



PLAN FOR ECOLOGY

Preliminary Bat & Bird Assessment

Site:

12 Stratton Terrace, Falmouth, TR11 2SY

Grid Reference: SW 80346 33661

16th May 2023

Version 1



Plan for Ecology Ltd

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Document Control:

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OS Grid Reference:	SW 80346 33661
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Client:	RTP Surveyors Ltd on behalf of Sally and Simon Banks
Report Reference Number:	P4E2974
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Declaration:

"The information, evidence and advice, which we have prepared and provided is true, and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management's (CIEEM) Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions."

Caroline Davey	
Kim Jelbert	

Report Lifespan:

Ecological features can change over time, particularly if site management/ use changes. Typically, preliminary bat and bird assessments are valid for 12 months (until end of March 2024).



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Summary

Bat evidence?	<p>12 Stratton Terrace was visually inspected for evidence of roosting bats on 31st March 2023. No evidence of bats was found, but there are potential roosting opportunities for bats in the main roof void and in the roof structure of the annexe. There are also a number of external features on the west elevation of the property which have the potential to support crevice dwelling bats and/or to permit bat access to the building interior.</p> <p>12 Stratton Terrace was, therefore, assessed as being of 'moderate suitability' for roosting bats.</p>
Bat mitigation recommendations?	<p>A minimum of two bat emergence or re-entry surveys are recommended plus a static detector survey of the main roof void to inform the planning application and subsequent building/re-roofing works. Bat emergence/ re-entry surveys can only be undertaken between May and September, and at least one of the emergence/ re-entry surveys should be undertaken between May and August, in line with best-practice guidelines.</p>
Bird evidence?	<p>No evidence of nesting birds, including barn owl, was noted within the building. 12 Stratton Terrace was assessed as being of 'negligible suitability' for barn owl.</p>
Bird mitigation recommendations?	<p>A precautionary approach should be adopted during development works. If an active bird's nest is found, then works within 5m of the nest should be delayed until nesting activity has ceased.</p> <p>There is opportunity to make provision for nesting birds within the fabric of the building or on the building exterior and enhance the value of the site for breeding birds post-development.</p> <p>No further surveys for birds are recommended.</p>



1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

RTP Surveyors Ltd on behalf of their clients, Sally and Simon Banks, commissioned Plan for Ecology Ltd to undertake a Preliminary Bat and Bird Assessment (sometimes referred to as a Bat and Barn Owl Assessment) of 12 Stratton Terrace, Cornwall, TR11 2SY (OS Grid Ref: SW 80346 33661) in March 2023. The client proposes to renovate the property. This includes re-roofing works to the main house and the annexe.

1.2 Project Administration

Property Address:	12 Stratton Terrace, Falmouth, TR11 2SY
OS Grid Reference:	SW 80346 33661
Client:	RTP Surveyors on behalf of Sally and Simon Banks
Planning Authority:	Cornwall Council
Planning Reference Number:	Unknown
Report Reference Number:	P4E2974
Proposed work:	Renovation of the house and annexe including re-roofing works
Survey Date:	31 st March 2023
Ecologist & Licence Number:	Caroline Davey BSc. (hons) MSc; bat licence no: 2022-10817-CL18-BAT; CL29/00037 (barn owl) held by Kim Jelbert BSc. (Hons) MSc. PhD. MCIEEM (Registered Consultant RC224)

1.3 Legislation & Planning Policy

Planning: The local planning authority has a statutory obligation to consider impacts upon protected species resulting from development. Planning permission will not be granted with outstanding ecological surveys, and if applicable an appropriate mitigation plan.

Bats: In the UK all bat species are listed on Annex IV(a) of the European Communities Habitats Directive and as such are European Protected Species (EPS). In Britain, protection of bats is achieved through their inclusion on Schedule 2 of the Conservation and Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended), Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 12 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (HM Government, 1981, 2000 & 2010).

As a result of this statutory legislation, it is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat/s in its roost;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a bat roost (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time);



- Possess or sell or exchange a bat (dead or alive) or part of a bat.

