

Site Name: Tŷ Cambria, 29 Newport Road, Roath, Cardiff, CF24 0TP

Report Reference: WWE25161 PRA – Preliminary Roost Assessment

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Introduction

Tŷ Cambria (the site) (grid reference: ST 19055 76830) is proposed for demolition and will be subject to a full planning application for demolition of the current building and replacement with a Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) scheme. Therefore, a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was undertaken by Shannon Phillips and Beth Lewis of Wildwood Ecology on 03/09/2025, following best practice in line with the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th edn. (Collins 2023).

Survey methods

Preliminary Roost Assessment

A field survey was undertaken on 03/09/2025. This was an external and internal building inspection survey, the purpose of which was to search for bats/evidence of bats and assess the likelihood of bats being present and the need for further surveys and/or mitigation.

A systematic search was made of the building and the grounds, especially below suitable access points where present. Such features include window-sills, windowpanes, walls, tiles, weather boarding, lead flashing, eaves, behind surfacing materials and under tiles, and other cracks and crevices that provide protection from the elements. Such features are known to be used by roosting bats.

Desk study

Desk study data was collected from the following sources on 04/09/2025:

- South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRc); and
- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC).

Priority and protected species

87 bat records within 2km from the past 10 years were returned from the South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRc). This includes 13 roost records, including two maternity roosts for soprano and common pipistrelle. The nearest bat roost was a pipistrelle day roost recorded 220m from the site.

The local records centre returned 33 records of Schedule 1 bird species within 2km from the past 10 years. These included peregrine, black redstart and barn owl, all of which are known to habitually nest in buildings and roof spaces.

Field survey

Table 1 - Field survey timings and conditions

Date	Weather conditions			
	Temp [°C]	Cloud cover [Oktas]	Wind speed [Beaufort scale]	Rain
03/09/2025	16	3/8	3	Intermittent drizzle

Field survey limitations

A visual inspection of the exterior of the building was limited due to the height of the building. Scaffolding had already been erected onto the eastern front that was inaccessible during the current survey, also restricting external inspection of this section of the building. However, as these areas are of the same age and construction as the rest of the building – which was found to offer negligible suitability for roosting bats – this limitation is not considered a serious constraint.

Access to the highest roof was not possible due to safety concerns regarding the ladder. This is not considered a serious constraint as the construction of the building was visible and a potential roosting feature on this section of the building was noted.

Site Description

The site is situated in the centre of Cardiff. The wider landscape is urban comprising residential and commercial properties. Several streetlights are present on the roads surrounding the structure. The surrounding roads are tree-lined. The wider landscape is therefore considered to be of low suitability for light averse roosting bats.

Building Description

The structure is a multi-storey building formerly used as offices. The exterior is comprised of concrete panels. No cracks within concrete panels were identified and mortar was in good condition. There are numerous windows on each floor and elevation, these sit in metal frames, which are flush to the external walls. Netted scaffolding was present on the eastern side of the building during the survey, limiting access to and inspection of this section. The netting may also prevent and restrict bats from entering or leaving any roosting features, if present. That said, as noted in the constraints section, this area is of the same age and construction as the rest of the building, which offers negligible roosting suitability, so this limitation is not considered significant.

A ground level car park is present to the north east of the structure. This is open to the elements – the lower section walls are comprised of brick and mortar, and the top section is barred metal fencing. A large metal shutter door is present on the northern elevation of the building. The walls and ceilings of the car park are well sealed with no features present to support roosting bats. Netting covers the ceiling of the car park to prevent birds from nesting.

The interior is light due to the number of windows. No potential access points into the interior were identified.

The roofs were flat comprised of bitumen felt. The roof of the structure at the top of the building had raised lead flashing creating a suitable roosting location for bats.

The structure location can be seen in Figure 1 overleaf.



Figure 1 - Structure locations and suitability.

Survey results, including the suitability of the structure for roosting bats and a description of potential roost features, can be found in Table 1.

Table 1 - Structure information and survey results.

Suitability for bats	Potential roost features and evidence of use identified
Low	The following potential roosting feature was identified on the structure: Feature 1: raised lead flashing on the roof at the top of the structure. This feature is considered sub-optimal as is unlikely to offer thermal stability to roosting bats. The structure is considered to be of low suitability for roosting bats as the potential roosting feature identified is only considered suitable to be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, is not considered suitable to support bats on a regular basis or a roost of high conservation concern.

Nesting birds

No evidence of nesting birds was identified on site, though feeding remains, likely left by gulls were present. The structure does have suitability to support nesting gulls on its roof.

