



HT ECOLOGY

Ecology Report

Carpenters, Sunny Corner, Portloe



Prepared for:
BSP Projects

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Date	Version	Author	Review
10/05/23	Final	Tom Davies MSc MCIEEM	H. Torr BSc (Hons) CEnv MCIEEM
15/6/23	Final Ver 1	Tom Davies MSc MCIEEM	H. Torr BSc (Hons) CEnv MCIEEM

Survey Validity

The results of this report are valid until 12 months from the date of survey (i.e. until April 2024). Should works have not re-commenced within this period, then an updated survey by a suitably qualified ecologist will be required.

Disclaimer

This document has been prepared by HT Ecology Ltd who accepts no responsibility or liability for any use that is made of this document other than by the client for the purposes for which it was originally commissioned and prepared. The evidence which we have prepared and provided is true and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the guidance of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

1. Introduction, legislation and methodology

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 HT Ecology Ltd was commissioned by BSP Projects to produce an Ecology Report to support a planning application for the conversion of two buildings into a single dwelling at Carpenters, Sunny Corner, Portloe, Truro, TR2 5RB (approximate OS Grid Ref. SW932393); refer to Figures 1 and 2 below for location (and Annex 1 to 3 for the existing and proposed development plan).

1.1.2 This report was undertaken in accordance with BS42020:2013 and the Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2016). As the site is primarily built-form, the report focuses on roosting bats and nesting birds. The scope of the report covers the following:

- Bat and nesting bird survey for the site; and,
- Conclusions and mitigation

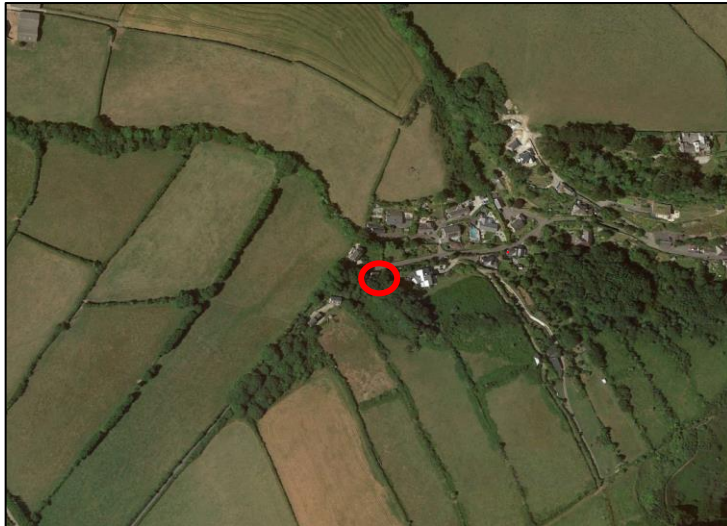


Figure 1: Aerial photograph showing site location and wider area



Figure 2: Site location zoomed in

1.2 *Legislation and planning policy*

Wildlife legislation

- 1.2.1 Bats and their roosts are fully protected by UK legislation, and all birds, and their nests, eggs and young are protected under UK legislation. Several bat and bird species are also Species of Principal Importance for Conservation of Biodiversity in England (Priority Species); refer to Annexe 5 for further information.

National planning policy

- 1.2.2 The Government's key national planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021). The NPPF includes the Government's policy on the protection of biodiversity through the planning system. It states that local plan policies and planning decisions should seek to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity. Planning policies should promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations (e.g., Habitats and Species of Principal Importance under the NERC Act 2006).

Local planning policy

Cornwall Local Plan 2010-2030 (Adopted 2016)

- 1.2.3 Cornwall council's policy requirements for planning applications are set out in the Cornwall Local Plan. The following policy relating to biodiversity is considered relevant to this proposal:
- 1.2.4 *Policy 23- Natural Environment* is relevant to this assessment and states that development should conserve, protect and where possible enhance biodiversity interests commensurate with their status and giving appropriate weight to their importance. All development must ensure that the importance of habitats and designated sites are taken into account and consider opportunities for the creation of a local and county-wide biodiversity network of wildlife corridors which link County Wildlife Sites and other areas of biodiversity importance, helping to deliver the actions set out in the Cornwall Biodiversity Action Plan.

1.3 *Methodology*

Desk study

- 1.3.1 Biodiversity information was obtained for a 5km area around the site (hereafter referred to as the 'desk study area') from the Environmental Records Centre for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (ERCCIS) and included the location and details of previous records of protected and/or notable species, including Priority Species (Species of Principal Importance for Conservation in England listed on Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities [NERC] Act 2006).
- 1.3.2 A search for designated sites within 5km of the site was undertaken using the MAGIC website (www.magic.defra.gov.uk).

Bats

Preliminary Roost Assessment

- 1.3.3 A Preliminary Roost Assessment of the buildings affected by the proposed works was undertaken on 24 April 2023 in accordance with standard bat survey protocols (Collins, 2016). This involved a detailed search of the interior and exterior of the buildings for evidence of bats (e.g., bats, droppings, feeding remains, staining). Information on potential or actual bat access points and roost locations was also recorded. A ladder, high-powered torch and endoscope was used, and the survey was carried out under an appropriate Natural England bat survey licence (T Davies 2015-11992-CLS-CLS Level 2).

