

BATS IN BUILDINGS Part A: background information

Bats commonly occur in buildings which are vitally important for their survival. There are legal implications for the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and the applicant when works to buildings are proposed. Bats and their roosting places are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Monmouthshire County Council must have regard to the Habitats Directive and requires information regarding the use of structures by protected species to be submitted with relevant planning applications.

In summary, it is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take bats; disturb bats and damage or destroy or block access to their roosts. Roosts are protected whether bats are present at the time or not.

Submitting an application or prior approval notification for a structure potentially used by bats

All species of bats are highly protected. However, the presence of bats in a building does not typically preclude development, provided adequate measures can be taken to avoid an offence and appropriate provision for bats can be made. The presence of any protected species is of material consideration when a local planning authority is considering a development proposal. The LPA is unable to register a planning application in the absence of adequate protected species information. The LPA is required to refuse consent in situations where there is insufficient information for the LPA to make a decision or it cannot be shown that an appropriate licence would be forthcoming from Natural Resources Wales (commonly termed addressing the three tests), or where the adverse impacts to bats cannot be acceptably mitigated.

Applications for works including **conversions, demolitions, alterations or renovations** to most structures such as;

- Rural and urban buildings
- Traditional and modern outbuildings
- Dwellings with proposals for renovation, roof works, extensions, loft conversions
- Modern and old schools, chapels and churches, public houses
- Stone walls of minimum 1.5m high

Must be accompanied by

1. A completed Bats in Buildings Part A-building information record (overleaf)
2. Clear, well lit, colour photographs of the internal and external of the structure.

The Building Information Record

The LPA will use the submitted information to inform their decision as to whether survey is needed. The LPA also uses local biological records and considers the presence of potential bat habitat in the vicinity of the development. These will enable the LPA to determine if there is a reasonable likelihood that bats use the structure before a planning application or prior approval notification is submitted. Action to avoid breaking the law can then be taken e.g. an appropriate survey, modifications to plans and where necessary proposals for mitigation, compensation and enhancements.

In the case of planning applications, if sufficient information regarding the use of a building by bats is not submitted with an application, Monmouthshire County Council will not register the application until such information is made available.

It is strongly advised that answers on the Building Information Record are as accurate as possible to prevent delays, which could include the application being made invalid, later in the planning process.

Bat Survey

All bat survey will need to be undertaken in accordance with the following best practice guidance; Bat Conservation Trust (2016). Bat Surveys - Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd Edition. BCT, London

<http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/batsurveyguide.html>

English Nature (2004). Bat Mitigation Guidelines. External Relations Team, English Nature.
<http://www.wildlifegateway.org.uk/site/pdfs/naturalEngland/Batmitigationguide2.pdf>

BATS IN BUILDINGS Part A: applicant's building information record

Site Name: 1 and 2 Twyn Cecil		Completed by: Russell Pryce	
<p>Answer the following questions as comprehensively as possible: Where you circle Yes please describe in detail and provide photographs</p>			
Do you know that there are bats using the building(s) subject to the planning proposals? No			
Is the building within 200m of tree(s) / hedgerow / open water? Yes (describe below) Row of trees to the rear of the property		What is the approximate age of the property? If unknown, circle the approximate age below Pre-1914	
<p>Please provide a short description of the building(s) and proposals: E.g. Types of buildings House, Bungalow, Traditional barn, outbuilding, school building, office block, etc. and activities- E.g. <i>The works will include conversion of two traditional stone barns (approx 5m high x 4m wide x 10m long) and a demolition of a two storey house and three small brick outbuildings. Also on the farm but unaffected by the works are two open sided dutch barns</i></p> <p>Terrace of two painted stone cottages with pitched slate roofs.</p> <p>Restore the cottage to a single dwelling through removing existing partitioning at ground only. No roof, elevation or first floor ceiling alterations are required.</p>			
What is the current and historic occupancy / use of the building(s)? Residential		Is there an undercroft / underground store / cellar / lower ground floor or similar underground structure? No	
Is there a roof void, attic space or hayloft? Yes (describe below) Yes – attic space but not used other than occasional storage		Is there a wall cavity? No	
<p>Describe the building materials in each structure. Wall materials E.g. traditional stone / brick / timber boards / concrete / asbestos / hanging tiles / other (please state)?</p> <p>Solid stone walls with a painted finish externally.</p> <p>Roof covering E.g. tiles / slates / asbestos / metal / other (please state)?</p> <p>Slate</p> <p>Is there an internal roof lining? Is it bituminous, boarding (state material) or breathable membrane (if known)? Describe the condition of the roof lining? Yes</p> <p>Bituminous felt - Condition is good</p> <p>Roof supports E.g. metal / traditional wood / simple rafter structure? Traditional wood.</p>			
What is the condition of the building? well maintained			
The roof is entire? Are there raised ridge tiles? No Are tiles tight fitting / slipped / missing? Tight fitting			
Are there cracks in the walls / gaps in mortar / around soffits / behind fascias (minimum thumb's width)? Painted stonework, no noticeable gaps around the fascias, soffits etc			

What is the current lighting regime inside and outside of the building(s)? E.g. motion detector lighting externally, approximate height of lighting, lighting in loft etc.

PIR sensor security light on the front elevation fixed to the fascia at first floor.