Works with potential to cause significant disturbance to roosting bats may require a European Protected Species (EPSL) licence or Bat Mitigation Class Licence (CL21) from Natural England before works can legally commence. Works likely to result in less significant disturbance may be carried out under a Bat Mitigation Method Statement. The magnitude of disturbance and, therefore, the requirement for an EPSL, Bat Mitigation Class Licence or method statement is assessed on a case-by-case basis by the bat ecologist. The Bat Mitigation Method Statement or EPSL must be prepared and/or applied for by a suitably experienced and licenced bat ecologist. Where planning permission is required, the appropriate licence cannot be obtained until planning permission has been granted.

Birds: In Britain the nests (whilst in use or being built) and eggs of wild birds are protected against taking, damage and destruction under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (HM Government, 1981). The barn owl (*Tyto alba*) is listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (HM Government, 1981); this legislation makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally capture, injure or kill a barn owl;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a barn owl whilst nesting;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a dependent young barn owl.



2.0 Methodology

The ecologist (Caroline Davey) assessed the suitability of 12 Stratton Terrace and the surrounding habitat to support bats and birds. A high-power torch was used to illuminate all accessible areas of the building with potential to support roosting bats and roosting/ nesting birds. The ecologist searched for signs of bats and birds including droppings, staining, feeding remains, bird nests, barn owl pellets and liming.

The assessment was carried out in accordance with the 'Bat Survey for Professional Ecologists - Good Practice Guidelines' produced by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2016).

2.1 Ecological Evaluation

Potential bat roosts identified during the visual inspection of the building were categorised as to their suitability in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust's (BCT) Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2016) as described below:

Negligible: negligible features with potential to support roosting bats.

Low: one or more features with potential to support individual bats on an occasional basis. Unlikely to support large numbers of bats.

Moderate: one or more features with potential to support roosting bats but unlikely to be of high conservation status.

High: one or more features with potential to support large numbers of bats on a regular basis.

2.2 Limitations

Weather during the survey was in line with seasonal norms. There are no limitations associated with weather conditions. The building supports exterior features (i.e., gaps and crevices associated with the fascia/ wall tops) that could not be visually inspected for roosting bats. These features have potential to provide suitable roost sites for bats/ provide bat access to the building interior. The roof and upper parts of the building were viewed from ground level; it is possible that some potential roost features (PRFs) are present but not visible from the ground. It wasn't possible to inspect the whole attic space as much of the space was un-boarded.



3.0 Assessment Results

3.1 Site Description

12 Stratton Terrace, Falmouth, is a Grade II listed Georgian Villa, located on the approach to the town centre of Falmouth close to the estuary, c.1km north of the town centre, c.1.5km south-east of Penryn and c. 15 km south of Truro.

The property is situated close to the waterfront of the Carrick Roads with views across the estuary to Flushing. The boundary of the property is located c. 0.1km from the riverside with the open countryside on the northern bank of the estuary being c. 0.5km from Stratton Terrace. There is further open countryside c. 1km west of the property.

Habitats in the wider area comprise predominantly town houses and vegetated gardens in Falmouth and Penryn, with mixed farmland with pockets of broadleaved woodland, coastal and estuarine habitats beyond. In combination, these features provide potential high-quality foraging and roosting habitat for bats, and suitable nest sites, roosts and foraging habitat for birds.

3.2 Bat Assessment

The visual assessment was undertaken on 31st March 2023. This assessment details the suitability of 12 Stratton Terrace for roosting bats.

12 Stratton Terrace is a Grade II listed Georgian Villa of granite block construction, rendered and painted (Figure 1). The main house is two-storey with a double pitched and hipped roof set around a central valley. The main house has two concrete cast chimneys and a traditional slate roof with clay ridge and hip tiles. The main entrance is on the south elevation with a courtyard garden and entrance to the annexe also on the south elevation.

The two-storey annexe has painted rendered exterior walls and has a mono-pitched roof of traditional slate. The annexe adjoins the neighbouring property on the north elevation.