- 1.3.4 Based on the survey results, the affected buildings were categorised in line with bat survey guidelines on a scale of 'Negligible' to 'High' bat roost suitability.

Birds

- 1.3.5 A search for evidence of nesting birds (i.e. active or disused nests) within the buildings was also undertaken on 24 April 2023.

Survey limitations

- 1.3.6 No significant survey limitations were noted. All parts of the buildings were accessed; however, it is possible that evidence of bats on the floors of the buildings may have been disturbed due to ongoing renovation work.

Surveyor Experience and Code of Conduct

- 1.3.7 The author and lead surveyor, Tom Davies, is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). He has extensive experience of protected species survey and Natural England (NE) licensing, particularly in regard to bats having undertaken professional bat surveys for over 10 years. He holds a Class 2 Natural England (NE) bat survey licence. CIEEM's Code of Conduct was followed during the survey and reporting.
- 1.3.8 The report was quality assured by Hayden Torr, who is a Director at HT Ecology. Hayden has 24 years' experience working in the ecological sector and is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and a Chartered Environmentalist. CIEEM's Code of Conduct was followed during the survey and reporting.

2. Ecological baseline

2.1 *Designated sites*

2.1.1 The following four statutory designated sites of nature conservation value were identified within the 5km search area:

- Cuckoo Rock to Turbot Point Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which is located approximately 350m east of the site and designated for its geological interest;
- Fal and Helford Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which occurs approx. 370m to the south of the site. This site is designated for its ecologically important sandbanks, mudflats and bay and its population of shore dock.
- Gerrans Bay to Camels Cove SSSI is also located 370m to the south and is the SSSI component of the SAC. This SSSI is designated for its important marine habitats and population of plants and coastal birds; and
- Upper Fal Estuary and Woods SSSI which occurs approximately 4.5km to the west of the site and is designated for its marine habitats and coastal birds.

2.2 *Habitats within the site*

2.2.1 Two buildings occurred within the site, with each building comprising a two-storey stone-built structure featuring pitched slate roofs. The buildings have been recently restored with new roof, windows and doors. Internally, the rooms had exposed ceiling joists and stonework and neither building contained any separate loft space/roof void.



Photograph 1: Building 1 northern and eastern elevations



Photograph 2 – Building 2 northern and eastern elevations



Photograph 3 – Building 1 southern elevation



Photograph 4 – Building 2 western elevation



Photograph 5: Internal of Building 1 on ground floor



Photograph 6: Internal of Building 2 on first floor

- 2.2.2 The rest of the site primarily comprised bare earth and rock. Vegetation, which predominantly included bramble scrub, appeared to have been recently cleared over the winter months, leaving the rock exposed. (Refer to Photograph 5 below).



Photograph 7 – Outside space to the south of the buildings

2.3 *Adjacent habitats*

- 2.3.1 Broadleaved woodland occurred to the south of the site with pastureland to the west. Residential properties were located to the north and east. The site is positioned on the western extremity of the village of Portloe, approximately 450m from the coast at its nearest point.

2.4 *Species*

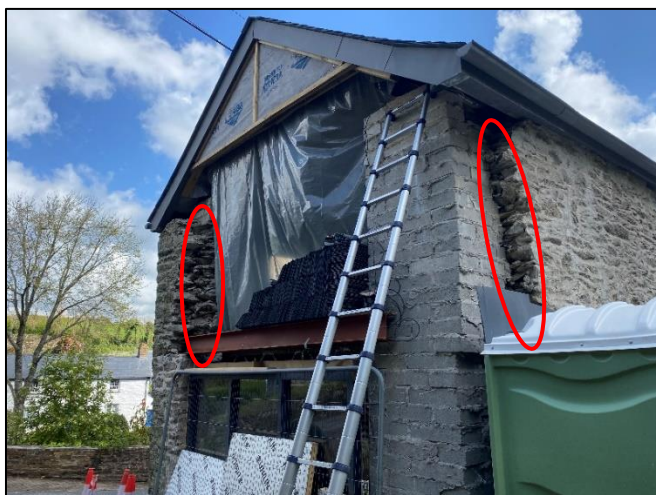
Bats

Desk study

- 2.4.1 Nine species of bat have been recorded within the search area comprising brown long-eared bat, common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, Daubenton's bat, greater horseshoe bat, lesser horseshoe bat, noctule, serotine and whiskered bat. No previous bat records were recorded within the site and the closest known bat roost was approximately 1.4km west of the site.

Site survey

- 2.4.2 No evidence of bats was recorded during the external and internal surveys of either Building 1 or Building 2. Holes in the stonework around the door and window entrances offered some suitability for crevice roosting bat species (refer to Photograph 7). All the remaining walls appear to have been recently re-pointed.



