



## **Preliminary Bat & Bird Assessment**

Site:

Racket Town, Tresco, Isles of Scilly

Grid Reference: SV 8928 1492

19<sup>th</sup> March 2020



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## Summary

<b>Bat evidence?</b>	<p>The property 'Racket Town' was visually inspected for evidence of bats on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Evidence of bats was found within the roof void, in the form of bat droppings observed scattered throughout and a cluster beneath the chimney c. 10.</p> <p>The building also supports external features with potential to support roosting bats and overall was assessed as being of <b>moderate suitability</b> for roosting bats.</p>
<b>Bat mitigation recommendations?</b>	<p><b>A minimum of two bat emergence or re-entry surveys of the building and a static detector survey are required</b> to inform the planning application and subsequent building works. Bat emergence/ re-entry and static detector 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. The results of these surveys will be required to inform the planning application. DNA analysis of bat droppings is also recommended.</p>
<b>Bird evidence?</b>	<p>An area of ivy on one external wall was observed which provides suitable habitat for nesting birds. No evidence of nesting birds was observed during the survey.</p>
<b>Bird mitigation recommendations?</b>	<p>Mitigation not required. Precautionary recommendations are provided.</p> <p>Works during the bird nesting season (March to September inclusive) should be avoided or preceded with a thorough search for nests to be undertaken by an ecologist. Works are most likely to be delayed between April and July. If, during works, an active bird nest is uncovered, works must stop immediately (as soon as it is safe to do so) and delayed until nesting activity has ceased.</p> <p>There is opportunity to incorporate provision for nesting birds post-development by installing bird boxes on the building exterior/ within the fabric of the building.</p> <p>No further surveys for birds are recommended.</p>



## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Background

Diana Mompoloki on behalf of Tresco Estate commissioned Plan for Ecology Ltd to undertake a Preliminary Bat and Bird Assessment (sometimes referred to as a Bat and Barn Owl Assessment) of the property 'Racket Town', Tresco, Isles of Scilly (OS Grid Ref: SV 8928 1492) in March 2020. The client proposes to refurbish and extend the property.

### 1.2 Project Administration

<b>Property Address:</b>	Racket Town, Tresco, Isles of Scilly, TR11 5HD
<b>OS Grid Reference:</b>	SV 8928 1492
<b>Client:</b>	Diana Mompoloki
<b>Planning Authority:</b>	West 1
<b>Planning Reference Number:</b>	Unknown
<b>Report Reference Number:</b>	P4E1126
<b>Proposed work:</b>	Refurbish and extend the property.
<b>Survey Date:</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> March 2020
<b>Ecologist &amp; Licence Number:</b>	Naomi Scala BSc (Hons) ACIEEM: Bat licence No. 2018-34120-CLS-CLS.  Chloe Balmer MSci (Hons) Qualifying CIEEM member  Dr Kim Jelbert BSc (Hons) MSc PhD MCIEEM: Bat licence No. 2015-10444-CLS-CLS & Barn owl licence No. CL29/00037

### 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 2010, 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 (Naomi Scala) assessed the suitability of the building 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. Accessible crevices with potential to conceal a roosting bat were inspected using an endoscope.

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**

All parts of the building were accessible. Weather during the survey was in line with seasonal norms. There are no limitations associated with weather conditions.



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## 3.0 Assessment Results

### 3.1 Site Description

The property 'Racket Town' is located centrally on the island of Tresco, the Isles of Scilly, c. 0.3 km east of New Grimsby beach, c. 4.5 km north-west of Hugh Town on St Marys and c. 4.4 km west of Higher Town on St Martin, Isles of Scilly, Cornwall. The location is rural in character with the property next to an area of broadleaved woodland to the north and mixed farmland (pasture and arable) to the south, east and west. An area of Reedbeds are c. 130 m south of the property, a Section 41 NERC Act (2006) / UK BAP Priority Habitat. Buildings in the wider area comprise a mixture of period and modern properties, 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 assessment was undertaken on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

