

BAT AND BARN OWL ASSESSMENT

Outbuildings

Trelonk Farm

Ruan High Lanes

Truro

TR2 5PA



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I. ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

Property Assessed	Outbuildings Trelonk Farm Ruan High Lanes Truro TR2 5PA
Grid Reference	SW 89085 41178
Name & Address of Owner	Mr R.M.B. Parnall Trelonk Farm Ruan High Lanes Truro TR2 5PA
Tel	01872 630060
Name & Address for Invoice payment	As above
Planning Authority Involved	Cornwall Council
Planning Reference Number	-
Consultancy Reference Number	CEC/497/3609
Date of assessment request	09/12/2021
Date of assessment	16/12/2021
Weather on date of assessment	Dry, easterly wind BFT3, 10°C
Surveyor's name & Licence Numbers	Dave Hunter (2017-28109-CLS-CLS, CL29/00150)
Report Reviewed by	
Proposed work: <i>Demolition / Conversion / Restoration</i>	Conversion to a dining area and boot room
Report Valid Until	December 2022

2. SUMMARY OF RESULTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Evidence of bats found	None
Bat survey recommendations	None
Evidence of barn owls found	None
Evidence of nesting birds	Swallow nests

3. LEGISLATION

3.1 Bats

All British bats are legally protected under Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), 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 disturbance to bats and/or roost destruction (including changes to the roost) may require a Bat Mitigation Licence before the work can lawfully commence. 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 buildings

The buildings are in a rural location. The surrounding landscape is grazed pasture and small arable fields with a network of hedgerows, blocks of broadleaved woodlands which are interconnected, wooded valleys, and an estuary and tributaries with wooded banks. The habitat offers good foraging opportunities for bats and barn owls.

4.2 Assessment methodology

An assessment as to the suitability of the buildings and surrounding habitat for bats and barn owls was made. The buildings were 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. Any cracks and crevices thought suitable for use by bats were inspected using an endoscope. The floor spaces, walls and timbers were checked. A search around the perimeter of the buildings 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?	None
Other evidence found	None

5.2 Detailed bat assessment results and recommendations

Two single storey outbuildings attached to the two-storey farmhouse were assessed. The outbuildings have walls of stone and concrete block, and pitched roofs of slates which are not underlined. They are currently used for storage.

The floor spaces, walls, roofs and stored items were searched. Gaps behind the wooden fascia boards along the sides and the slate barge on the gable end were checked. No bats or evidence of bats was found at the time of the survey.

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 structure, particularly under ridge tiles, beneath wall plates or behind fascias. 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, fascias 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 access for bats is included and 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.

Alternately bat bricks can be built into the walls of the building. These should be located as high as possible and away from any external lighting. These are widely available from a number of sources. Locally, Green & Blue in Perranporth make 'Bat Blocks' (<https://www.greenandblue.co.uk/products/bat-block>). Other bat bricks are

available from websites such as Wildcare (<https://www.wildcare.co.uk/wildlife-nest-boxes/bat-boxes/wall-mounted.html>) or NHBS (<https://www.nhbs.com/equipment>).

6. BARN OWL SURVEY RESULTS

6.1 Summary of results

Nest found	No
Adults found	No
Chicks found	No
Eggs found	No
Pellets found	No
Other evidence found	No

6.2 Detailed barn owl survey results and recommendations

No barn owls or evidence of barn owls was found at the time of the survey. The outbuildings are single storey and subject to disturbance and have low potential for use by owls. However, the surrounding area provides suitable foraging habitat: it is therefore suggested that a barn owl box is erected in a suitable location nearby (see enclosed leaflets and the Barn Owl Trust website for further information).

There were swallow *Hirundo rustica* nests within the outbuildings, not in use at the time of the survey. The active nests and eggs of all wild birds are protected against taking, damage or destruction under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. To avoid disturbing nesting birds the works should ideally be carried out between October and March, i.e. outside the breeding season. If this is not possible, measures to exclude birds from the buildings should be implemented before they start nesting; this exclusion must be carried out outside the nesting season. It is recommended that alternative provision is made for nesting swallows, i.e. access into other buildings within the site.

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