Photograph 8: crevices in stonework around windows



Photograph 9: crevices in stonework around windows

- 2.4.3 These features were inspected fully on 24th April 2023 with an endoscope and no evidence of bats was found. Overall, the buildings were assessed as being of 'Low' roosting suitability for bats.

Birds

Desk study

- 2.4.4 Numerous previous records of birds were found within the 5km desk study area, including goshawk, sedge warbler, cuckoo and dunnock which are Priority Species. However, no previous records were found for the site itself.

Site survey

- 2.4.5 No evidence of nesting birds was found within either building and the habitats within the site were considered unsuitable for nesting birds (i.e., bare rock and earth).

Other species

Desk study

- 2.4.6 Dormice have been recorded within the 5km desk study area.

Site survey

None of the habitat on site was considered suitable for dormice and the site was considered unsuitable for other protected/notable species.

3. Conclusions and mitigation

3.1 *Proposed works*

- 3.1.1 The proposals comprise development of two buildings into a single residential dwelling, connected by a covered walkway on the first floor between the western elevation of Building 1 and the eastern elevation of Building 2 (refer to Annexes 2 and 3).

3.2 *Designated sites*

- 3.2.1 Natural England, together with Cornwall Council have determined that residential development within 12.5km of the Fal & Helford SAC has potential for an in-combination 'Likely Significant Effect' on this site through increased recreational pressure. This potential effect would be avoided through payment of a financial contribution secured towards access management within the SAC and provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace. Payment which would be paid prior to submitting the planning application. An Appropriate Assessment (AA) confirming that no adverse effects would occur on this SAC following mitigation has been prepared and would be submitted with the planning application. The AA uses Cornwall Council's 'Fal & Helford SAC Template'¹.

3.3 *Bats*

- 3.3.1 All the crevices were thoroughly inspected with no evidence of bat use identified. The survey results indicate that the proposed works currently pose a negligible risk to bats and, therefore, no specific mitigation is considered necessary. In the unlikely event that bats are found during the proposed works in 2023, works should cease until advice has been received from Natural England or HT Ecology. Should the renovation works be delayed until next year, then a check for bats should be undertaken by an ecologist prior to works re-commencing to reassess the structure for roosting bats.
- 3.3.2 In order to achieve 'Biodiversity Gain', a single bat box (Beaumaris Woodstone Bat Box or similar; refer to Annexe 4) would be positioned on the eastern gable end (at the apex) of Building 1 (refer to Annexes 2 and 3 for proposed location).

3.4 *Birds*

- 3.4.1 The vegetation covering the bare rock was removed before the survey, during the winter months, making it unlikely that nesting birds were affected. No further vegetation removal is required.
- 3.4.2 In order to achieve 'Biodiversity Gain, two bird boxes (Vivara Pro WoodStone House Sparrow Nest Box or similar; refer to Annexe 4) are proposed on the northern elevations of both buildings (refer to Annexes 2 and 3). The boxes should be installed at a height of 3m above ground facing away from direct sunlight and the prevailing wind.

¹ <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/2uzex1y5/form-2-part-2-european-sites-spd-marine-and-estuarine.pdf> website accessed 15/6/23

3.5 *Conclusions*

- 3.5.1 Providing the ecological avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures detailed in Section 3 are implemented, the proposed development would protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity in accordance with biodiversity policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) and the Cornwall Local Plan 2010-2030 (Adopted 2016).

4. References and bibliography

Collins, J. (Ed) 2016. *Bat surveys good practice guidelines – 3rd edition*. BCT, London.

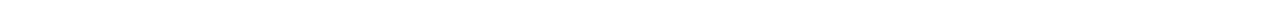
CIEEM, 2018. *Ecological impact assessment guidelines – 3rd edition*.

