

**BAT AND BARN OWL SURVEY OF PROPERTIES ASSOCIATED WITH
MAWGAN PORTH BEACH FRONT REGENERATION,
MAWGAN PORTH, NEWQUAY, CORNWALL, TR8 4BA**

January 2021



**Spalding Associates (Environmental) Ltd.
10 Walsingham Place
Truro
Cornwall
TR1 2RP**

Tel: 01872 272711

E-mail: office@spaldingassociates.co.uk



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O.S. Grid Ref: SW 85006 67174

Survey date: 25th January 2021

Surveyor: David Attwell
Class Survey Licence Reg. Nos. 2015-12519-CLS-CLS

Time spent on site: 2 hours

Taxonomic groups: Bats
Barn Owls

Report authors: David Attwell

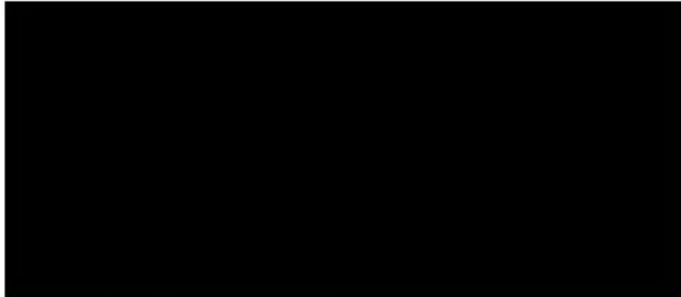
Report compiled by: David Attwell

Report completed: 31st January 2021

Report for: Mr. G. Jones

Report No: 20-40 Mawgan Porth

Document approved by: Adrian Spalding PhD Director

Signature: 

Date: 1st February 2021

**Bat and Barn Owl Survey of properties associated with the Mawgan Porth Beachfront Regeneration Project,
Mawgan Porth Cornwall, TR8 4BA,
January 2021**

