

## PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT (PRA)

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### BISHOP AND WOLF PUBLIC HOUSE, HUGH TOWN, ST MARY'S, ISLES OF SCILLY



**Client:** St Austell Breweries

**Our reference:** 24-5-2

**Planning reference:** P/24/034/COU

**Report date:** 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024

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# Executive Summary

## Bats - Results and Findings

The preliminary roost assessment (PRA) survey of the structures of The Bishop & Wolf which would be directly impacted by the proposals concluded that there is **moderate potential** for use by bats.

This is likely to be restricted to use by individual bats of common species such as common pipistrelle; however the potential for more significant roosts cannot be ruled out in the absence of further surveys.

## Bats - Further Survey Requirements

The following recommendation is provided in order to ensure a suitable baseline to inform a Planning Application and to avoid negative impacts to Protected Species:

- **Two further Presence/Absence Surveys (PAS)** should be undertaken on the building to characterise and assess the potential use of the roof structures by bats in order to meet the standard of survey required by Best Practice Guidance to support a Planning Application.

## Bats - Recommendations

The results of the recommended surveys would be used to inform the development of mitigation or Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) which would be submitted in support of the Planning Application to allow the development works to proceed. No further recommendations are therefore outlined at this stage.

## Nesting Birds - Results and Findings

Active and historic nests were identified associated with the building and further potential for nesting birds was identified.

## Nesting Birds - Recommendations


Works should take account of confirmed breeding sites as well as the potential for other locations to be utilised during the breeding season.

Recommendations are provided to ensure legislative compliance, including timing of works or pre-commencement inspections.

## Other Ecological Receptors

No further ecological impacts relevant to planning are identified.

# APPENDIX 1 – PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT (PRA)

<b>Planning Authority:</b> Isles of Scilly	<b>Location:</b> SV 90262 10518	<b>Planning Application ref:</b> P/24/034/COU
<b>Planning application address:</b> Bishop & Wolf, Silver Street, Hugh Town, St Marys		
<b>Proposed development:</b> The proposed works were identified by the CAD Heritage Architects when commissioning the PRA survey and in subsequent correspondence, and should accord with the proposals submitted for Planning: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Inspect all roof structure and coverings and repair / replace as required</li><li>2) Undertake various internal development and renovation works.</li></ol>		
<b>Building references:</b> The building comprises several distinct elements. For the purpose of this report, these are arbitrarily identified as Bishop & Wolf (B&W) A – F. These structural elements are identified in the map outlined below:		
 An aerial photograph of a building complex, likely a church or historical structure, with several distinct sections highlighted in different colors. The sections are labeled as follows: B&W A (purple, top section), B&W B (red, middle-left section), B&W C (green, middle-right section), B&W D (yellow-green, bottom section), B&W E (orange, narrow section between B&W B and B&W C), and B&W F (teal, thin strip along the top edge of B&W A). The building is situated in an urban area with other buildings and streets visible in the background.		

**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 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024 in accordance with relevant Best Practice methodology<sup>1</sup>.

**Local and Landscape Setting:**

The Bishop & Wolf is centrally located within Hugh Town on St Mary's, Isles of Scilly. Silver Street runs immediately to the north-east of the building with further residential and retail/café development on the other aspects. The building complex encloses a courtyard area which is used as a beer garden for the pub.

The central location within Hugh Town means that the dominant local land use is built environment. This is predominantly residential with small-scale commercial businesses also represented. This densely built environment extends around 300m to the west and around 500m to the east. Some of these adjacent properties have associated areas of garden or green space, but the centre of Hugh Town is relatively densely developed. The location of the buildings is within the narrowest part of Hugh Town with Town Beach and Porthcressa lying 75m to the north and 50m to the south respectively.

The closest areas of green space are the Parade Gardens lying 70m to the east; and the grassed area adjacent to Porthcressa Beach lying 50m to the south-east. Both of these areas are dominated by close-mown amenity grassland with ornamental planting, reflecting their popularity with visitors and fundamentally municipal function. The closest areas of semi-natural habitat are associated with the Garrison approximately 250m to the west; and the land around Buzza Tower approximately 250m to the south-east.