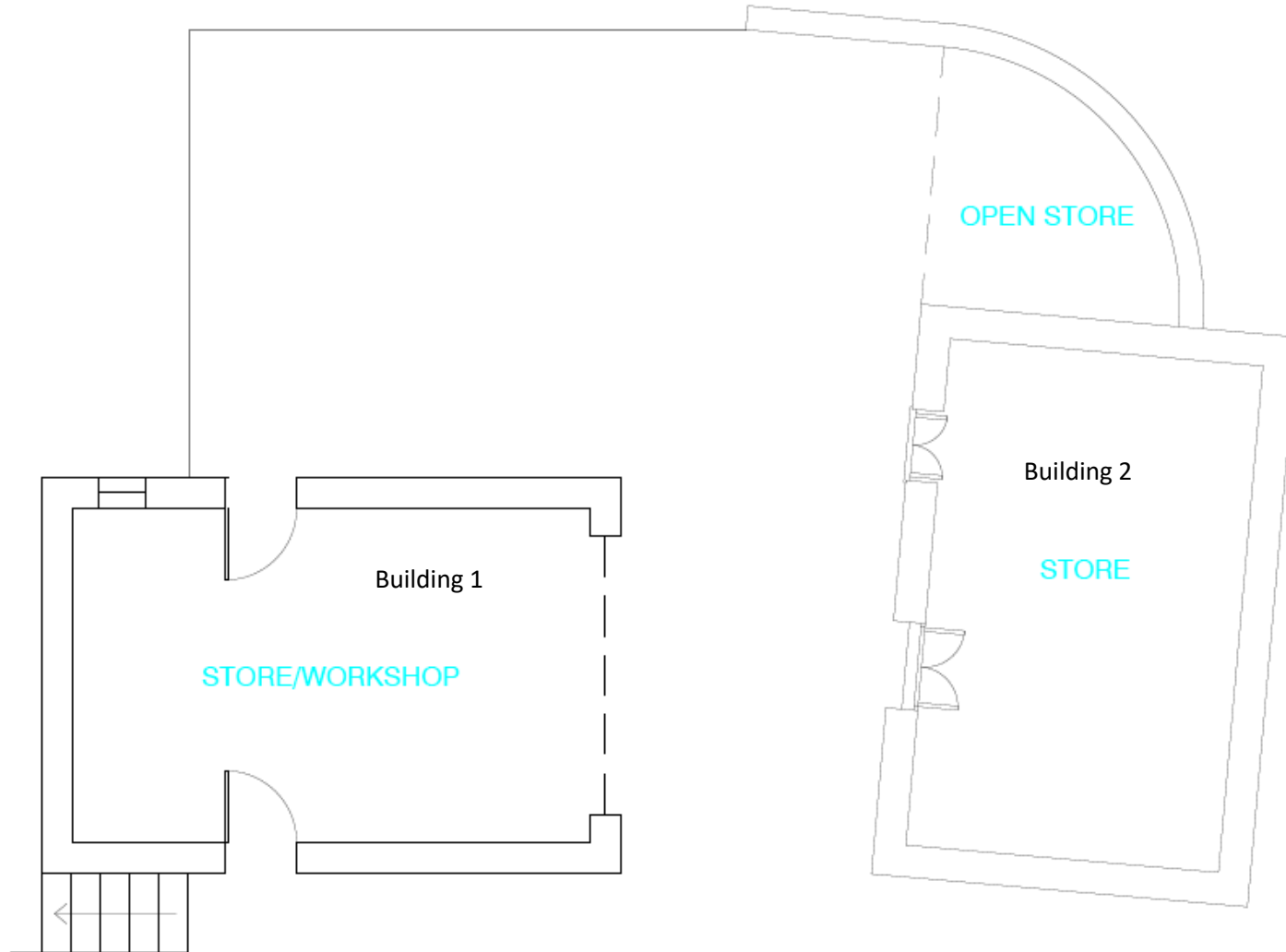
Cornwall Local Plan 2010-2030 (Adopted 2016)

Institute of Environmental Assessment (1995) *Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment*. E & FN Spon. London.

Mitchell-Jones, A. J. (2004). *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. Natural England/English Nature, Peterborough.

Annexe 1: Existing plan





GROUND FLOOR PAN

NOTES

ALL WINDOWS WHITE
PAINTED TIMBER (UNLESS
LABELED OTHERWISE)

ALL STONEMWORK EXISTING

 - 200mm INSULATED
WALL INSIDE ALL
EXISTING STONE
WALLS

SITE ADDRESS:
CARPENTERS, PORTLOE

DRAWING NAME:
GROUND FLOOR PLAN

DRAWING No: 101

DRAWN BY: BSP	DATE: 11/07/2022
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REV: A	SCALE:1:30
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REV DETAILS:
EXISTING

