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Bat Potential Roosting Feature Assessment

Waterside Club, Coracle Way, Carmarthen, Carmarthenshire

W G B James

Final Report

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1 Introduction and site description

1.1 *Introduction*

Kite Ecology was employed by Evans Banks Planning Ltd on behalf of the owner, WGB James, to complete a Bat Potential Roost Feature Assessment of the Waterside Club, Coracle Way, Carmarthen, Carmarthenshire. Under the proposals, the existing building would be converted.

1.2 Desk study

1.2.1 Aerial photographs

The building is situated to the south east of the centre of the market town of Carmarthen, immediately to the north of the River Towy. There is an adjoining building to the east, car parking and builders yard to the west and a road to the north. The building has very limited connectivity to the surrounding habitats which are visible in the aerial photograph in Figure 1.

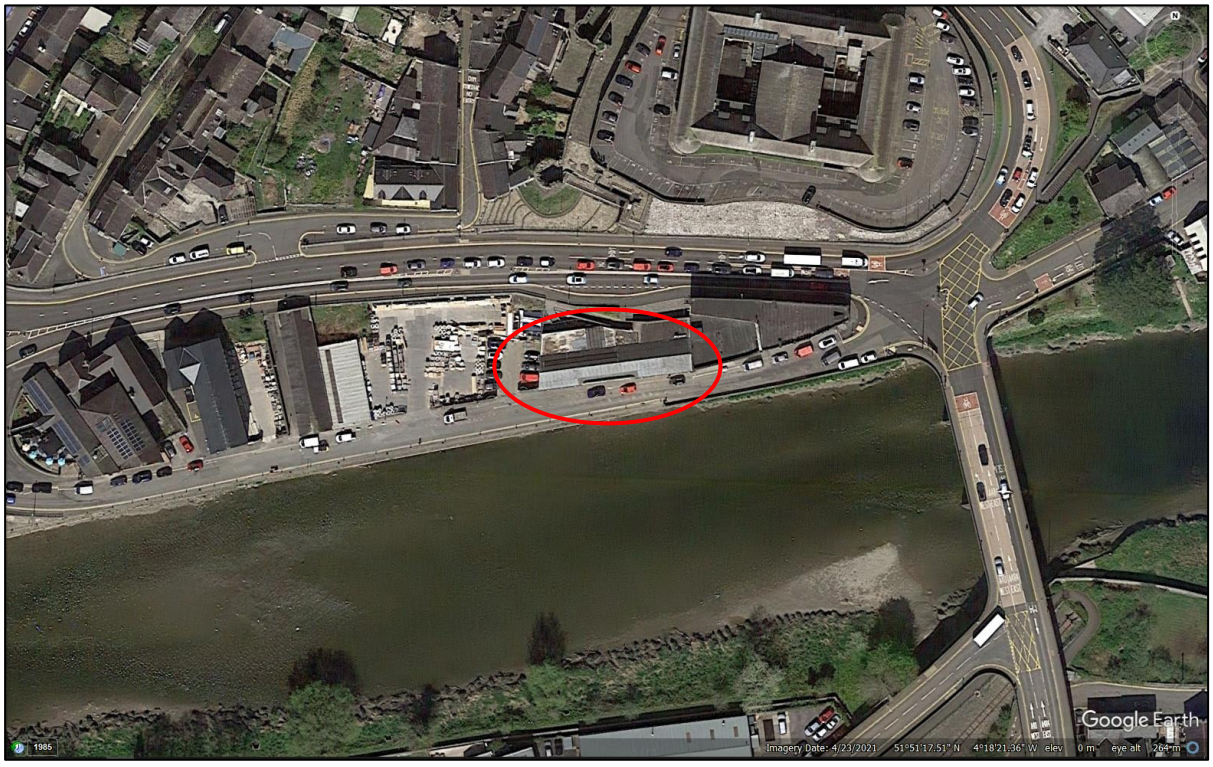

Figure 1. Aerial photograph showing the location of the site.

1.2.2 Site description

The survey relates to a two storey, industrial building that has, most recently, been used as a night club. The original southern section has brick walls that are smooth rendered on the southern elevation and rough rendered on the western gable end (eastern end adjoining adjacent building). It has a pitched, unlined corrugated sheet cement fibre roof, supported on metal trusses. The roof includes skylights so is relatively light internally. There are tight fitting plastic soffits and fascia's on the southern elevation, with metal fascia's on the western gable end. The northern section of the building is single storey, with a flat felt roof.

Figure 2. Southern and western elevations.

Figure 3. Southern and eastern elevations.

Figure 4. Northern elevation.

2 Survey methodology and results

2.1 A visual inspection of the building was undertaken on 12th March 2025. The building was searched thoroughly for any signs of bats including droppings, feeding remains, staining and the bats themselves. Any potential bat access points were also recorded. The weather on the day of the survey was relatively clear with an average temperature of 7˚C and south westerly winds of Force 2-3. All surveys were undertaken by a suitably licensed ecologist who is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management and a Chartered Environmentalist.

2.2 Summary of results

2.2.1 Bats

No evidence of bats was found. All roof coverings are intact. All soffits and fascia's are very tight fitting against the render. The roof construction lacks the thermal stability usually required by roosting bats. Overall, the building can be classed as negligible bat potential.

3 Legislation

3.1 Bats

All species of bat and their breeding sites or resting places (roosts) are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which transcribes the EC Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and wild flora and fauna) into UK law. Bats are also protected under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence for anyone intentionally to kill, injure or handle a bat, to possess a bat (whether live or dead), disturb a roosting bat, or sell or offer a bat for sale without a licence. It is also an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter, whether they are present or not. Licences are available from Natural Resources Wales to allow actions that would otherwise be unlawful.

4 Recommendations

4.1 Bats

4.1.1 In the opinion of the surveyor, the building is of negligible bat potential so additional surveys are not considered necessary in this instance.

4.1.2 As there are bats in the area, it is recommended that initial works be completed using the precautionary principle.

4.1.3 *Precautionary principle*

All roof coverings, fascia's and soffits should be removed by hand being lifted rather than rolled and checked on their underside prior to stacking/disposal to ensure no bats are clinging to the underside. If a bat is encountered during works, it should be carefully covered and work in that area cease immediately. Further advice should then be sought either from Kite Ecology or Natural Resources Wales.

4.1.4 *Enhancements*

To enhance the roosting opportunities on site, three bat boxes will be included in the scheme. In this instance, a Beaumaris woodstone bat box (Figure 5) or similar design would be most appropriate as these are flat backed to fit against buildings. Bat boxes should be sited as high up on a building as possible but avoid being positioned over windows or doors.

Figure 5. Example of a Beaumaris woodstone bat box.

4.1.5 *Lighting*

As bats are in the area, any new external lighting should be hooded, downward facing and positioned to avoid shining directly onto the features such as woodland edges and hedgerows. The lighting should also be PIR sensitive LED type which have a much more directional lighting range. An example is shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Example of different PIR LED lighting.

4.3 *Note to client and architect*
All lighting and enhancement measures must be clearly marked up on plans.

5 References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

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