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PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT (PRA)

2 ENNOR CLOSE,
OLD TOWN, ST MARY'S, ISLES OF SCILLY



Client: Rachel Greenlaw

Our reference: 22-11-2

Planning reference: Produced in advance of submission

Report date: 26th November 2022

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Executive Summary

Bats – Results and Findings

The preliminary roost assessment (PRA) survey of the structures either directly or indirectly impacted by the proposals concluded that there is **negligible potential** for use by bats.

This assessment relates solely to the elements of the structure which would be affected - it does not provide a comprehensive assessment of the building in question.

Bats – Further Survey Requirements

No further surveys are recommended – the PRA conclusion does not require further survey information with regards to bats in order to inform a planning application.

Bats – Recommendations

Standard good practice and vigilance should be observed by the contractors undertaking the works in acknowledgement that bats are transient in their use of roosting opportunities and may explore potential locations, especially if the condition of structural features were to change. A specific methodology is provided in Appendix 1.

It is not recommended that any Planning Conditions are required with regards to bats in order to ensure legislative compliance.

Nesting Birds – Results and Findings

The survey of structural features to be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed works identified no nesting locations suitable for use by breeding birds.

Nesting Birds - Recommendations

There is no requirement to replace nesting habitat for breeding birds as no suitable features would be affected.

If the applicant wishes to provide biodiversity enhancement, nest boxes could be erected either on the dwelling or within the residential garden. Guidance on suitable specifications is provided.

Other Ecological Receptors

No further ecological impacts relevant to planning are identified.

PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT (PRA)

Planning Authority: Isles of Scilly	Location: SV 91488 10384	Planning Application ref: Report produced in support of application
Planning application address: 2 Ennor Close, Old Town, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly		
Proposed development: The proposed works were identified by the client and should accord with the documentation submitted in support of the application. These involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The removal of an existing conservatory to the rear of the property and construction of a new single-storey extension on this aspect; 2) The demolition of the existing porch and the construction of a new single-storey extension on the front aspect of the property. This assessment takes into account both the potential direct impacts to the structure (eg. demolition or removal of structural elements) and the indirect impacts (eg. blocking or obstructing roost entrances as a result of extensions).		
Building references: The roof section in question is identified in the plans provided in Appendix 2.		
Name and licence number of bat-workers carrying out survey: James Faulconbridge (2015-12724-CLS-CLS)		
Preliminary Roost Assessment date: The visual inspection was undertaken on 25 th November 2022 in accordance with relevant Best Practice methodology ¹ .		
Local and Landscape Setting: The property is situated towards the northern edge of the residential area of Old Town on St Mary's in the Isles of Scilly. The land use immediately surrounding the property comprises residential development with gardens. The older properties to the south often have mature gardens with trees. The immediate environs of the property therefore provide good quality foraging habitat for common pipistrelle. The land to the north, east and west beyond the bounds of the settlement is dominated by agricultural land with field hedges providing connectivity within the landscape. Tree cover is sporadic with occasional shelter belts and individual trees. The shoreline of Old Town Beach lies approximately 220m to the south-west – this is likely to provide a suitable foraging resource along the strandline. Approximately 150m to the north-east of the building is Lower Moors SSSI – a topogenous mire with areas of elm woodland and scrub as well as a series of pools and marshy grassland. Records from the Local Bat Group indicate that this is an important foraging resource for bats on the island.		

¹ Collins, J. (ed.) 2016 Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

A number of bat roosts are confirmed in the local environs – the most significant of these is a roost which is believed to be a maternity roost for common pipistrelles situated approximately 300m to the north. Further roosts of unconfirmed status are situated 170m to the north and 150m to the south, the latter is within Old Town itself. All of these roosts relate to common pipistrelle, though one roost is also identified as supporting soprano pipistrelle, a species whose status on the islands at the time of writing is uncertain due to a lack of recent records.

