

# **Bat Survey Report**

Bottom Annexe, Old Grimsby, Tresco, Isles of Scilly

Grid Reference: SV 89252 15730

15<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Version 1



# **Plan for Ecology Ltd**

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**Document Control:** 

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OS Grid Reference:	SV 89252 15730
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	2016-22394-CLS-CLS)
Client:	Tresco Estate
Report Reference Number:	P4E3047
Version:	01
Date:	15 <sup>th</sup> August 2023

#### **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, bat surveys are valid for 18 months (until December 2024).

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#### 1.0 Summary

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Bat evidence?	The survey results indicate that Bottom Annexe, Old Grimsby, Tresco, Isles of Scilly, supports a day roost used by an individual common pipistrelle bat ( <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> ).
Proposed works?	Demolition of the existing building and construction of a replacement building to upgrade staff accommodation on Tresco.
Bat specific mitigation recommendations?	Demolition works will not commence until an appropriate licence has been obtained from Natural England.
	The licence cannot be applied for until planning consent is in place. If the works will commence later than May 2024, then the licence must be informed with at least one additional bat emergence survey, to be undertaken in the most recent bat survey season (May-September). This is a condition of the licence application and is not a planning requirement. The current level of survey effort (two bat emergence surveys, a static monitoring survey and DNA analysis of bat droppings less than 18 months old) is sufficient to inform a planning application. No further survey effort is required to inform the planning application.
	Works will be scheduled for a time of year when bats are least likely to be impacted.
	Works with potential to impact bats will be carried out under an ecological watching brief. A licensed bat ecologist will oversee works to the roof/ fascias/ wall tops and the dismantling of the ridge. Any common pipistrelle bats uncovered will be relocated to a bat box installed within a nearby tree or structure. NB: the bat box (1 x Schwegler 2F or comparable product) will be installed in advance of works commencing and in a location that will not be disturbed as a result of building works.
	The common pipistrelle bat day roost located on the south side of the building, at the ridge on the gable end, will be lost during the demolition works. Loss of the common pipistrelle bat day roost will be compensated by either creating a bat access beneath a fascia board or between the roof tiles and roof membrane or by installing bat boxes/crevices on the exterior of the building.
	If bats will be allowed to access the roof space of the proposed replacement building, then bitumen type 1F roofing felt must be used to line the replacement roof; this is because modern synthetic membranes are harmful to bats and their use will not be permitted by Natural England.
	No exterior lighting will be installed close to the temporary or permanent bat roost features or new access points in the new building.
	Building contractors will be briefed prior to commencement of site works.



# 2.0 Introduction

### 2.1 Background

In February 2023 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) and a habitat assessment of adjacent habitats at Bottom Annexe, Tresco, Isles of Scilly (Grid Ref: SV 89252 15730). The client proposes to demolish the existing building and construct new accommodation in its place.

External and internal features were noted during the preliminary survey that have potential to support roosting bats/ permit bats access to the building interior. Apparent bat droppings were also observed within the roof void. Bottom Annexe, Tresco, Isles of Scilly, was assessed as being of **`moderate suitability'** for roosting bats (Plan for Ecology Ltd, 2023).

In accordance with the 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines' (Collins, 2016), further bat surveys were recommended, comprising a minimum of two bat emergence or re-entry surveys during the bat active season (May to September inclusive) to inform the development works. In May 2023, Tresco Estate commissioned Plan for Ecology Ltd to undertake the recommended further survey work. This report describes and evaluates the use of the building by bats, and details mitigation recommendations to minimize impacts upon bats in accordance the 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists - Good Practice Guidelines' produced by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2016).

Property Address:	Bottom Annexe, Tresco, Isles of Scilly
OS Grid Reference:	SV 89252 15730
Client:	Tresco Estate
Planning Authority:	Cornwall Council
Planning Reference Number:	Unknown
Report Reference Number:	P4E3047
Proposed work:	Demolition of existing building and construction of new accommodation
Visual Assessment Date:	24 <sup>th</sup> March 2023
Emergence Survey Dates:	18 <sup>th</sup> May and 22 <sup>nd</sup> June 2023
Ecologist & Licence Number:	Caroline Davey BSc. (hons) MSc ACIEEM; bat licence no: 2022-10817-CL18-BAT; CL29/00037 (barn owl) held by Kim Jelbert BSc. (Hons) MSc. PhD. MCIEEM (Registered Consultant RC224)
	Nicola Dyer BSc MSc MCIEEM; bat licence no. 2019-40845- CLS-CLS
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# 2.2 Project Administration



Dr Lucy Wright BSc (Hons) MSc PhD MCIEEM; bat licence no. 2022-10359-CL17-BAT

# 2.3 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 Britain protection of European Protected Species (EPS) such as bats is achieved through their inclusion on Schedule 2 of the Conservation and Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (HM Government, 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.



