

Bat Survey - Former Public Toilets, Chapel Street, Egremont, Cumbria, CA22 2DU

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This brief report outlines the findings of a site inspection for bats at Former Public Toilets, Chapel Street, Egremont, Cumbria, CA22 2DU (Nat Grid Ref. NY 01191 10767).

Our Ref. No.: CBC20BAT012
 Date: 02 July 2020
 Your Ref. No.: N/A

A Site Location Plan and plans 'as existing' have been provided (See Figures 1 & 2) and it is understood that a proposal exists to completely demolish the existing former public toilet building to create additional car parking space. It is not proposed to replace the building with any new built structure. The proposed demolition has the potential to impact upon bats / bat roosts as a legally protected species group. Hesketh Ecology were commissioned in June 2020 to complete an assessment of the building, identify any potential for (or evidence of) bats and to advise as to the requirement for further survey effort.

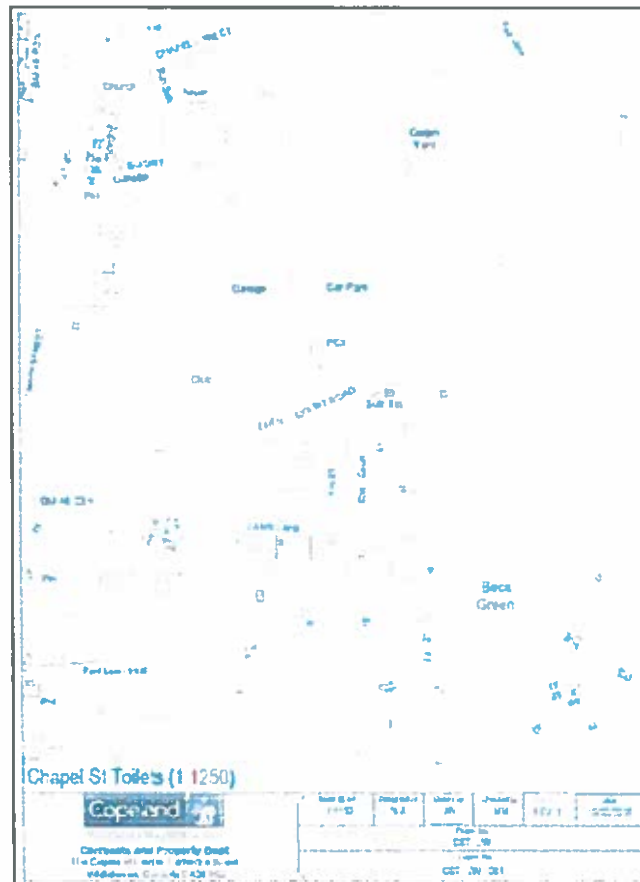


Figure 1: 'Chapel St Toilets'; Project No. CST - JW, Drawing No. CST-JW-001 by Copeland Borough Council.

