PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT (PRA)

HANJAGUE,
ROCKY HILL, ST MARY'S, ISLES OF SCILLY

Client: *Melanie King*
Our reference: *25-6-3*
Planning reference: *Produced in advance of submission*
Report date: *21st July 2025*
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IOS Ecology

Executive Summary

Bats – Results and Findings
The preliminary roost assessment (PRA) survey concluded that there was **negligible bat roosting potential** in relation to the structures to be impacted by the proposed works. This judgement was reached in accordance with the survey methodologies and evaluation criteria outlined in the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 4th edition.[1]
Bats – Further Survey Requirements
No further surveys are recommended – the PRA conclusion does not require further information with regards to bats in order to inform a planning application.
Bats – Recommendations
Standard good practice and vigilance should be observed by the contractors undertaking the works in acknowledgement that bats are transient in their use of roosting opportunities and may explore potential locations, especially if the condition of structural features were to change. A methodology is provided in Appendix 1.

Nesting Birds – Results and Findings
No obvious nesting habitat for breeding birds was identified associated with the property to be impacted by the proposed works, though there is potential for individual bird species to find isolated opportunities if the structural condition of the property were to change or in adjacent vegetation.
Nesting Birds - Recommendations
Contractors undertaking the works should be vigilant to the potential presence of nesting birds if conditions or opportunities change between the time of the survey and the commencement of works; or when there is a risk of disturbing adjacent vegetation.

[1] Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London

PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT (PRA)

Planning Authority:	**Location:**	**Planning Application ref:**
Isles of Scilly	SV 91449 11117	Report produced in support of application

Planning application address:

Hanjague, Rocky Hill, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly

Proposed development:

The proposals for the property were outlined by the client upon instruction of the survey and should correspond with the details included in the Planning Application submitted alongside this report. These involve:

- The construction of an extension connected with the flat-roof component of the existing structure and occupying the existing footprint of the detached outbuilding.

Building references:

The building is a bungalow with a flat-roof extension and detached outbuilding identified in the plans provided in Appendix 2.

Name and licence number of bat-workers carrying out survey:

James Faulconbridge (2015-12724-CLS-CLS)

Preliminary Roost Assessment date:

The visual inspection was undertaken on 13th July 2025 in accordance with relevant Best Practice methodology[2].

Local and Landscape Setting:

The property is situated within a small settlement of dwellings and agricultural buildings in Rocky Hill which lies to the north-east of Hugh Town in St Mary's, Isles of Scilly.

The property is set within a mature garden with lawns, herbaceous borders and ancillary buildings. The land use to the east comprises a farmyard with agricultural land to the north, south and west.

The wider land use to the north is dominated by small fields within high windbreak hedgerows which are under active cultivation for flower farming. The land to the south is similarly agricultural with a number of pasture fields in amongst the bulb fields. There are small copses and areas of semi-mature elm trees to the east of the property.

The desk study did not reveal any records of bats recorded roosting within the building historically and there are no recorded bat roosts within 500m of the property.

Five species of bat have been recorded on St Mary's. The species conclusively identified were common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*). Leisler's bat (*Nyctalus leisleri*) and Nathusius' pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*) records were also returned though these species are not known to be resident on the island and are likely associated with vagrant or migratory individuals.

[2] Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London

Building Description(s):

The following description will provide an overview of the construction and structural condition of the property with a focus on features which, by their design or condition, could provide suitable roosting opportunities for bats.

Bungalow

The existing hipped-roof bungalow was assessed internally and externally as part of the PRA survey. No evidence of bats was identified and, though there are discrete opportunities where bats may find roosting features, their physical separation from the proposed works area would preclude any risk of impact arising from the proposed extension.

For the purposes of clarity and brevity therefore, no further description of the bungalow structure is required for the purposes of the current proposals.

Flat-Roof Extension

The single-storey flat-roof extension is block built with a combination of painted blockwork and rendered sections externally. Both pointing and render are in good condition throughout with no gaps or cracks noted.

The window and door frames are well sealed in their apertures with no gaps, cracks or cavities associated.

The fascia or soffit around the structure is well-fitted and in good condition.

The fibreglass roof covering overhangs the wall edge but is separated by a batten width or more – this is too wide to be suitable for use by roosting bats on a routine basis due to the broad dimensions of this space.

The flat-roof component is connected with the main bungalow with flashing – this junction lies just beneath the fascia on the eaves of the bungalow and appears to be tightly fitted.

There are no internal voids within the flat-roof structure.

Outbuilding

The detached outbuilding is a single-storey flat-roof structure constructed of breeze blocks which are well-pointed.

The window and door frames are well sealed in their apertures with no gaps, cracks or cavities associated.

