Ref: A085825

Date: 22nd May 2014

Dear Rob,

Mortuary Building, Hayes Point, Sully, CF64 5XU: Bat Survey Report

Background

WYG was commissioned by Stavakis Consultants to complete a daytime building assessment and a series of bat emergence/return surveys of a building at the above site. The proposed development includes the conversion of the building for residentia use.

The principal objectives of this study were to undertake an internal and external building assessment and nocturnal surveys to determine whether bats were roosting, or had the potential to roost, in the buildings on site. Based on the results of these assessments and surveys, potential ecological constraints and opportunities relating to the proposed development were identified with recommendations for further work made as appropriate.

This report details the findings of the bat surveys.

Site location and general description

The site is located between the town of Barry and the village of Sully in the Vale of Glamorgan, at Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference ST 14034 67614.

The building is a single storey former mortuary that was built in the inter-war period (see Plate 1 and 2). The roof is flat at different levels and there are a number of holes/gaps which provide potential access for bat to the building.

The surrounding habitat comprises mature trees to the north, east and west of the property providing good habitat for bats.

Plate 1: SE and NE Elevation

Plate 2: SW Elevation

Bat Legislation and Biodiversity Policy

All British bat species are given special protection by their inclusion on Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) and Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).As a result it is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats
- Damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
- Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost

With specific reference to the offence of disturbance, regulation 39(1) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) states that a person commits an offence if he:

> *deliberately disturbs wild animals of any such species [i.e. a European Protected Species] in such a way as to be likely significantly to affect:*
> *(i) the ability of any significant group of animals of that species to survive, breed, or rear or nurture their young; or*
> *(ii) the local distribution or abundance of that species.*

Where development would result in damage to, or obstruct access to, any bat roost (whether occupied or not) or risks harming or significantly disturbing bats, a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) may be required from the Welsh Government to allow the development to proceed. The legal interpretation of "development" in the context of European protected species is not restricted to works requiring planning permission from local planning authorities. It also includes permitted development and can encompass works that do not require any formal permission.

Methodology

Internal and External Building Assessment

An internal and external assessment of the building for suitability to support breeding, resting and hibernating bats was completed on the 11th April 2014 by Elliott Hughes *GradCIEEM* using survey methods based on those outlined in the Bat Conservation Trust's *Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines 2nd Edition* (2012) and English Nature's *Bat Mitigation Guidelines* (2004). The weather conditions at the time of the inspection were suitable for completing an appropriate building inspection with no rain and good visibility.

The building was inspected during daylight, and any features suitable for bats, such as weatherboarding, hanging tiles, soffit boxes, gaps in brickwork, cracks and crevices, slipped or broken tiles, gaps around ridge tiles and lead flashing were noted. Roof coverings and soffit boxes were viewed using close-focussing binoculars and torch from the ground level. A full internal inspection of the building was then undertaken, where possible, whereby all accessible areas were searched for signs of bat activity (e.g. droppings, staining, feeding remains and individual bats). The buildings were then evaluated based on the guidelines outlined in the BCT guidelines (Hundt, 2012).

Any potential access points were identified and inspected for signs of bats such as:

- bat droppings on the ground or stuck to walls (both internally or externally);
- suitable entry and exit points around eaves, soffits, flashing, under tiles or gaps in mortar;
- live bats, bat corpses or skeletons;

- oily marks (from fur) or localised clean spots around possible access points and roost areas;
- lack of cobwebs along beams, roof timbers, or potential access points;
- feeding remains (such as moth wings).

Bat Emergence/Return Surveys

Dusk emergence and dawn return surveys were completed in line with that required for buildings of moderate potential by Elliott Hughes, Sarah Dillon *ACIEEM* and Charlotte Houlker *GradCIEEM*. Surveyors used an EM3 and BatBox Duets connected to Zoom H1 recorders to record bat activity. Bat calls recorded were analyzed using Batsound sound analysis software.

