



**BAT, BARN OWL AND NESTING BIRD SURVEY**

**on**

**1 BOSCOWEN ROAD, FALMOUTH, CORNWALL**

**May 2023**



**Wheal Grey Ecology Ltd**

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**BAT, BARN OWL AND NESTING BIRD SURVEY ON  
1 BOSCOWEN ROAD, FALMOUTH, CORNWALL**

**O.S. Grid Ref:** SW 8064 3173

**Survey date:** 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**Surveyor:** Simon Barnard BSc (Hons) MSc CEcol MCIEEM  
Class Survey Licence Reg. Nos. 2017-32208-CLS-CLS  
(Level 3) & 2015-13541-CLS-CLS (Level 4)  
Barn Owl Class Survey Licence CL29/00170

**Time spent on site:** ¾ hour

**Taxonomic groups covered:** Bats, Barn Owls and Nesting Birds

**Report author:** Simon Barnard BSc (Hons) MSc CEcol MCIEEM

**Filename & issue number:** BBONB\_1 Boscowen Road, Falmouth\_Final 1

**Report for:** Ms Laura Highton, Poynton Bradbury Wynter Cole Architects

**Report No:** 22-152/PBWC/1 Boscowen Road, Falmouth\_BBONB

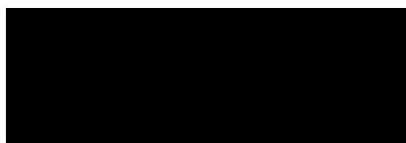
**Report completed:** 19<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**Report Sign off**

**Document checked and approved for issue by:**

Debra Barnard MBBCh Director

**Signature:**



**Date:**

20<sup>th</sup> May 2023



## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Wheal Grey Ecology Ltd were instructed by Ms Laura Highton, of Poynton Bradbury Wynter Cole Architects, on behalf of the client to carry out a visual inspection on 1 Boscowen Road, Falmouth, Cornwall looking for evidence of use of the building by Bats, Barn Owls and Nesting Birds. The proposal is to extend the property.

The survey was carried out in the morning on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and the weather was overcast with occasional light rain showers, a light breeze, 100% cloud cover and the temperature was 11°C.

## 2. DESCRIPTION OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE

### 2.1. Description of Building

The building subject to this survey is a large detached two-storey house with rooms built into the roof structure. It has a pitched roof with a number of large dormers and projections and to the rear of the house is an attached single storey garage which also has a pitched roof. It appears to be built from a combination of stone, brick and blockwork with a rendered finished externally and some areas of horizontal cladding. To the rear there is also a small single storey flat roof extension, see photos 1 to 4.



Photo 1. Showing the house from the east



Photo 2. Showing the house from the south



Photo 3. Showing the house from the north west



Photo 4. Showing the garage from the north



There is a single roof void over the main part of the house below the ridge which is partially divided into two by a light well in the centre of the roof. The northern half of this could be accessed but the southern section could only be limited viewed. These roof voids are open from the fibreglass covered floor to the underside of the roof which is lined with timber sarking and there are gaps between each plank. There is also water tank within the northern half of this roof void, see photos 5 and 6.



Photo 5. Showing the northern part of the roof void over the house



Photo 6. Showing the southern part of the roof void over the house

There is a second roof void over the garage which is open from the top of the ceiling to the underside of the roof which is lined with modern breathable roofing membrane. This roof void is fairly light internally due to small windows in the northern and southern gable end walls, see photos 7. Below the house there is an extensive basement which has been used as living accommodation and is divided into a number of rooms, see photo 8.



Photo 7. Showing the roof void over the garage



Photo 8. Showing the basement

Externally the building appears to be well sealed with tight fitting fascia and soffit boards, well sealed ridge tiles and slates. There are some small gaps which could be used by day roosting bats either to access the roof voids or for roosting in themselves at the junctions between the roof and the dormers.



## 2.2. Surrounding landscape

The property subject to this survey is within the town of Falmouth, to the south of the centre, close to the seafront. It is surrounded by houses in fairly large mature gardens with the tree lined Falmouth branch line to the north and a large area of open and tree lined ground to the west, comprising Falmouth Cemetery, and Swanpool Nature Reserve, see figure 1.