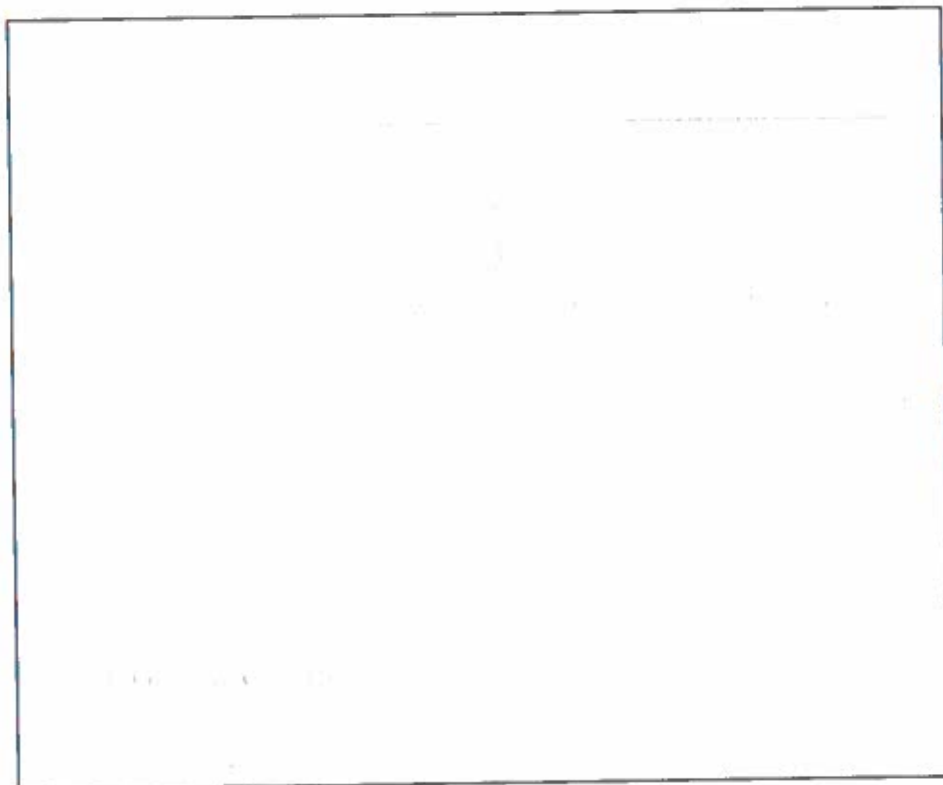


Figure 2: Chapel St Toilets 'as existing'.

A site inspection was conducted on 1st July 2020. The weather at the time of the survey was mild and dry. This inspection was conducted during the optimal bat activity season and aimed to identify any features offering *potential* for bats as well as any evidence of bats.

The former public toilet building is a very small, single storey, detached building located in Chapel Street carpark in Egremont town centre. The building measures 4 x 10m and is surrounded by macadam parking bays. An isolated row of small Leyland Cypress (*Cupressus x leylandii*) trees exist on a small island of amenity grassland immediately to the south of the building, but these have been severely pruned to around 2m and are functionally isolated from any other distinct linear habitat feature likely to be used by foraging or commuting bats. A small number of mature trees do exist within the curtilage of commercial properties to the south east of the site, but the building is surrounded on all sides by predominantly bare macadam surfaces which are illuminated at night and offer very little suitable bat foraging / commuting habitat.

The former public toilet building itself is constructed of brick, with a timber framed roof which is hipped at the northern and southern ends. The roof is internally lined with a bituminous roofing felt and externally clad in a manufactured tile. The roof is in a very poor state of repair having apparently suffered from vandalism and a large number of tiles are broken and holes exist through the internal roof lining. To mitigate the risk of broken tiles falling or

blowing off the roof, debris netting has been secured on the eastern pitch of the hipped roof. The external walls are rendered and the eaves are enclosed within plastic soffits and fascias which are in a good state of repair and do not offer any gaps. Internally the male, female and disabled toilet facilities are enclosed within pre-fabricated stainless steel cubicles with a glass false ceiling. The attendant area is without this internal cubicle, allows access to the rear of the toilet facilities and contains the cisterns and cleaning facilities. From the attendants area it is possible to access the roof space, which is generally unenclosed, but does lie above the internal cubicle unit.



Figure 3: Showing the eastern elevation of Chapel Street Toilets with debris netting attached to the eastern pitch of the hipped roof to prevent broken tiles falling off.

The eastern pitch of the roof - being completely covered with debris netting - is inaccessible to bats. Although many broken and missing tiles exist on this pitch, offering theoretical access to gaps between the cladding and the lining (and to the internal void), the debris netting comprehensively prevents access via the eastern pitch. Broken tiles also exist on the northern and western pitches; these are limited to a small number of tiles but do allow theoretical access to the roof structure and void to birds and bats. All gaps created by broken tiles were accessible during the site inspection and could be inspected in detail.

