



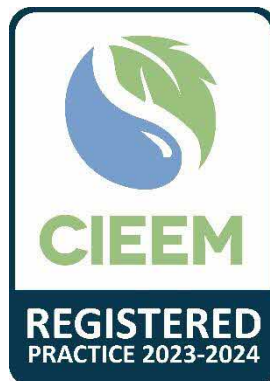
Preliminary Bat & Bird Assessment

Site:

Hendravossen, Black Rock, Praze-an-Beeble, Cornwall

Grid Reference: SW 6591 3509

23rd January 2024



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Document Control:

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OS Grid Reference:	SW 6591 3509
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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."

Naomi Scala	
Kim Jelbert	

Report Lifespan:

Ecological features can change over time, particularly if site management/ use changes. At the time of writing, Cornwall Council considers Preliminary Bat and Bird Assessments to be valid for 12 months (until December 2024), unless stated otherwise.



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Summary

Bat evidence?	<p>Three barns at Hendravossen, Black Rock, Praze-an-Beeble were visually inspected for evidence of bats on 7th December 2023.</p> <p>Barn 1 was assessed as being of 'moderate suitability' for roosting bats.</p> <p>Barns 2 and 3 were assessed as being of 'negligible suitability' for roosting bats.</p>
Bat mitigation recommendations?	<p>A minimum of two bat emergence or re-entry surveys and a static detector survey are required of Barn 1, to inform the planning application and subsequent building 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. No further surveys of barns 2 and 3 are required. Precautionary recommendations should be followed.</p>
Bird evidence?	<p>No evidence of nesting birds, including barn owl (<i>Tyto alba</i>), was noted within the barns or on the exterior of the barns.</p> <p>The barns were assessed as being of 'negligible suitability' for barn owl.</p>
Bird mitigation recommendations?	<p>Precautionary recommendations are provided.</p> <p>There is opportunity to make provision for nesting birds within the fabric of, or on the exterior of the converted barns and enhance the value of the site for birds' post-development.</p> <p>No further surveys for birds are recommended.</p>

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

Laurence Associates on behalf of their client commissioned Plan for Ecology Ltd to undertake a Preliminary Bat and Bird Assessment (sometimes referred to as a Bat and Barn Owl Assessment) of three barns at Hendravossen, Black Rock, Praze-an-Beeble, Cornwall, TR14 9PN (OS Grid Ref: SW 6591 3509) in October 2023. The client proposes to convert the barns for residential use.

1.2 Project Administration

Property Address:	Hendravossen, Black Rock, Praze-an-Beeble, TR14 9PN
OS Grid Reference:	SW 6591 3509
Client:	Laurence Associates
Planning Authority:	Cornwall Council
Planning Reference Number:	Unknown



Report Reference Number:	P4E3281
Proposed work:	Conversion for residential use
Survey Date:	7 th December 2023
Ecologist & Licence Number:	Naomi Scala BSc (Hons), MSc, ACIEEM (Bat licence no: 2018- 34120-CLS-CLS; barn owl licence no: 2023-11048-CL29-OWL)

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, 2017, 2019).

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 (Naomi Scala) assessed the suitability of the barns 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 Surveys for Professional Ecologists - Good Practice Guidelines' produced by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2023).

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, 2023) as described below:

None: No habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats at any time of year.

Negligible: No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.

Low: A structure with one or more features with potential to support individual bats opportunistically at any time of year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats.

Moderate: A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.

High: A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts such as maternity or hibernation roosts.

2.2 Limitations

Weather during the survey was in line with seasonal norms. There are no limitations associated with weather conditions. The roof and upper parts of the building were viewed from ground level; it is possible that some potential roost features (PRFs) are present at height but not visible from the ground.



3.0 Assessment Results

3.1 Site Description

Hendravossen is located down a private lane, north of Black Rock, which is located c. 2 km east of Praze-an-Beeble and c. 2.6 km south of Troon, Cornwall. The location is rural in character. Areas of the UK BAP Priority Habitat/ Section 41 NERC Act (2006) habitat of principal importance 'deciduous woodland' are present c. 580m to the south and c. 1.3km to the southeast of the site. Reservoirs are present c. 340m and c. 640m to the west of the site. Habitats in the wider area comprise predominantly mixed farmland with pockets of broadleaved woodland, reservoirs and small towns and villages. Buildings in the wider area comprise a mixture of period and modern properties with vegetated gardens, outbuildings and barns. 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 7th December 2023.

This assessment details the suitability of three barns at 'Hendravossen' (Fig. 1) for roosting bats.



Figure 1: Aerial view of the three barns surveyed at Hendravossen. Barn 1 (red outline); Barn 2 (blue outline); and Barn 3 (green outline).

Barn 1

Barn 1 is of part block/ part wood panel construction with a pitched corrugated fibre roof (Figs. 2-3). The roof supports three roof lights at the north elevation and a metal ridge and fascias. A roller door is located at the west elevation.



Internally, Barn 1 has a timber A-frame and the roof is unlined. The floor is concrete, and the barn is currently empty. The barn supports gaps at the internal wall tops, between the block wall and the wood panelling that could not be visually inspected for roosting bats (Fig. 4). These features have potential to permit bats into the barn interior.