# 3.0 Methodology

### 3.1 Summary Visual Assessment

A visual assessment of Bottom Annexe, Tresco, Isles of Scilly, was undertaken on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2023. The ecologist (Caroline Davey) assessed the suitability of the building and surrounding habitat to support bats in accordance with Collins (2016). A high-power torch was used to illuminate all accessible areas of the building with potential to support roosting bats. The ecologist searched for signs of bats including droppings, staining and feeding remains.

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

<u>Negligible</u>: negligible features with potential to support roosting bats.

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

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

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

## 3.2 Emergence Surveys

Emergence surveys of the building were undertaken on 18<sup>th</sup> May and 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023. An emergence survey involves an ecologist(s) counting the number of bats emerging from the building at dusk or dawn for a period of at least 1.75 hrs. The surveyor(s) records the calls of any bats that emerge using a bat detector and recording equipment; this enables identification of the species present and the location of bat access points. Two ecologists were required to cover all elevations of the building. Surveyor locations are shown in Fig. 1 (below).

In accordance with the interim guidance note on the use of night vision aids (BCT, 2022), the surveyors also used night vision recording equipment as detailed below; this enables identification of the species present and the location of bat access points (where applicable). Night vision aids increase the likelihood of detecting bats emerging later during the survey (45 minutes after sunset onwards) when light levels are low. The ecologists reviewed the video footage for the last 60 minutes of the survey (when light levels were low, and bats could be missed by the surveyor).

On the first bat emergence survey occasion (18<sup>th</sup> May 2023), surveyor 1 (Chloe Balmer) and surveyor 2 (Lucy Wright) used Echo Meter Touch 2 (EMT2) detectors coupled with Reolink RLC-811A security cameras and JC Security Infrared Illuminators 12-LED.

On the second bat emergence survey occasion (22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023), surveyor 1 (Caroline Davey) used an Echo Meter Touch 2 Pro (EMT2) detector coupled with Reolink RLC-811A security camera and JC Security Infrared Illuminators 12-LED and surveyor 2 (Nicola Dyer) used an Echo Meter Touch 2 (EMT2) detector but no Reolink security camera.

The reolink camera and infrared illuminator were mounted on tripods. The Reolink RLC-811A CCTV cameras are widely and successfully used to record bats emerging from buildings. The fields of view of each camera during the first emergence survey are shown in Fig. 2 and Fig.3 below.



Different bat detector types use different methods of detecting; the EMT2 detectors use heterodyne and real-time expansion. Each method of detection is described below:

- Heterodyne: this method identifies bat calls echolocating at the frequency set by the operator but will fail to/ or only partially record bat calls outside this frequency.
- A real-time expansion bat detector digitally records ultrasonic bat calls and then plays them back at a slower rate and frequency to give an audible output.



Figure 1: Emergence survey – surveyor locations. Bottom Annexe is outlined in red. Yellow triangles show surveyor locations.



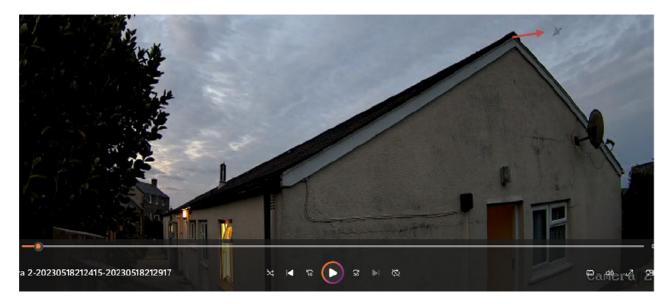


Figure 2: Still image taken from the infra-red video footage used by surveyor 1 (Lucy Wright – south elevation) during the first emergence survey on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023. Emerging pipistrelle bat recorded on the top right of the photograph (red arrow)



Figure 3: Still image taken from the infra-red video footage during the latter part of the survey (Chloe Balmer – north elevation) on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

## 3.3 DNA analysis

One sample of apparent bat droppings was collected from the roof void of Bottom Annexe during the initial visual assessment. The sample was sent for DNA analysis to provide further information on the bat species present. DNA analysis was carried out by SureScreen Scientifics Ltd, Derbyshire, U.K.



