METHOD STATEMENT IN RESPECT OF COMMON PIPISTRELLE, *PIPISTRELLUS PIPISTRELLUS* BATS, AT THE FORMER PRIMARY SCHOOL, GROVE STREET, BARNSLEY, SOUTH YORKSHIRE

The following methodology has been guided by the bat workers manual 2004 and the bat mitigation guidelines 2004/2012. The statement is compiled by Helen Holford who is suitably qualified in bat survey and mitigation proposals.

Summary of the proposed mitigation strategy

This document relates to the former Primary School, Grove Street, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S71 1EU, with a central grid reference of SE35247 06319 which is confirmed as a bat roost for one species.

1. The building is planned to be demolished to allow development of 33 dwellings on the site.

2. Internal and external building inspections were conducted during late August and September 2014 by Natasha Estrada and Helen Holford of Estrada Ecology who are experienced in undertaking inspection surveys for bats. No field sign evidence of bats was found.

3. Emergence surveys were conducted at the site September 2014 to inform how bats utilise the site and to establish potential bat-entry and exit points.

4. Activity survey data indicate the former primary school on Grove Street, Barnsley, South Yorkshire is used Common Pipistrelle bats as a transitional/day roost.

5. The demolition of the property requires a suitable mitigation strategy in respect of bats.

6. Mitigation will include the provision of permanent roosting provision with the redevelopment site and continuous provision throughout the duration of the works.

7. Disturbance will be minimised by pre-works surveys and the timings of works.

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8. Exclusion of access and egress points prior to their destruction to facilitate demolition will be conducted under EPS licence (subject to planning and a licence being granted).

9. All works on the roof in the affected area will be supervised by a suitably qualified ecologist.

10. Works on the areas where bat activity were found will be conducted outside the bat activity season.

1.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Pre and mid activity impacts

Pre-works surveys to ensure no bats are in situ will ensure no measurable disturbance as will the timings of the works. All works will be conducted under EPS licence.

Continuous roosting provision will be provided throughout the duration of the works via the use of bat boxes situated within 500 metres of the site.

Long term impacts

On site mitigation will encompass the provision of new roosting opportunities through installation of bat access tiles and integrated boxes within the redevelopment of the site.

Works to exclude then destroy access points will be conducted under EPS licence and timed to commence outside the bat activity period.

Summary of impacts in the wider context

No impacts are predicted on foraging or commuting lines. Optimum foraging and commuting lines were recorded outside the site boundary.

The roost sites will not be subject to strong artificial light sources and no obstruction by vegetation will occur.

The proposed works will have no impact on migration of the species to and from the site. Activity surveys indicate favoured foraging grounds are to the north east beyond the site boundary.

Consultation suggests that Common pipistrelle; *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* bat are widespread in the local / regional area but under recorded.

Bat surveys

On the eastern aspect of the building a small number of Common pipistrelle bats were recorded emerging from gaps within or missing slate tiles from two locations. The western aspect had one location where Common pipistrelle bats were seen to emerge from gaps within slate tiles.

Location, ownership

The site is under the ownership of the applicant.

2.0 Methods

WORKS TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE ECOLOGIST OR SUITABLY EXPERIENCED PERSON

Surveys to ensure bats are absent from all areas of the roof space will be conducted immediately pre-works by suitably licensed bat ecologists.

A licensed bat ecologist will be present on site to supervise the installation of exclusion devices and all works involving roof stripping in the locations where bat were observed emerging and areas with features likely to be used by bats.

A suitably qualified bat ecologist will be on site to supervise the installation of bat access tiles and ensure work is completed in line with this method statement.

2.0 MITIGATION TYPE: Provision for Common Pipistrelle

Common pipistrelle, *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* bat

Natural England's Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Mitchell-Jones, 2004) state that the mitigation or compensation requirement for feeding perches, individual bats and small numbers of bats of common species is for '*Flexibility over provision of bat boxes, access to new buildings*

etc. No conditions about timing or monitoring.'