A previous Preliminary Bat and Bird Assessment undertaken by Cornwall Environmental Consultants (CEC) in 2014, found evidence of bats within the barn interior in the form of bat droppings and moth remains (CEC, 2014). Furthermore, the client confirmed she had swept the floor of the barn, suggesting that any bat droppings (if present) would have been cleared away.

Although no evidence of bats was found within the interior, Barn 1 supports potential gaps between the internal block wall tops and the wood panelling which provides access to the barn interior. Previous evidence of bats within the barn was also observed in 2014 (CEC, 2014).

Overall, Barn 1 was currently assessed as being of 'moderate suitability' for roosting bats.

Barn2

Barn 2 is a single-storey building of block construction with a clear corrugated plastic flat roof (Figs. 5-6). The barn supports two windows at the east elevation and two wooden doors at the west elevation. Externally, the building is well sealed with no obvious gaps.

Internally, the building is used for storage and has a concrete floor (Fig. 7). The roof is unlined and heavily cobwebbed. The interior is well lit from the clear roof and two windows. No evidence of bats was observed within the interior.

Overall, barn 2 was assessed as being of 'negligible suitability' for roosting bats.

Barn 3

Barn 3 is a dilapidated barn of stone construction. The barn has lost most of its roof, with only the walls remaining (Figs. 8-9). The barn is open to the elements and offers very few potential roosting areas suitable for use by bats.

Internally, the barn has a concrete floor and is divided into three sections (Figs. 10-11). The barn interior was very damp due to the missing roof. No evidence of bats was observed within the interior.

Overall, barn 3 was assessed as being of 'negligible suitability' for roosting bats.



Figure 2: View of the north and west elevations of Barn 1.



Figure 3: View of the north and east elevations of Barn 1.



Figure 4: View of interior of Barn 1. Red arrow shows gaps between the block wall top and the wood panels providing potential bat access to the barn interior.



Figure 5: View of the west elevation of Barn 2.



Figure 6: View of the east elevation of Barn 2.



Figure 7: View of interior of Barn 2.



Figure 8: View of the south and west elevations of Barn 3.



Figure 9: View of the north elevation of Barn 3.



Figure 10: View of the western interior of Barn 3.



Figure 11: View of the eastern interior of Barn 3.



3.1 Bird Assessment

No evidence of nesting birds was observed within the interior of the three barns at Hendravossen.

No evidence of barn owls using the building was noted, and no suitable access points were present. Barns 1, 2 and 3 at Hendravossen were assessed as being of negligible suitability for nesting, breeding or resting barn owls.

4.0 Mitigation Recommendations

Barn 1 at Hendravossen supports gaps between the block walls and wood panels that provide potential to permit bat access into the building interior. No evidence of bats was observed within the barn interior. Historical evidence of bats was observed in 2014 in the form of bat droppings and moth wings (CEC, 2014) and the client reports regularly sweeping Barn 1, which could remove any bat evidence. Barn 1 was, therefore, assessed as being of 'moderate suitability' for roosting bats. The client seeks to convert the barn for residential use. Barns 2 and 3 were assessed as being of negligible suitability for roosting bats.

In accordance with the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2023), works to Barn 1 must be informed with at least two bat emergence surveys undertaken between May and September; surveys must be spaced at least three weeks apart and one of the surveys must be carried out between May and August. A static monitoring survey of the barn interior is also required.

The survey information will be required to inform the planning application, bat mitigation licence application and subsequent building works. The surveys will determine the bat species present, number of individuals, bat access points and timings of usage.

Although no current evidence of roosting bats was found within Barns 2 and 3 and it is considered highly unlikely that bats use the barns for roosting, absence cannot be assumed. A precautionary approach should be adopted. The building contractors should be made aware that bats can roost unseen within the building structure. If, during works, a bat(s) is uncovered, the bat must not be handled, and works must stop immediately (as soon as it is safe to do so). Advice must be sought from an experienced bat ecologist (Plan for Ecology Ltd: 01326 218839) or Bat Conservation Trust (Tel: 0345 1300 228).

Further surveys of Barns 2 and 3 for bats are not recommended as part of this assessment.

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. It may be necessary to obtain a European Protected Species Licence (or comparable licence) from Natural England to permit the proposed scheme of works. Planning consent must be obtained prior to applying for the bat mitigation licence.

In the U.K., all bat species and their roosts (even if unoccupied) are protected by law. See section 1.3 (above) for details of relevant legislation.

4.1 Bird Mitigation

No evidence of nesting birds, including barn owl, was found within the interior of the three barns. Barns 1, 2 and 3 at Hendravossen were assessed as being of 'negligible suitability' for barn owl.



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.

4.2 Opportunities for Biodiversity Enhancement

The biodiversity value of the site for nesting birds and invertebrates post-development could be enhanced by incorporating a single bird box and bee brick on the building exterior, in line with Cornwall Council's Planning for Biodiversity Guide (2018). Plan for Ecology Ltd can provide further advice upon request.

NB: suitable products are available from www.nhbs.com, www.wildcareshop.com and www.greenandblue.co.uk



5.0 References

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