The identified gaps were inspected with a high powered torch and video endoscope and no evidence of bats having used these locations was identified. No droppings were discovered anywhere on or within the roof structure and no scratches or other evidence of bats was identified in or around the features

deemed to offer potential for bats to roost. Furthermore, no evidence of bats or birds was identified within the roof void. Rat droppings were discovered within the roof void on timber walkways above the glass false ceiling and on the glass itself.

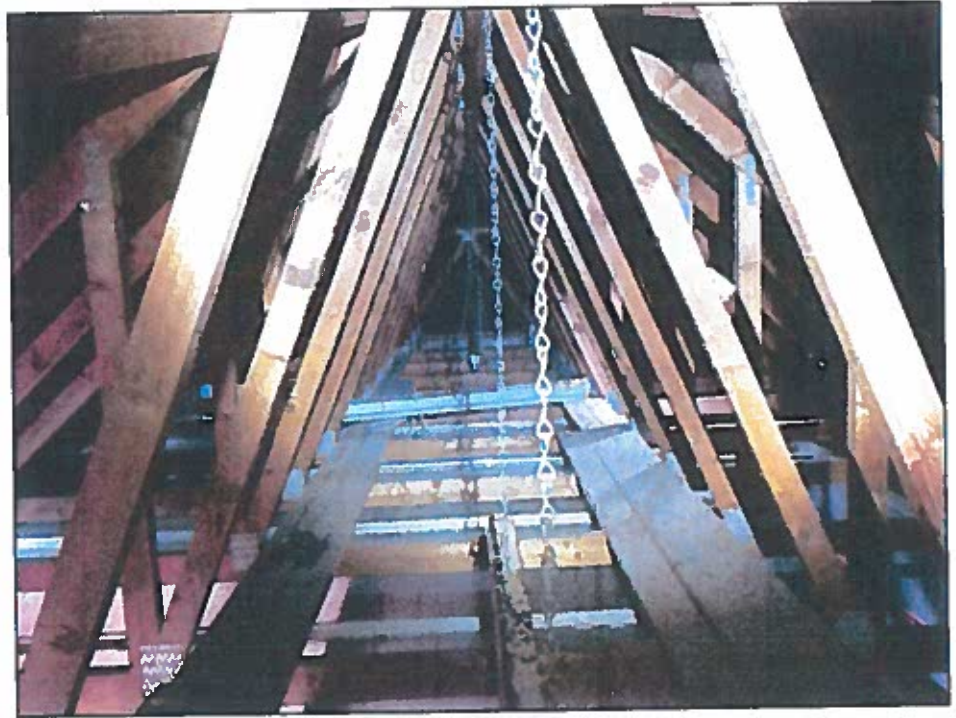


Figure 4: Showing the internal void within the building.



Figure 5: Showing rat droppings within the roof void.

The former public toilet building is considered to offer 'negligible' potential for roosting bats. The presence of theoretically suitable gaps between tiles means that it is not possible to conclude 'nil' potential, but a thorough endoscopic inspection of the crevices is adequate to conclude that bats are not currently using these 'negligible' roost potential features.

In line with published good practice guidelines; *'If no or only low suitability potential roost features are found then further surveys are not necessary'* (See Pg. 48 of Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edition)*). The Bat Conservation Trust, London. ISBN - 13 978-1-872745-96-1), no further survey effort is recommended.

As the building is located within an area of 'poor' quality bat foraging habitat, and considering the proximity of the building to suitable foraging habitat in the wider area, there is very little risk that individual bats could opportunistically occupy suitable roost features between the time of the site inspection and the commencement of works. As a precautionary measure, in order to minimise the risk of individual bats being harmed during works, the following measures should be observed;

- This report should be made available to any contractor working on site.
- If bats are discovered at any time prior to or during works, all work must stop and the acting consultant contacted immediately. If this unlikely event does occur a European Protected Species licence will be sought.
- The work will be completed as quickly as possible once started. Any gaps created during the course of the works will be left open for the minimum possible period. Where possible gaps will not be left open over night to avoid the possibility of bats opportunistically roosting in gaps which will later be blocked.

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