

# Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

For Mr & Mrs B Repps, Aura, Holnicote road, Bude. EX23 8EJ.



Internal roof of building.

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October 2023  
Revised by Derek Gow (MCIEEM)



Upcott Grange, Broadwoodwidge, Lifton, Devon, PL16 0JS

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Overview

The Derek Gow Consultancy Ltd (DGC) were commissioned by For Mr & Mrs B. Repps, Aura, Holnicote road, Bude. EX23 8EJ to conduct a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) including a protected species survey of a garage on their property to inform a planning application for its demolition and conversion into another property.

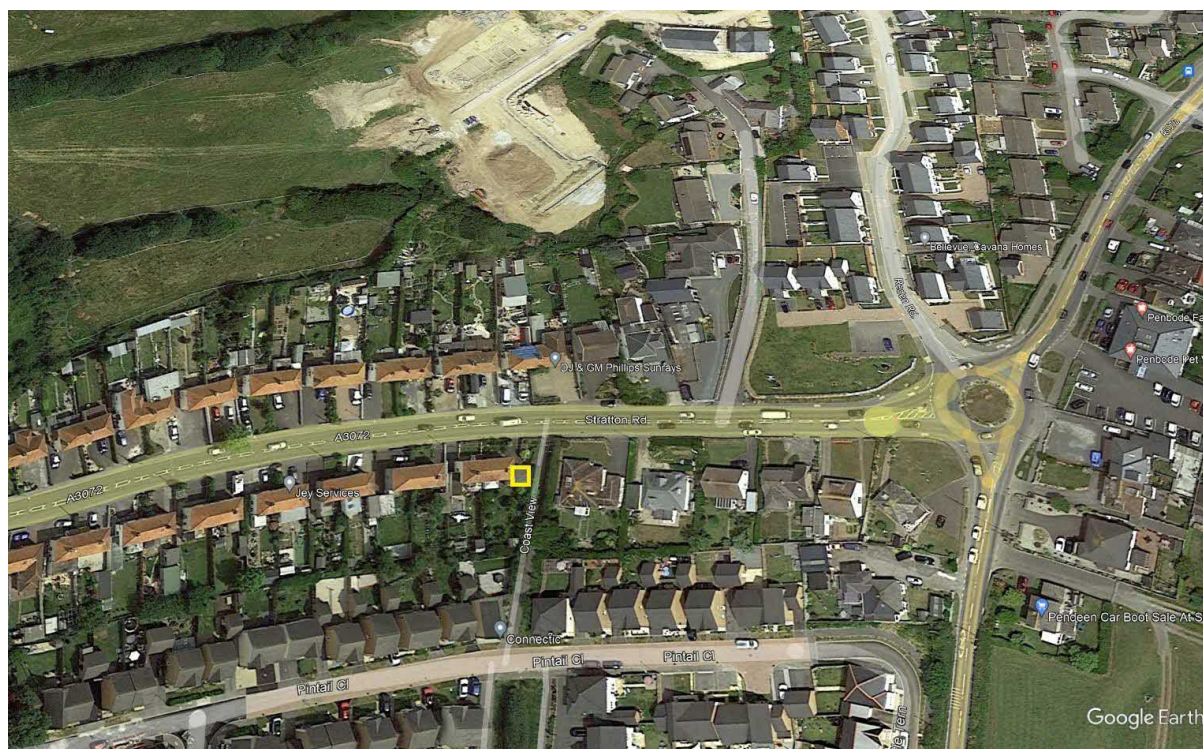


Figure 1. Proposed development site in yellow.

### 1.2. Objectives

The purpose of the survey is to document the ecological conditions on site, including identifying the potential for any protected and notable species, particularly bats to inform a planning application. Recommendations for further ecological surveys or works will thereafter be advised.

### 1.3. Site Description

The property is situated to the west of the main A3072 Stratton Road in Bude. The building proposed for demolition is a rendered blockwork garage with a corrugated concrete sheet roof. At present this structure is sound and watertight and been sealed along the tops of the block wall with cement render. Although materials are stored within the building it was accessible at the time of a scoping visit which was undertaken on the 29<sup>th</sup> of October 2023. The area surrounding the buildings is urban with many residential properties.



Figure 2. The south end of the garage.



Figure 3. The east wall of the garage



Figure 4. The north wall of the garage.

#### 1.4. Proposed Development

A planning application has been developed to demolish the garage and erect another building on its site.

None of the surrounding trees or hedge banks will be impacted by this development.