Two bat tubes will be incorporated on the western aspect of the development in two locations at the apex of the gable ends see Figure1 for locations.

A bat access tile set will be installed on southern and northern aspects of the development properties see Figure 2 for locations.

Such tiles allow bats access but restrict them to the areas between the ridge tiles and under felting. The large double camber provides optimum natural air flow whilst preventing extreme fluctuations in temperature. This is deemed proportionate mitigation for Common pipistrelle, *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* bat based on the survey result.

Timings: Works will be conducted outside the bat activity season 1st October – 30th April. Provision will be in situ in the roof for returning bats in line with the Bat Mitigation Guidelines.

Mechanisms for ensuring delivery: Pre-works surveys to ensure no bats in situ. Supervision of bat tile installation to ensure like for like provision and environmental conditions are retained. Supervising ecologist to ensure provision is in situ by the 30th April.

Figure 1: Location of proposed bat tubes on the western aspect of the buildings is highlighted in green



Figure 2: Proposed enclosed bat box from the ibstock company (or similar)



www.**ibstock**.com

This box is deisgned specifically for the pipistrelle bat,with several roosting zones within the box itself containing the bats within the box . It is fully integrated and requires no ongoing maintenance.

Figure 3: Location of proposed bat tubes is highlighted in green



Figure 4: Proposed bat access tile units from the Tudor roof tile company (or similar) and location.



www.tudorrooftiles.co.uk

Post works monitoring: No post monitoring of bat access tiles is required as the site is of low conservation status as determined by Natural England's Bat Mitigation Guidelines 2004.

3.0 MITIGATION TYPE: Works to be conducted under EPS mitigation licence

Common Pipistrelle bat

Capture and Exclusion

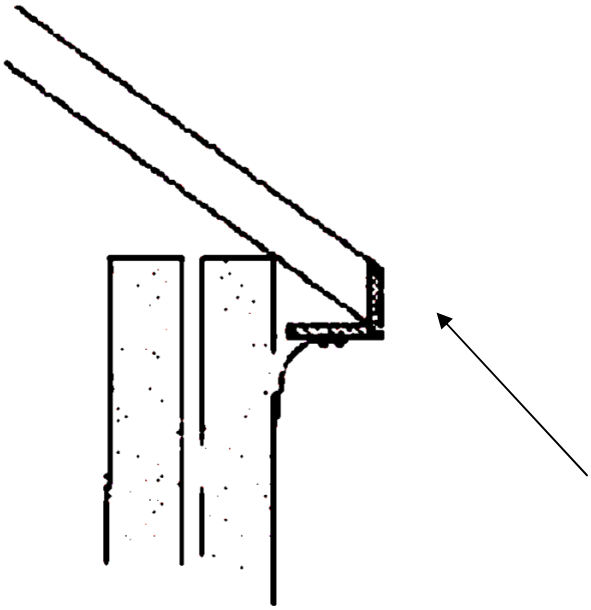
Works to initially exclude bats from existing roosts and subsequently destroy existing bat roosts will be conducted under European Protected Species mitigation licence (subject to planning and subsequent licence being granted).

Bats will be excluded from all gaps and other potentially suitable crevices of by the use of one way exclusion devices.

Exclusion techniques will involve those as outlined on pages 88-90 of the Bat workers Manual (2004) if appropriate (*Figure 1, below*), or using lengths of 32mm drainage pipe inserted into cavities at an angle thus allowing bats to escape, but not return.

Exclusion devices will remain in place for five consecutive nights of good weather for bats (>8 °C, no rain and no strong winds). Following this, and providing bats are not present, the features will be dismantled by hand or permanently sealed to prevent bats accessing them or any other part of the eaves prior to demolition works commencing. This will ensure no bats are present in the roost the time of demolition.

