STEPHEN GOWER BA DIPTP MRTPI (Rtd)
- **LICENSED BAT WORKER**
- **MEMBER OF STAFFORDSHIRE MAMMAL GROUP**
- **MEMBER OF THE MAMMAL SOCIETY**

SURVEY RELATING TO THE FORMER ST.JOHN'S SCHOOL HALL AND VESTRY, ZION METHODIST CHURCH, SIMMONDLEY LANE, GLOSSOP.

***DATE OF SURVEYS**: 17th July and 13th September 2012*

PURPOSE OF SURVEY

It is proposed to demolish this former School Hall and associated toilet block and Vestry as part of a scheme for new residential development. The main chapel building would be retained as shown on the attached site plan. This survey and appraisal is to satisfy the requirements of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to ensure bats, a European protected species and their roost, and other protected species, are not adversely affected. In this particular case the only creatures likely to be affected are bats. The school hall remains in use for local play groups and the Vestry is now mainly used for associated storage purposes.

DESCRIPTION:

The school hall and associated rooms are constructed of local grit stone with slate tile roof, the toilet block being the only exception having been added at a later stage in artificial stone with felt roof. Accommodation is at one level forming a large internal space with windows to the rear and side elevations in addition to substantial roof lights. There is no separate roof void to the main building, as shown on the site plan attached as an Appendix. The Vestry, similarly of local stone and slate roof (attached to the main chapel) is single storey but with a significant sized roof void and also a cellar where a redundant boiler is situated. At the time of inspection the buildings were considered to be in a generally sound condition externally in respect of main walls, and the roof in particular, was in good condition, with no missing tiles, the only exception being the toilet block where problems had occurred with the flat roof and the ingress of water.
Photographs of the buildings, including the cellar, are attached as an Appendix to this survey.

APPRAISAL:

The buildings were inspected internally and externally for their suitability for bats, and evidence of their occupation, using an endoscope where necessary. A separate emergence survey was also undertaken on the 13th September.

From an external inspection it was observed that the main walls were soundly pointed and provided no opportunities for crevice seeking bats. Similarly the slate roof was in good condition, such that it would be difficult for bats to gain entry, although the only very limited roof space to the school hall was above the classroom/kitchen annexes on the southern side of the school building. The roof and walls to the Vestry were similarly considered to provide few opportunities for bats but there was an opening into the roof space from the cellar access which potentially could be used by bats, and in addition, an opening at ground level would enable bats to access the cellar.

Internally the main school hall provided few if any suitable roosting areas. There were no dark undisturbed areas as the building was in fairly regular use with good natural light and use of electric light. The condition of the roof above the small roof voids of the annexes on the southern elevation was such as to prevent any means of entry to this space. There was no evidence of use by bats in any part of the main school hall in terms of droppings or other signs.

The Vestry with the roof space and cellar was potentially more interesting and both the roof space and cellar were inspected for signs of use by bats. However, although the loft space appeared suitable as a roost area, no droppings or other signs of use by bats were found, probably reflecting the fact that in obtaining entry to the roof space, this would be at a fairly low level through the doorway with the possibility of some human disturbance at critical times in the evenings (ie emergence times). In respect of the cellar, this would only be of interest as a winter roost site (hibernacula) and there would be no evidence of droppings as the bats are in a state of torpor. It would be extremely difficult to be certain if it were used for this purpose, and this area should therefore be further inspected during the winter months prior to any demolition of the building taking place.

Similarly the emergence survey was undertaken to provide more certainty on whether any parts of buildings were being used as roost areas, with particular interest in the Vestry. The evening of the survey was warm (15 degrees) with some gusty wind at times but generally favourable for bats to forage. Emergence time was unexpectedly early at 19.24 hours in good light conditions with the recording of common pipistrelles at fairly regular intervals, at 19.30, 19.35, 19.39,19.45, 19.46, 1948 1951 hours and less frequently thereafter until 20.45 hours. Because the light was good it was possible to be quite certain that these bats were not emerging from the church buildings but flying from the wooded area on the opposite side of Simmondley lane (site of The Glossop Primary school 33KV sub-station), across the grounds of the church to a part wooded area to the north

identified on the site plan as rough ground. The open yard of the church was used for feeding and as a link between these two wooded areas and from the observations and recordings there was clearly a reasonably sized roost in the locality of common pipistrelles.

