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Monday, 04 March 2013

### **Re : Buildings on the Aldcliffe Triangle**

This is to confirm that on the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2013, I inspected buildings located in the Aldcliffe Triangle in Lancaster with a view to determining their likely use by, and importance to, bat species. The inspection was requested as the area is considered to have a high likelihood of bat species being present, due to the location which is adjacent to the Lancaster Canal.

The inspection was carried out in winter, when bats are hibernating but it is considered sufficient to address the minimum risk to bats at the site.

The buildings are small and constructed from some stone and some red brick. The roofs are of traditional small slates on timber frames. Building A has a brick chimney and the roof slates are underlined with plasterboard. Building B has a pent roof and the slates are underlined with roofing felt. Building A is to be renovated and building B is to be demolished.

The methodology used to inspect this site was as follows.

- Site records search via North Lancashire Bat Group data set to determine the species of bat which may occur at the site.
- Identification of adjacent bat roosting and feeding sites from aerial photography at 1:5000 scale- This allows us to determine likely commuting routes into and off the site.
- Field assessment of adjacent bat feeding and roosting sites made following review of aerial photography- This allows us to cross check our interpretation of aerial photography with actual habitats on the ground.
- Inspection of the exterior of both buildings to locate potential bat roosts- Gaps and cracks in the roof, walls and ridge tiles may provide access to bats.
- Inspection of the interior of Building A to look for bats or evidence of bats inside.

The proposal is to demolish Building B which has been subjected to repeated vandalism. Building A is to be renovated and brought into use by the Friends of the Triangle. The

programme of work has the potential to disturb bats or destroy roost sites, if they exist, in the roof or walls of the buildings.

The interior of Building A was searched to look for signs of bats such as bat droppings but none were found. The roof slates are underlined with plaster board which is still intact in places. It is therefore possible for bats to roost under slates without any evidence being seen inside the building. An external inspection of the walls, windows, sills and doors was made to look for bat droppings deposited as bats fly out from their roost sites at night but none were found.

The exterior of Building B was inspected to look for potential roost sites. There is potential access along the roof verge of this building and it is possible that bats could enter to roost between roof slates and underfelt. The roof verge was closely inspected from the top of a ladder and the gap was found to be relatively open, probably not providing the stable and secure roost sites that bats seek except on an occasional or temporary basis. There were no bat droppings, grease or scratch marks which would be indicative of regular or longstanding use by bats.

**There is some limited potential for bats to roost under roof slates at the site. However, these are likely to be used only temporarily and/or occasionally by common species of crevice dwelling bats.**

**No direct evidence of use by bats was found and the two buildings are judged to offer only low potential for use by bats. They are judged to be of low significance for bat species.**

As a consequence we consider that undertaking emergence surveys and full habitat assessment of the building and its surroundings is not necessary.

### Photographs



Building A



Building B

### **Advice and Recommendations**

The site survey results indicate that there is low potential for the occurrence of roosting bats at the site and therefore without precautionary mitigation there would be a low chance of bats being disturbed, harmed or otherwise affected by the proposed work at the site.

As a precaution, the following recommendations are given. These should be drawn to the attention of all those working at the site and followed carefully during the project.

#### *General working guidelines*

1. All contractors on the site must be made aware of the possible presence of bats prior to the commencement of work.
2. Contractors must be provided with the contact details of an appropriately qualified individual who can provide advice in relation to bats at any time during work. In the event that bats are found during work, unless the action has already been cleared by a suitably qualified individual, **all work must cease** and an appropriately qualified individual contacted for further advice.
3. Remove existing slates and other roof materials by hand and taking care not to twist or bang. Check the underside of ridge tiles. Keep a careful watch for bats during this operation.
4. Be observant during work for bats which may use the building if new areas of the roof are exposed and left open over night. Bats are opportunistic and may make use of gaps opened up during work overnight.
5. If 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.

