

PENELICK
LOOE
PL13 2LX

ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

8 AUGUST 2022

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QUALITY ASSURANCE

This survey work and report has been undertaken with reference to; The publication 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists' Collins, J. (ed) 2016, 3rd edition, Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Description	Ecological Assessment
Produced for	Ema Cavalier-Smith
Issue	1
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DISCLAIMER

This report provides a broad overview of the legal protection of wildlife and specifically relates to how the law is applied in England. The law applied to other countries of the United Kingdom may differ. This report does not offer formal legal advice and no liability is accepted. If legal advice is required related to wildlife issues, this should be sought from appropriate professionals.

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BRIEF SUMMARY

Brookside Ecology was commissioned to undertake an Ecological Assessment at Penellick to inform repair works to chimneys at the property. The assessment was undertaken in relation to the potential presence of protected species for legislative and listed building requirements.

Three chimneys were assessed with one having sites where bats might access with some low suitability for roosting. Roof slates surround all chimneys were considered to have potential bat access sites and suitability for roosting bats.

The report makes recommendation for a sensitive approach to works with further survey where necessary. The assessment concludes that if bat roosts were present and were to be impacted by proposals, with appropriate mitigation, bats could be protected and roost sites retained without detriment to their favourable conservation status.

INTRODUCTION

1. Brookside Ecology was commissioned to undertake an Ecological Assessment of Penellick, Looe, PL13 2LX at Ordnance Survey Grid Reference (OSGR) SX204534. The assessment was undertaken to inform proposals in relation to the potential presence of protected species for legislative and listed building requirements.

PROPOSALS

2. It is proposed three chimneys are repaired but the full scope of works is not known at the time of survey.

OBJECTIVES

3. The purpose of this preliminary assessment is to:
 - Identify any ecological, bat or other protected or notable species issues that may impact the proposals.
 - Make preliminary recommendations for mitigation and enhancement opportunities where required.
 - Specify further survey work if required in accordance with best practice guidance.

METHODS

4. The preliminary assessment of the building was undertaken 19 July 2022 by C Carter and M Pearmain, Natural England registered bat workers.
5. A visual inspection of the interior and exterior of a building is undertaken for evidence of bat use following standard survey methodologies. The publication 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists'¹ is used for reference and guidance.
6. Several factors are taken into consideration during an assessment. These include; features present within or on the site that would support roosting bats; the potential for disturbance; lighting impacts; proximity of features to foraging habitat; connectivity to the site between it and the wider countryside.
7. A thorough examination of the exterior of a building is undertaken to search for evidence of bat use with a visual inspection of structures such as window and door lintels, gaps in walls, lead flashing, fascia boards, ridge, roof and hanging tiles where present. Underneath these features a search for evidence of droppings, staining from urine and fur oil that might indicate use by bats.
8. The internal search of a building follows a similar approach with a thorough search made of crevices in timber joints, wall sockets and gaps in walls where present. Evidence of bat droppings, urine stains plus prey residues such as fly, butterfly or moth wings and any live bats or bat carcasses that might be present.
9. Equipment available for use include close-focussing binoculars - Vistron 10 x 40, Endoscope - Scopacam, 3.8 metre extendable ladders and Clulite high powered torches.
10. The bat roosting potential of a building is assessed along with the surrounding habitat/commuting features and classified into one of the following categories below:

¹ Collins, J. (ed) 2016, Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines. 3rd edition, Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Suitability	Description of Roost Level
Negligible	Negligible feature/s likely to be used by roosting bats
Low	Structures 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	Structures 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	Structures with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger number of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat.
Roost	Known or Confirmed Roost

Table 1. Bat roosting potential of buildings/structures, adapted from Collins 2016 (Description of commuting/habitat aspects removed for simplicity)

OTHER NOTABLE SPECIES AND ECOLOGICAL ISSUES

11. Full consideration is given to how the development might impact other species and habitats on, and immediately surrounding the development.
12. In a development such as this the most likely wildlife that might be encountered would be nesting birds and hence a search is made for nests and faecal deposits.

DESK STUDY

13. The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website was consulted to identify sites designated for their conservation or biological interest within a 1km search radius. The Natural England website was used to obtain citation details of statutory sites. A search was also undertaken for European Protected Species Licences for bats within the same radius which provides an indication of how developments are impacting on species and roosts in the area.