The desk study showed that no species of bat had previously been recorded roosting within the building. A data search revealed information on five species of bat recorded on St Mary's. The species conclusively identified were common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*). Leisler's bat (*Nyctalus leisleri*) and Nathusius pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*) records were also returned though these species are not known to be resident on the island. Five records of common pipistrelle roosts are identified in relatively close proximity to the property – these relate to individual bats utilising features such as hanging slates around dormer windows or gaps behind fascias.

**Building Description**

There are several distinct structural elements within the contiguous building complex. Due to their varying styles of construction, these are considered independently in the following description and are identified in the map provided in Appendix 2.

*B&W A – Pitched-Roof Three Storey Building*

The primary building which represents the core of the complex is the three-storey structure whose ground floor is occupied by the bar and restaurant.

This is built from granite-blocks which are generally well pointed throughout, though occasional gaps in the pointing do occur providing minor potential access points for bats. The wooden window frames are well-fitted throughout. Granite-block chimneys are present at either end of the roof structure – the junctions between these and the roof are lined with lead flashing with

<sup>1</sup> Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London

occasional lifted elements offering potential minor access or roosting opportunities for bats.

The roof covering is synthetic slate tiles which are generally well-fitted though occasional minor lifted elements do occur throughout the structure. These, along with gaps around ridge tiles at the junctions with the two chimneys, could provide potential access for bats to roosting opportunities beneath roof tiles. Further access to these potential roosting opportunities occur beneath the fascias – the irregular shape of the granite blockwork interacting with the linear plane of the fascia creates a number of minor cavities which could also provide roosting features in their own right.

There is a loft space above the tie-beam of the main pitched roof which was too small to access for inspection but which could be viewed from a loft hatch. Timbers appear to be in good condition; though the internal gable walls have gaps in the pointing in places which could potentially offer roosting opportunities. Tar paper occurs above the rafters but this is incomplete and tiles are visible through gaps in places. No insulation was apparent. Light is visible in a number of places identifying the potential for bats to access the void itself, as well as reach potential roosting opportunities between the tar paper and the tiles. The void is also boxed in at the eaves in the top floor – some of these spaces are used for routine storage but others are sealed or inaccessible but would provide similar roosting opportunities to those described for the apex void. Rodent droppings were identified in the voids, but no direct evidence of bats was identified from the restricted inspection undertaken.

There are dormer windows on both aspects of the pitched roof – these have timber window frames which are generally well fitted although there are minor cavities beneath the sills. Hanging tiles/dilapidated timber boarding on the sides present potential minor access niches in places. The valley junction between the dormers and the main pitch of the roof are lined with lead flashing which is lifted in places allowing access to potential roosting features. There are sealed voids between the internal ceiling and the pitch of the dormer roofs which are not connected to the main roof void and could not therefore be accessed to inspect for evidence of bats.

Drop tiles are present on the north-eastern gable of this building – gaps occur in places allowing potential access to roosting opportunities. The building is tied in with the adjacent structure at the south-western gable.

#### *B&W B – Two-Storey Flat Roof Section*

A flat-roof section is present on the western end of the south-western aspect of B&W A. This can be accessed via the upper floor dormer window of the adjacent building.

The structure is rendered externally with the covering in good condition – no cracks or other cavities were noted. The wooden window frames are well-fitted. There are gaps behind the fascia at the top of the wall on the south-eastern aspect which could potentially provide access to roosting opportunities for bats.

Herring gulls are nesting on the flat roof.

#### *B&W C – Two-Storey Pitched Roof Building (Kitchen)*

A two-storey pitched roof building is present on the eastern end of the south-western aspect of B&W A which houses the kitchen and a staff accommodation bedroom in the upper floor. It is tied in with the main structure of B&W A to the north and has the same roof covering as this structure in a similar condition with occasional lifted tiles which could potentially offer minor access features.

The building is rendered externally with the covering in good condition – no cracks or other cavities were noted. The uPVC window frames appeared to be well-fitted. These are joined to the wall by lead-flashing beneath the sills in places – this was occasionally lifted which could potentially provide roosting opportunities for individual bats but no evidence of current or

recent occupation was noted at the time of survey.