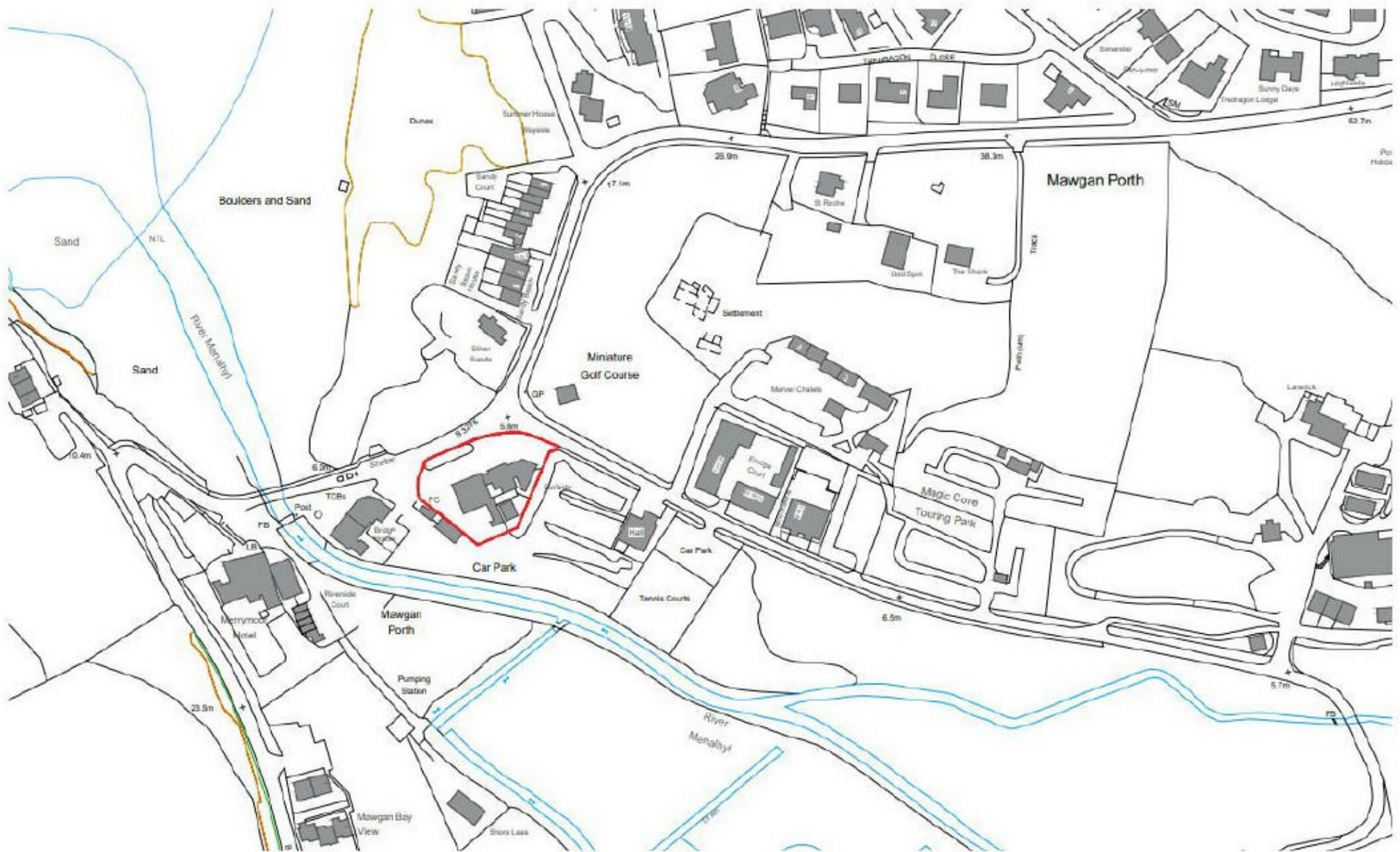


Figure 1: Location of the Beach Front properties at Mawgan Porth (Source: Architect /Google Maps TM)



1. INTRODUCTION

Spalding Associates (Environmental) Ltd were instructed by Mr. Graham Jones to carry out a Bat and Barn Owl survey of a number of properties that form part of the commercial beachfront at Mawgan Porth. The portfolio of businesses includes Cornish Fresh, Art at the Beach, Married to the Sea and Disco Beads which form an organic street scene to the east of the coast road. In addition to the main buildings there are a number of ancillary structures at the rear which include a holiday flat, surf school venue and storage facilities for the shops.

The properties are an eclectic mix of building styles and materials and the site has been developed randomly over period of many years. At the front is a large hard surfaced area which is utilised for parking and other commercial activities in the form of kiosk or seasonal trading. To the rear there is a mix of hard surface areas with a few small patches of garden laid to lawn or small shrub beds. A larger yard surrounds Cornish Fresh which includes some temporary steel containers for storage as well as picnic benches and chairs utilised in the peak periods. A block wall forms the northern perimeter of the whole development site.

Mr. Jones and a neighbouring shop owner are proposing to demolish the existing buildings and to re-develop the footprint of the site with a mix of commercial and residential uses.

2. DESCRIPTION OF BUILDING

The properties are roughly aligned north north east by south south west with the shop fronts facing north westwards towards the beach at Mawgan Porth. There is a large hard surfaced parking at the front which



Figure 2: Image of the properties that make up the beachfront site at Mawgan Porth

is used for a mix of parking and seasonal commercial activity accessed at either end from the coastal road. The rear of the properties are a series of ancillary buildings and storage units within enclosed spaces which consist of hard surfaces and some amenity landscaping.