14. A 1 km search on NBN Atlas was undertaken to search for records of bats to ascertain their prevalence in the wider area.
15. Google satellite view was used to identify habitats of value to protected and notable species including woodland, tree lines and hedgerows, scrub, areas of grassland and waterbodies.

RESULTS

WEATHER

16. Dry and sunny, 20% Cloud Cover, Temp 20°C, Wind speed Beaufort 1 SW

SITE CONTEXT

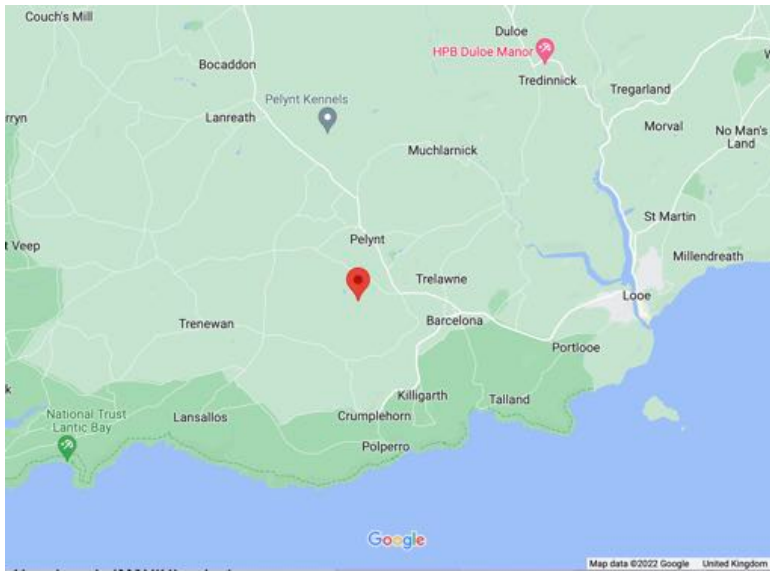


Figure 2. Red marker indicates site location

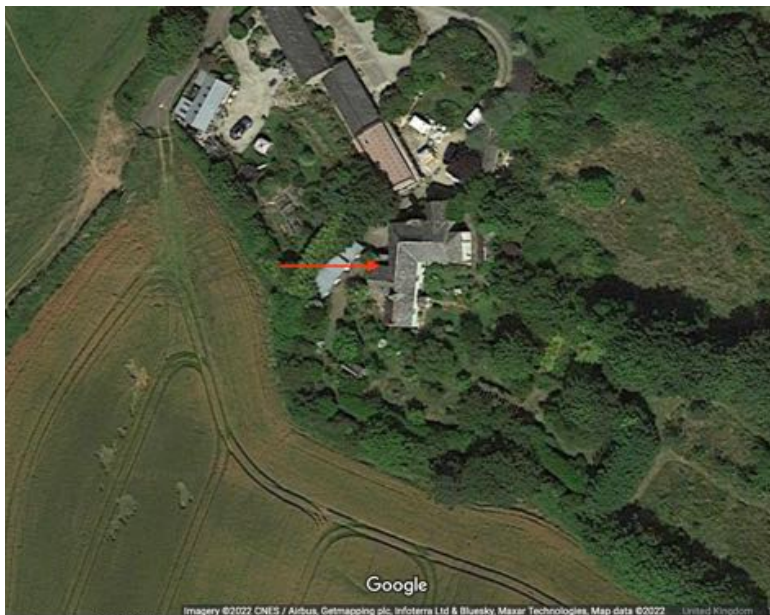


Plate 1. Google Satellite view, red arrow indicates building

17. The site is located in a rural location approximately 2km to the south-west of Pelynt. It is surrounded by open countryside of hedge bordered fields of grassland and arable, wooded valleys and water courses with some light residential and agricultural development. Nearby hedges would form natural connective features with the wider hedge network. There would be low levels of light pollution in the area of the house.



Plate 2. Front, southern elevation

BUILDING

18. A detached, double storey stone house with slate tiled roof surrounded by mature gardens.
19. **Chimney 1.** (Plate 3). Generally well pointed to the stonework however, there were crevices noted to the stone work that were considered to be large enough for wildlife such as bats to potentially gain access. Surrounding roof slates had gaps where they were lifted that may also provide suitable bat access.
20. **Chimney 2.** (Plate 4). Brick built chimney with well pointed bricks without gaps suitable for bat access. Surrounding roof slates had gaps where they were lifted that may provide suitable bat access.



Plate 3. Chimney 1



Plate 4. Chimney 2

21. **Chimney 3.** (Plate 5) Rendered stone chimney that is well sealed without bat access. Surrounding roof slates had gaps where they were lifted that may provide suitable bat access.



Plate 5. Chimney 3

22. **Attic** (Plate 6). Much of the interior has vaulted ceilings however, there is an attic present below Chimney 2. This was searched and there was no signs of an active bat roost present.

DESK STUDY

23. The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website was consulted and revealed the site is within 'impact risk zone' of statutory sites. However, this proposal does not appear to require the planning authority to consult Natural England on potential risks to such sites.
24. The search within a 1 kilometre radius of the site revealed;
- No statutory sites of wildlife interest were found.
 - No records of European Protected Species Licences for bats were found.
25. The search undertaken on NBN Atlas revealed:
- There is one bat records of Lesser Horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros* in the search radius approximately 0.9km distant to the north.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

26. The desk study revealed the site is not within an 'impact risk zone' of statutory sites designated for their scientific or conservation value. There were no protected species records found that are considered relevant to the site.
27. The assessment found the wider area to have a variety of habitats suitable for many species of wildlife. There are hedge lines in close vicinity that would provide suitable commuting features that some bat species might use to move between site and wider countryside. There would be low levels of light pollution in the area. The area is assessed as having 'high suitability for bat commuting and foraging habitat.' These factors would increase the probability of bats being in the area.
28. Chimney 1 as identified, is considered to provide some potential bat access sites as do the surrounding roof tiles. Chimney 2, is well pointed to its brickwork and has no access for bats but has access under tile gaps surrounding the chimney. Similarly, Chimney 3 is well rendered without access for bats but has access under tile gaps surrounding it. Accordingly, the chimney or immediate area surrounding them, have some low suitability for roosting bats and therefore a possibility of them being present in these sites, and elsewhere in the roof. It is considered that it would be limited to crevice roosting bats as there was no evidence to suggest an active bat roost was present in the only attic that is present.
29. In assessment of proposals for repair of the chimneys, it is understood that the full scope of works is not known at this time. However, it is considered that proposals for repair of chimneys 2 and 3 would have no risk of impacting bats. There is a risk that pointing of stonework to chimney 1 could block potential bat access sites and therefore there is a low level of risk that bats would be negatively impacted if they were present. Any works to surrounding roof tiles of all chimneys would have greater risk of impacting bats if they were present.
30. If bat roosts were present, it is considered that with a sensitive approach to repairs, bats could be protected and roost sites could be readily retained without detriment to their favourable conservation status. See recommendations below.
31. No other protected or notable species or habitats issues were identified.

LIMITATIONS

32. Structures were inspected from the ground and therefore could not be fully inspected.

RECOMMENDATIONS

33. It is recommended that if repointing of chimney 1 is required, or if works are required that involve relaying of surrounding roof slates of any of the chimneys, further assessment should be undertaken. This should be either through bat emergence surveys and/or having a Natural England registered ecologist to be present during repairs to determine their presence or absence. As it is understood works may not be undertaken for some period of time, this should be ideally undertaken closer to the time of commencement of repairs.

LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY

34. A brief outline of relevant wildlife legislation is detailed below with a focus on that relevant to the site in question. It is not meant to be an in depth treatise of all wildlife regulations as this is not possible within the scope of this report. It is advised that individuals should seek professional legal advice if necessary.

BATS

35. All British bats are protected under both UK and EU law; The Habitats Directive, which is transposed into law in England and Wales by The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 ('Habitats Regulations'), as amended.

36. Regulation 41 (1) of the Regulations makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill bat(s);
- Deliberately disturb bat(s) affecting their ability to survive, breed, rear young or significantly affect local distribution or abundance;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place, whether present or not;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat roost;
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to roost sites;
- Possess, control, transport, sell, exchange or offer for sale or exchange, live or dead bats, or parts thereof.

37. Some rare bat species, namely Greater Horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, Lesser Horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, Barbastelle *Barbastellus barbastellus* and Bechstein's *Myotis bechsteinii*, are afforded greater protection under European legislation, being listed under Annex II of the EC Habitats Directive which lists species whose conservation requires the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs).

BIRDS

38. All wild birds are protected under the Habitats Regulations. Under this legislation it is an offence to:

- 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; and
- Take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

39. The relevant adopted policy at the national level is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as amended July 2021, which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. This emphasises the need for planning authorities to consider biological conservation and the need for maintaining and enhancing biodiversity within planning policies and decisions.