#### 2. Legislation

Statutory protection is afforded to certain wild habitats and species through European Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora. This has been adopted into UK legislation through the provisions of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2010. At national level protection this is found in the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA 1981; as amended) which is designed to protect species and habitats considered to be of principle importance and to safeguard these for the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

Under Regulation 41 it is an offense to deliberately capture or kill a wild animal of a European protected species, deliberately disturb such an animal or to damage or destroy its breeding site or resting site.

Since August 2007 amendments to the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994 have changed the term 'deliberately disturb' such that it is an offense if the species are disturbed in such a way that it is likely to significantly affect the colonies' ability to survive, breed or rear their young; or to affect their local distribution or abundance.

The WCA (Wildlife and Countryside Act) 1981 as amended is the principal mechanism for the statutory protection of wild flora and fauna in the United Kingdom. All bats, their resting and

breeding sites are protected under schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (as amended), making it an offense to kill, injure or take a bat, or destroy, disturb or obstruct a roost. There are 18 species of bat in the UK all of which are also protected under the EC Habitats Directive.

All species of bat resident in the UK are protected under the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994 as amended 1997, the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 as amended. In part this requires local planning authorities to take account of protected species such as bats when determining planning applications. The above legislation makes it a criminal offence to:

Capture or kill a bat,

Disturb a bat whilst in a place of shelter or rest,

Damage or destroy a bat's breeding site or resting place.

With regard to wild birds under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 the law is broken if a person:

Intentionally kills, injures or takes wild birds

Intentionally takes, damages or destroy a wild bird's nest while it's being used or built

Intentionally takes or destroys a wild bird's egg

Possesses, controls or transports live or dead wild birds, or parts of them, or their eggs

Sells wild birds or puts them on display for sale

Uses prohibited methods to kill or take wild birds

Intentionally or recklessly disturbs any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturbs the dependent young of such a bird.

The consequences for the above, even in the event of harm to a single bird, nest or egg, is an unlimited fine, or imprisonment of up to six months in jail or both. Natural England considers the 'Bird Nesting Season' to be officially from February until August.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Overview

This report has been produced in accordance with current guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Impact Appraisal (CIEEM, 2013). Derek Gow of DGC visited the site in the afternoon of the 29<sup>th</sup> of October 2023. The weather was dry and open.

### 3.2. Desk Study

No desk study was undertaken for this project as the proposed development is of an entirely minor nature.

### 3.3 Protected Species Survey

The site was assessed for its potential to support bats and nesting birds.

The value of the habitat for bats can be assessed by identifying features used by bats for roosting, foraging and commuting. This can include trees, hedges and buildings. The presence of bats, the usage of an area by bats and often the species can be determined by the identification of bat droppings, urine stains, feeding remains and wing buffering as well as live bats and corpses. Following initial surveys, dusk and dawn emergence surveys may be required to provide additional information on the presence and size of a roost.

## 4. Results

A thorough visual search of the internal and external structures of the buildings was undertaken. The building is sound with locking doors and a pebble dash external coat which is complete in good repair. Where the corrugated concrete sheets meet the top of the garage wall they have been sealed with cement. The roof itself is cement corrugated sheeting and is entirely viewable within. The floor is concrete and again in good order. A variety of household materials were stored throughout the building at its time of inspection the surfaces of which were easily viewable and clean. The building is therefore of simple construction. Block external walls, a sheet concrete roof and a concrete floor.



Figure 5. Underside of the roof.

A search of the concrete floor with a strong torch, the window sills, work benches, shelves and stored materials revealed no bat droppings. There were no areas outside on the building's flanks where any access/urine stains or droppings caught on render were likewise visible.

The design of the building affords bats with few options if indeed they could gain access. There are no comfortable crevices which would provide refuge and the character of the roofing material would make the building alternatively very hot or cold depending on the prevailing weather.

No field signs of bats were identified at all in the building on the surfaces of the materials stored inside or on the floor.

No field signs of nesting birds were identified in the building which was not accessible to them.

## 5. Discussion and Recommendations

None of the surrounding trees or hedge banks will be impacted by this development.

No evidence of bats was found. There is no evidence of the existence of bats in terms of their well distributed droppings which would be expected over the clear areas of concrete floor internally. No evidence of their prey remains were found.

No evidence of the use of any of the buildings by nesting birds was identified.

As a result, I can confirm that there will be no negative ecological impact associated with this proposal.

## 6. References

Bat Conservation Trust, 2007. Bat Surveys - Good practice Guidelines. London: Bat Conservation Trust.

CIEEM, 2013. Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.