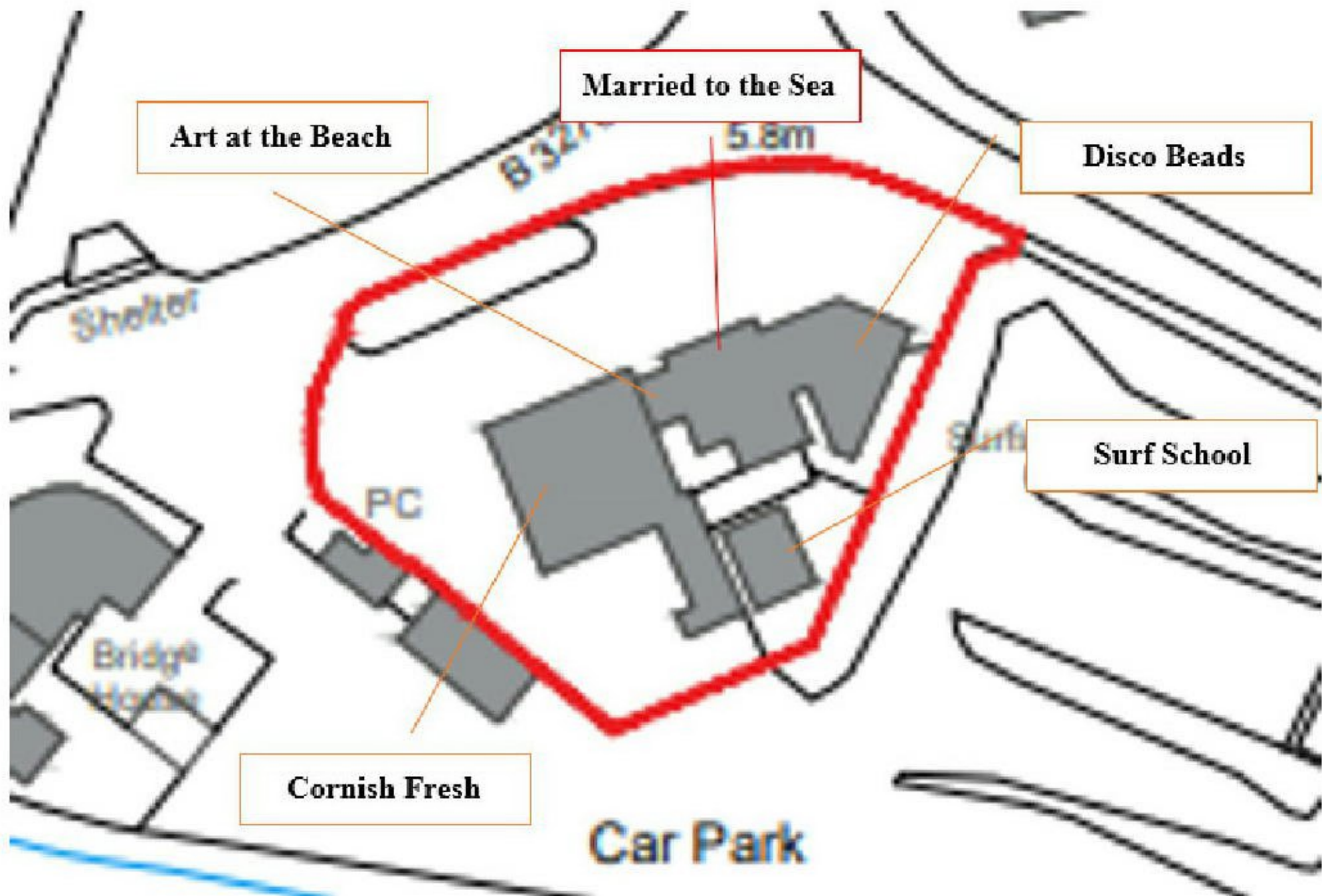


Figure 3: Location of the separate business and buildings surveyed

The properties can be broken down into the following units:

I. Cornish Fresh

This business is formed around a central building (roughly 15M x 8M x 6M to ridge) which reflects a modern house in design. It is constructed from blockwork with rendered walls and is split into two levels with living accommodation on the first floor whilst the ground level (open plan) forms the shop floor. The roof covering is relatively modern with softwood ‘fink’ style trusses (<600MM spacing’s) which have been battened and covered with Type 1 bitumen felt which support modern concrete tiles with a concrete ridge. A wooden soffit has been constructed on all four elevations with plastic rainwater goods front and rear.

The first floor living accommodation is accessed via a wooden staircase at the southern gable. There is a decked balcony area in front of the flat which overlays the front extension (see below) and is surrounded by a wooden balustrade. A single doorway provides access to the property which is divided into a series of living rooms with UPVC casement windows in the front (x3), rear (x3) and southern gable (x1).

The loft space is accessed via a hatch at the southern end and is illuminated by a series of electric lights. At the gable ends wooden vertical boarding has been used to close the space. A redundant water tank with cover is located close to the southern gable and a series of breather pipes for bathroom and electrical



Figure 4: External elevations of Cornish Fresh

Top: Front and rear elevations of Cornish Fresh. Note the multiple extensions and flat roofs at the rear of the central building of which the upper floor is accommodation.

