

# Preliminary Visual Assessment for Bats and Breeding Birds

20 Egloshayle Road, Wadebridge

September 2020

A report by

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(Natural England licence no: 2019-39576-CLS-CLS)

## Report details

Site address: 20 Egloshayle Road, Wadebridge, Cornwall, PL27 6AD  
Grid reference: SW757260  
Survey date: 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020  
Surveyors: John Blackburn BSc (Hons), MSc Ecologist  
(Natural England licence no: 2019-39576-CLS-CLS)  
Report date: 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020  
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Report checked by: Colin Hicks BSc (Hons), MCIEEM  
Report Reference: WOR-1602

## Declaration of compliance

### BS 42020:2013

This study has been undertaken in accordance with British Standard 42020:2013 Biodiversity, Code of practice for planning and development.

### Code of Professional Conduct

The information which we have prepared is true, and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

## Validity of survey data and report

The findings of this report are valid for 12 months from the date of survey. If work has not commenced within this period, an updated survey by a suitably qualified ecologist will be required.

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## Non-technical summary

Western Ecology has been commissioned to complete a preliminary visual assessment for bats and breeding birds at 20 Egloshayle road, Wadebridge, Cornwall, PL27 6AD.

Prior to works commencing, a survey has been commissioned to ensure that the proposed works do not adversely affect bats and breeding birds. The survey will:

- Identify the past and/or current use of the site by bats and breeding birds;
- Assess the likely impact of the proposed development on bats and breeding birds;
- Provide a basis upon which to propose further survey work or mitigation, should they be affected by the development.

The survey was completed on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020 with an air temperature of 17°C, no wind, and 60% cloud cover.

### Assessment for bats

Evidence of previous use of the site by bats was found. A small number of bat droppings, likely to be pipistrelle species, were found on fibreglass insulation in the roof void. These were near chimney brickwork, beneath a gap in the roof where there is missing mortar.

From this survey alone, it is not possible to be confident that bats will not be impacted by the proposed works. In line with guidelines (Collins, 2016), further surveys are required to characterise the use of this building by roosting bats.

In line with guidelines (Collins, 2016), at least two surveys are recommended, comprising a dusk emergence survey and, dependant on the outcome of this, one dawn re-entry or a further dusk emergence survey. Two surveyors are required to cover the building. These surveys can only be completed in the optimal bat survey period, May to September inclusive (with at least one survey between May and August inclusive).

Any mitigation, should it be required, will be formulated once the results of this additional survey work is known.

### Assessment for breeding birds

No evidence of nesting birds was recorded. No further mitigation is required.

# 1. Introduction

Western Ecology has been commissioned to complete a preliminary visual assessment for bats and breeding birds at 20 Egloshayle Road, Wadebridge, Cornwall, PL27 6AD.

This survey has been prepared in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust's "Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines" (Collins, 2016).