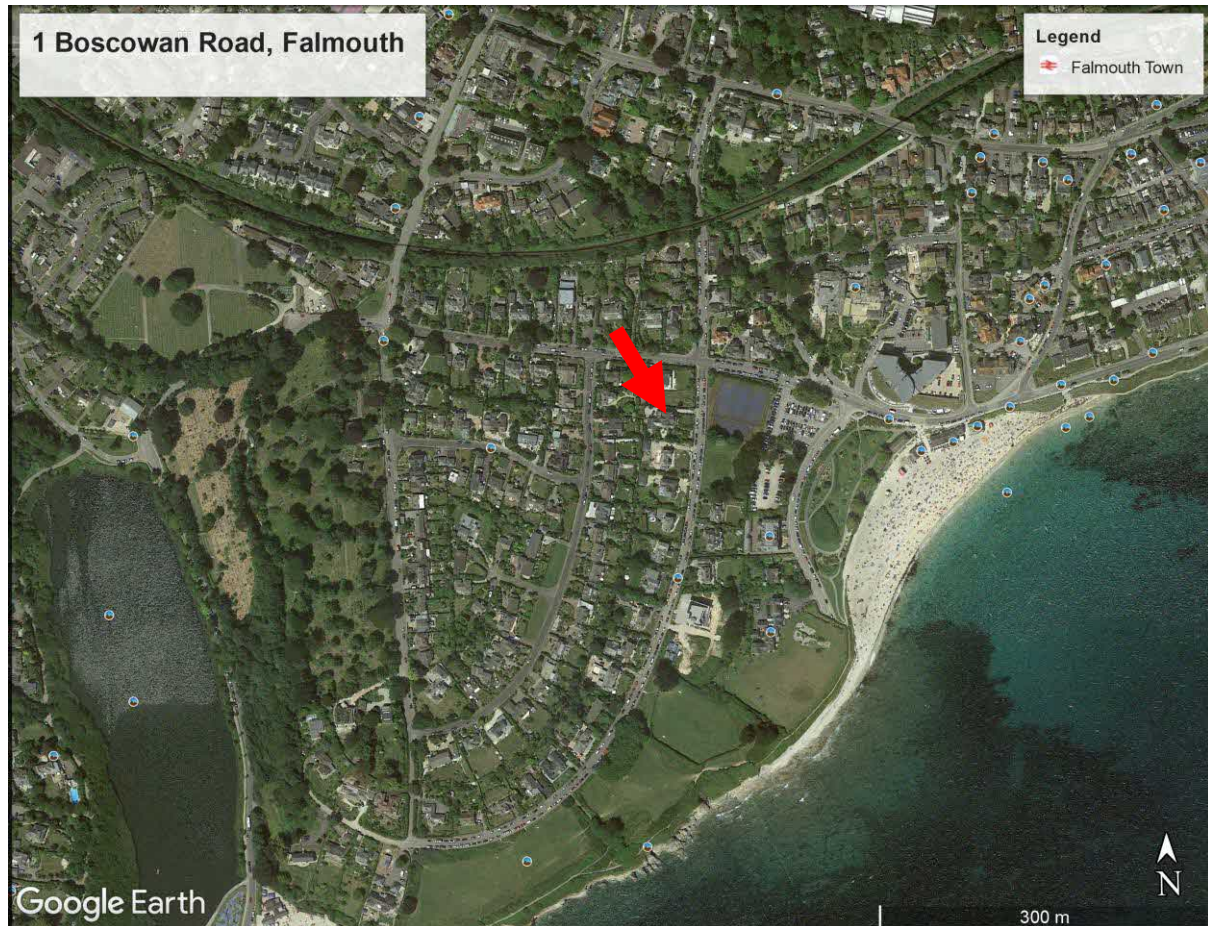


Figure 1. Google Earth image showing the location of the property (red arrow) and surrounding landscape

The habitats surrounding the property represent good urban bat foraging habitat which is well linked into the surrounding landscape and the wider countryside which is known to be used by a number of species of bat for foraging and roosting including Common and Soprano Pipistrelles, Whiskered bats, Natterer's, Brown Long-eared bats and Lesser Horseshoes.

### **3. METHODS**

#### **3.1. Bats**

The building was carefully inspected internally and externally, where access allowed, for evidence of the use of the building by roosting bats using a high-power torch, ladders, binoculars and an endoscope (where needed). This included looking for individual or groups of roosting bats and signs that the building is currently, recently or has been historically used for roosting by bats such as droppings or staining around potential access points. It involves searching between any roof timbers, walls and wall tops, any cavities, openings or gaps behind hanging slates or fascia's, window ledges and other protruding features. Additionally, any potential entry points are inspected thoroughly for signs of their use, i.e., staining, polishing or scratching of woodwork (indicating use by bats).

As bats can leave little evidence of their occupation, this survey included an assessment of the potential of the buildings and features of the building to support roosting bats. This involved identifying potential roosting features including but not limited to cracks, crevices and voids, cavities created by spaced off fascia, hanging slates or split render and any other features capable of providing suitable roosting space for bats.