12 Stratton Terrace is one of a number of substantial properties on the waterfront in Falmouth. Bats have been recorded roosting in the vicinity of 12 Stratton Terrace in previous years.



Figure 1: 12 Stratton Terrace; Grade II listed Georgian Villa, east elevation

West elevation

One half of the building (southern half) on the west elevation is completely faced with hanging slate tiles, the other half rendered and painted. One concrete chimney with a terracotta stack is located on this elevation and lead flashing around the base of the chimney has come away slightly, providing a potential crevice for bats and possible access into the main roof void (Figure 3). There is a roof vent on this elevation with a surround of lead flashing which may also provide a crevice for bats and/or access into the roof void (Figure 4). There are also small crevices behind the hanging slate tiles on the exterior wall that may provide roosting sites for bats (Figure 5). There is a painted timber fascia board and soffit on the west elevation. The fascia board is tight to the wall and does not appear to provide any suitable crevices for roosting bats. The timber soffit also has no cracks or crevices and is unlikely to provide access for bats.



Figure 2: West elevation of 12 Stratton Terrace



Figure 3: Crevice beneath lead flashing at the base of the chimney on the West elevation may provide an access point for roosting bats



Figure 3: Vent on the roof of the west elevation may provide a crevice for roosting bats and / or access into the roof interior



Figure 5: Small gaps behind hanging slates on the west elevation may provide roosting sites for bats

South elevation

The main entrance to the house is on the south elevation (Figure 6). The walls are painted and rendered granite block with a timber fascia board and soffit. There are no holes or cracks in the soffit or gaps behind the fascia board. The stonework is tight and there are no potential access points for bats on this elevation. It was not possible to view the roof from this elevation and there may be suitable cracks and crevices within the slate roof structure that could provide bat access into the roof void. The entrance of the annexe is also on the south elevation, and this is constructed from rendered painted granite block. The roof is mono-pitched and there are numerous crevices behind the slates on this roof that may provide roosting opportunities for bats (Figure 7).



Figure 6: South elevation of the house, with main entrance



Figure 7: Roof of the annexe with slipped slates and gaps between slates which may provide potential roosting sites for crevice dwelling bats and / or allow access into the interior

East elevation

The frontage of the house lies on the east elevation (Figure 1). The walls are painted and rendered granite block with four large windows, three of which are bay windows, one with a flat slate roof. There is a timber fascia board and soffit on this elevation. The stonework is tight and there are no gaps behind the fascia boards or cracks in the soffit. It is not possible to view the roof structure from this elevation or inspect the flat roof of the bay window. There may be suitable cracks and crevices within the slate roof structure that could provide bat access into the roof void.

North elevation

The north elevation is also of painted, rendered granite block construction. There is very little space between the wall of the neighbouring property and the north elevation of the house (Figure 8). There is a timber fascia board which is tight to the wall with no potential crevices for roosting bats. There are two concrete cast chimneys on this elevation. The slate roof is not visible from this elevation and although there appeared to be no obvious visible features for bats, there may be suitable cracks and crevices within the slate roof structure that were not visible during the survey.