Figure 5. *Exclusion method to be employed (Bat Mitigation Guidelines, 2004)*



A length of acetate sheet or heavy duty

polythene is attached to the soffit / tiles

allowing bats to push past, but not re-enter

once they have left the roost

The slates will be excluded as outlined above and dismantled by hand under the supervision of a licensed bat ecologist. If the slates can be removed by hand to destroy the roost, the gap at the wall top will be permanently sealed (using expanding foam or similar) to prevent bats accessing the building at the eaves.

If it is not possible to remove the soffits by hand, they will be sealed and filled with expanding foam to permanently exclude bats and to destroy the roost.

The integrity of the expanding foam will be inspected on a monthly basis to ensure bats cannot access the eaves area between the time of exclusion and the time of demolition.

Prior to demolition, the roof covering will be removed by hand under the supervision of a licensed bat ecologist. This will ensure no bats will be left between the roof covering and lining, at wall tops or under tiles. The roof cover will be removed from the top down to ensure that if any bats are present, they will not be at risk of crush injuries.

Any other areas suitable for roosting bats will be inspected and dismantled with an ecologist present.

In order to minimise the disturbance to bats, exclusion, stripping and demolition works will be timed to outside the summer roosting season from October to April.

A pre-works bat inspection survey will be carried out of areas that can be safely inspected by a licensed bat ecologist.

Works will avoid encountering torpid bats in roof structures, by only working during periods when temperatures have not dropped below 8°C over 4 consecutive days and nights.

Exclusion and roost destruction works are programmed to commence outside the main bat activity season and are anticipated to be completed within a month

General recommendations for all bat species

No artificial lighting will be present in the vicinity of the new roost sites and no disturbance to emerging bats is predicted.

4.0 POST DEVELOPMENT SITE SAFEGUARD

Habitat management and maintenance

New roost provision

The provisions proposed for bats within the building will be supervised by a suitably qualified bat ecologist ensuring they are positioned in areas providing optimum conditions for bats and avoiding both direct and indirect artificial light sources.

Roost provision and unimpeded access will be in situ pre 1st May of the given year of works in order to maximise use by returning bats and avoid measurable disturbance.

Population monitoring

No post monitoring of bat boxes and bat access tiles is required as the site is of low conservation status as determined by Natural England's Bat Mitigation Guidelines 2004.

Mechanism for ensuring delivery

A suitably qualified bat ecologist will be commissioned to undertake works to protect bats and to supervise mitigation.

5.0 Habitat Regulations Derogation Tests

Test 1

Preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment.

Demolition is the only option the applicant can pursue due to the layout and current condition of the existing building. To retain the building in its current structural condition and location is not financially viable to the applicant. The proposed plans are to demolish the building in preparation for development of residential housing on the site. The building is likely to continue to place a financial burden on the owner if it remains empty and un-tenanted.

The site is currently vacant and whilst fencing is present around the periphery of the site vandalism of the property has been recorded.

Test 2

There is no satisfactory alternative

To adopt the "Do nothing" option would ultimately accelerate the cycle of decline of the building leading to sub optimal conditions for bats and ultimately lead to deterioration of the existing roost.

Areas of the roof show signs of disrepair with slates loose, lifted and absent. Should severe weather conditions occur these areas could be damaged and the roost destroyed.

Test 3

The action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

The proposals will permanently destroy a small Common Pipistrelle roost. The Common Pipistrelle bat is native, widespread and common, with an estimated UK population of 2.4 million individuals (Bat Conservation Trust 2010). Common Pipistrelle are an adaptable species of bat and the level of impact on the site is considered low, roosting provision will be provided for the species prior to demolition and permanent provision will be in place within the redevelopment.

The impact is considered to be low in a wider context and is not thought to contribute in any way to the reduction in abundance or distribution of any bat species or roosting habitat in a regional or national context. Therefore the favourable conservation status of the species would not be detrimentally affected. No changes to the foraging and commuting landscape for bats are predicted under current plans and it is not considered there will be any impacts for foraging bats.