



Meadowview
Roche, Cornwall

Bat and Nesting Bird Visual Survey

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BE1081

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Prepared by:
Dr Janine Bright MCIEEM CEnv

For:
A & K Architectural Services



Bright Environment Ltd
Meadow Cott, Chute Lane, Gorran Haven, Cornwall, PL26 6NU
T: 07974204078 E: janine@brightenvironment.net W: www.brightenvironment.net



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1. INTRODUCTION

It is proposed to demolish a workshop/garage and construct a new dwelling at Meadowview, Prosper Road, Roche, Cornwall, PL26 8PR. The OS Grid reference of the site is SW 99102 59097.

Bright Environment Ltd was commissioned by A & K Architectural Services in January 2024 to carry out a visual bat and nesting bird survey to inform the planning application. Bats and nesting birds are legally protected (see Appendix 1).

2. METHODOLOGY

The survey methodology adopted follows the guidance given in 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines' (Collins, 2023) and 'Barn owl survey methodology and techniques for use in ecological assessment' (Shawyer, 2011). Impact assessment and mitigation follows the guidance provided by CIEEM (2018) and the 'Bat Mitigation Guidelines' (Mitchell-Jones, 2004).

2.1 Visual survey methodology

A visual survey of the building was carried out on 29th January 2024. During this the suitability of the building and surrounding habitats to support bats and nesting birds was assessed.

A detailed search of the interior and exterior of the building was carried out using a high powered torch to illuminate all areas thought suitable for bats and nesting birds. Any accessible cracks and crevices were investigated with the use of a torch and endoscope.

The survey involved looking for bats and nesting birds and for evidence of their use, including droppings, pellets, staining, liming, feathers and feeding remains. Survey details are shown in Table 1.

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, 2023) 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.

Table 1 Survey details.

Date	Type of survey	Personnel - bat licence number	Weather conditions
29.1.24	Visual survey	Dr Janine Bright 2020-49235-CLS-CLS	Rain, calm, overcast. Temp 11C

3. SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 Habitat description

Meadowview is on the outskirts of Roche in mid-Cornwall. It is a rural location. The surrounding landscape is dominated by mixed agriculture whereby the fields are bound by a network of native species-rich Cornish hedgerows. These habitats provide good foraging opportunities for bats.

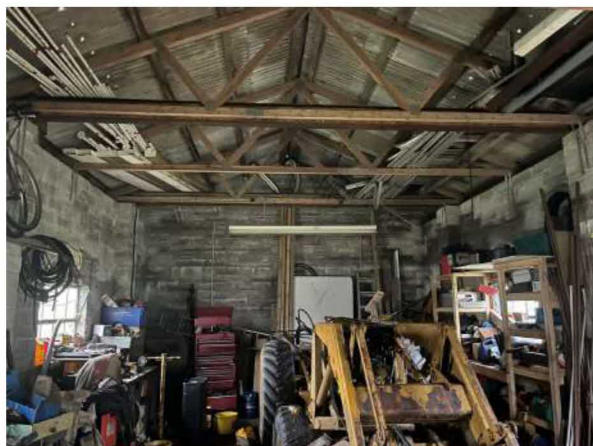
The garage workshop to be demolished was built approximately 40 years ago. It is of concrete block construction with a pitched gable roof. The roof covering is corrugated pressed cement fibre sheet. No ceiling or underlay is present. There is wooden cladding on the west gable. The floor within is concrete.



Photograph 1. North and west elevations.



Photograph 2. East and south elevations.



Photograph 3. Internal.

3.2 Visual bat survey results

The interior of the building has few crevice features suitable for roosting bats. There are no fly-in access points for horseshoe bats. There is a small void between the external wooden cladding and internal wooden boarding. This was searched and no evidence of bats found.

There are windows on both the north and south elevations, making the interior relatively light.

It was possible to carry out a thorough search of all potential bat roost areas and no evidence of bat use was found.

3.3 Nesting bird survey results

No evidence of nesting birds was found at the time of the survey.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

No evidence of bats or nesting birds was found and it is considered unlikely that any evidence was overlooked. It was possible to carry out a thorough search of all potential bat roost areas. The building has been assessed as having negligible potential as a bat roost. No further surveys for bats are required.