BSP PROJECTS
SOUTH LTD

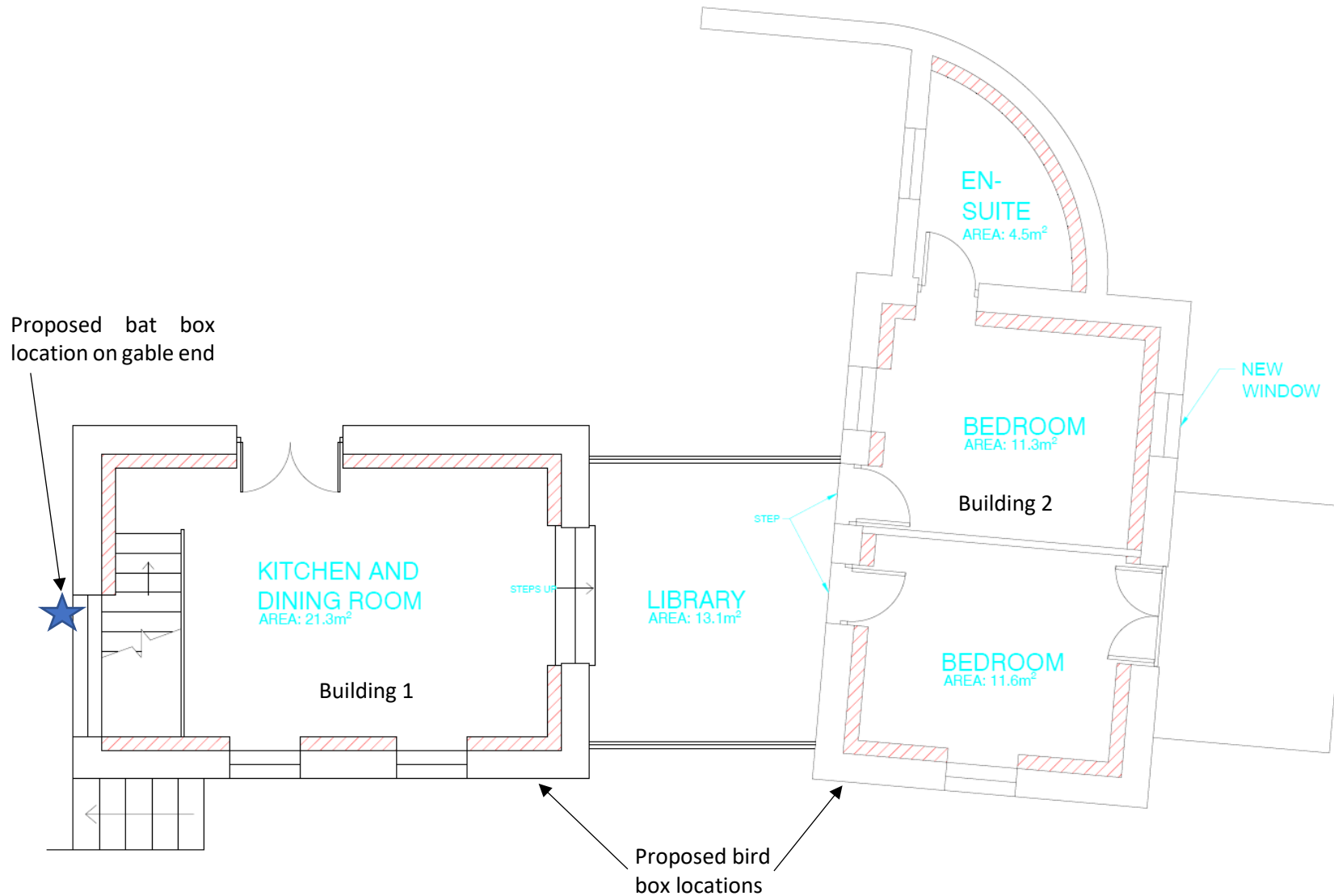
Annexe 2: Proposed works

NOTES

ALL WINDOWS WHITE
PAINTED TIMBER (UNLESS
LABELED OTHERWISE)

ALL STONework EXISTING

 - 200mm INSULATED
WALL INSIDE ALL
EXISTING STONE
WALLS



Proposed bat box
location on gable end

KITCHEN AND
DINING ROOM
AREA: 21.3m²

Building 1

LIBRARY
AREA: 13.1m²

EN-
SUITE
AREA: 4.5m²

BEDROOM
AREA: 11.3m²

BEDROOM
AREA: 11.6m²

Building 2

NEW
WINDOW

STEP

STEPS UP

Proposed bird
box locations

FIRST FLOOR PAN

SITE ADDRESS:
CARPENTERS, PORTLOE

DRAWING NAME:
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

DRAWING No: 102

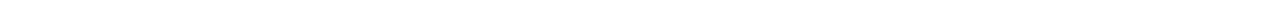
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BSP 11/07/2022

REV: A SCALE:1:30

REV DETAILS:
PROPOSED

BSP PROJECTS
SOUTH LTD


Annexe 3: Elevations plans



NOTES

ALL WINDOWS WHITE
PAINTED TIMBER (UNLESS
LABELED OTHERWISE)