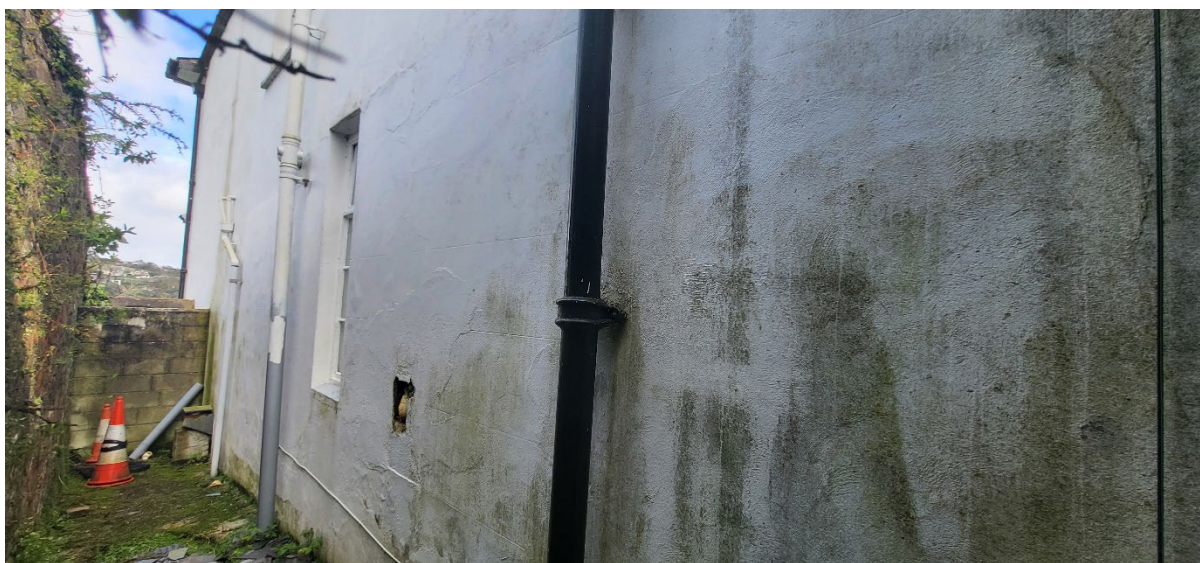


Figure 8: North elevation

Roof Void

The roof structure consists of a double pitched and hipped structure set around a central valley. In effect this creates four distinct but connected roof voids set around the central rectangular valley. The roof void is currently unused and is for the most part un-boarded so access was limited to a small section close to the entrance hatch. The internal structure is of timber construction and the roof is partly lined with bitumen roofing felt and partly lined with a breathable membrane (Figure 9). There are numerous roosting opportunities for bats within this roof void and there are some possible access points visible from the interior between the base of the roof structure and the tops of the walls, as indicated by the penetration of light into the roof void (Figure 10). No bat droppings were found during the survey but full access to the void interior was not possible on health and safety grounds.



Figure 9: Internal structure of the roof void. Timber frame and slates lined partly with bitumen roofing felt and partly a breathable membrane

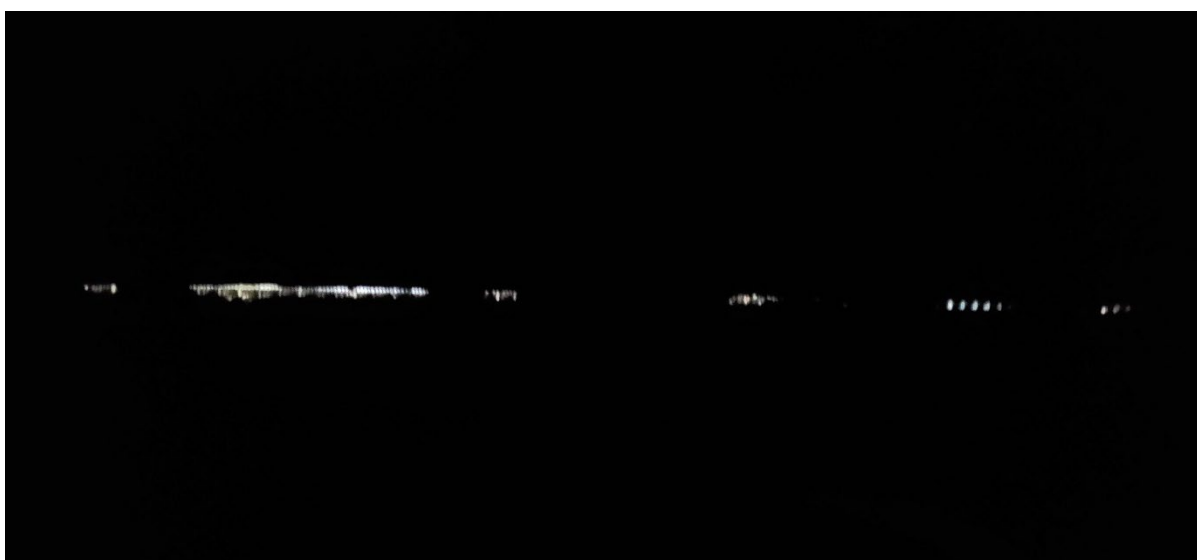


Figure 10: Light penetrating into the roof void, indicating potential access points for bats between the roof and the top of the walls

