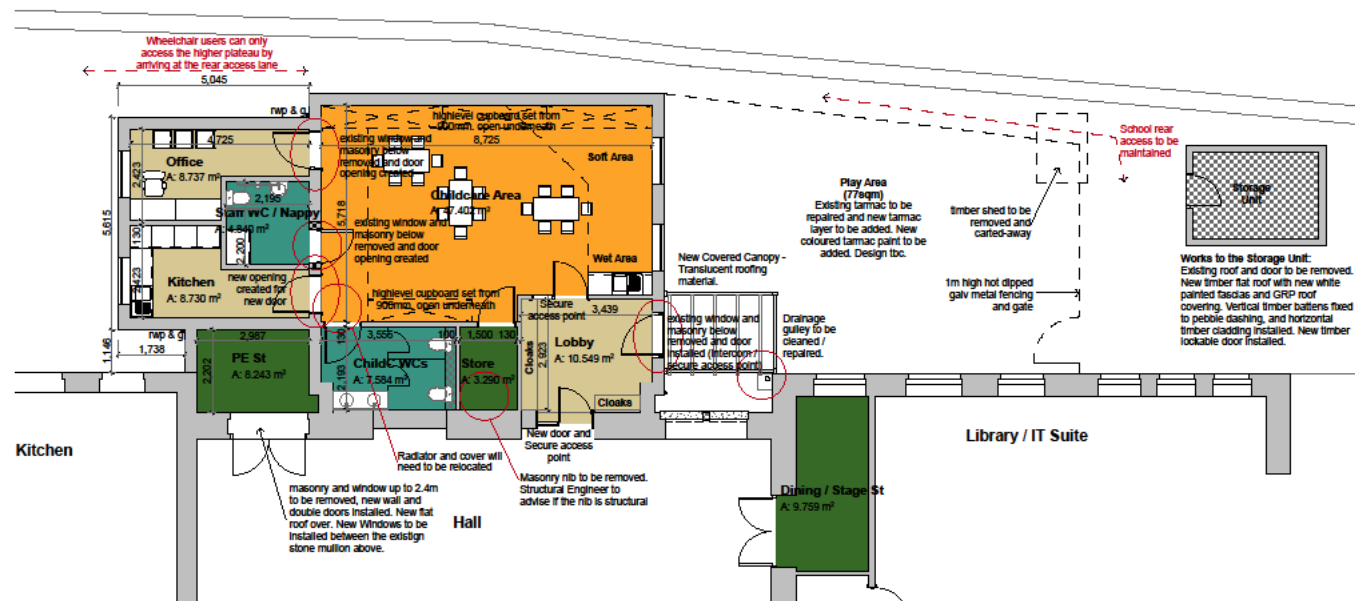
Figure 2: View of wider landscape surrounding the school (property arrowed red)

1.3 Proposed development

It is proposed to extend the existing extension to the north west to create additional space within the school. In addition to this, it is proposed to remove an existing timber garden shed and re-roof an existing storage unit.

PROJECT PLAN: Bedlinog Primary School, Bedlinog, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 1SY. The proposed extension will be used to provide additional space for the school's existing and future needs. The extension will be used to provide additional space for the school's existing and future needs. The extension will be used to provide additional space for the school's existing and future needs.

Rev	Initial	Note	Date
A	dk	Proposed extension with office, toilet and kitchen added as requested by the client on 15/06/2020	02/07/2020
B	dk	Proposed extension increased to accommodate a staff dis wc and nappy change. External fencing added as requested by in client meeting dated on 15/07/2020	05/08/2020
C	dk	New store with flat roof created as requested by the head teacher 01/09/20. Additional external works added - sheds.	02/09/2020
D	dk	Internal dimensions added as requested by the Head Teacher	20/10/2020

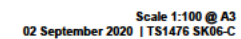
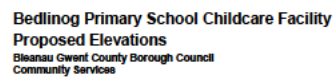
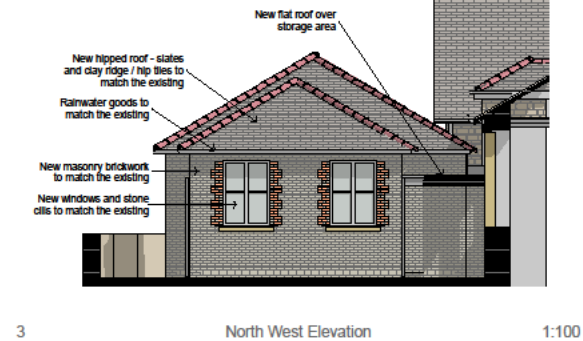


Bedlinog Primary School Childcare Facility
Proposed Floor Plan
Blechnau Gwent County Borough Council
Community Services



Scale 1:100 @ A3
20 October 2020 | TS1476 SK05-D

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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 (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.