ALL STONEMWORK EXISTING

 - 200mm INSULATED
WALL INSIDE ALL
EXISTING STONE
WALLS

SITE ADDRESS:
CARPENTERS, PORTLOE

DRAWING NAME:
NORTH AND SOUTH
ELEVATIONS

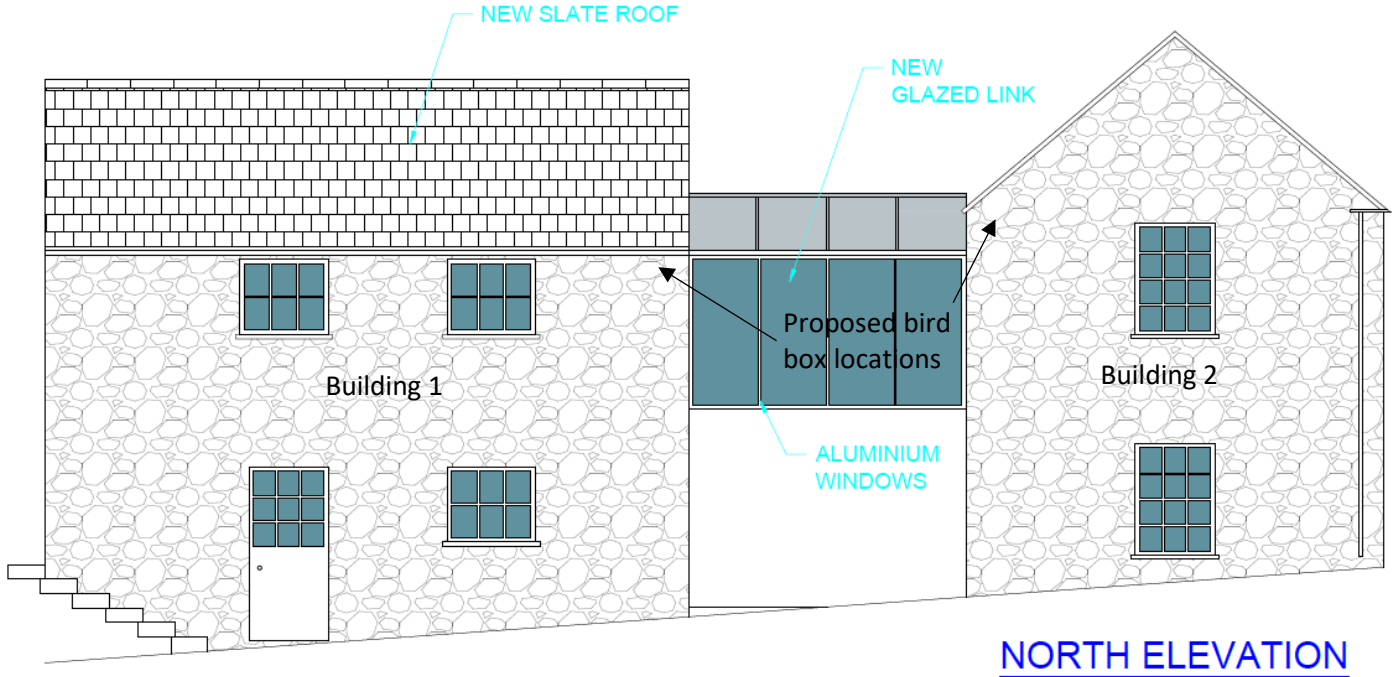
DRAWING No: 103

DRAWN BY: BSP DATE: 11/07/2022

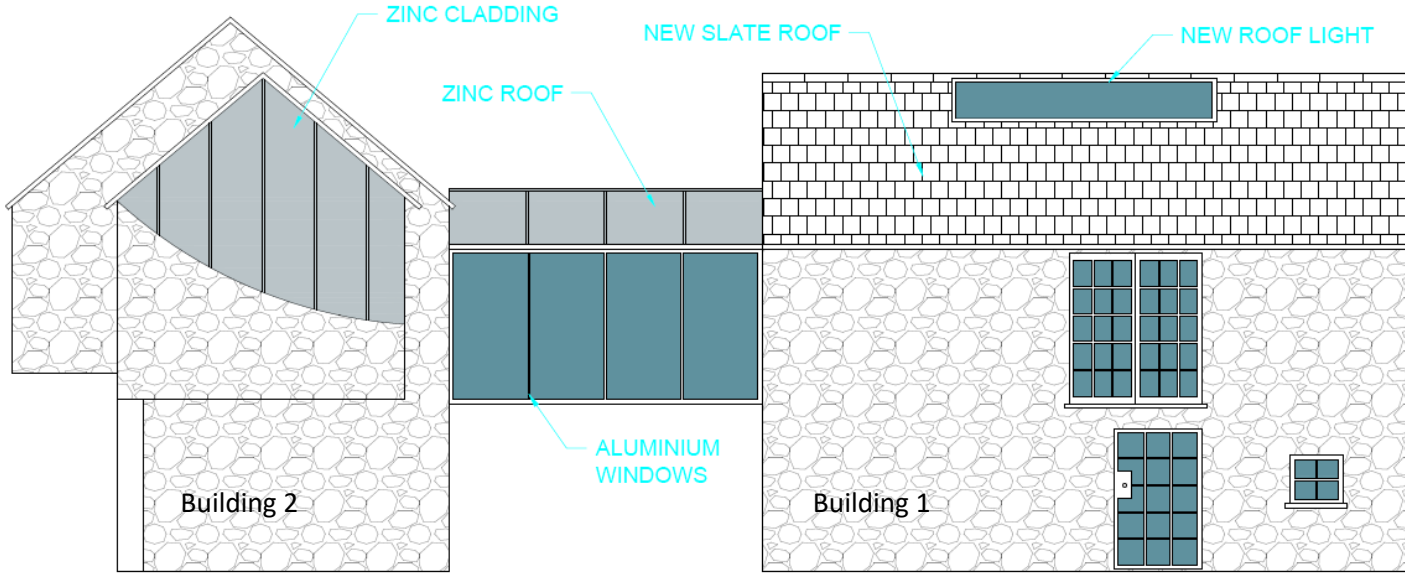
REV: A SCALE:1:30

REV DETAILS:
PROPOSED

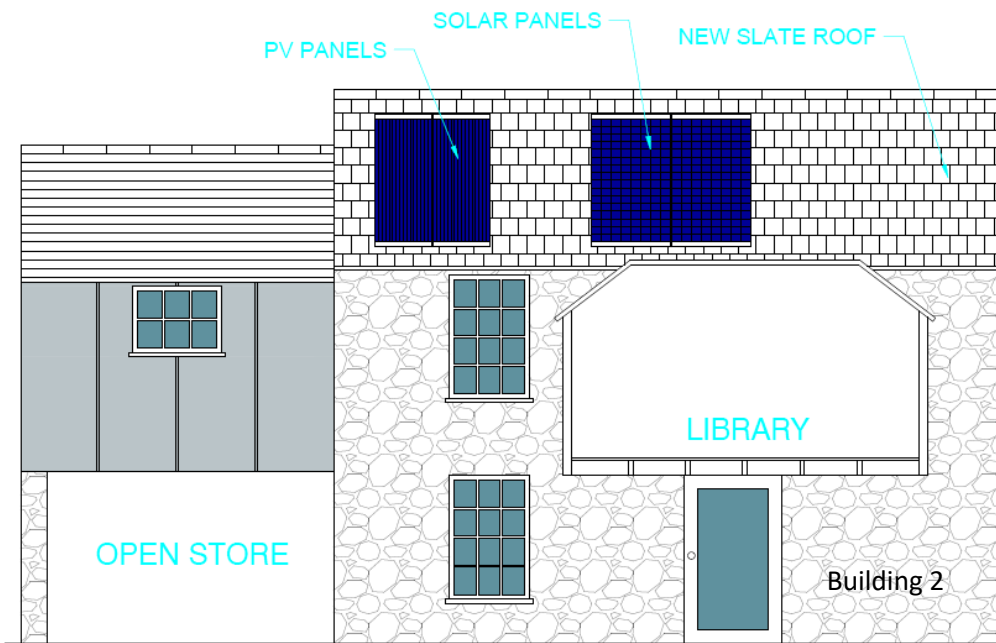
BSP PROJECTS