6. **If bats or bat roosts are found during work, all work should cease** as per point 2. The site will need to be re-assessed in regard to its use by bats. A Natural England license may be required if continuing work is, on balance, likely to result in the disturbance, killing or injury of bats or the alteration, destruction or obstruction of roost site.
7. Following English Nature (Natural England) guidance Mitchell-Jones (2004), if these guidelines are followed we would consider that on balance, a disturbance to bat species which could be contrary to the 1994 Habitat Regulations and Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is unlikely. **If bats are found prior to or during work, a license application may be required.**

#### *Site Specific guidelines*

It is likely that the site could be enhanced for bats by considering their needs before and during the renovation programme for Building A. Simple and inexpensive measures include :

- ⇒ The provision of bat boxes which could be located on the chimney of the renovated building
- ⇒ The provision of “bat” slates near to the apex of the renovated building, as per the plan at **Appendix A**
- ⇒ The provision of “ridge tile” roosts in the renovated building, as per the plan at **Appendix B**

Any such provision is likely to benefit bats in the medium to long term.

If you have any queries or comments regarding the assessment of this building please do not hesitate to contact me in the first instance and I would be happy to clarify any issues with you.

Yours Sincerely



Gail Armstrong

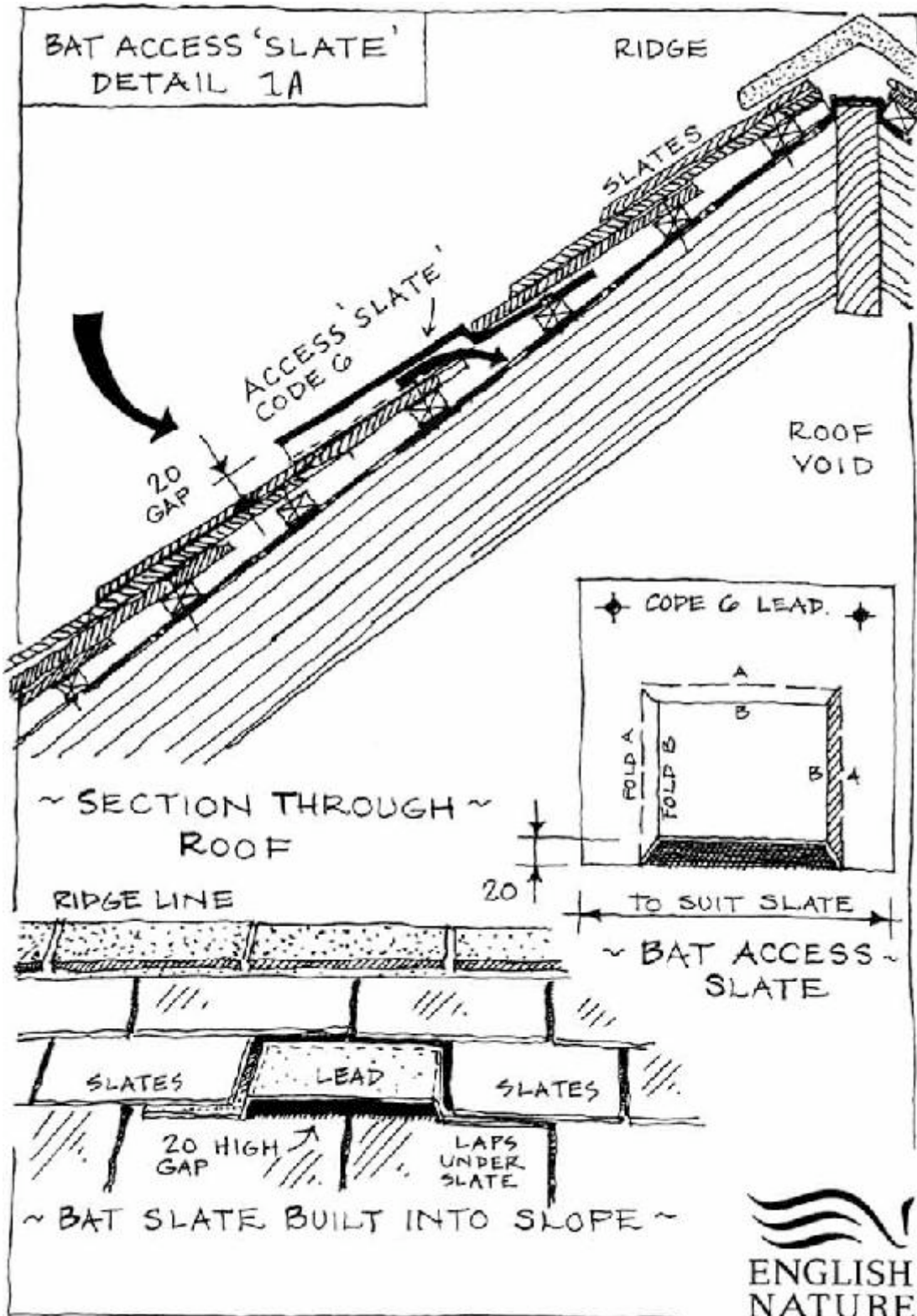
Natural England License Holder, current licence number **20122087**