Building Description(s):

The property is a detached, two-storey house which is rendered externally to a high standard.

The proposals are restricted to the removal of the porch; the removal of the conservatory; and the construction of single-storey extensions. The proposals do not include direct or indirect impacts to the roof space of the property – therefore this part of the structure was not assessed as part of the PRA. This survey report does not therefore represent a comprehensive assessment of the property – rather a specific assessment of the potential direct and indirect impacts associated with the proposals under consideration.

Porch

The porch is rendered externally to a high standard in a contiguous style with the rest of the house. It has a single-pitch, tiled roof with pre-fabricated interlocking tiles which are well sealed and in good condition with no gaps either between tiles or at the eaves. The verge is concreted and well-sealed and the lead flashing at the union between the porch roof and the main property is tightly fitted. A uPVC soffit is present above the door – this is well-sealed. The door itself and a window in the western aspect are uPVC with well-fitted frames – no gaps were noted.

No roosting opportunities suitable for use by roosting bats were identified associated with the porch in its current structural condition.

Conservatory

The conservatory has a rendered lower wall supporting a uPVC structure above. The structure is in good condition with no suitable features for use by roosting bats. The interior of the conservatory is light and used as part of the residential property – no suitable roosting habitat for bats is identified internally.

Lead flashing lines the union between the conservatory roof and the adjacent main dwelling – there are small gaps at the eaves but these were inspected fully with a video-endoscope and found to be blocked with dense cobwebs and debris indicating no current or recent use by bats. This sole element of the construction offers negligible potential for use by roosting bats.

Main Dwelling

The main dwelling adjacent to the conservatory and porch, where the new extensions will be constructed, is rendered with well-fitted uPVC windows and doors. Slate sills below the windows, where present, are well-sealed. These adjacent structures which would be affected by the construction of the new extension do not offer any roosting opportunities for bats in their current structural condition.

Survey Limitations

It was not possible to inspect the void above the roof of the porch as this is sealed – however the lack of external access points renders this limitation irrelevant to the assessment.

There were no limitations on access or visibility which would affect the results of the survey.

Assessment of Potential for use by Roosting Bats

It is considered that the lead flashing where the conservatory joins the main dwelling provides

negligible potential for use by roosting bats – however an inspection using a video endoscope provides sufficient confidence to confirm a lack of current or recent use.

No other potential roosting opportunities were identified associated with the elements of the structure which are to be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed works.

Recommendations and Justification (Bats):

No further surveys are recommended – the conclusion of **negligible potential** does not require any further information with regards to bats in order to inform a planning application.

Standard good practice and vigilance should be observed during the removal of the lead flashing between the conservatory and the main dwelling in acknowledgement that bats are transient in their use of roosting opportunities and may explore potential locations. The flashing should be removed carefully and by hand in order to ensure that, in the unlikely event of bats utilising this potential feature, they would not be harmed or killed. Recommended measures to achieve this recommendation and ensure legislative compliance are provided in Appendix 1.

It is not recommended that Planning Conditions are required to secure this measure.

Assessment of Potential for use by Nesting Birds

No suitable nesting habitat for birds was identified associated with the elements of the building to be directly or indirectly affected by the proposals. No vegetation capable of supporting nesting birds was identified in close proximity to the proposed works area.

Recommendations and Justification (Birds):

There is no requirement to mitigate for loss of nesting habitat for breeding birds; however if the applicant wished to provide biodiversity enhancement measures, this could be achieved through the erection of bird boxes on the residential property or within the garden.

House sparrows nest communally and nest boxes could accommodate this, either through the installation of a single purpose-built nest box comprising several individual chambers with separate entrances, or the installation of 3+ nest boxes in close proximity. Nest boxes suitable for hole-dwelling species such as blue tits, or open-fronted boxes for species such as blackbird and robin also have a high likelihood of occupation.

