

**BAT AND BARN OWL SURVEY OF
BEACH VIEW, TRENANCE, MAWGAN PORTH, CORNWALL**

OCTOBER 2021



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BAT AND BARN OWL SURVEY OF BEACH VIEW, TRENANCE, MAWGAN PORTH, CORNWALL

O.S. Grid Ref: SW 8495 6784

Survey date: 8th October 2021

Surveyor: David Attwell
Class Survey Licence Reg. Nos. 2015-12519-CLS-CLS
Katherine Hapton BSc (Hons) QCIEEM

Time spent on site: 1.5 hours

Taxonomic groups: Bats
Barn Owls

Report authors: Aidan Hulatt BSc (Hons) MSc
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Report compiled by: Aidan Hulatt BSc (Hons) MSc

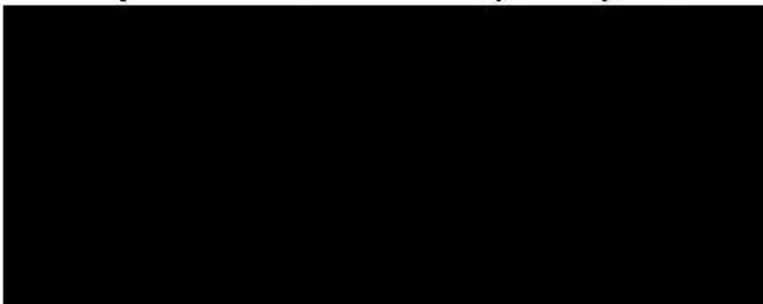
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Report for: Mr & Mrs Heritage

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Document approved by: Amy Horn-Norris Bsc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM

Signature 

Date: 22nd October 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

Spalding Associates (Environmental) Ltd were instructed to carry out a Bat and Barn Owl survey by Mr C Heritage on the property Beach View, Trenance, Mawgan Porth, Cornwall. The current proposal for the site is to demolish the existing house and garage and build a new dwelling in its place.

2. DESCRIPTION OF BUILDINGS



Image 1. Beach View house



Image 2. Garage

The buildings surveyed were a dormer bungalow, with rooms built into the roof space, and a detached garage. The external finish of both buildings is a cement render with concrete roof tiles. The roof is pitched with short hips at both gable ends. The wooden rafters and soffits extend over the eaves at the front and back of the building approximately 400mm.

There is a single storey extension on the front of the house with a single pitch roof with lead flashing into the main building. Joined to this extension around the north side of the building is a lean to with a transparent Perspex roof. To the rear of the property is another single storey extension with a bitumen felt covered flat roof. There is a rendered chimney on the roof with lead flashing.

The roof space has two dormer windows built into front and one into the back of the house. The rooms built into the roof space have resulted in relatively small voids in the front and back of the property and there is a small void below the ridge which runs the length of the building. The south-western roof voids were sealed internally and therefore inaccessible. However, the void at the northern side of the building and south-eastern void could be accessed.

The garage is a one and a half storey building of similar construction. It is rendered with a pitched roof and concrete roof tiles. The eaves have an overhang of approximately 200mm. Both the house and garage are built into the hillside with the ground rising steeply to the north.

2.1. Surrounding Landscape

The property is built on the side of a hill which slopes gently down to the beach at Mawgan Porth to the south-west. It is surrounded by similar properties all set in good size gardens which overlook the coast and beach. Beyond the village are fields, used for crop production, which are bounded by close cropped Cornish hedges and to the east is a shallow stream valley. Figure 1 show the site location and existing nature networks. The habitats surrounding the property represent poor bat foraging habitat as it is in an exposed location, however, a number of species of bat are known to forage and roost in the area.