There is a fascia running around the edge of the structure – this is well fitted and any minor gaps have dense cobwebs indicating long-term lack of disturbance.

The felted roof covering overhangs the wall edge but is separated by a batten width or more – this is too wide to be suitable for use by roosting bats on a routine basis due to the broad dimensions of this space.

Internally, the outbuilding has been stripped back to the battens. Whilst discreet internal roosting opportunities may be present associated with the wall plate, the degree to which the exterior is sealed following a comprehensive inspection would preclude further consideration of this potential.

Survey Limitations

No other significant constraints on access or inspection were noted.

Assessment of Potential for use by Roosting Bats

No evidence of current or historic use by bats was identified during the survey and an overall **negligible potential** was determined.

Recommendations and Justification (Bats):

No further surveys are recommended – the conclusion of **negligible potential** related to the structures to be impacted does not require any further information with regards to bats in order to inform a planning application.

Standard good practice and vigilance must be observed by the contractors undertaking the works in acknowledgement that bats are transient in their use of roosting opportunities and may explore potential locations.

The proposals would not affect any confirmed roosts, commuting routes or foraging habitat – therefore no habitat creation is required with regards to bats.

It is recommended that a bat box could be installed on the northern aspect of the new extension to provide an enhancement in the availability of roosting habitat on the islands. This should be positioned close to the apex, to avoid risk of predation by cats, and securely attached with due regard to the weather conditions and wind exposure experienced in this location during the winter months. A Kent Bat Box or similar design would be suitable for this location – the box selected should be suitable for use by common pipistrelle, the species most likely to use a roost in this location.

Assessment of Potential for use by Nesting Birds

The relevant aspects of the property do not appear to offer suitable nesting habitat for breeding birds due to the tightly sealed nature of the existing structure.

There is potential for breeding birds to find suitable nesting habitat in adjacent vegetation which could be disturbed during construction, for example through erection of scaffolding or contractor presence.

Recommendations and Justification (Birds):

In order to ensure legislative compliance, the contractors undertaking the works must ensure that nesting birds are not disturbed in accordance with requirements under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981).

Timing of Works

The proposed works could be undertaken outside of the breeding season which runs from March – September inclusive, where practicable. This would provide the most robust means of avoiding risk of impact to nesting birds associated with adjacent vegetation.

Pre-commencement Inspection

If the recommended timing of works is not possible, then contractors should visually inspect the vegetation before it is affected by the works, in order to confirm that no nests are present. In the event that a bird nest is present, it must be left undisturbed until chicks have fledged the nest, at which point works can proceed.

Care must also be taken to ensure that the works do not cause disturbance or damage to proximate nesting areas through indirect impacts including vibration, noise or contractor presence.

Enhancement Opportunities

The proposals are not identified as impacting on any bird nesting habitat in the long term, with any impacts restricted to temporary disturbance of adjacent features for the duration of works.

If the applicant wishes to provide enhancement for nesting birds, bird nest boxes could be installed on the new extension, existing buildings or within shrubs/trees within the garden. The mature garden would offer a high chance of occupation by a range of common birds species. Nest boxes could include those suitable for hole-dwelling species such as blue tits, or open-fronted boxes for species such as blackbird and robin.

Boxes should be mounted on a wall or tree if possible, at a height of at least 3m above the ground with an entrance clear of vegetation/other features which may put them at risk of predation from cats.

Boxes can be sourced online, or can be constructed on site using methodology and specifications provided by the RSPB.

Survey Validity and Update

The data supporting this PRA are considered to provide an appropriate baseline for a planning application submitted within 12 months from the date of survey.

It is recommended that if there are significant changes in building condition, or if a Planning Application is not submitted by July 2026, then an updated walkover survey should be undertaken in order to identify any changes in the ecological assessment of the site and update/amend the assessment accordingly.

APPENDIX 1
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PRECAUTIONARY METHOD STATEMENT WITH REGARDS TO BATS

The purpose of this Method Statement is to ensure that proposed works can proceed where presence of bats has been determined to be unlikely, but a precautionary approach is still advisable. It has been determined that direct harm to roosting bats during the proposed works would be highly unlikely.

Contractors should, however, be aware of **their own legal responsibility with respect to bats**:

Relevant Legislation regarding Bats

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, or the 'Habitat Regulations 2017', transposes European Directives into English and Welsh legislation. Under these regulations, bats are classed as a European Protected Species and it is, therefore, an offence to:

- *Deliberately kill, injure or capture bats;*
- *Deliberately damage or destroy bat roosts.*

A bat roost is commonly defined as being any structure or place that is used as a breeding site or resting place, and since it may be in use only occasionally or at specific times of year, a roost retains such a designation even if bats are not present.

