



LC Ecological
Services

PHASE 1 BAT SURVEY
TIPPETTS FARM
TREGONY
CORNWALL

AUGUST 2023

ON BEHALF RED PLANNING



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Authorisation

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CONTENTS

SUMMARY	1
1.0 INTRODUCTION	2
2.0 METHODOLOGY	4
2.1 Desk study	4
2.2 Field survey	4
2.2.1 Phase I bat survey.....	4
3.0 RESULTS	5
3.1 Desk study	5
3.2 Field survey	5
3.2.1 Description of the buildings	5
3.2.2 Potential for bats	6
3.2.3 Potential for nesting birds	6
4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	7
4.1 Summary of survey findings	7
4.2 Recommendations	7
APPENDIX I: Photographs	9

SUMMARY

1. LC Ecological Services Limited, were commissioned by Red Planning to conduct a phase 1 bat survey of the agricultural barn at Tippetts Farm, Tregony, Cornwall, TR2 5SX (Grid reference: SW 93572 42191). The survey was undertaken in support of a planning application for the conversion of the barn to a dwelling.
2. A phase 1 bat survey was undertaken, and this entailed a detailed inspection of both internal and external features of the barn looking for signs of bats. A desk top study for nearby mitigated lost roosts under a European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licence was also conducted.
3. The barn is located in a farmyard with buildings to the south, north and south-east. A species poor Cornish hedge lies to the east with arable fields in all directions.
4. No evidence of roosting bats was recorded in the barn. Externally, the barn is well sealed with no roosting potential identified. Internally, no evidence of bats was identified. Sparrows were confirmed roosting on the eastern gable end of the barn.
5. Enhancements have been recommended to enhance the new dwelling for roosting bats.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

LC Ecological Services Limited, were commissioned by Red Planning to conduct a phase 1 bat survey of the agricultural barn at Tippetts Farm, Tregony, Cornwall, TR2 5SX(Grid reference: SW 93572 42191). The survey was undertaken in support of a planning application for the conversion of the barn to a dwelling.

All bat species are legally protected under Annex IV of the EC Habitats and Species Directive which is transposed into UK law via the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. All species of bat are also protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This legislation makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately kill, injure or capture bats;
- Deliberately disturb bats in such a way as to be likely to significantly affect: (i) the ability of any significant group of bats to survive, breed or rear or nurture their young; or (ii) the local distribution or abundance of bats¹;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any bat whilst it is occupying a roost;
- Damage or destroy bat roosts; and
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.

This legal protection means that where activities have the potential to impact on bats, the results of a bat survey and an appropriate mitigation strategy must be submitted to Natural England.

In addition, several species of bat including soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and brown long-eared bats (*Plecotus auritus*), are UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Species. BAPs set out policy for protecting and restoring priority species and habitats as part of the UK's response as signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity. BAPs operate at both a national and local level with priority species and habitats identified at a national level and a series of Local BAPs that identify ecological features of particular importance to a particular area of the country. The requirement to consider and contribute towards BAP targets was strengthened through the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The NPPF sets out the Government's vision for biodiversity in England with the broad aim that planning, construction, development and regeneration should maintain and enhance, restore or add to biodiversity and geological conservation interests. NPPF includes sections on legally protected species and sites.

¹ The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 consolidates the numerous amendments that were made to the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994. Of particular relevance are amendments made in August 2007 and January 2009 which increased the threshold of illegal levels of disturbance to European Protected Species (EPS). An offence is only committed if the deliberate disturbance would result in significant impacts to the EPS population. However, it should be noted that activities that cause low levels of disturbance to these species continue to constitute an offence under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (see below).

Section 2 of the report provides details of the methodologies adopted and section 3 provides an account of the survey results. Section 4 provides information on the relevance of the results to the proposed development and presents appropriate measures of best practice.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Desk study

The Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website was used to provide information on any European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licences for bats within two kilometres of the site.

2.2 Field survey

2.2.1 Phase I bat survey

Bats roost in a wide variety of sites within buildings, with many species roosting in cracks and crevices, within brick work, under slates and tiles, and within timber beam joints where they are difficult to see.

Bats often access roosts at key areas such as the gable end, soffits, barge boards, ridge tiles, between double lintels, around window frames, through open joints in the brickwork or broken tiles through open doors / entrances to the buildings.

The presence of roosting bats can be spotted through signs such as accumulations of moth or butterfly wings, staining, bat droppings, or bats themselves. The absence of these cannot, however, be treated as conclusive evidence that bats are not using the buildings. An assessment was therefore also made of the potential of the building to support bats based on the following scale:

Table 1: Roosting potential

Roosting potential	Description of roosting features
Confirmed Roost	Evidence of bat occupation found
High Roosting Potential	With significant roosting potential, either because they contain a large number of suitable features or those features present appear optimal
Moderate Roosting Potential	Features with moderate roosting potential, with roosting features appearing less suitable
Low or Negligible Roosting Potential	Buildings with few, if any, features suitable for roosting

A direct search for evidence of bats was conducted on the 20th July 2023 by licenced principal ecologist Sophie Higgins (Natural England Class 2 bat licence 2015-18867-CLS-CLS). The weather conditions at the time of the phase 1 survey were 16°C, light breeze and 10% cloud cover.