Annexe Roof Void

The internal roof structure of the annexe is of timber construction and is lined with bitumen roofing felt (Figure 11). The roof space has a window allowing light into the void, a timber floor and has open access by staircase to the downstairs. It is currently used for storage (Figure 12). There are potential roosting opportunities for bats behind the bitumen roofing felt and at the tops of the walls, but it is unlikely that the main void would be used by bats as it is light and bright and the space is not enclosed. No droppings or other evidence of bats was observed during the survey.



Figure 11: Internal structure of the roof of the annexe (timber lined with bitumen roofing felt)



Figure 12: Interior of the roof space of the annexe

No bat droppings or evidence of bats was observed during the survey, but the house and the annexe both have numerous internal and external features that may support roosting bats. Furthermore, surrounding habitat provides suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bats. The property was, therefore, assessed as being of **'moderate suitability'** for roosting bats.

3.3 Bird Assessment

No evidence of active bird nests was observed within the interior or on the exterior of the building.

No evidence of barn owls using 12 Stratton Terrace was noted and there are no suitable access points for this species. The building was assessed as being of **negligible suitability** for nesting, breeding or resting barn owls.



4.0 Mitigation Recommendations

4.1 Bat Mitigation

No bat droppings or other evidence of bats was found during the survey, but the property supports internal and external features with potential to support crevice dwelling bats and/or permit bat access into the building interior. Furthermore, there is also suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bats in close proximity to the property. 12 Stratton Terrace was, therefore, assessed as being of '**moderate suitability**' for roosting bats.

Works must be informed with at least two bat emergence or re-entry surveys undertaken between May and September; one of which should be carried out between May and August. A static monitoring survey between May-September of the roof void is also recommended. The survey information will be required to inform the planning application and subsequent building works. The surveys will determine the bat species present, number of individuals, bat access points and timings of usage.

Please note that planning permission is unlikely to be granted with outstanding ecological surveys. This report must be updated with the results of the recommended further surveys or superseded with a standalone bat survey report, following provision of the final site plan and prior to submission of the planning application.

4.2 Bird Mitigation

No evidence of nesting birds, including barn owl, was found within the interior of the building.

12 Stratton Terrace was assessed as being of '**negligible**' suitability for barn owl.

Due to the coastal location of the site, herring gulls (*Larus argentatus*) may nest on the roof of the property between March and August/ September.

Although no evidence of nesting birds was found, a precautionary approach should be adopted. If, during construction works, an active bird nest is uncovered, works within at least 5m of the nest must stop immediately (as soon as it is safe to do so) and delayed until nesting activity has ceased. Works are most likely to be delayed between April and July.

Further surveys for birds are not recommended as part of this assessment.

4.3 Opportunities for Biodiversity Enhancement

Net gain is described as a measurable target(s) for development projects where impacts on biodiversity are outweighed by the mitigation hierarchy approach to first avoid, and then minimise, impact including through restoration and/ or compensation (Baker *et al.*, 2019). Biodiversity net gain is an approach to development, and/or land management, that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand.

The biodiversity value of the site for nesting birds post-development could be enhanced by installing bird boxes within the fabric of the modified building, or on the building exterior. The value of the site for invertebrates could be enhanced by installing bee bricks/ posts within the building/ landscaping on-site. Plan for Ecology Ltd can provide detailed recommendations upon request. These recommendations are in accordance with the Cornwall Planning for Biodiversity Guide (Cornwall Council, 2018). NB: suitable products are available from www.nhbs.com, www.wildcareshop.com and www.greenandblue.co.uk



5.0 References

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