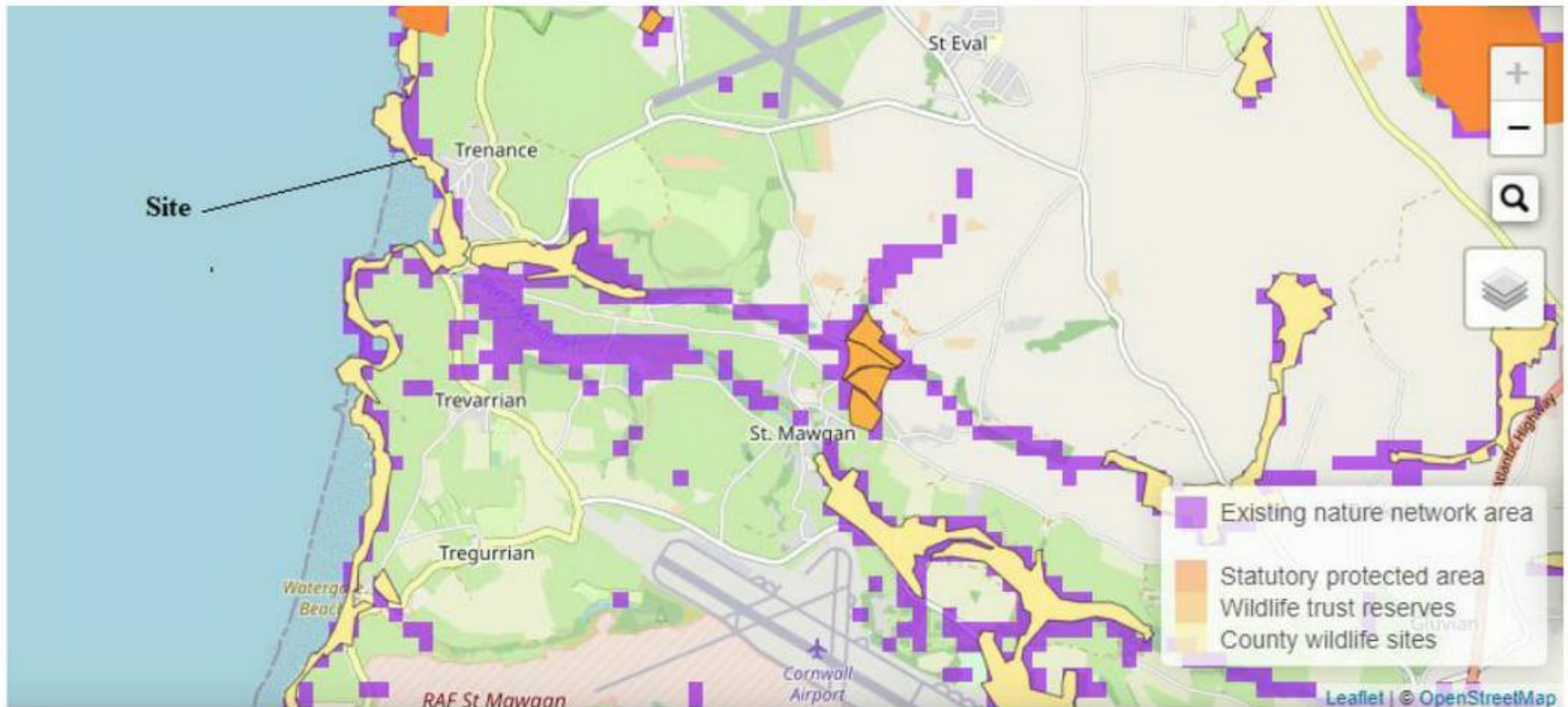


Figure 1: Existing nature networks surrounding Beach View, Trenance, Mawgan Porth. (Source LAGAS Nature Network Maps: www.lagas.co.uk/app/product/nature-network).

3. Assessment of Potential for Bats and Barn Owls

The survey includes an assessment of the buildings to determine the suitability for bats or birds. This includes a structured evaluation for bats based on the characteristics of the roost which allows a broad categorisation of its potential (Table 1). In terms of birds and in particular Barn Owls *Tyto alba*, features such as direct access and external materials also enable indicative values to be placed on the likelihood of presence.



Image 3. Soffits of main building



Image 4. Potential entry point towards the west of the building

The dwelling at Beach View was generally well sealed with few entry points into the roof space for roosting bats. The render came up to the soffits at the front of the house with no gaps (Image 3). A single potential entry point was identified on the single storey extension (Image 4). On the front of the house the roof and ridge tiles are generally tight, but a couple of individual tiles have lifted, creating

enough space for bats to enter. At the back of the house there were a couple of missing tiles which also creates potential entry points. The lead work was in good condition and tight to the tiles.

The garage was well sealed around the soffits and roof with the tiles in good condition and none missing. There was a single Swallow *Hirundo rustica* nest found on the ground floor of the garage on a metal joist supporting the first floor. The eaves of both buildings provide potential for nesting swallows and house martins.