# 3.4 Ecological Evaluation

The value of buildings/ other structures for roosting bats is determined following the framework provided by Wray *et al.* (2010). This framework determines the appropriate value of a roost on a geographic scale, based on the relative rarity of the bat species using the site (based on the known distribution and population size in the U.K.), as well as the type of roost (based on the results of the emergence/ re-entry and static detector surveys). Where more than one bat species is present within the site, each species is valued individually, and the highest value obtained is assigned to the site.

Table 1 (below) categorizes bat species by their distribution and rarity in England. Table 2 (below) assigns a value for each roost type for the different rarity categories (Tables 1 and 2 are adapted from Wray *et al.* 2010).

	Region
Rarity (within range)	England
Common	Common pipistrelle ( <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> ) Soprano pipistrelle ( <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus)</i> Brown long-eared ( <i>Plecotus auritus</i> )
Rarer	Lesser horseshoe ( <i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i> ) Whiskered ( <i>Myotis mystacinus</i> ) Brandt's ( <i>Myotis brandtii</i> ) Daubenton's ( <i>Myotis daubentonii</i> ) Natterer's ( <i>Myotis nattereri</i> ) Leisler's ( <i>Myotalus nattereri</i> ) Noctule ( <i>Nyctalus leisleri</i> ) Noctule ( <i>Nyctalus noctula</i> ) Nathusius' pipistrelle ( <i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i> ) Serotine ( <i>Eptesicus serotinus</i> )
Rarest	Greater horseshoe ( <i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i> ) Bechstein's ( <i>Myotis bechsteinii</i> ) Alcathoe ( <i>Myotis alcathoe</i> ) Greater mouse-eared ( <i>Myotis myotis</i> ) Barbastelle ( <i>Barbastella barbastellus</i> ) Grey long-eared ( <i>Plecotus austriacus</i> )

Table 1: Relative rarity of bat species in England (adapted from Wray et al. 2010)

Table 2: Value of bat roosts (adapted from Wray et al. 2010)

Value	Roost types
District, local or parish	Feeding perches (common species) Individual bats (common species) Small numbers of non-breeding bats (common species) Mating sites (common species)
County	Maternity sites (common species) Small numbers of hibernating bats (common and rarer species) Feeding perches (rarer/rarest species) Individual bats (rarer/rarest species) Small numbers of non-breeding bats (rarer/rarest species)



Value	Roost types
Regional	Mating sites (rarer/rarest species) including well-used swarming sites Maternity sites (rarer species) Hibernation sites (rarest species) Significant hibernation sites for rarer/rarest species or all species assemblages
National	Maternity sites (rarest species) Sites meeting SSSI guidelines
International	SAC sites

#### 3.5 Weather Conditions

The weather during the initial visual assessment was in line with seasonal norms. The emergence surveys were undertaken during suitable weather conditions, as described below:

- 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023: Dry with part cloud and a temperature of 13°C at the beginning of the survey; and 12°C, part cloud and dry at the end of the survey; in accordance with the Beaufort Scale, wind was described as 'light air'.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023: Dry and clear with a temperature of 17°C at the beginning of the survey; and 16°C, clear and dry at the end of the survey; in accordance with the Beaufort Scale, wind was described as `light air'.

#### 3.6 Limitations

There are numerous visible features on the exterior of the building with potential to support roosting bats, which could not be fully inspected for evidence of bats. These limitations were addressed by undertaking two bat emergence surveys. There are no limitations associated with weather conditions.

The bat surveys were undertaken in accordance with best practice guidance; however, the results of these surveys represent only a snapshot of use at the time of survey.

Surveyor 1's (22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023) Reolink RLC-811A SD card was erroneously reformatted prior to saving the video recordings; all footage was reviewed prior to the formatting error. Surveyor 2 (22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023) did not use a camera.

The calls of four bat species are notoriously difficult to record: the long-eared bat (*Plecotus spp.*) and the barbastelle bat (*Barbastella barbastellus*) have a quiet echolocation call, and the horseshoe bats (*Rhinolophus hipposideros* & *R. ferrumequinum*) have highly directional calls. The long-eared, barbastelle and horseshoe species can be easily missed during bat detector surveys. We presume all *Plecotus spp.* recordings are those of brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*) because Cornwall is outside the known range of the grey long-eared bat (*Plecotus austriacus*).



# 4.0 Bat Survey Results

### 4.1 Site Description and Habitat Assessment

Bottom Annexe is located in Old Grimsby, on the north-east coast of Tresco, Isles of Scilly *c.* 5km north of Hugh Town on St Mary's and *c.* 3.5km west of Higher Town on St Martin's, *c.* 48 km west of the mainland at Land's End.