Middle: The southern gable end provides access to the flat via a wooden staircase note the wooden soffit board. The right hand image is taken from the garden of the Surf Shop.

Bottom: Image of the shed at the rear of the property with a slate roof and ceramic ridge. The right image shows the shop interior looking south through the porch extension.

appliances are plumbed into the roof with vented outflows on the rear elevation. The area has been well laid with modern fibre insulation and aluminium backed boarding has been used as the interface with the flat ceiling. Electrical wiring is loosely laid throughout the space and a small area of loose boarding provides secure access in the immediate vicinity of the hatch. This area has also been used for limited storage of domestic goods.

At the front of this central building is a single storey extension (15M x 4M x 2.5M) which forms part of the ground floor retail area. Two sets of UPVC doors provide access at either ends of the space which also includes a large rectangular casement window with wooden panelling below. The blockwork of the front wall projects above the wall head to form a vernacular statement and the setting for the shop name. The roof itself is flat with timber framework and plyboard capped with a bitumen felt. There are no visible barge boards or external elements which are cloaked by the projecting block wall with returns to both gables.

At the rear of the central block are a series of extensions which provide seasonal retail space and storage again with rendered block walls and simple timber studwork for the roof. This includes a 'mirror' single storey structure (15M x 4M x 2.5M) to that on the front elevation which has a later porch (4.5M x 3M X 2.2M) addition added to its southern gable. These roofs are again flat with the main extension sloping slightly to the north and the lower porch to the south. Both have recently been plastic coated and in places have weathered timber bargeboards with rain water goods. The porch itself which has a single UPVC door and casement window providing access to the rear of the shop. Internally the retail areas have a mix of plaster boarded ceilings and some UPVC panelling for hygiene. In the storage areas and access corridors the underside of the roof is generally open with tie beams and rafters visible.

Abutted to the rear extension is a further additional space which is narrower at 2M x 8M x 2M. Constructed from breeze blocks with rendered walls it sits 400MM below the roof slope of the rear extension taking water on a similar mono pitch to rainwater goods for disposal. It has also been plastic coated with remnants of timber barge board at the northern end. At this juncture it interfaces with the storage space at the rear of the shop which also forms a corridor linking to a small shed with pitched slate roof (approx. 5M x 5M x 3.5M). This has softwood timber trusses at close spacing in a raised tie style. Modern woven membrane has been laid with wooden battens and sized slates with a tightly mortared ceramic ridge. Walls are again constructed from blockwork with some bricks which is partially finished on the eastern gable head. Two large piers support a steel RSJ on the southern wall where a further extension has been added with a timber flat roof with a bitumen covering and plastic rainwater goods. A pair of large UPVC doors provide access for the passage of goods into the storage rooms and the rear of the shop.

Immediately to the east of the shed are two steel storage containers which sit within a hard surfaced area bounded by a block wall which creates the boundary for the property.

II. Art at the Beach

This very small retail unit is a single storey building that links both Cornish Fresh and the Surf Hire element of Married to the Sea. The walls are a mix of blockwork and rubble slate which has been partially rendered. The front elevation has a wooden door and large casement window with shop sign above. At the rear there is a large metal window in the block wall which has timber lap above to the interface with the flat roof. This is simple timber framework with ply board and bitumen covering draining water to the eastern elevation where rainwater goods link to drains within a small concrete yard.



Figure 5: External elevations of Art at the Beach and Married to the Beach (Inc. Surf Shop)

Top: Front and rear elevations of Art at the Beach. Note the flat which borders the northern side of the shop and extends eastwards into a small enclosed garden.

Middle: The Surf Shop with its slate roof and the single storey flat roof extension to the north which also forms part of the retail area.

Bottom: Images of the flat showing the flat roof porch entrance and the hipped roof of the Surf Shop behind. A lower pitched slate roof extends into the garden which is bordered on its eastern boundary by the Surf School. The flat shares part of its space with Disco Beads which uses toilet and storage facilities facing their own business unit across a narrow private yard.

III. Married to the Sea

This property comprises a number of different elements of which the main focus is the Surf Hire unit which forms the central focus for the beachfront property.