#### **3.2. Barn Owls**

Where suitable access points into the buildings were present the interior was carefully searched, with the aid of a torch, looking for evidence that the building is used by Barn Owls, for either nesting or roosting. This includes searching for owl pellets, feathers and nest debris, with particular attention being paid to the ground below crossing timbers, below any artificial nest boxes which may have been installed or ledges which could be used by nesting Barn Owls. If any nest boxes or ledges are present and it is safe to do so they will also be inspected for signs of use.

#### **3.3. Swallows and other birds**

Suitable ledges, voids and the underside of any floors or timberwork which could provide nesting space for Swallows and other birds were inspected for evidence of previous or current nest building attempts.

#### **3.4. Surveyors' experience and licences held**

Simon Barnard is an experienced bat surveyor with over 15 years' experience of carrying out all aspects of professional bat survey work including activity surveys, call analysis and emergence surveys. He has held a Natural England survey licence for more than 12 years, currently being registered on the Level 3 (CL19) and level 4 (CL20) Class Survey Licence. He has been involved in designing numerous mitigation schemes and obtaining European Protected Species development licences for the majority of the species of bats found in Devon and Cornwall and is a registered consultant on Annex's B, C and D on the Natural England's Bat Mitigation Class Licence. He also holds a valid Barn Owl Class Survey Licence CL29/00170.



## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1. Bats

Within the northern part of the roof void small numbers of bat droppings, which appear to be from Brown Long-eared bats, were seen on the floor of the roof void, see photos 9 and 10. The southern roof void could not be fully accessed or inspected. No signs of the use of the basement or roof void over the garage by roosting bats were found.



Photos 9 and 10. Showing the bat droppings found in the northern part of the roof void over the house

### 4.2. Barn Owls

No evidence of the use of this building by Barn Owls was found.

### 4.3. Swallows and other bird species

No evidence of the use of this building by nesting birds was found.

### 4.4. Limitations

The southern part of the roof void over the house could not be accessed or fully inspected.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1. Bats

As evidence of the use of the roof void over the house by roosting bats was found and this area will be impacted by the proposed works, further bat survey work should be undertaken.

The further survey work will aim to establish if the building is currently being used by roosting bats, confirm the status of any roosts found, identify the species present, the number of individuals and the locations of the access points and roosting sites. This information will then be used to inform the impact assessment and the form of the mitigation needed.

**The further survey work should take the form of a pair of emergence surveys, using three surveyors, and the deployment of a remote detector into the roof void over the house for 7 consecutive nights. This further survey work can only be undertaken during the active bat survey season, May to September, with at least one of the surveys being undertaken during the peak survey period before the end of August. The surveys should be undertaken at least four weeks apart.**

If bats are found to be using the building a Bat Mitigation Licence is likely to need to be obtained before the works can commence lawfully.

Bat survey work to accompany planning applications is considered to be valid for 12 months from the date the survey is conducted and usually needs to be updated if it falls outside of this.

### 5.2. Barn Owls

No recommendations necessary.

### 5.3. Swallows and other bird species

No recommendations necessary.



## **6. MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENTS**

### **6.1. Bats**

Recommendations on the mitigation measures needed, the form of the mitigation and the type of Licence required can only be made after the further survey work has been completed.

### **6.2. Barn Owls**

No mitigation needed.

### **6.3. Swallows and other bird species**

New nesting opportunities for birds could be incorporated into the extended building by building in or mounting prefabricated nest boxes onto the exterior of the building. This would help to potentially enhance the biodiversity value of the site.

## 7. LEGISLATION

### 7.1. Bats

Bats in England have been protected under a number of regulations and amendments but the most up-to-date and relevant are:

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017  
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Section 9)

The result of Regulations and Acts is that all species of bat and their breeding sites or resting places (roosts) are protected under law. It is an offence to:

Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat  
Deliberately disturb a bat in a way that would affect its ability to survive, breed or rear young or significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species  
Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat at a roost  
Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a roost whether bats are present or not  
Damage or destroy a roost whether bats are present or not  
Possess, control, transport, sell, exchange or offer for sale/exchange any live or dead bat or any part of a bat

Through the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (this has been updated and consolidated with subsequent amendments by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 mentioned above) bats were designated a European protected species as part of a Europe wide effort to conserve certain plant and animal species.

Any development which is likely to result in the disturbance of a European protected species, or damage to its habitat usually requires a European protected species licence from Natural England. 'Development' is interpreted broadly to include projects involving demolition of buildings, rebuilding, structural alterations and additions to buildings.

### 7.2. Birds

All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law and it is an offence, with certain exceptions, to intentionally:

Kill, injure or take any wild bird.  
Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built.  
Take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2017 require public bodies to help "*preserve, maintain and re-establish habitat for wild birds.*"

Barn Owls and other birds listed in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 are given a further level of protection against disturbance whilst breeding.

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