The Isles of Scilly Complex Special Area of Conservation (SAC) lies *c.* 171m east of Bottom Annexe at its closest point on the shoreline. The Castle Down (Tresco) Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies *c.* 370m west of Bottom Annexe and the Pentle Bay, Merrick and Round Islands SSSI lies *c.* 473m south-east of Bottom Annexe.

The Isles of Scilly Complex SAC has been designated for its pristine marine environment and diverse fauna. Rocky reefs in Scilly stretch from the intertidal to deep circalittoral reefs and are recognised for the diversity of species they support. The Castle Down SSSI has been designated for its maritime heathland and Merrick and Round Islands SSSI has been recognised for its transition from dunes to lichen-rich heathland and uninhabited islands important for breeding seabirds.

The Isles of Scilly are unique in their importance for nature conservation. Due to the archipelago's southerly location, coastal influences and range of exposures, species assemblages here are different from the mainland UK. A range of warmer water species are noticeably more prevalent on Scilly.

The wider area comprises coastal heathland, beaches and low cliffs, open sea and the mature trees of the subtropical garden at Abbey Garden. Small fields and hedges, and mainly period properties with small gardens make up the rest of the surrounding habitat on Tresco.

In combination, these features provide potentially high-quality foraging and roosting habitat for bats.

## 4.2 Visual Assessment Summary

The visual assessment of the building was undertaken on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

#### <u>Exterior</u>

Bottom Annexe is a single storey building of rendered concrete block wall construction, with slate effect roof tiles and concrete ridge tiles (Figure 4: east elevation, Figure 5: west elevation, Figure 6: north elevation, Figure 7: south elevation). The roof is pitched with one flue and two vents on the west elevation. Three roof slates were identified on the west elevation as being slightly raised which may provide access for bats into the interior of the roof. Timber fascia boards are present all around the building with some small gaps on the west elevation. The gable end of the north elevation has a fascia board at the top of the wall of the gable end. There are very small gaps behind this fascia board on the east elevation appears to be completely tight and the roof structure appears tight in the most part with no obvious access points or gaps that could be utilised by crevice dwelling bats. However, there are replacement roof slates that may provide an access point for bats on the east elevation.



#### <u>Interior</u>

Bottom Annexe has three separate roof voids that are accessible from individual roof hatches.

Roof void 1: The roof space is hot and dark with a timber roof structure lined with an impermeable plastic liner. The floor of the roof void is covered in old piles of roofing insulation. The hot water tank is housed here. This void is un-boarded, so the inspection was made from the hatch. No droppings were observed from the survey point.

Roof void 2: This roof void has an identical structure to roof void 1 and the floor of the roof void is also covered in piles of old roofing insulation. It is very hot and dark in this roof void, possibly due to the impermeable plastic roof liner. This void is un-boarded, so the inspection was made from the hatch. No droppings were observed from the survey point.

Roof void 3: This section of roof void has the same timber structure as roof voids 1 and 2 but has been lined with bitumen roofing felt (Figure 8). This roof void is much cooler than voids 1 and 2. The floor of the void also has piles of old roofing insulation and was un-boarded, so the inspection was made from the hatch. Several apparent bat droppings *c.* 3 droppings were identified close to the hatch entrance (Figure 9).

As droppings were identified during the survey and the building supports a number of features that could support roosting bats, Bottom Annexe was assessed as being of **`moderate suitability'** for supporting roosting bats.



Figure 4: View of the east elevation of Bottom Annexe





Figure 5: View of the west elevation of Bottom Annexe



Figure 6: View of the north elevation of Bottom Annexe





Figure 7: View of the south elevation of Bottom Annexe



Figure 8: Interior of roof void 3





Figure 9: Droppings on roofing insulation of roof void 3

## 4.3 Emergence Survey

During the first emergence survey on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023, one common pipistrelle bat was recorded emerging from the beneath the ridge tile at the gable end on the south elevation.

During the second emergence survey on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023, one common pipistrelle bat was recorded emerging from beneath the ridge tile at the gable end on the south elevation.



Figure 10: South elevation of Bottom Annexe. The red arrow indicates the emergence location of the single common pipistrelle bat during both surveys (18<sup>th</sup> May and 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023)



# 4.4 DNA Analysis

DNA analysis of a sample of droppings collected from Bottom Annexe to determine species was described as lesser white toothed shrew (*Crocidura suaveolens*). The lesser white toothed shrew is primarily insectivorous, the same as bats, and their droppings can be mistaken for bat droppings as they are similar in appearance and crumble when touched due to the presence of insect remains.

