

BAT AND BARN OWL ASSESSMENT
DISUSED WATER STORAGE TANK
CHACEWATER
TRURO
CORNWALL
TR4 8LQ



CONTENTS

1.	Administration Details	3
2.	Summary of Results & Recommendations	3
3.	Legislation	4
3.1	Bats	4
3.2	Barn owls and other birds	4
3.3	Planning Authority	4
4.	Assessment information	5
4.1	Description of habitat surrounding the building	5
4.2	Assessment methodology	5
5.	Bat assessment results	5
5.1	Summary of results	5
5.2	Detailed bat assessment results and recommendations	5
6.	Barn owl survey results	6
6.1	Summary of results	6
6.2	Detailed barn owl survey results and recommendations	6

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I. ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

Property Assessed	Disused water storage tank Chacewater Truro Cornwall TR4 8LQ	
Grid Reference	SW758437	
Name & Address of Contact	Mrs Elizabeth Hobbs C/o BLS Estates Riverside House Heron Way Newham Truro Cornwall TR1 2XN	
Tel.	Paul Howarth 07734 262061	
Name & Address for Invoice payment	As above	
Planning Authority Involved	Cornwall Council West 2	
Planning Reference Number		
Consultancy Reference Number	CEC 497/3409	
Date of assessment request	04/12/2020	
Date of assessment	07/01/2021	
Weather on date of assessment	Clear and dry with a temperature of 2°C	
Surveyor's name & Licence Numbers	Steve Marshall	2015-11878-CLS-CLS (CL18 Bat Survey Level 2) BTO Barn owl nest recorder Cornwall
Report Reviewed by	Dave Hunter (2017-28109-CLS-CLS)	
Proposed work: <i>Demolition / Conversion / Restoration</i>	It is proposed to convert the water tank to form accommodation.	
Report valid for planning purposes until	January 2022	

2. SUMMARY OF RESULTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Evidence of bats found	None
Bat survey recommendations	No further surveys required on the building
Evidence of barn owls found	None
Evidence of nesting birds	None

3. LEGISLATION

3.1 Bats

All British bats are European protected species (EPS), included on Annex IV(a) of the European Communities Habitats Directive. Annex IV(a) species are protected in this country under Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Additionally, bat species in the UK are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Schedule 12 of the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000. In combination, this makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately kill, injure or capture bats;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost, or deliberately disturb a group of bats;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a bat roost (a bat roost is interpreted as any structure or place which is used for shelter or protection, regardless of whether bats are present at the time or not);
- Possess or transport a bat or any part of a bat, unless acquired legally; and
- Sell, barter or exchange bats or parts of bats.

The bat ecologist will assess the significance of the bat roost and the scale of impact. Works involving significant disturbance or roost destruction (including changes to the roost) may require an EPS licence before the work can lawfully commence. Works involving minor disturbance may qualify for a Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL). Natural England is the licensing authority in England. Only a suitably licensed and experienced ecologist can act as the named ecologist in the licence application. Our company can provide a quotation for this additional work. The development must take into account the presence of bats and retain access and a suitable roosting site for bats. For further information and advice contact Natural England on 0845 601 4523 (local rate).

3.2 Barn owls and other birds

The nests and eggs of all wild birds are protected against taking, damage and destruction under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Barn owls (*Tyto alba*) are given greater protection against disturbance while breeding under Schedule 1 of the Act.

3.3 Planning Authority

If further bat surveys are recommended to enable suitable mitigation to be designed, the Local Planning Authority will not be in a position to make a decision on the planning application until the surveys have been completed and appropriate mitigation included within the proposals.

4. ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

4.1 Description of habitat surrounding the building

The building is located within a rural location, east of the village of Chacewater. The surrounding habitats consist of cattle grazed pasture with a good network of hedgerows and trees. These conditions will provide good foraging and roosting opportunities for bats and barn owls in the surrounding area.

4.2 Assessment methodology

An assessment as to the suitability of the building and the surrounding habitat for bats and barn owls was made. The building was surveyed using a high-powered lamp to illuminate all areas thought suitable for roosting bats and barn owls. This included searching for bats and barn owls *in situ*, droppings, pellets, staining, liming, feathers and feeding remains. A search around the perimeter of the building was then conducted and any gaps and crevices which had the potential for roosting bats checked.

5. BAT ASSESSMENT RESULTS

5.1 Summary of results

Number seen at time of visit	None
Droppings?	None
Any known history of colony?	No known history of a colony on this site
Other evidence found	None

5.2 Detailed bat assessment results and recommendations

The building assessed is a disused water storage tank and has previously been assessed for bats and barn owls in March 2017 (CEC497/2743) and October 2018 (CEC497/3066). The building is built with concrete walls and roof and originally there would have been only one access into the building, through a hatch set into the roof. Since the building has been decommissioned and a doorway has been cut into the building. A careful search of the interior for evidence or signs of use by bats was made. The floors, underside of the roof and stored items were all searched followed by the exterior of the building. No evidence of use by bats was noted at the time of this assessment.

Although no current evidence of roosting bats was found it cannot be assumed that bats are not present when works commence. Care should therefore be taken during the work as bats could roost unseen deep within crevices in the structures, particularly under the ridge or beneath wall plates. If any bats are discovered during the work, they must not be handled: works must stop immediately, and advice sought from CEC (tel 01872 245510).

If you wish to promote wildlife, it is possible to provide roosting opportunities for bats within the completed building. Access for bats can be provided into the roof space (or into the space beneath the roofing slates if the development is to have vaulted ceilings) by leaving small gaps 15-20mm wide by at least 50mm long in suitable places. Suitable places would include behind soffits, fascia's and barge boards or at the gable apex. The access points would need to be next to the walls (to allow bats to land on the wall then crawl up through the access point) and not inadvertently blocked by insulation (see enclosed leaflet for additional information).

If the roof covering is to be underlined, it is recommended that bitumen roofing felt is used. Recent research has shown that the modern breathable membranes can be harmful to bats (bats have been found dead in some roosts after having become entangled in the fibres of the membrane) and the membrane deteriorates over time due to damage from bats. Only type IF bitumen felt is suitable for use in bat roosts; if the product states non-woven, polypropylene or spun-bond it is not suitable.

6. BARN OWL SURVEY RESULTS

6.1 Summary of results

Nest found	No
Adults found	No
Chicks found	No
Eggs found	No
Pellets found	None
Other evidence found	No

6.2 Detailed barn owl survey results and recommendations

The water tank does not have access suitable for use by barn owls and no barn owls or evidence of barn owls was found at the time of the survey. The surrounding area provides suitable foraging habitat; however, the completed building and surrounding land holding will not have a structure or tree suitable to locate a barn owl box. Provision for barn owls is therefore not considered appropriate for this development.

No evidence of use by nesting birds was found but the broken air bricks set within the wall have potential for use by birds. If the works are to be carried out within the bird breeding season (March to September) the building should be searched for nesting birds. If nesting birds are present, works should not commence, and further advice sought from Cornwall Environmental Consultants (tel 01872 245510) or Natural England (tel 01872 245045) as the nests and eggs of all wild birds are protected against taking, damage or destruction under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

For information on roosting/nesting requirements for barn owls contact the Barn Owl Trust, Waterleat, Ashburton, Devon TQ13 7HU.

Tel 01364 653026. Web www.barnowltrust.org.uk

For Barn owl planning advice please see: http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/barnowl-rpa_tcm6-12652.pdf