

Thank you for consulting GMEU regarding the above application, which is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment (Arbtech, 2025) and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (Arbtech, 2025).

The site was found to comprise two buildings, developed land, and two small trees. The buildings and trees were found to have negligible bat roosting potential and based on the evidence provided I have no reason to doubt this assessment. As such, no further surveys are required. The remainder of the site was found to provide minimal ecological value. However, Reasonable Avoidance Measures for hedgehogs were recommended. These should be adhered to and secured via condition. I would also make the following recommendations:

- Protected species can turn up in unexpected places and the granting of planning permission does not negate the need to abide by the laws which are in place to safeguard biodiversity. An informative should be used so that the applicant is aware that they must seek ecological advice should they find or suspect that the proposal will impact on protected species.
- Planning policy encourages enhancements and net gains for biodiversity to be delivered through the planning system. Wherever possible measures to enhance the site for biodiversity should be secured as part of this planning application; these could include integration of bat or bird boxes into the proposed buildings on site, as per the ecology report.

Regarding the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (Arbtech, 2025), this shows that a gain of 0.02 habitat units (27.55%). This is due to the retention of the trees on site and the creation of vegetated garden. I would note that while some vegetation including bramble does appear to have colonised the developed land, I accept that this likely covers less than 10% of the area in line with the UKHab developed land definition. I therefore have no reason to doubt the results of the BNG assessment and the standard BNG condition can be applied.

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