CONCLUSION

There was no evidence from the inspection of the School Hall and Vestry to suggest either current or historic use by bats. Bats were recorded in the locality and seen to be feeding around the Church buildings and flying between two wooded areas either side of the site, but the demolition of these buildings would not significantly affect this situation. More importantly the demolition of the buildings would not cause the loss of a summer roost site. However, the remote possibility of use of the cellar as a winter roost site should be taken into account, although this did not appear to be a particularly good example because of the possibility of human disturbance (electric light was available) and previous use as a boiler room, and demolition only carried out following a further inspection during the period of hibernation. This should be reinforced with a planning condition.
In respect of biodiversity objectives some measures could be agreed as part of the scheme for new housing but as this site is on the edge of Glossop where the habitat is reasonably attractive for bats with woodland and a good proportion of mature trees nearby, there should be more than adequate roost sites for bats in the general locality.

Appendix 1 – Site Photographs























Appendix 2 – Site Plan



This drawing is the Copyright of SJ Design Limited.
All dimensions must be checked on site and not scaled from this drawing.
All materials and workmanship are to be in accordance with prevailing British Standards, Codes of Practice, Building Regulations, manufacturers and federation recommendations and all to the complete satisfaction of SJ Design Limited.

REV	DATE	REVISIONS

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Client: Zion Methodist Church

Job Title:
Zion Methodist Church
Simmondley Lane
Glossop
SK13 6NS

Drawing Title:
Site Plan
As Existing

Scale: 1:500; @A3

Date: November 2011 | Drawn by: SJ

Drawing No.: 101 | Rev.:

Appendix 3 – Qualifications

LICENCE

Mr Stephen J Gower
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ENGLAND

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Licence number: **20121808**
Supersedes licence number: 20112560

WILDLIFE & COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 (as amended) & THE CONSERVATION OF HABITATS AND SPECIES REGULATIONS 2010.

This licence is granted under the following legislation – Section 16 (3) (a) & (c) of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and under Regulation 53 (2) (a) & (c) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. Natural England hereby authorises **Stephen J Gower** hereinafter referred to as "the licensee", and the following accredited agent(s), to carry out the activities detailed on the attached annex:

None

This Licence is valid from **31 May 2012** to **30 May 2013** inclusive, and is granted under the following conditions:

[1] While engaged in work permitted by this licence the licensee must have access to a copy of this licence and produce it to any police officer or any Natural England officer on demand.

[4] The licensee or his/her agent may employ assistants provided they work under the personal supervision of the licensee or agent.

[5] No work shall be carried out under this licence on a National Nature Reserve or Marine Nature Reserve except with the prior written permission of Natural England's appropriate area team.

[8] A report of the work carried out under this licence must be sent to Natural England at the above address within two weeks of the expiry date. To renew your licence from the date it expires a request must be sent to Natural England at least three weeks prior to expiry with a report form completed to that date.

[10] This licence is granted subject to compliance with the conditions specified. Anything done otherwise than in accordance with the terms of this licence may constitute an offence. Before exercising this licence the licensee should sign and date it in the space provided.

[11] This licence may be modified or revoked at any time by Natural England.

[48] Any bats taken under this licence shall be liberated at the site of capture immediately after examination unless specific permission has been granted by Natural England to do otherwise.

[78] The licensee may not disturb or handle hibernating bats.

Notes:

[202] Nothing in this licence confers any right of entry onto land or property.

[207] Before exercising this licence the licensee should liaise with the appropriate local bat groups or licensees. The licensee should observe the guidelines set out in the Bat Workers Manual.

[217] All equipment used for the purposes of this licence shall be so constructed and maintained as to avoid cruelty and distress to the species named on this licence.

[231] The licensee may photograph the animals as an incidental part of licensed work provided that no additional disturbance is caused thereby.

[243] Natural England recommends that anyone handling bats wears gloves and is suitably vaccinated against rabies.

[246] Possession of a licence to disturb or capture bats indicates that the licensee has demonstrated an appropriate level of competence in these activities. The licence should not be used or taken to indicate competence in any other activity that may be associated with work on bats.

Date: **31 May 2012**

Signed:
FOR AND ON BEHALF OF NATURAL ENGLAND

PLEASE SIGN TO STATE THAT YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE CONDITIONS OF THIS LICENCE.

Date: _____ - _____ - 2012 Signed: _____

Annex to Licence Number 20121808 (Details)

Species: Bats (All Species) (Chiroptera)
Item:
Number:
Activities: • Disturb and take
Methods: • Hand and static hand-held net
Purposes: • Science and Education
County: • All Counties Of England
Notes: