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14th September 2022

Charles Cox

114 Bath Road
Cheltenham
GL53 71X

Dear Charles,

Re. WWE22136 - The Frocester Inn, Peter's Street, Frocester, Stonehouse, GL10 3TQ

This letter report is regarding the Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) undertaken by Wildwood Ecolog on the 8th of August 2022, at the Frocester Inn. The survey was requested by Stroud District Council (SDC) to inform a planning application, for alterations to the existing barn attached to the Frocester Inn, Peter's Street, Frocester, Stonehouse, GL10 3TQ.

The purpose of this letter is to provide sufficient information for the local planning authority to ass potential ecological impacts of the proposed developm ent (see **Appendix I**).

The results of the PRA have been used to inform whether further surveys are required, or to establish the need for, and extent of, any mitigation or compensation measures required as part of th development.

Survey Methodology

An assessment of the barn was undertaken by Peter Hacker (ACIEEM, Senior Ecologist) in accordance with the latest published best practice guidance for bat surveys (Collins, 2016). The suitability of the building to support roosting bats was assessed, together with a systematic search for signs of bats (e.g. droppings, moth wings, scratch marks, staining, etc.) or presence of actual bats. Particular attention was paid to the roof areas, with searches for any crevices or gaps in walls, gaps between beams a sts, droppings stuck to the walls, floors or other surfaces, or feeding remains below beams, in add number of other factors and signs indicative of a bat roost.

The building was classified according to its suitability for roosting bats, based on the presence of features within the structure and / or landscape (see **Table 1** below).

Table 1- Summary of guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites (from Collins 2016).

Suitability	Description of building, tree, or structure	Number of survey visits recommended[1]
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.	None
Low	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, potential roost sites not suitable for larger numbers or regular use (i.e. maternity or hibernation).	One
Moderate	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats, but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.	Two
High	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time.	Three
Confirmed Roost	Evidence of bats or use by bats found.	Minimum of two – to characterise the roost

Survey Results

At the time of the survey, the onsite barn was a single-storey building, of mixed Cotswold stone and red brick construction, situated at the western part of the Frocester Inn site (see **Photograph 1** to **Photograph 3** in **Appendix II**).

The roof of the building was comprised of slate tiles, although the ridge tiles were in places also secured by lead flashing. There were no eaves to the roof, instead, decorative half-bricks were located along the top of the building's walls (see **Photograph 4**). Internally, the building ceiling was partially vaulted with exposed beams, and was in active use by Frocester Inn as a function room, bar, and storage space (see **Photograph 5**).

Based on the dimensions of the roof, the internal loft space is likely to be around 1– 15m apex height.. A single loft hatch was present (see **Photograph 6**), however, the internal loft space was not possible due to health and safety reasons, i.e., the height of the loft hatch and its location away from any supporting walls, making access via a ladder dangerous.

The main access point into the building for bats (if present) could be a gap in the brick wall on the south-west elevation of the building, where one of the decorative bricks was missing (see **Photograph 7**). This feature could allow direct access behind the southern wall and up beneath the roof tiles. There were also a small number of small gaps (approximately 4) between the roof tiles (see **Photograph 8**), that could be used by individual crevice-dwelling bats on an opportunistic basis, but due to the size of the features their use by bats is considered unlikely.

The loft space could support roosting bats, however it is considered unlikely to be suitable for a maternity roost due to the limited size of the apex height. Hibernating bats are also considered unlikely to be present during winter months, due to the occupied nature of the building and internal heating, which would likely make the loft too warm and dry to be a suitable hibernation roost.

Overall, the building was assessed to have **low suitability for use by roosting bats**, due to the number of access points, the low likelihood that these are used by large numbers of bats, and the limited suitable of the loft void for a maternity roost or hibernation roost, as outlined above.

[1] To provide confidence that bats are likely absent from the structure.

Proposed Works and Likely Impacts on Bats

It is proposed to convert the existing barn into rented accommodation spaces. This will include conversion of some of the existing windows into doors, or sealing existing doors, to create separate rooms - suite bathrooms (see **Appendix I**).

The planned alteration works to the building will not impact the roof, internal loft space, or any external walls of the barn. The existing ceiling level will be maintained and the proposed new rooflights inside the accommodation spaces will be installed in the sloping soffits, therefore the roof void will not be af

Additionally, it has been confirmed by the architect that there are no plans for additional external lighting. Taken together, it is therefore considered highly unlikely that there will be an adverse impact on roosting bats (if present) as a result of the works.

Recommendations

As the proposed works are internal and will not impact the roof/ loft, bat surveys are not proportionate as adverse impacts can be avoided by precautionary timing of the works.

Bat presence during hibernation season (November – March, inclusive) is not anticipated as the barn is not suitable for hibernating bats. It is therefore recommended as a precaution that construction wo should avoid the active bat season (April – October, inclusive) to minimise the risk of accidenta disturbance to individual or low numbers of bats that could be present through noise and vibration during the conversion work.

Commuting and foraging bats are considered likely to use the habitats close to the site such as the nearby St. Andrews Churchyard. Therefore, it is recommended that one Schwegler 2F 'General Purpose Bat Box', available online at https://www.nhbs.com/2f-schwegler-bat-box-general-purpose (or a similar make/model) should be installed on the building or on a suitable tree nearby, to enhance roosting opportunities for the local bat population.

Conclusions

Providing that the recommendations outlined within this letter report are successfully implemented, it should be possible for the proposed works to proceed and for there to be no long-term adverse impacts on the protected species that may be present at the site.

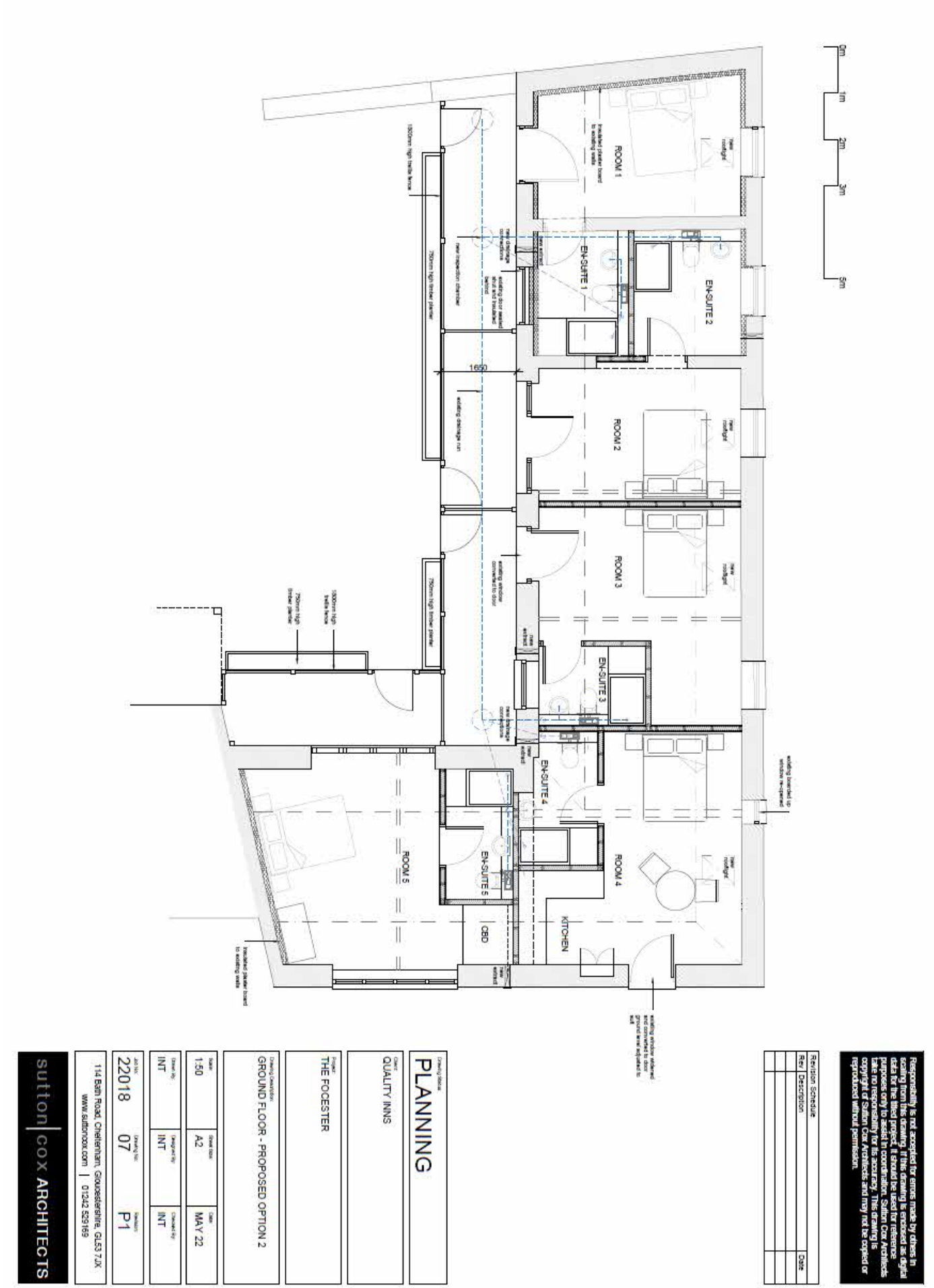
This ecological report will remain valid for a period of 18 months from the date of the survey.

Written By:
[redacted]
Senior Ecologist

Reviewed By:
[redacted]
Senior Ecologist and Arboriculturist

Wildwood Ecology Ltd.
[redacted]

Appendix I: Ground Floor – Proposed Development



Appendix II: Site Photographs

Photographs 1: South building aspect.

Photograph 2: West building aspect.

Photograph 3: East building aspect.

Photograph 4: Decorative half-bricks.

Photograph 5: Internal space.

Photograph 6: Loft access hatch.

Photograph 7: Gap in brick wall.

Photograph 8: Small gaps between tiles.