

# Method Statement for the demolition of buildings at the former Sheep Market, The Butts, Cowbridge

## Compensation / Pre-Demolition

Before any demolition takes place, compensatory roost space must be provided in the immediate vicinity, which will also allow any bats discovered during demolition to be transferred by a licensed bat handler with the minimum disturbance and use of time.

- i. **Purchase a minimum of three Schwegler 1FD Bat Boxes.** These can be obtained from <https://www.nhbs.com> and are in stock at Schwegler (as at 12/10/2020). These are long lasting bat boxes that are attractive to the species recorded in the Bat Survey.
  
- ii. **Affix the bat boxes as a group on the one mature tree on the south side of the site.** Note that the bat boxes are heavy and liable to break if dropped from height so two people may be required. If one person ascends the ladder with strong twine attached to the hanging wire of the box at ground level and then hauls the box up into position to affix it. Schwegler bat boxes are supplied with aluminium nails and none of the trees on this site has a Tree Preservation Order. Another option would be to use a cherry-picker. Bat boxes need to be
  - a. at least 4 metres above ground, higher if possible,
  - b. away from artificial light,
  - c. placed where they will get some sun and
  - d. placed out of strong winds.

Affix the boxes at slightly different heights and with southerly aspects.

Because of the requirement to fix these bat boxes to a tree and to have them available to the bat worker during demolition you are advised to have a risk assessment for working at height undertaken.

( <https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/height.htm> )

- iii. If possible, allow a few weeks for the boxes to weather in.

## Demolition

- iv. Before demolition commences the applicant needs to **acquire the services of an experienced and licenced bat worker.**
  
- v. **The Bat worker should give a 'toolbox talk' about bats to all the staff** involved in the demolition before work commences. The talk will cover bat ecology, bats and the law, and what to do if bats or field signs of bats are found during the works.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In order to reduce costs and travel costs the toolbox talk could be followed by the soft strip of Buildings 3 and 4 outlined in viii below.

- vi. Although the Bat Survey has identified that Buildings 1 and 2 may be demolished in the standard way it would be advisable to ensure that the **bat worker is aware of the date for demolition** should any bats be discovered. Because this is very unlikely then the bat worker does not need to be on site but simply available.
- vii. **Demolish Buildings 1 and 2 in the standard manner**, ideally getting all structures down to near ground level on the same day or at least as bare structures with no opportunities for bats.
- viii. **For buildings 3 and 4 undertake a 'soft strip' before completing demolition and ensure the bat worker is on site before commencing.** This will involve removing fascia's, cladding, external timber, gutter supports by hand with the minimum of disturbance possible with the bat worker in attendance. Gently pull back such items and check for the presence of bats. If bats are found, stop work and get the bat worker to remove the bats to the Schwegler boxes. Once she/he has returned, recommence the strip in the same manner. Access to the bat boxes in i. above should be in place before the soft strip starts in case translocation of bats is required to minimise disturbance and time loss.
- ix. Once a building has been stripped externally then it can be demolished in the standard way to ground level, again preferably on the same day.

### ***Post Demolition***

Note that bats are a protected species and **only licensed bat workers are allowed to access the Schwegler bat boxes**. Use of the boxes will be evident through dropping stains below the entrance hole and 'chittering' noises from the boxes on warm late afternoons and early evenings.

Any further development of the site is likely to require a lighting plan to minimise disturbance to the bats and if possible further strengthening of the southern boundary to provide a dark flight path for bats.

Colin Cheesman

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10<sup>th</sup> October 2020