**Telephone: 01524 701316**

**Mobile: 079 1702 1073**

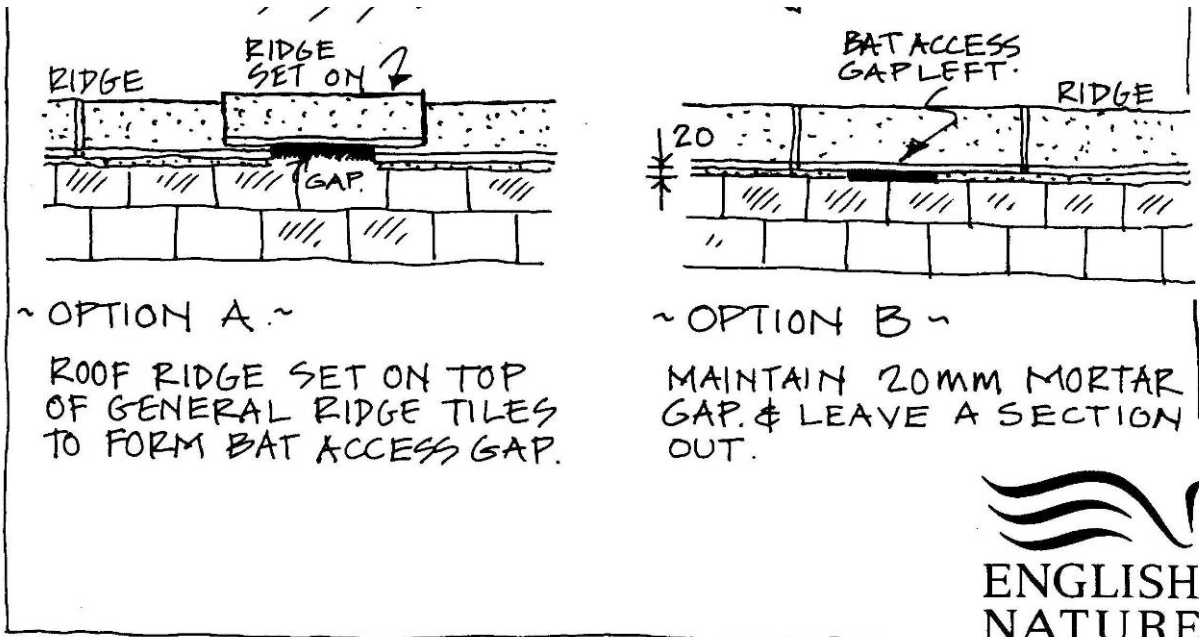
**Email: [gail@batlady.co.uk](mailto:gail@batlady.co.uk)**

Appendix A Bat Access Slate



SP The above information is for guidance only and may not be appropriate in all circumstances. If in doubt seek professional advice.  
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Appendix B Ridge Tile Access for bats



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The above information is for guidance only and may not be appropriate in all circumstances, if in doubt seek professional advice.  
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