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 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 0212-236. 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 was assisted during the surveys by Hugh Dixon. Hugh is an experienced licensed bat ecologist.

3.5 Internal & External Inspection

An initial inspection survey was carried out on 22nd June 2021 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- 22nd June 2021

A dusk survey was carried out on 22nd June using two 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.



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

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

A total of 29 bat records were returned within the data search. Records include species such as common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, noctule, myotis and "chiroptera." The closest record refers to a common pipistrelle in flight, approximately 90m from the site. The closest roosting record is of common pipistrelles roosting 377m from the site.

18 bird records were returned within the data search. The closest of which (91m away) refer to pied wagtail, swallow, blue tit and great tit.

4.2 Inspection survey

4.2.1 External survey results

Please note, the following applies to the rear elevation of the school in close proximity to the proposed extension and the existing extension as these are the only areas that will be affected. The proposed extension will not directly impact the main roof of the school in any way.

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

- A very small gap beneath the fascia on the north east elevation of the extension (debatable as to whether bats could access)
- A small gap beneath the fascia of the south east elevation of the extension (please note, this does not run the full length of the fascia board)

Please see appended plates for photographs of the property exterior. Other than these areas, the building is well sealed with no obvious gaps and no apparent slipped slates on the pitches of the roof. The hip tiles appear to be well cemented.

New doors will be installed in existing windows with only the masonry beneath removed, there are no potential bat access points at these locations with the stone and sills tightly mortared.

The timber shed is a typical single unit garden shed and has no obvious access points for roosting bats.

The storage unit is in a state of disrepair. There are fascias present, however, they are just rotten pieces of wood that would have been used as decoration at some point. The gap beneath the fascia and the wall can be clearly seen and no bats or evidence of bats were noted at this location. There are gaps at eaves level and beneath the ridges of the asbestos, however all of these gaps have been tightly filled with expanding foam.

As such, the timber shed and wood store were classed as being of negligible potential for roosting bats. The existing extension to be affected was categorised as being of low potential for roosting bats and further emergence/re-entry surveys were recommended.

4.2.2 Internal survey results

The main roof of the school was not inspected as it will not be impacted by the proposed works.

There is no access to the roof of the extension, the ceiling within is suspended with only a small height above it.

The storage unit is made of bare concrete, the roof is unlined and all gaps at eaves level are filled with expanding foam. There is a single small hole in the roof where the asbestos has broken or cracked.

No bats or evidence of bats was found in 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 22/06/21	21:36	Start	21:20	16	Low	30%	Dry evening, insects flying
		End	22:50	15	Low	15%	

4.5 Activity Survey Results

4.5.1 Survey 1- 22nd June 2021

The first bat call heard was a common pipistrelle at 21:37, a second common pipistrelle was heard at 21:42. The bats were seen flying very high over the school from south west to north east. Despite ideal bat survey conditions, these were the only bats heard throughout the course of the survey. No further bats were seen and no bats emerged from the proposed extension.

4.6 Identified Roosts

4.6.1 Survey 1

No bats emerged from the building on this date.

4.7 Conclusion

Overall levels of bat activity at the site were extremely low at the site with only two bat calls heard throughout the course of the survey. This was surprising given the amount of vegetation in close proximity to the building under survey. One explanation for this is there are very bright security lights to the rear of the building that appear to be on all night.

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 tie in an extension on the north western pitch of the existing extension.

New doors will be created in the locations of existing windows, with only the masonry beneath this removed. There are no potential bat access points at these locations.

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 within any of the buildings under survey.

5 INTERPRETATION & IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 Active Season Usage

It is considered that the property is not a bat roost.

5.2 Hibernation Season Usage

It is unlikely that bats will use the property for hibernation purposes due to a lack of access points, a lack of summer roosts and the buildings architectural design.

5.3 Breeding Birds

No evidence of breeding birds was found throughout the property. All areas will be checked for the presence of breeding birds prior to works commencing. If at any point an active nest is found, all works will cease until such a time the young have fledged the nest of their own accord.

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.

Compensation will not be required.

6 ENHANCEMENT

6.1 Bats

A Schwegler 1FF bat box will be attached to the north east elevation of the property. 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 eastern elevation of the main school.

