

Nesting Bird and Bat Friendly Demolition Method Statement

PROJECT TITLE: Land at Dragon Park, Merthyr Tydfil

National Grid Reference : SO 05436 04336

DATE: October 2020

VERSION: 3.0

1.1 The applicant is seeking planning permission to complete the demolition a number of partly demolished buildings on a former large factory site. A suite of bat surveys were undertaken in 2019 by suitably qualified ecologists who concluded that no bats were using the buildings on site as a day roost during the survey periods.

1.2 Walked transects of the site did however did identify bats using the site to commute and to feed.

1.3 The buildings on site are already part demolished and the LPA have concerns that these buildings offer potential for bats to hibernate throughout the winter months.

1.4 These buildings are also suitable for use as an occasional day roost by bats outside of the hibernation period. Therefore any demolition must be undertaken using a bat friendly methodology. Bat are a protected species and are afforded legal protection under the The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. It is a criminal offence to:

- Deliberately capture or kill a bat
- Deliberately disturb a bat
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat
- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange a living or dead bat or any part of a bat

1.5 The site is also suitable for nesting birds.

1.6 All breeding birds are protected under schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended. Under this Act it is an offence to:

- Intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built.
- Intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird

1.7 Enhanced protection is afforded to species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act, this additional protection makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

2.0 Demolition Methodology

2.1 A suitably qualified ecologist will be appointed as an ecological clerk of works for the entire demolition process.

2.2 The British bird nesting season is from February to August inclusive. U.K. bats hibernate periodically from November to February inclusive.

2.3 Any vegetation that is planned for removal that is greater than 0.5m in height above ground level will be cleared outside the bird nesting season.

2.4 No demolition works are to be undertaken during the bat hibernation period of November to February inclusive. British winters are unpredictable and are of varying severity. Even once the hibernation period has finished, the exact date suitable for demolition will be made by the ecologist once the weather has warmed enough for bats to become regularly active.

2.5 The general site manager will be appointed as responsible person for the site. The ecologist and site manager will discuss time frames and demolition works will not be

undertaken on any structural demolition until the site manager is in possession of a sign document from the ecologist that it is ecologically safe to proceed.

2.6 Prior to any demolition a further exit surveys for nesting birds and bats will be undertaken. These surveys will be undertaken using current best practice and in weather conditions suitable for activity of the target species. These surveys will include internal inspections of the buildings where it is safe to do so. Demolition will only commence once the site manager is in possession of the written results of these surveys and that the surveys demonstrate that no protected species will be directly impacted upon.

2.7 While the proposed works do not directly impact on the bat roost and therefore a European Protected Species license issued by Natural Resources Wales will not be required at this stage it is imperative that working practices are adopted to ensure that no bats are disturbed.

2.8 The demolition will use a soft strip methodology where possible. The buildings will have any areas suitable for bats or nesting birds stripped under direct supervision of the ecologist where safe to do so. The soft strip will involve careful removal by hand of any areas where this potential for bats to roost.

2.9 Prior to any works starting a schwegler 1FF bat box will be situated in a suitable location. The location will be agreed with the ecologist prior to fitting. This bat box will benefit from being at least 4m above ground level and in an area with good ecological connectivity to the wider environment. The box will be south facing where it can absorb solar warmth. This will be located in a quiet area of the site and there will be a buffer zone of 10m around the box that will marked as out of bounds to the contractors. The bat boxes will not be illuminated. The bat box must be left in situ and offered protection going forward.

2.10 Prior to works starting a Schwegler 1FW will be situated in a suitable location onsite. The site will be agreed by the supervising ecologist. This bat box will benefit from being at least 4m above ground level and in an area with good ecological connectivity to the wider environment. This will be located in a quiet area of the site and there will be a buffer zone of 10m around the box that will marked as out of bounds to the contractors. The bat boxes will not be illuminated. The bat box must be left in situ and offered protection going forward.

2.11 The ecologist responsibilities will be:

- The ecologist will give a tool box talk to all contractors prior to works starting on what is permitted in regards to the demolition.
- To undertake the relevant surveys prior to demolition, both internal and suitable activity surveys. These surveys must be undertaken 24 hours before any demolition of any structure. The site manager will be informed in writing the results of the surveys and if demolition is permitted.
- To inform the site manager of these surveys finding in writing.
- To liaise with the site manager regarding timings to allow the site manager to organise the demolition team to ensure that the team is available following the surveys is no bats are birds are found to be using the buildings.
- To discuss and inform the site manager where the bat boxes are to be fitted.
- The Ecologist will as part of their tool box talk identify the bat boxes and the protected buffer zone around the bat boxes.

2.12 The site manager responsibilities will be:

- To ensure all of the demolition team is inducted by the ecologist prior to starting work on the site.
- To ensure there is no night time working.
- To ensure that the structures will not have any direct flood lighting.
- To ensure that no works will be permitted to the structures until they have written permission from the ecologist that the demolition can commence. The site manager will be informed in writing the results of the surveys and if demolition is permitted.

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- The site manager will risk assess any structure along with the demolition contractor to ensure that it is safe to progress the soft strip. The findings of this risk assessment will be presented to the ecologist.
 - The site manager will ensure that contractors do not work within 10m of the bat boxes.

3.0 If Protected Species are Discovered.

3.1 If nesting birds are discovered at any stage the nest will be cordoned off by 20m and no works will be permitted within this exclusion zone until the chicks have fledged. A further survey for bats and nesting birds will be undertaken at this stage, and the results forwarded to the site manager.

3.2 If bats are discovered using the site at any time, NRW will be informed and a European protected Species Licence applied for to sanction the works. No further works will then be permitted until the license is issued.

3.3 Outside the supervision period in the very unlikely case that a bat is discovered and that it is necessary to remove a bat to avoid it being harmed, gloves should be worn. It should be carefully caught in a cardboard box and kept in the dark in a quiet place until it can be released at dusk near to where it was found, or moved to an undisturbed part of the building, with outside access, and placed in a location safe from predators. THE BAT WORKER MUST BE CONTACTED IN THIS INSTANCE AND WILL ATTEND SITE TO ADVISE. IF THE BAT WORKER IS NOT CONTACTABLE THEN NATURAL RESOURCES WALES MUST BE CONTACTED AND ADVICE SORT.

3.4 The bat will be inspected ensuring that it is healthy and uninjured.

The bat will be relocated to a bat box which will be erected onsite.

3.5 The contact details of the bat worker must be provided to the site manager, to be on-call in case any bats or nesting birds are discovered. In the event that bats

or nesting birds are found during work, all work must cease and the retained ecologist contacted for further advice.

Richard Watkins
Director
Ecological Services Ltd

Signed: *R Watkins*

Date: October 2020

4.0 Method Statement Contractor Induction Sheet

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