

Bats

Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA)

Three buildings were surveyed, the detached two-storey residential dwelling (B1) that is being demolished, a single-storey brick-built outbuilding (B2), and a small timber-framed shed (B3). The PRA report assessed B2 to have 'negligible' roosting potential and B3 had no described bat roosting potential but would be retained. B1 had a 'moderate' roosting potential, and therefore two emergence surveys will need to be conducted during the active bat season on B1 (as per Section 5.5 and 7.4 of the PRA).

It should be noted that whilst surveys can be conducted between May and **September**, inclusive, that at least one emergence survey should be between May and **August**, inclusive, in line with the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines (2023). No such assessment appears to have been submitted with the application currently and Defra Circular 01/2005 gives guidance to local authorities on how these issues should be considered, including that surveys for protected species should not be left to conditions. Therefore, the application should not be determined until a bat report detailing the further surveys has been provided. It should be noted that as at least one survey must take place between May and August, there is only a short amount of time to fit the survey in during the 2025 bat season.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

With regards to Biodiversity Net Gain, the application is described as exempt as it is 'existing dwelling being extended'. The application appears to be for the full demolition of the building on site and erection of a new dwelling, and this is therefore inaccurate. In any case, it is unclear which exemption is being applied (i.e. self-build or de minimis). As such, further clarity will be required to reassure the LPA that the statutory Biodiversity Gain Condition will not apply. If the application is not exempt from BNG, the scheme will be required to achieve a 10% net gain in biodiversity units. In this case, we would expect that an excel metric including the baseline and predicted post development biodiversity value of the site is submitted, along with a statement or report that provides adequate information for the LPA to be satisfied that a 10% net gain in biodiversity units is achievable, either on or off-site.