PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT (PRA)

ATLANTIC VIEW,
HIGH LANE, ST MARY'S, ISLES OF SCILLY

Client: *Truan Hicks*

Our reference: *25-6-1*

Planning reference: *Report produced in advance of submission*

Report date: *21st June 2025*

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Executive Summary

Bats – Results and Findings
The preliminary roost assessment (PRA) survey of Atlantic View concluded that the property has **Low Potential** for use by roosting bats.
Bats – Recommendations (Main Dwelling)
The following recommendation is provided: • **One further Presence/Absence Survey (PAS)** should be undertaken to characterise and assess the potential use by bats in order to meet the standard of survey required by Best Practice Guidance to support a planning application.

Nesting Birds – Results and Findings
A historic nest was identified within the roof space of the property and there are opportunities which may be suitable for some species such as house sparrow in features associated with the soffits and eaves of the roof space.
Nesting Birds - Recommendations
Works should take account of the potential for species such as sparrow to make use of nesting opportunities during the breeding season. Recommendations regarding appropriate working methodologies are provided to ensure this. It is recommended that nest boxes for common bird species could be erected on the building or within the garden to mitigate for the loss of nesting opportunities associated with the repair and renovation of the soffits.

Other Ecological Receptors
No further ecological impacts relevant to planning are identified.

Report Status
As the requirement for a further PAS survey is identified in accordance with the Best Practice Guidance, this report **does not provide a comprehensive baseline** until this survey has been completed and the results used to conclude Likely Absence or inform appropriate mitigation measures if a roost is confirmed.

PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT (PRA)

Planning Authority:	**Location:**	**Planning Application ref:**
Isles of Scilly	SV 91676 11750	Report produced in advance of application

Planning application address:

Atlantic View, High Lane, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly.

Proposed development:

The proposed works involve comprehensive renovation works to the existing property.

For the purposes of this assessment regarding bats, it is assumed that all aspects of the property capable of supporting roosting bats may be directly or indirectly impacted by the scope of works.

Building references:

The building is a single contiguous structure, though there are discrete elements which vary in age and construction. For the purposes of this report, these are designated:

- Dormer Bungalow – the original structure;
- Single-Storey Extension – an extension which ties in with the main Dormer Bungalow on its eastern aspect;
- Porch – a single-storey porch present on the front of the Dormer Bungalow;
- Conservatory – a flat roof structure on the southern aspect of the Dormer Bungalow.

These individual components of the property are identified in the map provided in Appendix 1.

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 6th June 2025 in accordance with relevant Best Practice methodology[1].

Local and Landscape Setting:

The property is part of a small settlement of dwellings with extensive gardens on High Lane. This location is central within the island of St Mary's in the Isles of Scilly.

The property is surrounded immediately by detached properties set within large gardens which are primarily managed as lawn or amenity/ornamental planting. Beyond these more managed areas, the land use is small-scale agricultural including bulb growing, flower farming and grazing pasture. The fields are of typical Scillonian character being small in size and often with large, evergreen windbreak hedges.

Within the wider landscape, there are pockets of elm-dominated woodland to the north-west associated with Content Farm, and more extensive mature tree cover within Holy Vale to the

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

east. The coastline is between 850m-1,000m away to the north, west and east.

The desk study showed that no species of bat had previously been recorded roosting on the Site or associated with properties on High Lane immediately bounding the Site.

A data search revealed information on five species of bat 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 believed to be itinerant or migratory individuals present during the summer period only.

There are ten records of roosts between 300-500m from the property – these are predominantly common pipistrelle roosts including both individual day roosts and maternity colonies associated with Holy Vale and agricultural properties to the east.

A brown long-eared roost is confirmed through DNA analysis within Holy Vale approximately 300m to the east.

Building Description

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.

See 'Building References' above along with Map 02 in Appendix 1 to identify the structural elements under discussion below.

Dormer Bungalow

The Dormer Bungalow is rendered externally with a cross-gable pitched roof and a single dormer window on the southern aspect.

The rendering is in good condition throughout the property with no gaps, cracks or other features which might offer roosting opportunities for bats.