Impacts

The onsite structure contains a feature with potential for roosting bats, though this is classified as low suitability, and the overall building is assessed as having negligible suitability for roosting bats. This classification is based on several limiting factors: the potential roost feature (raised lead flashing on the roof) is shallow, exposed to the elements, subject to regular disturbance, and offers little opportunity for movement or thermal regulation. While the feature could support an individual bat opportunistically, it is unlikely to support multiple bats or roosts of higher conservation importance. Overall, the building provides only a small number of minor and scattered features, which are considered unlikely to be occupied. Given these constraints, the likelihood of bat use is low, and further emergence surveys are not recommended.

The suitability for habitats in close proximity to the onsite structure to be used as potential flight-paths and/or foraging habitat is low.

The proposed works which comprise the demolition of the building may trigger legislation related to bat conservation as the identified potential roosting feature could be affected. This feature therefore requires further assessment or mitigation to ensure compliance with wildlife protection regulations.

The structure may support nesting birds; however, no evidence of nesting was observed during the survey. Without mitigation should the demolition be undertaken during the bird nesting season, then active nests (if present) would be destroyed.

Recommendations

Bats

Due to the sub-optimal suitability of Feature 1 to support bats, a pre-works inspection by a suitably qualified ecologist with an endoscope is required to determine bat presence/absence prior to removal. Ideally, the pre-works inspection would be undertaken within the bat active season between May- September.

Features (e.g. lead flashing, roofing) should also be soft-stripped by hand and checked for bats prior to demolition.

If a bat or evidence of bats is found during the pre-works assessment, then the works would need to stop and a discussion with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) would be needed to determine further actions.

If roof lining is required in the new development, only BS 747 Type 1F traditional hessian bitumen felt or wooden sarking should be used. Breathable membranes must be avoided, as they pose a risk of entanglement and death to bats. They can also degrade in bat roosts, allowing water and urine to enter roof voids and compromising the structure over time.

If any areas of the site will require new lighting, a sensitive lighting plan should be produced, demonstrating consideration for bats with dark flight lines retained to ensure the proposed development would not have a detrimental effect on bats commuting/ foraging along nearby habitat. The external works for the proposed development should be undertaken during daylight hours.

Suggestions for mitigating the light impact on bats are outlined in Guidance Note 08/23 - 'Bats and artificial lighting in the UK; Bats and the built environment series' (The Bat Conservation Trust, BCT, and the Institution of Lighting Professionals, ILP).

Birds

Site works should commence outside of the bird nesting season, or, if work has to be carried out during the nesting season (generally from 1st March until 31st August, although birds are known to nest outside of these dates in suitable conditions), a nesting bird check will be required and must be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist just prior to works commencement. Any active nests should be protected by a suitable buffer, as instructed by the ecologist, until the young have fledged, as confirmed by the ecologist.

Enhancements

Local authorities have a duty to seek to maintain **and enhance** biodiversity in the exercise of their functions.

Where possible, the existing onsite habitat of ecological importance will be retained to ensure that habitats and species that rely on them are not adversely affected by the development. Native species of local provenance (and grown in the UK) or ornamental plants with known wildlife value will be used for new onsite planting.

Further onsite habitat retention, creation or enhancement may be required as part of the required net benefit for biodiversity.

At least 5 bird nesting boxes and 2 bat roosting boxes (the exact number is dependent on final proposals) should be incorporated within the newly constructed building (i.e., built-in), or at boundary features.

A range of box types should be used to provide opportunities for a number of species.

The following designs are recommended (or similar, if they are not available):

- Bats – inbuilt bat boxes. E.g. Ibstock Bat Box B, Ibstock Bat Box C, Schwegler 2FR bat rube, Wildcare Integrated Eco Bat Box, Habibat bat boxes and access tiles (various faces);
- Birds - sparrows (Woodstone Sparrow Nest Box, Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace, Wildcare House Sparrow Nest box);
- Birds - swifts (S brick, Vivara Pro Woodstone Swift Box, Ibstock Swift Eco, Cambridge Swift Brick, Schwegler 1A, Schwegler 18, Schwegler 16, Schwegler 1MF); and
- Birds - house martins and swallows (Woodstone single chamber house sparrow, Esco House Martin Nest Box, Eco Swallow Nest Bowl, Woodstone House Martin Nester, Schwegler No.9B Double House Martin Nest, Schwegler 10 Swallow Nest).

Integrated bird nesting bricks should be installed in clusters of 2-3 at the north, east and west gable ends or close under the eaves away from windows and doors, at a height of 4m+, with clear flight access and no protruding ground floor roofs such as garages.

Site photos



Figure 2 – View of southern side.



Figure 3 – Scaffolding present on eastern side.



Figure 4 – Example of exterior walls and windows.



Figure 5 – View of roof.



Figure 6 – Example of raised lead flashing.



Figure 7 – Example of raised lead flashing.



Figure 8 – Example of netting within car park.



Figure 9 – View of interior.