SOUTH LTD



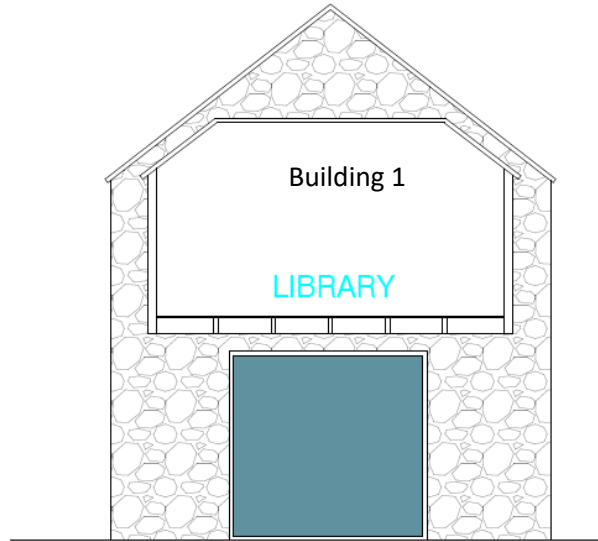
NORTH ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

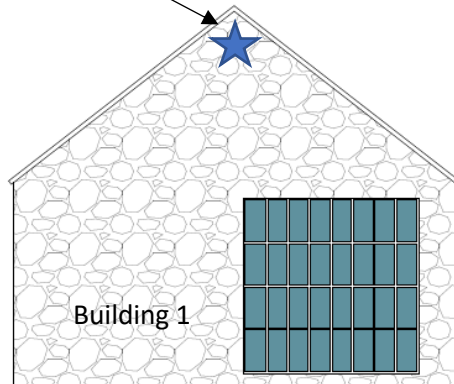


EAST ELEVATION
UPPER

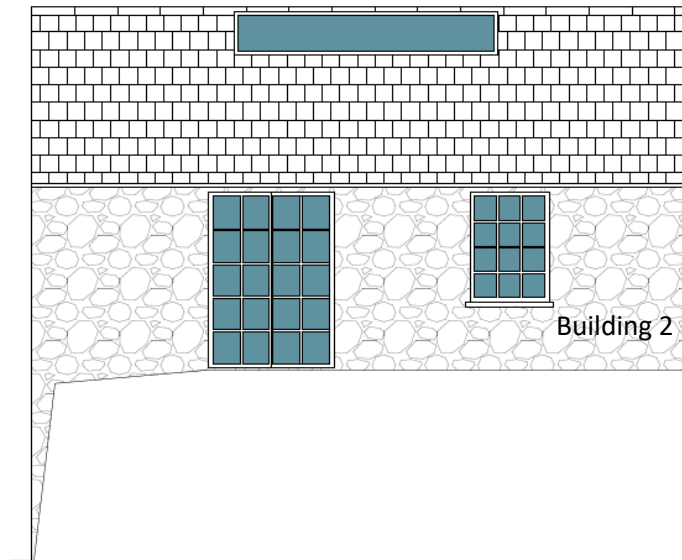


WEST ELEVATION
LOWER

Proposed bat
box location



EAST ELEVATION
LOWER




WEST ELEVATION
UPPER

NOTES

ALL WINDOWS WHITE
PAINTED TIMBER (UNLESS
LABELED OTHERWISE)