There are boxed soffits and fascias with guttering attached which run along the eaves on the western aspect of this structure – some utility holes are present which could potentially provide access to roosting opportunities within this feature.

A loft space internally could not be fully accessed for inspection due to extraction ducting obstructing access – however the void could be viewed from a loft hatch. Tightly fitted plastic roofing membrane is present above the rafters with insulation between the joists. Light visible at the eaves confirms potential access to roosting features for bats; and several nests are present along this aspect confirming historic use by breeding birds.

The building is tied in with the adjacent offsite structure on the western aspect – no access to inspect this side of the property could be secured.

#### *B&W D – Two-Storey Pitched Roof Building (Staff Accommodation)*

A two-storey pitched roof building is attached on the southern gable of B&W C – the pitch of the B&W D building is slightly higher providing a partial gable. There are gaps in the verge pointing on this partial north-eastern gable as well as the south-western gable; both of which could potentially provide access to roosting opportunities either in their own right or within the roof space itself.

The structure is rendered externally with the covering in good condition – no cracks or other cavities were noted. The uPVC window frames appear to be well-fitted.

The pitched roof has dry-laid natural slate tiles with ridge tiles. These appear to be well-fitted but minor gaps occur in places which may provide access to potential roosting features. The loft space itself appeared to be sealed – no access to the void between the upper floor ceiling and the roof covering could be identified and therefore any evidence of roosting bats could not be assessed by the PRA survey methodology.

#### *B&W E – Single-Storey Flat Roof Section*

A single-storey flat-roof section is bounded on three sides by the structures described in B&W A, B and C. The walls are rendered white with well-fitted wooden door frames in the southern aspect.

The only potential roosting features associated with this structure (as distinct from the surrounding structures on the storey above) are minor gaps associated with the timber fascia on the southern aspect.

#### *B&W F – Single-Storey Mono-pitch Roof*

This is a single section of roof which is present on the north-eastern aspect of building B&W A and is described separately for clarity; though it is internally connected to the main bar area.

The single-pitch roof has wet-laid scantle tiles which appear to be well-pointed. Minor gaps under the lead flashing where this roof is joined to the main B&W A building are noted and could potentially offer minor roosting opportunities for individual bats. There is an under boarded porch at the western end of this roof which appears well-sealed though a minor gap occurs behind the fascia at this location.

The roof void associated with this structure is sealed and no access hatch could be identified to allow internal inspection.

### Summary

The following roosting opportunities are identified for use by bats:

- Gaps behind lead flashing on buildings B&W A, E and F;
- Gaps beneath roof tiles or within loft spaces in B&W A, C and D;
- Gaps behind fascias in buildings B&W A, B, C, D and F;
- Missing mortar in the verge of B&W E;
- Gaps behind drop tiles on the north-eastern gable of B&W A.

### Survey Limitations

It was not possible to partially or fully inspect the roof voids within the following components of the structure:

- B&W A and C: partially inspected from a loft hatch but access constrained;
- B&W D and F: sealed void – no access possible;
- B&W A (dormer windows): sealed void – no access possible.

The offsite side of B&W D and E to the east is in private ownership and therefore inspection of this aspect of the building was not possible.

There are locations within the building where evidence of bats, if present, would not have been apparent from a PRA survey, such as roosts which might be present between tiles and underfelted or gaps between mortar in wet-laid slates.

These are taken into account when concluding the assessments of building potential and are addressed by the recommendations for further surveys.

### Assessment of Potential for use by Roosting Bats

The building complex is considered to provide **moderate potential** for use by roosting bats.

This takes into account the potential features identified; as well as the relatively central location of the structure within Hugh Town which is likely to provide a wide range of suitable roosting opportunities alongside those offered by the building under consideration in this assessment.

### Recommendations and Justification (Bats):

In accordance with the criteria outlined in the Best Practice Guidance, further surveys would be required to provide an appropriate evidence-base upon which to support a planning application.

- The structural features identified as offering features with **moderate potential** should be subject to **two PAS surveys**.

The PAS surveys should be led by Licenced Bat Worker(s) between May and September with at least one survey between May and August. The two surveys should be at least three weeks apart.