The Surf Hire shop (approx. 13M x 10M x 6M to ridge) comprise block and stonework walls with a retail area at the front of the building and a small holiday let flat at the rear. It is accessed via a central doorway with large two bay windows either side which are hidden by timber and corrugated iron extensions on a raised timber floor. The roof layout reflects the development of the footprint and is partially hipped with local slate laid on wooden battens over Type I bitumen felt. Ceramic ridge tiles have been used for the ridge and each of the slopes of the hips. The framework for the roof is made up of a modified queen post format which creates a large internal space (3.5M x 2.2M in the centre which diminishes where the rafters (450mm spacings) meet the wall head. A single chimney breast passes through the roof space on the northern side and a lower narrow section of roof projects eastwards forming the cover for the rear holiday flat. The floor has been boarded and the areas is utilised for storage of shop goods and discarded cardboard and general bric a brac. A pressurised water tank sits in the south eastern corner of the space and a large Velux roof light is located in the western hipped slope which provides substantial light to the interior. Access to the roof is via a hatch close to the western elevation. Internally the shop area is finished with painted walls and plaster boarded ceilings.

The rear holiday flat is a single story extension of the Surf Hire shop under the same roof. It is built of block walls with render and is accessed via the rear elevation through a single doorway within a lower porch extension. The living area extends in an 'L' shape eastwards and there are UPVC windows in all elevations. Wooden fascia boards support plastic rainwater goods on the various roof sections and there are a number of slates on the southern elevation of the rear extension which have tingles or have slipped. The entrance porch is flat roofed with a bitumen covering and a small decked area abuts the property as part of an enclosed garden setting which is a mix of concrete floors with lawn and shrub beds.

The northern wall of the flat abuts toilets and storage used by Disco Beads as part of the footprint for their business operation, again sitting under the Surf Hire shop slate roof. To the east, the boundary is formed by the western wall of the Surf School building.

To the north of the Surf Hire shop is another commercial space run as part of the Married to the Beach retail offer. This is a single storey building which abuts with Disco Beads (see below) and is made of the same block and render construction associated with the Surf Hire shop. There are two large wooden windows and an entrance door in the southern end of the front elevation above which is a large business sign. Timber decking has been used to provide cladding between the window frames and the walls are painted. The roof is timber studwork with ply and again is flat with a bitumen cover draining gently to the east.

IV. Disco Beads

This business is located in its own defined area and comprises a standalone unit with use of part of the rear of the Surf Shop for toilets and storage facilities. The property is constructed from block walls with render with a few sections of brickwork. It is covered by a timber stud and ply framework which supports a flat bitumen roof draining to the east. In the front elevation there are two large windows and a recessed entrance door. This elevation is clad with overlapping vertical softwood timbers with a lower wall constructed of similar materials at parking level. The northern elevation is solid blockwork alongside a lane leading to the surf school and the rear of the unit which also services the flat. Access to the back of Disco Beads is via a wooden gate which opens into a narrow yard with the toilets and storage to the south and the main industrial unit to the north.



Figure 6: External elevations of Disco Beads and the Surf School

Top: Front and north elevations of Disco Beads. Note the use of timber cladding on the front elevation

Middle: The Surf School front elevation with tin cladding and western wall which borders the flat's garden.

Bottom: Image of the flat roof of the Surf School looking south towards the Cornish Fresh yard with the shed in the middle distance. Lower right image shows a view looking south over the Disco Beads unit with the northern roof slope of the Surf School showing the lower extension which covers the flat.

V. Surf School

The Surf School is a rectangular block which forms a standalone unit (approx. 8M x 7M x 2.2M) at the rear of the commercial area. It is accessed via the lane alongside Disco Beads and there is small rectangular open space at the rear (partially landscaped) and south eastern corner of the plot (hard surfaced). To the south it is bounded by the block wall which forms the yard at the rear of Cornish Fresh.

The property is again block construction with render and painted walls. The roof comprises timber studwork with ply and a flat bitumen roof. In the western elevation are two wooden windows and a timber fascia board whilst the front elevation is clad with corrugated iron sheets and hosts a UPVC door and window. Wooden fascia also exist on the eastern and southern wall heads with plastic rainwater goods.