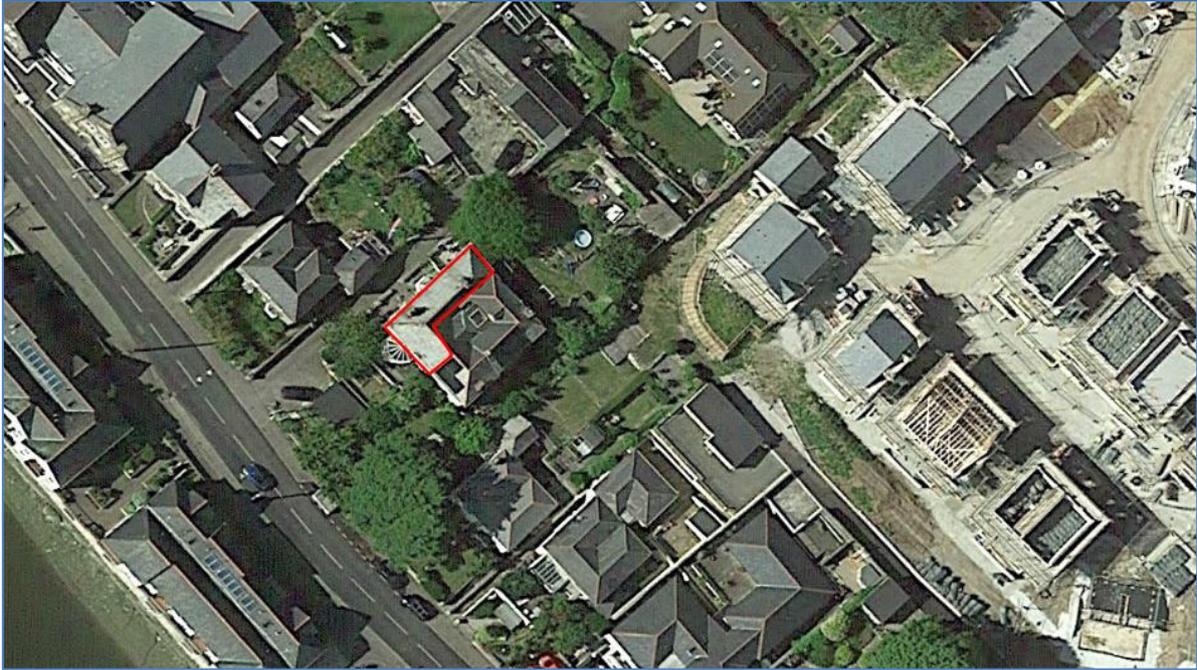
## 1.1. Site description

The property at 20 Egloshayle, Wadebridge is in an urban setting within Wadebridge, in North Cornwall (Plan 1). Residential gardens with associated habitats are present in the immediate surrounds and to the south, 100m, lies the River Camel. Across the river lies an area of open amenity grassland and further urban development. 500m east lies a small woodland which leads into open farmland.

Further afield Wadebridge is surrounded by large expanses of open, manged farmland, small woodland and hedgerows and are likely to provide good potential for foraging and commuting bats in the area.



Plan 1. The location of the building surveyed.



Plan 2. The building surveyed at this site

## 1.2. Proposed works

Works will be carried out to either remove an interior section of the chimney (with additional support works in that area of the roof void) or remove the chimney entirely. An extension will be added to the north-east aspect (Plan 2a and b). There may be some flashing in association with the new flat roof at the Northern end which may require some temporary slate stripping of the bottom slate courses before being reinstated.

## 1.3. Survey aims

To ensure that the proposed development does not adversely affect bats and breeding birds, the survey will:

- Identify the past and/or current use of the site by bats and breeding birds;
- Assess the likely impact of the proposed development on bats and breeding birds;
- Provide a basis upon which to propose further survey work or mitigation, should they be affected by the development.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Bat roost assessment

All areas of the buildings were carefully examined internally and externally for signs of use by bats, with the aid of torches, by a suitable qualified and licenced ecologist. This included a search for bat droppings, feeding remains, urine stains and polished/scratched woodwork. A search was also made for individual bats, as well as potential access points and cavities capable of providing a roosting space for bats.

This survey method complies with guidelines produced by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2016).

The survey was completed on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020 with an air temperature of 17°C, no wind, and 40% cloud cover.

A data search was not considered appropriate due to the highly mobile nature of bats. It is assumed that all species of bat that are present in Cornwall could be active within the vicinity which includes Barbastelle, Serotine, Noctule, Lesser Horseshoe, Greater Horseshoe, Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Nathusius Pipistrelle (very rare), Whiskered, Brandt's, Natterer's, Daubenton's, Brown Long-eared and possibly Grey Long-eared.

It is very unlikely when considering the location and structure being assessed that a data search would provide further meaningful information.

### 2.2. Breeding birds

The building and associated areas were searched for evidence of nesting bird species.

### 2.3. Surveyor

The survey was completed by John Blackburn. Mr Blackburn has 9 years' experience working on ecology and conservation projects in the UK and abroad. He has been working on bat surveys for the last 7 years, holds a Level 2 Class Licence to survey bats and is a competent ornithologist.

