

Mike & Anne Gurr
Vale View Cottage, Maypole, St Mary's
Isles of Scilly TR21 0NU

5 October 2015

Lisa Walton
Senior Manager: Planning & Development
Council of the Isles of Scilly
Town Hall
St Mary's

RECEIVED BY THE
PLANNING DEPARTMENT
05 OCT 2015

Dear Lisa

Re: Men-a-Vaur: Planning Applications P/15/066-068FUL

Further to our e-mail correspondence regarding this matter, and in the absence of a specific request to provide a bat survey of the premises, we have decided that a letter of comment would be in order. We make the following statement on behalf of the interests of wildlife, following correspondence we received from a local resident in Branksea Close.

Statement

We viewed the garden of Men-a-Vaur from the pathway leading to Branksea Close on the morning of Saturday 4 October to get an overview of the site of the planning application. We noted the overgrown nature of the land with several small trees having been felled. We also noted the position of the garage, viewed from the road through the pathway between Men-a-Vaur and the adjacent house to the west.

On the evening of Saturday 4 October, we conducted a dusk survey with two objectives: (1) to observe whether any bats emerged from the garage and (2) to view the overall activity of bats around the garden. One of us viewed the garage from the road; the other viewed the garden from the Branksea Close path. We each had a bat detector tuned to the appropriate frequency for common pipistrelles. The evening was fine and dry with a clear sky, little wind and a temperature of 13°C. We started observations a little after sunset (19.00) and concluded our observations at 19.45. Bats normally leave their roosts about 20 minutes after sunset. No bats emerged from the garage. 4 bats were observed flying over the garden but were transient – they did not linger in the garden. It would appear that the garage is not being used as a roost. The trees growing in the garden are small and shrubby and do not appear to offer suitable roosting opportunities for bats.

From experience, we know that pipistrelles move roosts frequently, often stopping for a few days only. Therefore it could not be guaranteed that if/when the garage is demolished, bats might not be present. ***Therefore, if work is commenced, care should therefore be taken in demolishing the garage in case bats had gained entry. If any bats should be discovered during the work, they must not be handled: work must stop immediately and advice sought from local bat wardens in the first instance (Mike & Anne Gurr, 422224 or Rebecca Steggle, 424315) or, if none is available, The Bat Conservation Trust's National Bat Helpline on 0845 1300 228. The BCT's adviser for the South West Region is David Jackson.***

Despite the lack of evidence for roosting bats, it is clear that bats use the area for foraging. The proposed developments will certainly affect the habitat and the availability of insects. Our view is that the development would not be in the interests of local wildlife and should be discouraged.

Yours sincerely

Mike & Anne Gurr, Licensed Bat Volunteers.