The property 'Racket Town' is single-story building of stone construction with a pitch roof and a small porch (Figs 1-6). The roof is of interlocking clay roof tiles with clay ridge tiles (Figs 1-3). There are wooden fascias and soffits, on the southwest corner the fascia is rotten (Fig 7). There is wooden cladding on the north and south elevations (Figs 2-6). There is a small projection off the eastern elevation, which is clad with ivy (Fig 4). There is a concrete chimney on the eastern elevation and gaps were observed under the lead flashing (Fig 8). Gaps beneath the lead flashing and a gap in the rotten wooden fascia board provide potential habitat for roosting bats/ provide potential bat access to the building interior.

Internally the roof void is a fink style roof traditional wooden structure, bitumen lined with rolled insulation between the joists and is c. 1.5 m to the apex (Fig 9). Gaps at the wall tops with potential to permit bats access/ provide roosting locations were observed. Bat droppings were observed scattered throughout the roof void (Figs 10) and a cluster of bat droppings were observed beneath, and on, the internal chimney breast (c. 10) (Fig 11).

External features were identified to have potential to support roosting bats and bat droppings were observed within the building interior. The property 'Racket Town' was assessed as being of '**moderate suitability**' for roosting bats.



Figure 1: View of the west elevation of Racket Town.



Figure 2: View of the east elevation of Racket Town.





Figure 3: View of the north elevation of the Racket Town.



Figure 4: View of the eastern elevation of the projection of Racket Town, showing dense ivy.



Figure 5: View of the north elevation of the projection of Racket Town.



Figure 6: View of the cladding and the wooden facias and soffits on the north elevation of Racket Town.



Figure 7: View of the rotten wooden fascia on the south-west corner of Racket Town.



Figure 8: View of the concrete chimney and gaps beneath the lead flashing.





Figure 9: Interior view of the fink structure roof void; bitumen lined and rolled insulation between the joists within Racket Town.



Figure 10: View of the bat droppings scattered throughout the roof void.



Figure 11: View of the cluster of bat droppings found beneath the internal chimney breast.

### 3.3 Bird Assessment

An area of ivy (Fig 4) on the south elevation of the projection provides suitable habitat for nesting birds. No evidence of nesting birds including roosting barn owl, was observed during the survey. The building has **negligible potential** to support barn owl.



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## 4.0 Mitigation Recommendations

### 4.1 Bat Mitigation

Evidence of bats in the form of bat droppings were observed within the roof void of Racket Town and external features with the potential for crevice dwelling bats were observed. The property 'Racket Town' was assessed as being of '**moderate suitability**' for roosting bats.

**Conversion of the building at 'Racket Town' must be informed with two bat emergence or re-entry surveys** and a static detector survey **undertaken between May and September; one of which should be carried out between May and August.** The survey information will be required to inform the planning application and subsequent building works. These surveys will determine the species, number of individuals, bat access points and timings of usage. DNA analysis of bat droppings is also recommended.

**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

Although no current evidence of nesting birds was observed, absence cannot be assumed.

Works during the bird nesting season (March to September inclusive) should be avoided or preceded with a thorough search for nests to be undertaken by an ecologist. Works are most likely to be delayed between April and July. If, during works, an active bird nest is uncovered, works must stop immediately (as soon as it is safe to do so) and delayed until nesting activity has ceased.

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

### 4.3 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/or bee brick within the modified building in accordance with the Cornwall Planning for Biodiversity Guide (Cornwall Council, 2018).

NB: suitable products are available from [www.nhbs.com](http://www.nhbs.com), [www.wildcareshop.com](http://www.wildcareshop.com) and [www.greenandblue.co.uk](http://www.greenandblue.co.uk)



## 5.0 References

British Standard Institution (2013) BS42020: 2013 Biodiversity – A Code of Practice for Planning and Development. BSI Standards Limited 2013. ISBN 978 0 580 77917 6.

Collins (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd Edition, Bat Conservation Trust, London.

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