

811/S(2)03

REASONABLE AVOIDANCE MEASURES IN RESPECT OF BATS

31 High Street, Wrexham LL13 8HY.

All native UK species of bat are listed on Annex II and IV of the EEC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna and Flora. This Directive is transposed into UK law through The Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended). All bats are also listed on Schedule 5 of Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and are afforded full protection under Section 9 of this Act. In brief, this legislation makes it offence to:

- deliberately kill, injure or take a bat;
- deliberately disturb a bat or bats in such a way as to be likely to impair their ability to survive, breed, or rear or nurture their young; to hibernate or migrate; or to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of that species;
- damage or destroy the breeding or resting place of a bat;
- intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a place that bats use for shelter or protection; and
- intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat whilst it is occupying a place which it uses for shelter or protection.

The building to be repaired was built in 1868 and comprises of slate roof coverings with terracotta ridges and lead box gutters behind parapets at second floor level.

Pictures of the buildings are below:



At present, the buildings offer little in the way of roosting opportunities for bats due to the construction and no evidence of roosting bats is present. Field evidence of bats searched for included:

- Staining, beneath or around a hole, caused by the natural oils in bat fur.
- Scratch marks around a hole caused by bat claws.
- Bat droppings beneath a hole, or resting area.
- Bat droppings and/or insect remains beneath a feeding area.
- A characteristic odour of bats and/or droppings.
- Dead bats - usually young from a nursery roost site.

Although no licence is needed because no confirmed roosts will be affected, it will still be important to implement precautionary Reasonable Avoidance Measures instead of licensing. It is considered that the following actions be taken to any planning condition attached to an approval:

Reasonable Avoidance Measures to avoid killing or injury:

- At the outset of invasive actions/demolition the workers are to be briefed so they are aware of the *potential* for presence of bats and so they are shown the following photographs of a Common pipistrelle bat and an accumulation of pipistrelle bat droppings.



Fully grown Common pipistrelle bat



Pipistrelle bat droppings, which look like mouse droppings, but crumble to dust when squashed between the fingers (comprising tiny, glistening bits of insect wings etc.)

- Emma Broad, the Ecologist for WCBC is to be informed when demolition works are to be commenced. No demolition shall commence without written approval from WCBC.
- Any removal of roofing is to be undertaken by hand, with the aid of a cherry-picker or scaffold where working at height. *If this work is undertaken between September and early-mid March there is no reasonable likelihood of encountering bats and the roof work does not need to be supervised by a licensed bat worker.* If undertaken *between late-March and September then a licensed bat worker is to attend and supervise work on the demolition.*
- The roof coverings are to be carefully *lifted*, rather than dragged, and the space beneath the supporting joists is to be searched for bats and droppings. If any bats are found during this process then works are to cease and the local authority Ecologist is to be informed immediately to advise on how to progress.
- Where any walls are to be dismantled, any gaps into wall-tops are first checked for any signs of bats and then the brickwork is to be removed by hand and with care, with workers continuing to check mortar gaps for sheltering bats.
- If any roosting bats are uncovered, the requirement for licensing will have to be reviewed.