Boxes should be mounted on a wall or tree if possible, at a height of at least 3m above the ground with an entrance clear of vegetation/other features which may put them at risk of predation from cats.

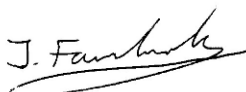
Boxes can be sourced online, or can be constructed on site using methodology and specifications provided by the RSPB:

Sparrows: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/give-nature-a-home-in-your-garden/garden-activities/createasparrowstreet/>

Other Species: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-families/family-wild-challenge/activities/build-a-birdbox/>

Signed by bat worker(s):

Date: 26th November 2022



APPENDIX 1

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PRECAUTIONARY METHOD STATEMENT WITH REGARDS TO BATS

The purpose of this Method Statement is to ensure that demolition and construction works can proceed where presence of bats has been determined to be unlikely, but a precautionary approach is still advisable. It has been determined that direct harm to roosting bats during the proposed works would be highly unlikely.

Contractors should, however, be aware of **their own legal responsibility with respect to bats**:

Relevant Legislation regarding Bats

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, or the 'Habitat Regulations 2017', transposes European Directives into English and Welsh legislation. Under these regulations, bats are classed as a European Protected Species and it is, therefore, an offence to:

- *Deliberately kill, injure or capture bats;*
- *Deliberately damage or destroy bat roosts.*

A bat roost is commonly defined as being any structure or place that is used as a breeding site or resting place, and since it may be in use only occasionally or at specific times of year, a roost retains such a designation even if bats are not present.

Bats are also protected from disturbance under Regulation 43. Disturbance of bats includes in particular any disturbance which is likely:

- (a) *To impair their ability -*
- *to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or*
 - *in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or*
- (b) *To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.*

Bats also have limited protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000 (as amended). It is, therefore, an offence to:

- *Intentionally or recklessly destroy, damage or obstruct any structure or place which a bat uses for shelter or protection.*
- *Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats whilst occupying any structure or place used for shelter or protection.*

Contractors should be aware of **where bats are most likely to be found in respect to the structure:**

There is a negligible risk of bats making transient use of minor cavities associated with the lead flashing which seals the join between the conservatory and the dwelling, especially if there is a change in condition between the date of survey and the commencement of works.

This flashing should be removed carefully and by hand in such a way that if any bats are present beneath, they are not crushed or otherwise injured by the action. Once this location has been exposed and it has been confirmed that no bats are present, works can proceed.

No other suitable features for use by roosting bats are identified within the structures to be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed works.

Contractors should be aware of **the process to follow in the highly unlikely event of finding bats** or evidence indicating that bats are likely to be present:

If bats are identified, works should cease and the named ecologist contacted immediately for advice.

If the bat is in a safe situation, or a situation which can be made safe, they should remain undisturbed.

Only if the bat is in immediate risk of harm can the bat be moved with care and using a gloved hand. This is a last resort and should only be undertaken for humane reasons if the bat is at immediate risk of harm **and** if the ecologist cannot be contacted for advice.

APPENDIX 2

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LOCATION PLAN AND PHOTOGRAPHS



Map 01 - Illustrating location of property within the local environs (red circle). Reproduced in accordance with Google's Fair Use Policy.



Map 02 - Showing the main dwelling house (aqua wash) with the conservatory to the rear of the property (yellow wash) and the porch to the front of the property (red wash).



Photograph 1: Showing the property from the front including the porch to be demolished.



Photograph 2: Showing a closer view of the porch roof with the well-sealed uPVC soffit on the front, and the well-sealed verge on the gable.



Photograph 3: Showing well-fitted uPVC door frame – this is illustrative of the condition of window and door frames associated with the property.



Photograph 4: Showing the porch window – the uPVC frame is well-fitted and the slate sill is well sealed.



Photograph 5: Showing the conservatory situated to the rear of the property.



Photograph 6: Showing the lead flashing at the joint between the conservatory roof to the adjacent building – there are minor gaps present where indicated.