

14th February 2024
Our Ref. 2416

Ecology Statement for the replacement of a slate roof finish on a Grade II Listed Building at The Mill, Hamslade Hill Oakfordbridge, Bampton, EX16 9JA.

Introduction

This document has been prepared in support of a planning application for the replacement of a slate roof on a Grade II listed building.

Legislation

All species of bats and their breeding sites or resting places (roosts) are protected under Regulation 41 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

It is an offence for anyone intentionally to

- a. kill, injure or handle a bat,
- b. possess a bat (whether alive or dead),
- c. disturb a roosting bat, or
- d. sell or offer a bat for sale without a licence.

Reg.41.

(1) A person who—

- deliberately captures, injures or kills any wild animal of a European protected species,
 - deliberately disturbs wild animals of any such species,
 - damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of such an animal,
- is guilty of an offence.

(2) Disturbance of animals includes in particular any disturbance which is likely—

(a) to impair their ability

(i) to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or

(ii) in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or

(b) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

Note: It is an offence to damage, obstruct access to or destroy any place used by bats for shelter, whether they are present or not. Bats use different roost sites at different times of the year according to weather conditions and their status which could be pre or post hibernation, mating or breeding.

Both Horseshoe bats have been identified as priority species under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

Local Environment

1. Being in a secluded location in the Exe valley, this is an area where a population of several species of bats and migratory birds can be expected.

The new roof

Bats:

This precaution gives information on what to do if in the unlikely event, a bat is encountered at any time during the course of any work. If a bat is found, work in that area must cease immediately.

Advice should then be sought from the bat help line (0345 1300 228) or a licensed bat handler. (THIS IS A LEGAL REQUIREMENT)

This advice is given in accordance with The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 under which all bats and their roosts are protected.

Any bats found should be left undisturbed and any protective covering carefully replaced, unless they are injured, in which case they should only be handled if absolutely necessary and with a gloved hand. They should be placed in a ventilated container with a secure lid and kept in a cool, quiet place pending further advice. A little water should be available in a milk bottle top/jam jar lid.

The addition of crumpled kitchen towel or a tea towel will give the bat/s somewhere to 'hide' and feel secure.

It is important to ensure there are no gaps accessible to bats in the new roof if a Light Breathable Membrane is used to line the roof covering.

Bat mitigation / enhancement measures

It is preferable to have bat boxes facing between south and west. The entrances must be a minimum of 3m above ground and they must have a clear flight path to and from them.

1. Installation of 3 No bat boxes on the facing South and West elevation – Eco Cavity Bat box Recycled.
Installed side by side.



2. Installation of a 3 x single 1WQ Schwegler bat boxes side by side



These boxes should be able to cater for a crevice and cavity dwelling variety of Bats.

It is also likely that Swallows, Swifts and House Martins frequent this location in the Summer months. They are having a challenging time with dwindling numbers.

Swallows, Swifts and House Martins

Swallows the existing Mill Wheel roof provides plenty of opportunities. If nesting cups are installed these are to be installed a minimum of 8ft off the ground and on a North Westerly or North Easterly facing wall. (North Easterly is preferable in this instance)

A Swift nest box is to be installed on be installed a minimum of 4.5m off the ground and on a North Westerly or North Easterly facing wall in a clear and unobstructed position. (North Easterly is preferable in this instance)



The roof overhangs are not sufficient to be suitable for House Martin nest boxes, However the existing Mill Wheel roof provides plenty of opportunities.

Bird protection legislation

All wild birds, their nests and young are protected throughout England and Wales. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 makes it an offence to intentionally:

- Kill, injure, or take any wild bird.
- Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built.
- Take or destroy an egg of any wild bird.

Conclusion

Bats:

Due to the time of year there should be Bats should not be active.

If however they are found then a suitably trained Ecologist should be called to care for / re-locate them. See above.

Birds:

Due to the time of year there should be no active bird nests. But if work were to begin during the nesting season, an inspection, must be made for active nests.

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