## 3. Results

### 3.1. Bat roost description

The property is a three-storey, brick built residential building with a timber framed, hipped roof covered in slate tiles. The roof is in generally in good condition, with only a small amount of mortar missing from around the chimney which leads into the roof void. The eaves are secure with plastic fascia boxes and guttering all around. One small hole is present on the south-western corner of the fascia box, leading to a small space beneath.

A single open roof void space is present that runs the length of the building. It is 2-3 meters in height with exposed wooden beams fibreglass insulation on the floor. There is no membrane to the underside of the slates. A small number of bat droppings, likely to be pipistrelle species, were found on fibreglass insulation in the roof void. These were near chimney brickwork, beneath a gap in the roof where there is missing mortar.

A flat roofed extension lies at the back of the property and is covered with roofing felt. The extension lacks a roof void.



The property viewed from the west



The slate covered roof



Flat roof at the back of the property



The open roof void



Pipistrelle droppings



The gap in the fascia box

### 3.2. Breeding birds

No evidence of breeding birds was recorded.

## 4. Assessment

### 4.1. Survey constraints

The survey was completed at a suitable time for the inspection of buildings and structures for bat roosts (Collins, 2016), and areas to be searched had not been cleaned/swept prior to survey. All areas of these buildings were accessible, and a full and complete assessment was made.

### 4.2. Assessment for bats

Evidence of previous use of the site by bats was found. A small number of bat droppings, likely to be pipistrelle species, were found on fibreglass insulation in the roof void. These were near chimney brickwork, beneath a gap in the roof where there is missing mortar.

From this survey alone, it is not possible to be confident that bats will not be impacted by the proposed works. In line with guidelines (Collins, 2016), further surveys are required to characterise the use of this building by roosting bats.

### 4.3. Assessment for breeding birds

No evidence of breeding birds was found. No further mitigation is required.

### 4.4. Legislation

#### Bats

Bat species and their breeding or resting places (roosts) are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. They are identified as European Protected Species. Under these laws it is an offence to:

- capture, kill, disturb or injure bats (on purpose or by not taking enough care);
- damage or destroy a breeding or resting place (even accidentally);
- obstruct access to their resting or sheltering places (on purpose or by not taking enough care); or
- possess, sell, control or transport live or dead bats, or parts of them.

Seven species of bat are listed as being of principal importance, in the Secretary of State's opinion, for the purposes of conserving biodiversity. Under section 41 (England) of the NERC Act (2006) there is a need for these species to be taken into consideration by a public body when performing any of its functions with a view to conserving biodiversity.

These are Barbastelle, Bechstein's, Noctule, Soprano Pipistrelle, Brown Long-eared, Greater Horseshoe and Lesser Horseshoe and are the subject of National and Local Biodiversity Action Plans.

Activities that can affect bats include (from GOV.UK):

- renovating, converting or demolishing a building
- cutting down or removing branches from a mature tree
- repairing or replacing a roof
- repointing brickwork
- insulating or converting a loft
- installing lighting in a roost, or outside if it lights up the entrance to the roost
- removing commuting habitats such as hedgerows, watercourses or woodland
- changing or removing their foraging areas
- using insecticide
- treating timber

### Breeding birds

All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) from being killed, injured or captured whilst their nests and eggs are protected from being damaged, destroyed or taken. Birds which are listed under Schedule 1 of the Act are given additional protection against disturbance.

Fifty-nine species of bird are listed as species “of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity”.

## 5. Recommendations and mitigation

### 5.1. Roosting bats

Further surveys will be required to determine if bats are present, and if so, to fully characterise the roost, and determine the significance and scale of impacts associated with the proposed development.

In line with guidelines (Collins, 2016), at least two surveys are recommended, comprising a dusk emergence survey and, dependant on the outcome of this, one dawn re-entry or a further dusk emergence survey. Two surveyors are required to cover the building. These surveys can only be completed in the optimal bat survey period, May to September inclusive (with at least one survey between May and August inclusive).

### 5.2. Breeding birds

No evidence of nesting birds was recorded. No further mitigation is required in relation to breeding birds.

## References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). The Bat Survey Trust, London. ISBN-13 978-1-872745-96-1