In the unlikely event that bats are discovered during the conversion, they must not be handled and works must stop immediately and advice sought from Bright Environment Ltd (Tel 07974 204078) or Natural (Tel 0300 060 3900).

It is possible that birds could nest before the works commence. The nests and eggs of all wild birds are protected against taking, damage or destruction under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. If the works are to be carried out within the bird breeding season (March to September) the building should be searched for nesting birds. If nesting birds are present, works should not commence until dependant young have fledged. Further advice can be sought from Bright Environment Ltd (Tel 07974 204078) or Natural England (Tel 0300 0602544).

In compliance with the Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) the new dwelling will include one bee brick and either one integral bird feature or one bat block. The bee brick will be installed on the south-facing wall 1-2m above ground level. Bee bricks contain multiple cavities for bees to lay their eggs and are integral to a building (see photograph 4). The bat block will be installed flush with the wall surface (examples are shown in Photograph 5) and sited near the roof in a dark location. Example integral bird features are included as photograph 6. One of these will be installed flush with the wall surface near the eaves. As ecological features can change over time it is recommended that this report is valid until February 2025.



Photograph 4. Example bee brick.



Photograph 5. 'Green and Blue' bat block and built in woodstone bat box `.



Photograph 5. Sparrow terrace and two example woodstone nest boxes.

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Appendix 1 Summary of relevant legislation, policies and case law

Bats

All British bat are European protected species and 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 2010. Together, this legislation makes it illegal to:

Intentionally kill, injure or capture a bat;

Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat;

Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a place of shelter or breeding (for example, bat roosts), and this applies regardless of whether the species is actually present at the time (for example, a bat roost used in the winter for hibernation is protected throughout the year, even during the summer when it is not occupied).

Possess or transport a bat or any part of a bat, unless acquired legally;

Sell, barter or exchange bats, or parts of a bat.

Intentionally handle a wild bat or disturb an bat whilst using a place of shelter/ breeding unless licensed to do so by the statutory conservation agency (Natural England).

Barbastelle, Bechstein's, noctule, soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared, greater horseshoe and lesser horseshoe bats are priority species for conservation on the UK BAP and protected under the NERC Act 2006. Barbastelle, pipistrelle, greater and lesser horseshoe bats are county priority BAP species (CBI, 2004).

Case Law

There are several case laws in Britain relating to the duty of developers and planning authorities with respect to wildlife, resulting in several key principles summarised in the table below:

Case / Appeal	Providing support for
Morge v Hampshire County Council (2011)	'Disturbance' under the Conservation Regulations 2010 applies to an activity likely to impact negatively on the local population of a European Protected Species.
R v Cheshire East Council 'The Woolley Case' (2009)	Regarding European Protected Species, Local Authorities must apply the 'three tests' under the Conservation Regulations 2010 when deciding on planning applications: that there is no satisfactory alternative, there is an appropriate reason for the development, and that the development will not affect the favourable conservation status of protected species present.
APP/P9502/A/08/2070105 (Appeal decision, Brecon, 2008)	Para 18: Local Planning Authorities cannot condition provision of a mitigation scheme; detailed mitigation must be provided prior to determination.
APP/C0820/A/07/2046271 (Appeal decision, Padstow, 2007)	Para 18: Full survey information must be provided prior to determination; not just for protected species, but also for BAP species (in this case corn buntings).
R v London Borough Council Bromley (2006)	Para 30: Environmental Impact Assessment required at outline planning stage.
R v Cornwall County Council 'The Cornwall Case' (2001)	Surveys for protected species cannot be conditioned; must be undertaken prior to determination.

Barn owls and other nesting birds

The nests and eggs of all wild birds are protected against taking, damage and destruction under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Barn owls are given greater protection against disturbance while breeding under Schedule 1 of the Act.

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out national planning policy that is committed to minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible. Under NPPF, local planning authorities have an obligation to promote the preservation, restoration and recreation of Priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of Priority species as identified under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006). Section 118 of the NPPF also requires enhancements for biodiversity. The NPPF also recognises the wider benefits of ecosystem services.