ALL STONEMWORK EXISTING

 - 200mm INSULATED
WALL INSIDE ALL
EXISTING STONE
WALLS

SITE ADDRESS:
CARPENTERS, PORTLOE

DRAWING NAME:
EAST AND WEST
ELEVATIONS

DRAWING No: 104

DRAWN BY: DATE:
BSP 11/07/2022

REV: A SCALE:1:30

REV DETAILS:
PROPOSED

BSP PROJECTS
SOUTH LTD

Annexe 4: Bat and bird boxes

Beaumaris Woodstone Bat Box

[https://www.nhbs.com/4?slug=bat-boxes&q=&fR\[hide\]\[0\]=false&fR\[live\]\[0\]=true&fR\[shops.id\]\[0\]=4&fR\[subsidaries\]\[0\]=1&hFR\[subjects_equipment.lv1\]\[0\]=Bat%20Boxes&qtview=211949](https://www.nhbs.com/4?slug=bat-boxes&q=&fR[hide][0]=false&fR[live][0]=true&fR[shops.id][0]=4&fR[subsidaries][0]=1&hFR[subjects_equipment.lv1][0]=Bat%20Boxes&qtview=211949)



Vivara Pro WoodStone House Sparrow Nest Box

https://www.nhbs.com/4/practical-conservation-equipment?q=&hPP=60&idx=titles&p=0&fR%5Bhide%5D%5B0%5D=false&fR%5Bhide%5D%5B1%5D=false&fR%5Blive%5D%5B0%5D=true&fR%5Blive%5D%5B1%5D=true&fR%5Bshops.id%5D%5B0%5D=4&fR%5Bshops.id%5D%5B1%5D=4&hFR%5Bsubjects_equipment.lv1%5D%5B0%5D=Bird%20Boxes%20%3E%20Integrated%20Bird%20Boxes&qtview=195281



Annexe 5: Species legislation and conservation status

Birds

The bird breeding season generally lasts from March to early September for most species. All birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and the Countryside & Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000. This legislation makes it illegal, both intentionally and recklessly, to:

- kill, injure or take any wild bird;
- take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is being built or in use;
- take or destroy the eggs of any wild bird

Furthermore, birds listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) are protected against intentional or reckless disturbance whilst nest building and when at or near a nest containing eggs or young. Dependent young of Schedule 1 species are also protected against disturbance.

In addition to this legal protection, the leading governmental and non-governmental conservation organisations in the UK have reviewed the population status of the birds regularly found here and produced a list of birds of conservation concern. Of the 247 species assessed, 67 were placed on the Red List of high conservation concern, 96 on the Amber List of medium conservation concern and 81 on the Green List of low conservation concern:

- Red list species are those that are Globally Threatened according to IUCN criteria; those whose population or range has declined rapidly in recent years; and those that have declined historically and not shown a substantial recent recovery.
- Amber list species are those with an unfavourable conservation status in Europe; those whose population or range has declined moderately in recent years; and those with internationally important or localised populations.

Bats

There are 18 species of bats found in the UK, 17 of which are known to breed here. The conservation status of these species is summarised in the table below:

Common name	Scientific name	IUCN Red List*	Priority Species
Greater horseshoe	<i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i>	LC	Yes
Lesser horseshoe	<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>	LC	Yes
Daubenton's	<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	LC	No
Brandt's	<i>Myotis brandtii</i>	LC	No
Whiskered	<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>	LC	No
Natterer's	<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	LC	No
Bechstein's	<i>Myotis bechsteinii</i>	NT	Yes
Alcathoe bat	<i>Myotis alcathoe</i>	DD	No
Greater mouse-eared	<i>Myotis myotis</i>	LC	No
Common pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	LC	No
Soprano pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	LC	Yes
Nathusius's pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>	LC	No
Serotine	<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	LC	No

Noctule	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	LC	Yes
Leisler's	<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	LC	No
Barbastelle	<i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>	NT	Yes
Brown long-eared	<i>Plectorus auritus</i>	LC	Yes
Grey long-eared	<i>Plectorus austriacus</i>	LC	No

*IUCN categories: LC Least Concern, NT Near Threatened, DD Data Deficient

All bat species are afforded full protection under UK and European legislation, including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Together, this legislation makes it illegal to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat.
- Damage or destroy a bat roost; or intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to bat roosts.
- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb, a bat, including in particular any disturbance which is likely:
 - to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or
 - in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
 - to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

A bat roost is defined in the legislation as "any structure or place which a bat uses for shelter or protection". Roosts are protected whether or not bats are present at the time.
