

Thank you for consulting the GMEU.

Summary

I recommend an updated bat assessment of the barn to be demolished.

Great Crested Newts (gcn)

An updated assessment was provided by a suitably qualified consultant. This confirmed that the amphibian fencing is still in place and the development site sub-optimal for this species. There was no evidence that any gcn had managed to gain access to this long running development site. The recommendation of the amphibian assessment should be conditioned as part of any permission.

Bats and Nesting birds

The existing barn is proposed for demolition as part of this phase of the development. I appear to have overlooked that this building has not been demolished in my comment relating to 70509 and that the last survey occurred in 2010 when the building was found to have no bat roosting potential. In 2010 evidence of nesting birds was recorded.

I therefore recommend that prior to determination a review of the previous bat and bird assessment of the barn to be demolished is provided.

A standard bird nesting condition covering demolition of the barn and any removal of trees is likely to be required.

Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment & Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Section 187 of the NPPF 2024 states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. 10% BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).

The development site currently consist primarily of unvegetated disturbed ground and the building and was developed land and the building at the time of the original survey. It is unclear whether the trees located at the end of the Barn are to be retained. Wildlife issues are restricted to great crested newts and nesting birds, gcn mitigation being dealt with as part of the wider development site.

I accept that the development is exempt from mandatory 10% BNG based on the self-build rule.

With regards mitigation and enhancement for this plot, I recommend replacement native tree planting if existing trees are to be removed and the provision of a house sparrow terrace on the new build. Mitigation may also be required for bats.