2.1. Surrounding Landscape

The buildings are located within the coastal settlement of Mawgan Porth and occupy a position at the head of the valley and just to the east of the beach. The area contains a number of priority habitats such as maritime cliff and slope, sand dunes and coastal and floodplain grazing marsh. The latter lies to the east of the development site and provides good quality habitat for a range of biodiversity including bats and birds. The valley leading back to St. Mawgan also contains a network of small Cornish hedgebanks and fields with a few good blocks of semi native woodland. This combination of habitats has good potential as foraging and commuting areas for bats and is well suited to a broad range of species. The area has potential for both summer and winter roosting opportunities in woodland and various buildings within the wider landscape. There is also records of mining and industrial workings within mid Cornwall that are known to be used by bats throughout the year including the Greater Horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* and Lesser Horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*.

3. METHODS

3.1. Bats

With the aid of a high-powered torch the buildings were carefully searched internally and externally, where access allowed, for bats or any signs of bat presence, past or present. This included searching for droppings, feeding remains and individuals as well as searching for potential entry points, polishing or scratching of woodwork (indicating use by bats) and for cavities capable of providing roosting space.

All surfaces were examined where ¹accessible, internally and externally, as well as ledges and other protruding features for bat droppings and feeding evidence. Any cavities present and open areas were searched with a torch, for roosting bats, as were any cavities present along the wall tops, between the roof timbers and walls and around any openings.

As bats can leave little evidence of their occupation, this survey included an assessment of the potential of the buildings and features of the buildings to support roosting bats.

The survey was carried out on the afternoon of the 25th of January 2021 and the weather was dry, cold and relatively still with 5% light cloud cover and a temperature of 7°C.

¹ It wasn't possible to gain access internally to Disco Beads and Art at the Beach

3.2. Barn Owls

With the aid of a torch any access points which could admit Barn Owls *Tyto alba* into the buildings were searched for and any ledges present within the buildings which were thought to have the potential to be used by nesting or roosting Barn Owls were searched for owl pellets, feathers and nest debris, as were the floors beneath crossing timbers.

3.3. Swallows and other birds

Suitable ledges and spaces which could provide nesting space for Swallows *Hirundo rustica* and other birds were inspected for evidence of previous or current nest building attempts.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Bats

The survey failed to identify evidence for the presence of bats based on the level of access available and the time of year.

Many of the buildings have limited potential for this group owing to the simplistic style of construction and the prevalence of flat roofs. This limits roosting opportunities within buildings or on external elevations where often bats utilise fascia boards, hanging slates and other vernacular features. In the instance of Disco Beads, the Surf School, Art at the Beach and parts of Cornish Fresh these niche locations were obviated by the construction style and materials used.

A thorough search was made of the roof space of the living accommodation of Cornish Fresh and the Surf Hire shop without revealing any indications of bats being present. Limited roosting potential was noted behind a few external fascias and ridge tiles but no conclusive evidence (current or historic) of bats using any of the buildings was observed.

4.2. Barn Owls

The buildings are unsuitable for this species and no signs for the presence of Barn Owls were seen

4.3. Swallows and other bird species

Despite external features suitable for some heterodynes no signs of nesting for this group was observed on any of the buildings. This may reflect the location and predator issues associated with gulls and other aggressive species using the coastal fringe. However, evidence was observed in the shed at the rear of Cornish Fresh that Swallows which prefer internal spaces had attempted to nest in the past. At least two embryonic nests were spotted on the roof trusses suggesting presence which might have been linked to access via the gable wall head (now blocked with netting).

Within the roof space of Cornish Fresh at least one historic corvid nest was observed against the wall head on the eastern elevation. It appeared that a missing section of ply on the soffit had allowed birds access to the roof space but this was now secured and there was no fresh evidence of birds using the space.



Figure 7: Images of the Cornish Fresh and Surf Hire shop (Married to the Sea) roof voids

Top: Views of the Cornish Fresh roof void above the living accommodation. Note the partial boarding, storage of furniture and clean insulation. The water tank is close to the gable which is vertically boarded.

Middle: Close up of the northern gable with timber cladding and thick insulation. Right hand image shows an old corvid nest built close to the wall head. Access was via damage to the soffit on the eastern elevation.