# 4.5 Bat Species Evaluation

The survey results show that Bottom Annexe supports a day roost used by an individual common pipistrelle bat. The roost site appears to be beneath the ridge tile on the gable end of the south elevation.

<u>The common pipistrelle bat</u>: is a crevice dwelling bat species that typically roosts between slates/ tiles and the roofing felt, or beneath fascia boards/ soffits. The common pipistrelle bat is common and widespread throughout the UK, and evidence indicates that the UK population has increased in recent years (BCT, 2023). Common pipistrelle is also considered common and widespread in Cornwall.

The day roost within Bottom Annexe supports an individual non-breeding common pipistrelle bat. This roost is considered to be of **low conservation significance** for this bat species.

Following the framework described by Wray *et al* (2010), as outlined in Section 3.3 above (Tables 1-2), the rarity of the bat species recorded on-site (common pipistrelle) is 'common.' The corresponding value for a day roost/ feeding perch of a small number of a common bat species is 'District, local or parish' level. Bottom Annexe is considered to be of **Local** importance for roosting bats.



# 5.0 Impacts and Mitigation Recommendations

### 5.1 Evaluation of Development Proposals and Impacts

The further survey work has shown that Bottom Annexe supports a common pipistrelle bat day roost (likely one individual).

The client proposes to demolish the existing building and construct new accommodation in its place. In the absence of mitigation, the proposals have the potential to disturb, injure or kill bats and to result in the loss and disturbance of a common pipistrelle bat day roost. In the long term, works are likely to result in the loss of the identified roost. Loss can be mitigated by reinstating new roosting features within the replacement building post-development. The impact of this on the local bat populations is detailed below:

- Common pipistrelle bat day roost comprising likely 1 individual (low impact).

## 5.2 Mitigation

To avoid, mitigate and compensate for potential impacts on roosting bats, an outline of the recommended mitigation is provided below (to be agreed with the client). The proposals have potential to have a significant impact on roosting bats; a European Protected Species (EPS) licence or a Bat Mitigation Class licence (CL21) must be obtained from Natural England before works can lawfully commence. The appropriate licence will set out the mitigation required to maintain the favourable conservation status (FCS) of the bat species using Bottom Annexe.

Outline of recommended mitigation:

- Works will not commence until an appropriate licence has been obtained from Natural England.
- The licence cannot be applied for until planning consent is in place. If the works will commence later than May 2024, then the licence must be informed by at least one additional bat emergence survey, to be undertaken in the most recent bat survey season (May-September). This is a condition of the licence application and is not a planning requirement. The current level of survey effort (two bat emergence surveys and DNA analysis of bat droppings less than 18 months old) is sufficient to inform a planning application. No further survey effort is required to inform the planning application.
- Works will be scheduled for a time of year when bats are least likely to be impacted.
- Works with potential to impact bats will be carried out under an ecological watching brief. A licensed bat ecologist will oversee demolition works to the roof/ fascias/ wall tops and the dismantling of the roof. Any common pipistrelle bats uncovered will be relocated to a bat box installed within a nearby structure. NB: the bat box (Schwegler 2F or comparable product) will be installed in advance of works commencing and in a location that will not be disturbed as a result of building works. See <u>https://www.nhbs.com/</u> for product specification.
- The common pipistrelle bat day roost located on the south elevation of Bottom Annexe will be lost during the demolition works. Loss of the common pipistrelle bat day roost will be compensated by either installing a bat access (i.e., bat access slate/ tile over bitumen type 1F) to provide bat access to the space between the bitumen membrane and roof tiles, by installing a single raised ridge tile with 50mm x 25mm gap over bitumen type 1F; by installing a timber fascia board with 20 x 50mm gap beneath providing bat access to the



wall top; or by installing a bat box on the exterior of the building. The location/ aspect of the alternative bat roost features will replicate those lost as closely as possible.

- If bats will be allowed to access the roof space of the proposed replacement building, then bitumen type 1F roofing felt must be used to line the replacement roof; this is because modern synthetic membranes are harmful to bats and their use will not be permitted by Natural England.
- No exterior lighting will be installed close to the temporary or permanent bat roost features or new access points.
- Building contractors will be briefed prior to commencement of site works. Contractors will be notified about the presence of bats within the building and informed that if a bat/s is/are uncovered during works, then work must stop immediately (as soon as it is safe to do so) and advice sought from the licensed bat ecologist/s (Plan for Ecology Ltd, 01326 218839).



# 6.0 References

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