Windows and doors are a mixture of uPVC and timber – frames are well fitted within their apertures. There are occasional gaps beneath sills but these were fully inspected at the time of survey and, whilst potentially capable of supporting individual bats on a transient or opportunistic basis, were found to be cobwebbed and showing no sign of recent or historic use.

There are timber soffits around the roofline including both eaves and gables – these are largely in good condition but occasional gaps were noted including on the northern and eastern aspects. These features could provide access to roosting opportunities associated with the soffit itself, or with the wall plate of the main building.

The roof covering comprises slate-imitation asbestos tiles with ridge tiles. There is a single instance of missing pointing beneath a ridge tile on the northern aspect, but the tiles are otherwise well-fitted and in good condition with no notable access points for bats noted. Guttering attached to the soffits would preclude direct fly-in access to any potential gaps beneath tiles at the eaves.

The dormer window on the southern aspect has hanging tiles of the same material; these appear to be well-fitted.

Lead flashing lines the valley between the two pitches of the roof as well as the junction with the single-storey extension to the east. This appears well-fitted.

There are two chimneys present within the roof structure – these are rendered and in good condition with sealed flaunching to the capped pots. A minor element of lifted flashing appears to be present on the western gable but this appears to be superficial.

Internally, there are voids at the apex and at the eaves of the roof. The roof is lined with tar paper with a boarded floor and no insulation. There are occasional tears in the tar paper which would allow access to the void from beneath the tiles. There are exposed timber trusses which were tightly fitted with no gaps between timbers. Daylight visible at the eaves indicates that there is potential for bats or birds to access these voids in principle. Evidence of rodents was noted but no evidence of bats was recorded in this void.

Single-storey Extension

The extension on the eastern aspect of the Dormer Bungalow uses the same materials and overall aesthetic including the asbestos tiles, timber soffits and rendered walls. Internally the roof structure is of a more recent and modern material including insulation between the joists and polyethylene underfelting. Rodent droppings – including white-toothed shrew – were again identified within the loft space. Light is visible at the eaves, and a historic bird's nest was identified in one location which corresponds with a damage feature on the external soffit where access is permitted.

The soffits on the southern and western aspects of this property have rot or damage features which could provide access to roosting opportunities associated with the soffit itself, or with the wall plate. Slight gaps also occur on the eastern aspect where soffit boards have been replaced.

There is a single instance of missing pointing on a ridge tile on the western aspect but this appears to be superficial.

Conservatory

The conservatory is a flat-roof structure which is constructed against the southern aspect of the Dormer Bungalow. This structure has large glazed windows set within rendered walls with a flat roof. The roof covering is in good condition with no gaps noted. Soffits appear to be well-sealed on this component. This structure does not otherwise appear to offer any roosting opportunities for bats.

Porch

The porch on the front of the property is a flat-roof structure with the roof covering in good condition. Timber soffits are well-sealed and the door frame is sealed in its aperture. A minor gap occurs in the lead flashing which links this structure to the Dormer Bungalow.

Summary

The following potential roosting features are identified associated with property:

- Gaps within soffits on the Dormer Bungalow and the Single Storey Extension which could provide access to roosting opportunities within the soffit voids or associated with the main structure of the building e.g. the wall plate;
- Minor gaps in pointing on the ridge of the Dormer Bungalow and the Single Storey Extension;
- Lifted flashing around the porch which could potentially provide a roosting opportunity for individual bats.

Survey Limitations

The following limitations on survey were noted:

- There are locations within the building where evidence of bats, if present, would not have been apparent from a PRA survey, such as roosts associated with the wall plate; or beneath roof tiles.

These limitations and constraints are taken into account when concluding the assessments of

building potential and are addressed by the recommendations for further surveys.

Assessment of Potential for use by Roosting Bats

The following roosting potential assessments[2] are therefore determined:

- The building has **Low Potential** to support roosting bats.

This takes account of the potential roosting features present; and the constraints to survey noted in the above section as well as the location of the property within a sparsely populated area with limited other buildings in the centre of St Mary's.

Recommendations and Justification:

In accordance with the criteria outlined in the Best Practice Guidance[3], the following surveys would be required to provide an appropriate evidence-base to support a Planning Application:

- 1x Presence/Absence Surveys (PAS).

The purpose of the PAS technique is to allow the building to be watched at dusk to observe bats emerging from concealed roosting locations. This uses the predictable emergence behaviour of bats to allow their presence to be detected in roosting locations which cannot be directly visually inspected.

