

66142 – GMEU recommendation

Summary

There are no significant ecological issues. Measures to protect bats and nesting birds and provision of ecological enhancements can be dealt with via condition and informative.

Bats

The building to be converted was assessed as low risk for bats and one emergence survey was carried out, by a suitably experienced bat consultant, late in the survey season. No evidence of bat roosting was recorded which when coupled with surveys carried out in the peak season for the adjacent property when again no bats were recorded and this is primarily a change of use has led to the consultant to conclude the risk to bats is very low. I have no reason to doubt the findings of the report. As individual bats can on occasion turn up in unexpected locations, I recommend an informative along the following lines is applied to any permission.

Whilst the building to be converted has been assessed as low risk for bats, the applicant is reminded that under the Habitat Regulation it is an offence to disturb, harm or kill bats. If a bat is found all work should cease immediately and a suitably licensed bat worker employed to assess how best to safeguard the bat(s). Natural England should also be informed.

Nesting Birds

No evidence of nesting birds was recorded in the building to be converted and the tree shown on aerial photographs appears to have already been removed. I am therefore satisfied that the risk to nesting birds is very low. No further information or measures are required.

Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Section 170 of the NPPF 2019 states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. The development will have negligible impact on the Natural Environment, the one tree shown on aerial photographs already removed and the remainder of the site consisting of the building, hard standing and amenity grassland, all of which remain largely unchanged. To provide enhancement provision of a native tree, a bat box or bird box would suffice. The detail can be conditioned along the following lines.

Prior to occupation details of ecological enhancement measures will be provided and shall take the form of one or more, of either a native tree bird box or bat box and agreed in writing by the LPA

David Dutton

Ecologist

Planning

Planning and Transport

Growth