The dusk emergence surveys commenced 15 minutes before dusk, and continued for approximately 1.5 hours after dusk. The dawn return surveys commenced an hour and a half before dawn and finished at dawn. For all surveys the surveyors were positioned so all elevations of the building could be observed. Table 1 summarises the dates of the emergence and return surveys and weather conditions.

Table 1: Dates and weather conditions for emergence and return surveys

Date of Survey	Start	Sunrise/ Sunset	Finish	Temperature Start (°C)	Temperature End (°C)	Precipitation	Cloud
15/05/2014	20:42	20:57	22:27	13	12	None	1/8
16/05/2014	03:49	05:19	03:49	11	12	None	1/8
21/05/2014	20:52	21:06	22:36	16	14	None	6/8

Results

Internal and External Building Assessment

The external roost assessment identified several gaps which provide potential access to the inside of the building. On the north-east side of the building, there is a hole in a concrete block where a window used to be (see Plate 3). A mass of small mammal droppings, the majority likely to be mouse droppings, were found on the inner window sill and on the floor beneath the entrance hole, two of which appeared to be old bat droppings (see Plate 4).

Plate 3: Hole in concrete blocks

Plate 4: Possible old bat dropping

On the north-west side of the building the two windows have been boarded with ply wood. There is a 20cm gap running along the top between the wood and the brick wall which provides potential access to the building for bats. In addition there are air vents on the outer walls; however these do not provide access to the inside of the buildings as fine metal grates block the passage to internal areas of the building.

The inside of the building was in poor disrepair with cobwebs hanging from the roof and across doorways and the majority of the wallpaper had peeled off potentially due to damp. The ceiling of the body storage room was missing, exposing a small loft void approximately 10cm high, with a plaster bottom, a wooden ceiling and wooden beams running in-between. There was a man-made hole in the shower room ceiling which provides access to the roof top outside.

The building was assessed as moderate potential for roosting bats based on the guidelines outlined in the BCT guidelines (Hundt, 2012).

Bat Emergence/Return

During the surveys no bats were noted emerging or returning to the building, with no roosting behaviour recorded around the building during any of the surveys. Bat activity on site was moderate with the following species recorded in order of relative frequency:

- Common pipistrelle;
- Soprano pipistrelle;
- Myotis; and

- Noctule.

Emergence Survey 15/05/2014

The first emergence survey was completed by Elliott Hughes and Sarah Dillon. The survey commenced at 20:42, the first bat, a single common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* was heard foraging at 21:06. By 21:10 five pipistrelles, including one soprano *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* were seen foraging around the building. The bats were recorded flying around the building and foraging along the woodland edge. A *Myotis* sp was recorded commuting at 21:46 and a Noctule *Nyctalus noctula* was heard at 21:47. No bats were seen emerging from the building.

Return Survey 16/05/2014

The return survey was completed by Elliott Hughes and Sarah Dillon. The survey commenced at 03:49, the first bat, a single common pipistrelle was heard foraging at 03:52. Common and soprano pipistrelle were regularly recorded during the survey foraging and feeding along the woodland edge around the building. The last bat was heard at 05:05, fourteen minutes before sunrise. No bats were recorded returning to the building.

Emergence Survey 21/05/2014

The second emergence survey was completed by Elliott Hughes and Charlotte Houlker. The survey commenced at 20:52, the first bat, a single common pipistrelle was heard foraging at 21:16. Activity peaked at 21:25 with four pipistrelles, including one soprano recorded foraging around the building. Common and soprano pipistrelle were recorded foraging and feeding along the woodland edge and around the building. No bats were seen emerging from the building.

Summary and Conclusion

No bats were recorded emerging or returning to building during the surveys and therefore no direct impacts to roosting bats are anticipated. However, it must be noted that the results of this survey cannot be taken as a future reflection of conditions on site. Given the presence of potential roosting features, it is possible that bats may utilise these features at some point in the future. Therefore, if works to the building are delayed beyond 12 months from the date of these surveys, it may be necessary to consider a resurvey of the buildings.

As no bats were recorded roosting in any of the buildings, no mitigation measures are required.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you wish to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

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For and on behalf of WYG

Sarah Dillon ***ACIEEM***
Project Ecologist