The PAS surveys should be led by Licenced Bat Worker(s) between mid-May and mid-September. Three surveyors and three Night Vision Assistance (NVA) cameras would be required to cover the relevant features and allow the results of the surveys to be reviewed and confirmed in accordance with the Best Practice Guidance.

The results of the survey would be used to conclude Likely Absence if the results were negative; or to inform the development of mitigation or Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) if a roost is confirmed.

Assessment of Potential for use by Nesting Birds

A single historic nest was identified in the roof of the Single-Storey Extension. Damage features associated with the soffits and other gaps at the eaves of the property may also allow species such as house sparrow to find nesting opportunities within the building.

Recommendations and Justification (Nesting Birds):

Care should be taken to ensure that no birds are nesting prior to works taking place.

Timing of Works

Works affecting the property should 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 impacts to nesting birds.

Pre-commencement Inspection

If the recommended timing of works is not possible, then contractors should visually inspect the work area internally and externally before they are affected by the works, in order to confirm that no nests are present. In the event that a bird's 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

[2] Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition) – Table 4.1. The Bat Conservation Trust, London

[3] Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition) – Tables 7.1 and 7.2. The Bat Conservation Trust, London

proximate nesting areas including the garden and perimeter hedges through indirect impacts including vibration, noise or contractor presence.

Enhancement Opportunities

It is recommended that bird boxes are installed to offer nesting habitat for common garden bird species. This would compensate for the removal of existing features which are associated with damage or structural deterioration of the soffits and would therefore be removed as part of the renovation works proposed.

House sparrows nest communally and nest boxes could accommodate this, either through the installation of a single purpose-built nest box comprising several individual chambers with separate entrances, or the installation of 3+ nest boxes in close proximity. Nest boxes suitable for hole-dwelling species such as blue tits, or open-fronted boxes for species such as blackbird and robin also have a high likelihood of occupation.

Boxes should be mounted on a wall or mature trunk 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:

Sparrows: https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/give-nature-a-home-in-your-garden/garden-activities/createasparrowstreet/

Other Species: https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-families/family-wild-challenge/activities/build-a-birdbox/

APPENDIX 1
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LOCATION PLAN AND PHOTOGRAPHS

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

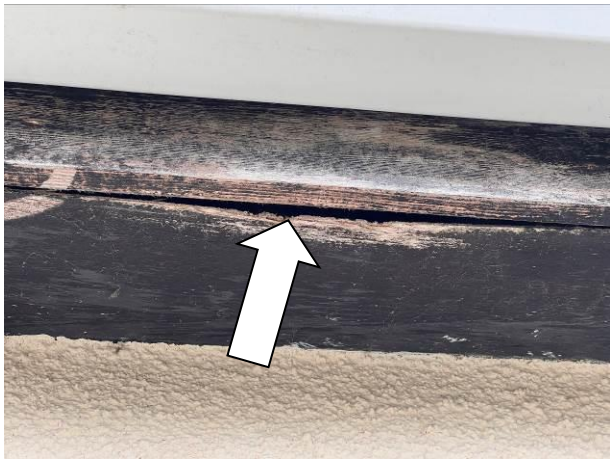
Map 02 – Showing the various structural components of the property as described in this report.

Photograph 1: Showing the view from the north-eastern corner of the property with the dormer bungalow on the RHS and the Single Storey Extension on the RHS with the Porch in between.

Photograph 2: Showing the view of the property from the south-western corner with the Conservatory visible on the LHS with the Dormer Bungalow behind. The Single Storey Extension is visible on the RHS.

Photograph 3: Showing an example of the lifted flashing offering a potential roosting opportunity.

Photograph 4: Showing an example of a structural gap between the soffits on the western gable.



Photograph 5: Showing a damaged portion of the soffit on the Single Storey Extension with indications of historic access by animals or birds.

Photograph 6: Showing an example of a gap beneath a sill which was inspected fully.

Photograph 7: Showing the interior of the eaves storage within the Dormer Bungalow.

Photograph 8: Showing the interior of the loft space at the apex of the Dormer Bungalow.

Photograph 9: Showing the interior of the more recently constructed Single Storey Extension loft space.