These surveys should be completed and submitted in support of a Planning Application in accordance with the guidance provided by Circular 06/05 (ODPM, 2005) which states that *“it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision”*.

For the avoidance of doubt, the current survey baseline is not sufficient to support a Planning Application with reference to the Circular 06/05.

The results of these surveys would be used to inform the development of mitigation or Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) which would be submitted in support of the Planning Application.

### **Assessment of Potential for use by Nesting Birds**

The building provides suitable nesting habitat for birds associated with both flat- and pitched-roof sections.

The following nesting sites were confirmed:

- Nesting herring gulls on the flat roof of B&W B;
- Nesting birds (historic nests likely starling and sparrow) in the roof space of B&W C.

It is likely that other features of the building may offer further nesting habitat for common species. Features associated with fascias and gaps around the eaves are frequently used by house sparrows in Hugh Town.

### **Recommendations and Justification (Birds):**

In order to ensure legislative compliance, the contractors undertaking the works must ensure that nesting birds are not disturbed in accordance with requirements under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981).

#### *Timing of Works*

Works affecting potential nesting sites associated with the roof (including fascias and soffits) should be undertaken outside of the breeding season which runs from March – September inclusive, where practicable. This would provide the most robust means of avoiding risk of impact to nesting birds.

#### *Pre-commencement Inspection*

If the recommended timing of works is not possible, then contractors should visually inspect the work area internally and externally before they are affected by the works, in order to confirm that no nests are present. In the event that a bird nest is present, it must be left undisturbed until chicks have fledged the nest, at which point works can proceed.

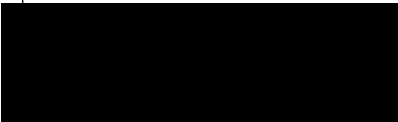
Care must also be taken to ensure that the works do not cause disturbance or damage to proximate nesting areas through indirect impacts including vibration, noise or contractor presence. This includes adjacent parts of the building and offsite structures.

#### *Enhancement Opportunities*

The central location of the building within Hugh Town; the use of the property as an eating establishment; the high levels of human activity and potential disturbance; and the likely retention of existing nesting habitat would suggest that enhancement features in the form of bird boxes would not be appropriate in this instance.

**Signed by bat worker(s):**

**Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024





## APPENDIX 2

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### LOCATION PLAN AND PHOTOGRAPHS



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



**Map 02** – Showing the distinct structural elements of the Bishop and Wolf which are described and assessed individually in the report.



**Photograph 1:** Showing the interior of the roof void of B&W A at the eaves – the typical tar paper and poorly pointed gable can be seen



**Photograph 2:** An example of occasional lifted tiles in B&W A along with the timber-clad dormer.



**Photograph 3:** Showing the lead flashing lining the junction between the chimney and the main roof of B&W A



**Photograph 4:** Showing one of the herring gull nests on the flat roof of B&W B.



**Photograph 5:** Showing the access from the dormer of B&W A to the flat roof section B&W B. The synthetic tiles on the side of the dormers on this aspect are visible.



**Photograph 6:** Showing the heights and alignments of roof pitches on B&W C and D



**Photograph 7:** Showing an example of the lifted flashing around the valley join between the dormer and the main roof on B&W A



**Photograph 8:** Showing the interior of the loft space above B&W C with more modern felting.



**Photograph 9:** Showing the 'courtyard' at first floor level created by the intersection of B&W A, B and C above B&W E.



**Photograph 10:** Showing an example of lifted flashing beneath the window of B&W C



**Photograph 11:** Showing gaps in the soffit where services enter on B&W C



**Photograph 12:** Showing the gable of B&W D with missing pointing



**Photograph 13:** Showing the gap behind the fascia on B&W B



**Photograph 14:** Showing B&W E on the ground floor



**Photograph 15:** Showing an example of a minor gap behind the fascia on B&W E



**Photograph 16:** Showing the gap in the verge pointing on B&W D



**Photograph 17:** Showing an example of lifted flashing where the roof of B&W F meets the main structure of B&W A



**Photograph 18:** Showing gaps in the gable verge of B&W A