In the context of Barn Owls, the house was deemed unsuitable for this species.

In summary the building was assessed as of low value for bats and limited value for birds.

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).

4. METHODS

4.1. Bats

The survey was carried out at midday on 8th October 2021. The weather was sunny with a southerly breeze and approximately 30% cloud cover, the temperature was 17°C.

With the aid of a high-powered torch the house and garage 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 accessible, internally and externally, as well as ledges, hanging tiles 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 associated features to support roosting bats.

4.2. Barn Owls

The buildings surveyed are not suitable to support this species.

4.3. 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.

5. RESULTS

5.1. Bats

No evidence of the use or occupation of the house or garage by roosting bats was discovered during the survey. Although no access could be gained to the south-west roof voids due to internal boarding, no evidence of bats was found within the accessible sections. The east side of the roof space was full of cobwebs which is an indication that bats are not roosting there and there was evidence of rodent droppings both rats and mice on the floor further reducing its potential. The garage was very open and light with no evidence or potential for roosting bats.



Image 5. Cobwebs in roof space



Image 6. Dormer on east side fully inspected

5.2. Barn Owls

There were no suitable roosting or nesting opportunities for this species and no evidence was found for presence.

5.3. Swallows and other bird species

There was a single old Swallow nest found inside the garage on a ledge (Image 7).



Image 7. Swallow nest in garage

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. 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, subject to planning, with a low risk of disturbing/harming roosting bats or damaging or destroying a bat roost. The building was assessed as having negligible potential for roosting bats partly due to its structure and partly because of its location.

It should be noted that only a quarter of the roof space could be surveyed, and in any building, individual bats could occasionally roost. If an individual bat was to be found unexpectedly whilst the works are being carried out, work should stop immediately, and Natural England or Spalding Associates contacted and asked for advice.

6.2. Barn Owls

No recommendations are necessary.

6.3. Swallows and other bird Species

If the buildings are to be demolished during the nesting bird season (March – August) a careful inspection of the garage and inaccessible roof spaces should be carried out to check for nesting birds. If nesting birds are discovered works should wait until the nested chicks have fledged the nest. This is because birds are protected by law while nesting.

7. MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENTS

7.1. Bats

No evidence of bats and negligible potential for bats was noted and therefore no mitigation is required.

However, if the owners were interested in creating opportunities in the future for bats to use the new building an externally mounted bat box could be mounted onto an exterior wall. An alternative would be to provide access to the roof void. However, in this case Type 1 bitumen felt must be used as bats can get entangled in modern woven fibre membranes. An example of how access could be achieved would be to space off fascia boards slightly to allow opportunities for bats to gain access particularly on warmer southern elevations.



**Schwegler Bat Roost 1FQ
(summer only)**



**Schwegler 1WQ
(summer and Winter Bat
Roost)**

Figure 2: Examples of Schwegler bat boxes appropriate for bolting onto buildings.

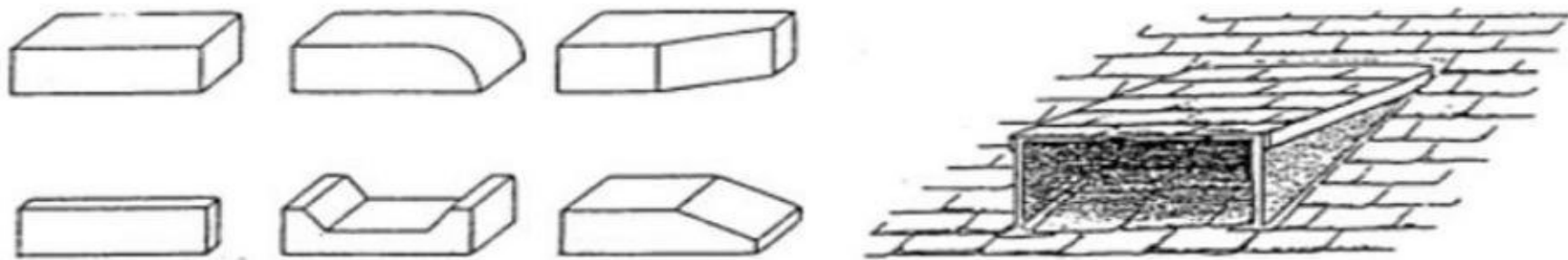
Providing access for bats:

For most species of bat only small holes or slots are needed and this helps to prevent birds from getting in. A Gap of 20mm wide by 50mm long is often adequate. The ideal position is between the soffit and the wall.

