

Wheal Grey
Ecology Ltd



BAT, BARN OWL AND NESTING BIRD SURVEY

on

**SUN VILLA, SUNNY CORNER, CUSGARNE,
TRURO, CORNWALL**

August 2021



Wheal Grey Ecology Ltd

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**BAT, BARN OWL AND NESTING BIRD SURVEY ON SUN VILLA,
SUNNY CORNER, CUSGARNE, TRURO, CORNWALL**

O.S. Grid Ref: SW 7531 4090

Survey date: 18th August 2021

Surveyor: Simon Barnard BSc (Hons) MSc CEcol MCIEEM
Class Survey Licence Reg. Nos. 2017-32208-CLS-CLS
(Level 3) & 2015-13541-CLS-CLS (Level 4)
Barn Owl Class Survey Licence CL29/00170

Time spent on site: ½ hour

Taxonomic groups covered: Bats, Barn Owls and Nesting Birds

Report author: Simon Barnard BSc (Hons) MSc CEcol MCIEEM

Filename & issue number: BBONB_Sun Villa, Cusgarne_Final 1

Report for: Ms Lucia Brown, Studio-arc

Report No: 20-181/S-a/Sun Villa, Cusgarne_BBONB

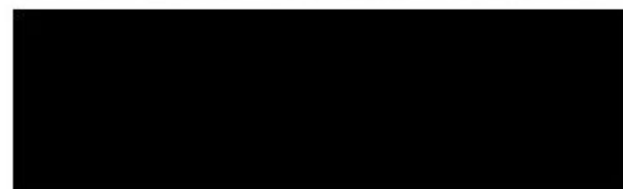
Report completed: 25th August 2021

Report Sign off

**Document checked and
approved for issue by:**

Debra Barnard MBBCh Director

Signature:



Date:

26th August 2021



1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Wheal Grey Ecology Ltd were instructed by Ms Lucia Brown, of Studio-arc, on behalf of the client Mrs Philippa Bramley to carry out a visual inspection on Sun Villa, Sunny Corner, Cusgarne, Truro, Cornwall looking for evidence of use of the building by Bats, Barn Owls and Nesting Birds. The proposal is to apply for planning permission to extend the house to the east in place of an existing stable block.

The survey was carried out in the afternoon of 18th August 2021. The weather was overcast, dry and still with 100% cloud cover and the temperature was 17°C.

2. DESCRIPTION OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE

2.1. Description of Building

The building subject to this survey is a painted stone end of terrace house with an attached single storey stone stable block to the east. The house is two storeys high with a pitched slate covered roof which is attached to the adjacent house to the west. The eastern end is a gable end with a built-in chimney. To the south is a single storey large glass porch and to the rear the garden is raised, see photos 1, 2 and 3.



Photo 1. Showing the house from the south



Photo 2. Showing the house from the north



Photo 3. Showing the attached stable block

There is a single shallow roof void running the length of the house, which is supported by timber trusses and is open from the fibreglass insulation covered floor to the underside of the roof which is lined with bitumen felt. The interior of the roof void is full of cobwebs with both the cobwebs and surfaces in the roof void being covered with soot, see photos 4.



Photos 4. Showing the roof void over the house

The attached stable block comprises three rooms, a small porch nearest the house with a store in the centre and a former stable at the eastern end. This part of the building is built from blockwork or stone and is roofed with corrugated cement fibre sheeting. The central room has double doors to the south and a section of the roof is covered with corrugated Perspex sheeting making it light internally. The eastern room has stone walls and is accessed via a stable door. Both rooms in this section of the building are used for storage and are open from the floor to the underside of the roof which is unlined, see photos 5 and 6.



Photo 5. Showing the central room in the stables



Photo 6. Showing the eastern room in the stables

Externally the gable end is well sealed, as is the ridge and leadworks around the chimneys. There are small gaps behind the fascia's boards on the front and rear of the building, but these are covered with cobwebs indicating they are not used by roosting bats. There are no significant void or cavities on the stable block which could be used by day roosting bats.

2.2. Surrounding landscape

The property is located in the open countryside and is surrounded by small fields laid to pasture and used for arable crop production bounded by tree lined Cornish hedges with bands of woodland and areas of scrub over former mining land nearby.