3.0 RESULTS

3.1 Desk study

The following granted EPSM licences were identified within a 2-kilometre radius of the site:

- 701 metres south-west of the site licence 2017-31868-EPS-MIT allowed the destruction of a breeding site and resting site for common pipistrelle bats (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*).
- 1,331 metres south-east of the site licence 2017-30887-EPS-MIT allowed the destruction of a resting place for lesser horseshoe (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) bats.
- 1,769 metres south-east of the site licence 2019-39290-EPS-MIT allowed the destruction of a breeding and resting site for brown long-eared and common pipistrelle bats.

3.2 Field survey

3.2.1 Description of the buildings

External description

- The agricultural barn is single storey with the lower section constructed of traditional stone with timber cladding on the upper half. The roof is a pitched corrugated metal roof with the southern elevation part corrugated sheeted.
- Externally, the southern elevation is open providing access to an open animal shelter which has hay stored in some sections.
- The eastern and northern elevations are accessed through large doors which are closed.
- No crevices were identified externally to support roosting bats.

Internal description

- Internally, the barn is split into two sections. The southern section is separated by a half stone wall and half timber cladding. This section is open on the southern elevation providing access for bats. The stone wall has some crevices which are shallow and not measuring more than 0.5 centimetres in depth. No bats were seen roosting inside. The majority of the crevices identified were full of snails.
- No roosting opportunities were identified in the southern elevation of the barn.
- The main section of the barn is used to store farm machinery with a single dividing low timber wall between the two sections.
- The stone wall in this section of the barn was well sealed with no identified crevices.

- The eastern section of the wall has corrugated asbestos sheets on top. The gap between the edge of the sheeting and the stone wall is filled with concrete filler. No crevices were found to support roosting bats.
- The timber frame supporting the barn has large gaps at the ridge which are considered too wide to support roosting bats.
- No other internal crevices were identified which could support roosting bats.
- No bats, droppings or feeding remains were found inside the barn.

Surrounding habitat

The barn lies in a farmyard with other buildings to the south and north with a species poor Cornish hedge to the east. Arable fields are present in all directions with low, well managed Cornish hedges. The area offers sub-optimal habitat for foraging and commuting bats due to the lack of mature linear features or woodland, which bats prefer to use.

3.2.2 Potential for bats

Despite a thorough search, no evidence of bats was recorded in the barn.

3.2.3 Potential for nesting birds

A single old disused swallow nest was recorded inside the barn and sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) were seen at the eastern gable access where they were coming and going to a nest.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 *Summary of survey findings*

Following the phase 1 bat survey it was concluded that the barn is of negligible potential to support roosting bats.

Sparrows were identified using the barn for nesting.

4.2 *Recommendations*

The conversion of the barn will be conducted outside of the nesting bird season (September to February, inclusive). If this time frame cannot be adhered to, then a qualified ecologist will attend site to check for nesting birds, if nests are confirmed, works will be stopped within a five-metre radius until all breeding attempts have been confirmed complete.

Compensation nests should be provided within the design of the new dwelling. A suitable replacement nest for sparrow is a woodstone sparrow nest box². This box can be installed at the eaves on the eastern or western elevation. Compensation nesting provisions for swallows can include a swallow cup³. These can be installed externally at the eaves. It is advisable to provide additional wooden panels to the site and underneath to provide a more enclosed nesting feature which is more preferred by swallows.

In the unlikely event that a bat is discovered during the works, all works must stop and a bat licenced ecologist contacted for advice.

It is recommended that an integrated bat box such as the Green and Blue bat tube⁴ is installed to provide opportunities for roosting bats.

² [Sparrow Terrace Nest Boxes \(wildcare.co.uk\)](http://wildcare.co.uk)

³ [Nid à hirondelle de cheminée Schwegler No 10 \(wildcare.co.uk\)](http://wildcare.co.uk)

⁴ [Bats – ©Wildcare Ltd @Green&Blue @BeeBrick are registered trade marks of Wildcare Ltd. \(greenandblue.co.uk\)](http://greenandblue.co.uk)

5.0 REFERENCES

Collins, J (ed) (2016). *Bat Surveys for Professionals Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edition)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Department for Communities and Local Government (2005). *Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System.*

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Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019). National Planning Policy Framework.

Mitchell-Jones A.J. & McLeish A.P. (2004). *The Bat Workers' Manual (3rd Edition)* Joint Nature Conservation Committee

APPENDIX I: Photographs



Photo 1: Internal view of the barn.



Photo 2: Large gaps between timber frame.



Photo 3: Open southern elevation of the barn.



Photo 4: Internal view of the barn showing light from roof.



Photo 5: Sealed internal wall.



Photo 6: Internal timber cladded wall and new corrugated roof.



Photo 7: Internal view looking west.