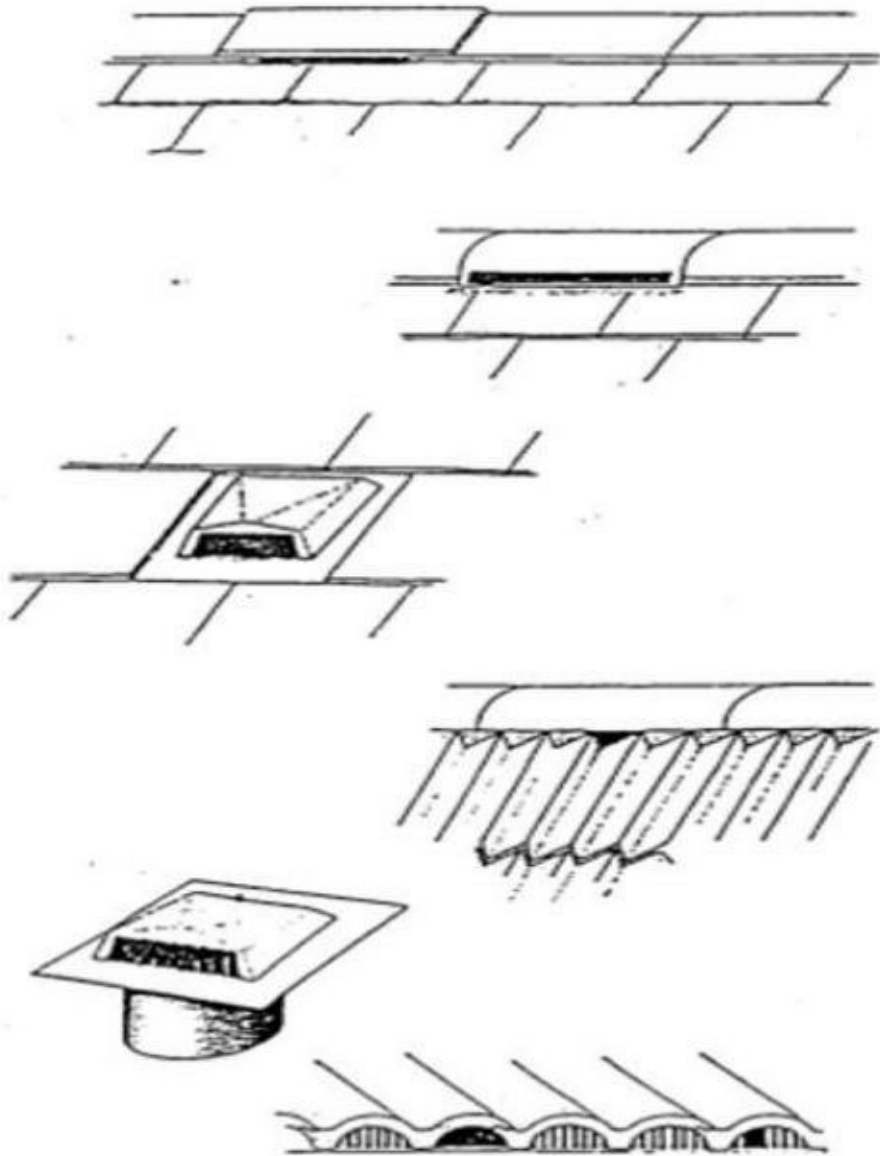
Unlike birds, bats can land on vertical wall and crawl up through the gap to their roost behind the soffit or in the roof. A rough surface is essential for the bats to grip on.

Building regulations specify that roofs must have adequate ventilation. This is usually provided at the eaves and so access for bats can be easily incorporated at the same time. Other suitable places for access points are at gable ends, under lead flashing or gaps between tiles or slates.

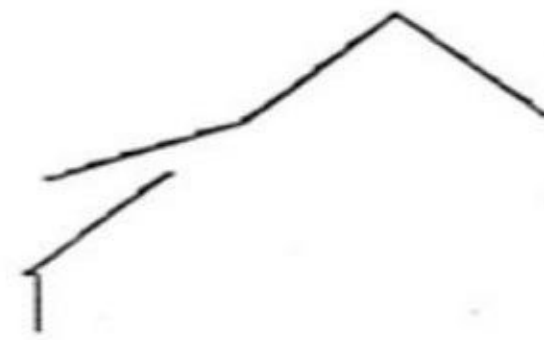
Horseshoe bats have more specialised requirements, preferring to fly directly into their roosts. Access openings need to be large enough to allow the bats to fly into the roof.



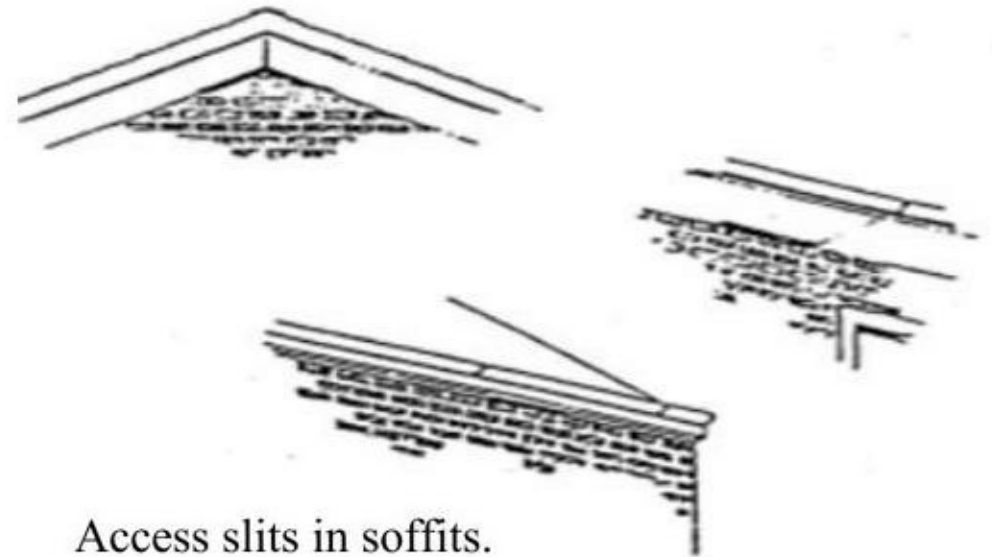
Walling bricks for creating bat access points. A standard brick is shown top left



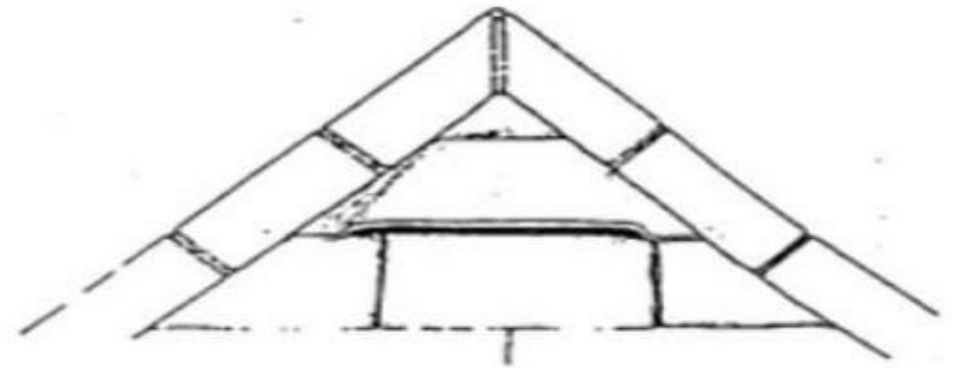
Ridge ventilators can be adapted as bats access points. It may be necessary to remove internal plastic moulding.



Dormer entrance particularly suitable for horseshoe bats.



Access slits in soffits.



Lead saddle in place of a slate to allow bats access to ridge or roof void.

7.2. Barn Owls

No mitigation is required.

7.3. Swallows and other bird species

These buildings have limited potential for nesting birds. However, there was a single old Swallow nest present.

New nesting opportunities for birds could be incorporated into the site by including prefabricated nest boxes or by incorporating deep over hanging eaves and prefabricated nesting ledges for Swallows onto the new building.

8. LEGISLATION

8.1. 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.

8.2. 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.