The habitats surrounding the property represents good bat foraging habitat which is known to be used by good numbers of a range of species of bat including Common Pipistrelles, Brown Long-eared bats, Whiskered bats, Noctules and Lesser Horseshoes. There are a number of known roosts in the surrounding landscape.

3. METHODS

3.1. Bats

The building was carefully inspected internally and externally, where access allowed, for individual or groups of roosting bats using a high-power torch, ladders and an endoscope (where needed); this included looking for signs that the building is currently, recently or has been historically used for roosting by bats. This included searching between any roof timbers, walls and wall tops, any cavities, openings or gaps behind hanging slates or fascia's, window ledges and other protruding features. Additionally, any potential entry points were inspected thoroughly for signs of their use, i.e., staining, polishing or scratching of woodwork (indicating use by bats).

As bats can leave little evidence of their occupation, this survey included an assessment of the potential of the building and features of the building to support roosting bats. This involved identifying potential roosting features including but not limited to cracks, crevices and voids, cavities created by spaced off fascia, hanging slates or split render and any other features capable of providing suitable roosting space for bats.

3.2. Barn Owls

Where suitable access points into the building are present the interior is carefully searched, with the aid of a torch, looking for evidence that the building is used by Barn Owls, for either nesting or roosting. This includes searching for owl pellets, feathers and nest debris, with particular attention being paid to the ground below crossing timbers, below any artificial nest boxes which may have been installed or ledges which could be used by nesting Barn Owls. If any nest boxes or ledges are present and it is safe to do so they will also be inspected for signs of use.

3.3. Swallows and other birds

Suitable ledges, voids and the underside of any floors or timberwork which could provide nesting space for Swallows and other birds were inspected for evidence of previous or current nest building attempts.

3.4. Surveyors' experience and licences held

Simon Barnard is an experienced bat surveyor with 15 years' experience of carrying out all aspects of professional bat survey work including activity surveys, call analysis and emergence surveys. He has held a Natural England survey licence for more than 10 years, currently being registered on the Level 3 (CL19) and level 4 (CL20) Class Survey Licence. He has been involved in designing numerous mitigation schemes and obtaining European Protected Species development licences for the majority of the species of bats found in Devon and Cornwall and is a registered consultant on Annex's B, C and D on the Natural England's Bat Mitigation Class Licence. He also holds a valid Barn Owl Class Survey Licence CL29/00170.

4. RESULTS

No evidence of the use of any part of this building by roosting bats was found during this survey and the building was thoroughly searched.

4.1. Barn Owls

No evidence of the use or occupation of this building by Barn Owls was found.

4.2. Swallows and other bird species

No evidence of the use of this building by nesting birds was found during this survey.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Bats

As no evidence of the use of this building by roosting bats was found, no further survey work is necessary, and the proposed works can proceed with a low to negligible risk of disturbing/harming roosting bats or damaging or destroying a bat roost.

It should be noted that in any building individual bats could occasionally roost. If a bat was to be found unexpectedly whilst the works are being carried out, work should stop immediately and Wheal Grey Ecology Ltd contacted and further advice sought. If a bat were to be found it should be protected from the elements and predators and work activity in the immediate vicinity should stop until further advice is received.

5.2. Barn Owls

No recommendations necessary.

5.3. Swallows and other bird species

No recommendations necessary.

6. MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENTS

6.1. Bats

No evidence of the use of this building by roosting bats was found and so no mitigation is required.

However, it would be desirable to incorporate new roosting opportunities for bats into the building, should the owner wish to do so. This could be done fairly simply by installing/building-in purpose-built bat boxes onto/into the building or creating access onto the eaves or behind fascia boards. This would help to enhance the biodiversity value of the site. Please contact us at Wheal Grey Ecology for further information if this is something you would like to consider.

Please Note: Breathable roofing products must not be used in areas where bats could come into contact with them as they have been proven to cause bat fatalities.

6.2. Barn Owls

No mitigation needed.

6.3. Swallows and other bird species

New nesting opportunities for birds could be incorporated into the building by incorporating prefabricated nest boxes into the building or mounting them onto the exterior of the building. This would help to enhance the biodiversity 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 2017 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.

REFERENCES

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