Bats are also protected from disturbance under Regulation 43. Disturbance of bats includes in particular any disturbance which is likely:

(a) To impair their ability -

- *to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or*
- *in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or*

(b) To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

Bats also have limited protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000 (as amended). It is, therefore, an offence to:

- *Intentionally or recklessly destroy, damage or obstruct any structure or place which a bat uses for shelter or protection.*
- *Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats whilst occupying any structure or place used for shelter or protection.*

Contractors should be aware of **the process to follow in the highly unlikely event of finding bats** or evidence indicating that bats are likely to be present:

If bats are identified, works should cease and the named ecologist contacted immediately for advice. If the bat is in a safe situation, or a situation which can be made safe, they should remain undisturbed. Only if the bat is in immediate risk of harm can the bat be moved with care and using a gloved hand. This is a last resort and should only be undertaken for humane reasons if the bat is at immediate risk of harm **and** if the ecologist cannot be contacted for advice.

APPENDIX 2
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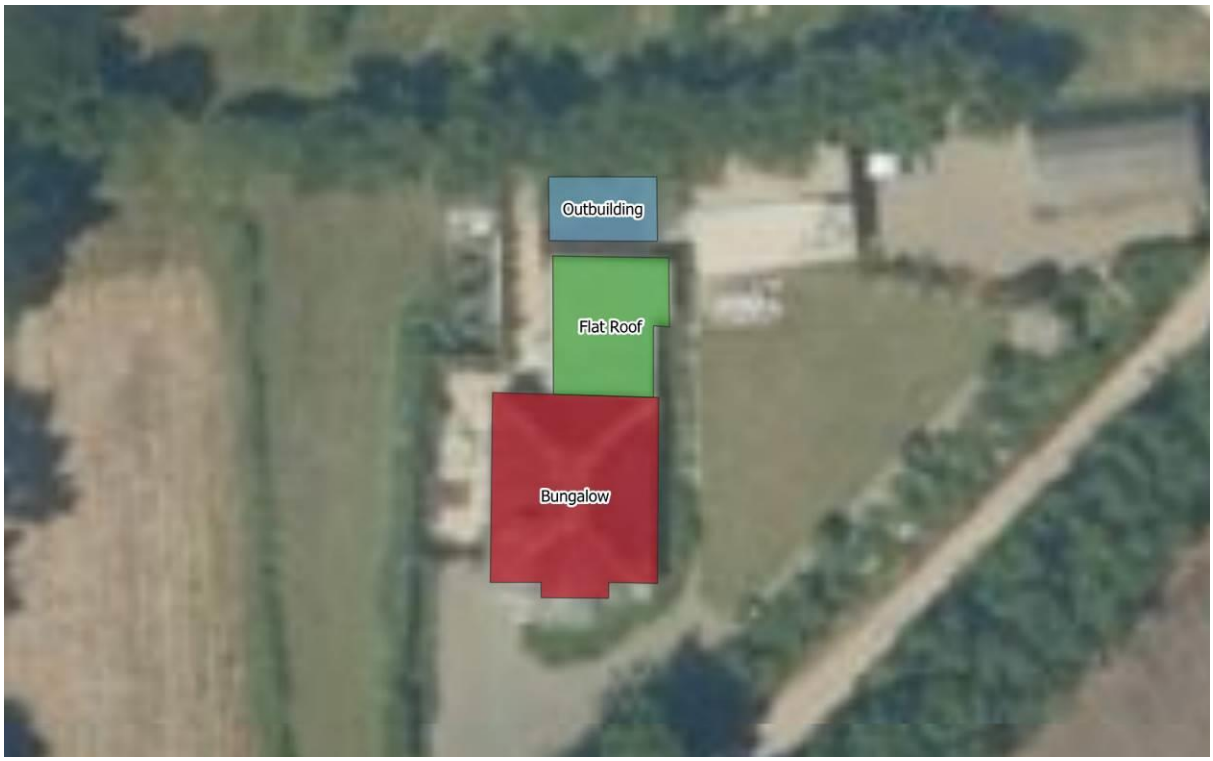
LOCATION PLAN AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Map 01 – Illustrating location of property within the local environs (red circle). Reproduced in accordance with Google's Fair Use Policy.



Map 02 – Showing the distinct components of the property including the dormer bungalow; the flat-roof extension; and the outbuilding.

Photograph 1: Showing the flat-roof extension tied in with the bungalow on the LHS

Photograph 2: Showing an example of the well-fitted window frames and the wall finish.

Photograph 3: Showing the location where the flat-roof extension on the LHS abuts the detached outbuilding on the RHS.

Photograph 4: Showing an example of the well-sealed fascia

Photograph 5: Showing the detached outbuilding on the RHS

Photograph 6: Showing the interior of the outbuilding.