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 tiles for the tying in of the 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 (tiles) and inspected by the onsite bat ecologist.
4. The tiles 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.
5. The area that the extension is to be tied into will be checked for the presence of bats by the onsite ecologist.
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. (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

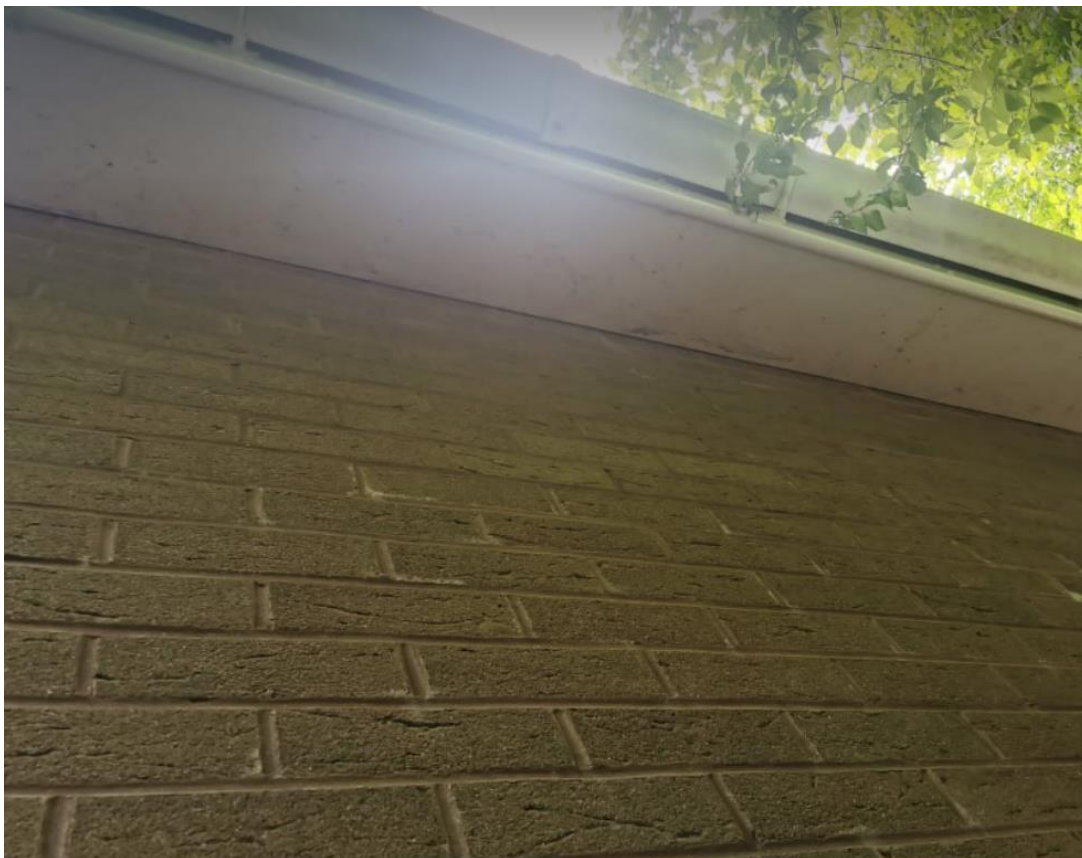
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (HMSO).

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

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

APPENDIX A- SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

Existing extension photographs





Garden shed to be removed

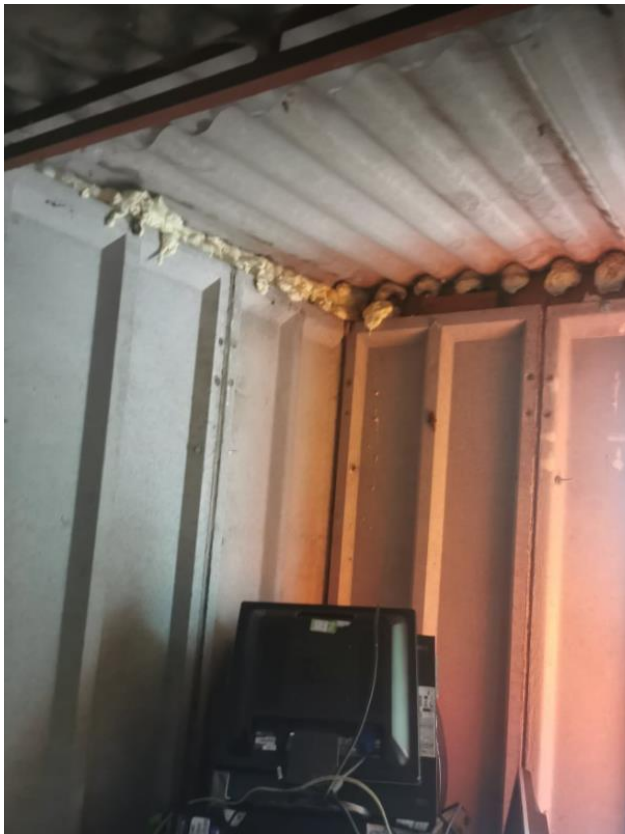


Storage Unit





(please note, lifts in asbestos are filled with expanding foam further in)





Windows to be replaced with doors



Appendix B- Drawings showing enhancements