Bottom: View of the light and large interior of the Surf Shop which is used for storage and shop stock. In the north eastern corner, a lower section of roof covers the flat below. The area has deep insulation and is well boarded. No signs of droppings were observed on the many surfaces provided by the various items loosely stored in the space.



Figure 8: Images of Internal and External roof features

Top: Cavity wall, cobwebbed ridge (Surf Hire) and Swallow nests in the Cornish Fresh store shed.

Middle: Surf Hire slate roof with ceramic ridge with missing mortar creating roost potential

Bottom: Fascia and Soffit boards provide opportunities for some species of bat to use external elevations

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Bats

Category (Bat Potential)	Description
Negligible value	Building, structure or tree where surveyor has not identified any suitable potential roosting features, or where those that are present are of such poor quality or condition, such that bats are highly unlikely to use them.
Low value	Building, structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation).
Moderate value	Building, structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only – the assessments in this table are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).
High value	Building, structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat.
Confirmed Roost	Bats or signs of bats, such as droppings and / or feeding remains, found, or information provided via desk study which indicates a roost.

Table 1: Classification of buildings and trees, according to their potential to support roosting bats (based on Collins, 2016)

Based on the preliminary roost inspection survey the buildings are considered as having a ‘low’ potential to support roosting bats. However, some external features such as fascia boards and ceramic ridge tiles (Surf Shop) are considered to have a slightly higher potential. **We would therefore recommend that prior to demolition a watching brief is agreed with the contractor to strip and remove these specific features in the presence of suitably qualified ecologist.** Ideally works should be take place in the autumn or early spring in line with best practice guidance but if not feasible they should proceed with the watching brief as set out above.

If works do not commence within twelve months of this survey being undertaken an updated survey will be required, prior to commencement of works, to ensure that the status of the site with regard to these species has not altered.

5.2. Barn Owls

No recommendations necessary.

5.3. Swallows and other bird species

Care should be taken to ensure birds are not nesting within the buildings when works commence. If the works cannot be timed to commence outside the bird nesting season (March to August inclusive) then a careful inspection of the building for nesting birds should be carried out prior to works commencing.

This should establish that no nesting birds are present before work proceeds. If nesting birds are found works should wait until the chicks have left the nest. This relates to legislation which affords protection to birds whilst nesting.

6. MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENTS

6.1. Bats

No mitigation required.

6.2. Barn Owls

No mitigation required

6.3. Swallows and other bird species

It would be desirable to consider if nesting opportunities for Swallows could be incorporated into the new development plans for buildings onsite. This would be best achieved in the form of prefabricated nest boxes either erected onto or built into the buildings. A possible option would be to consider this with design of external ancillary structures such as bin stores or sheds. This would help to maintain the biodiversity and enhance the value of the site.

7. LEGISLATION

7.1. Bats

Bats in England have been protected under a number of regulations and amendments but the most up-to-date and relevant are:

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Section 9)

The result of Regulations and Acts is that all species of bat and their breeding sites or resting places (roosts) are protected under law. It is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat
- Deliberately disturb a bat in a way that would affect its ability to survive, breed or rear young or significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat at a roost
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a roost whether bats are present or not
- Damage or destroy a roost whether bats are present or not
- Possess, control, transport, sell exchange or offer for sale/exchange any live or dead bat or any part of a bat

Through the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (this has been updated and consolidated with subsequent amendments by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 mentioned above) bats were designated a European protected species as part of a Europe wide effort to conserve certain plant and animal species.

Any development which is likely to result in the disturbance of a European protected species, or damage to its habitat, usually requires a European protected species licence from Natural England. ‘Development’ is interpreted broadly to include projects involving demolition of buildings, rebuilding, structural alterations and additions to buildings.

7.2. Birds

All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law and it is an offence, with certain exceptions, to intentionally:

- Kill, injure or take any wild bird.
- Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built.
- Take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2012 require public bodies to help “*preserve, maintain and re-establish habitat for wild birds.*”

Barn Owls and other birds listed in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 are given a further level of protection against disturbance whilst breeding.



Figure 10: View of the entrance to Cornish Fresh with accommodation on the first floor