

GMEU response

Summary

Further clarification relating to bats is recommended. Other ecological issues relating to nesting birds, invasive species, proximity to a watercourse and ecological mitigation can be dealt with via condition and or informative.

Bats

A valid bat assessment has been provided. The consultant has discounted the likelihood of any disturbance to bats as they were assured that there would be no direct impacts to the fascia board or roof. I note however the demolitions statement refers to demolition of both elevations from eaves to foundation. It therefore appears likely that at least some disturbance could occur.

I therefore recommend confirmation from the bat consultant that they are satisfied that the development can occur without the need for further survey.

Assuming yes then the recommendations of the report can be conditioned.

Other Protected Species

I am satisfied that it is very unlikely that any other protected species such as water vole or great crested newts will be effected by this development. *No further information or measures are required.*

Nesting Birds

The development is low risk for nesting birds. I recommend an informative along the following lines is applied to any permission.

The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended it is an offence to remove, damage, or destroy the nest of a wild bird, while the nest is in use or being built. Planning consent does not provide a defence against prosecution under this act. If a birds nest is suspected work should cease immediately and a suitably experienced ecologist employed to assess how best to safeguard the nest(s).

Himalayan Balsam

This species listed under schedule 9 part 2 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is located along the watercourse adjacent to the site. There will be biosecurity risks associated with development resulting from seed being accidentally carried off-site in spoil and on clothing and machinery. This is however a minor development and it would seem unreasonable to request a full method statement. I am satisfied that for this development the risks can be covered by an informative.

It is an offence under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended to introduce, plant or cause to grow wild any plant listed in Schedule 9 part 2 of the Act. Species such as Himalayan balsam are included within this schedule. If any such species will be disturbed as a result of this development a suitably experienced consultant should be employed to advise on how to avoid an offence.

Proximity to a Watercourse

Works to the rear elevation, poses a risk to the watercourse from dust, pollutants, debris and sediment falling or being washed during heavy rain in to the channel. I recommend simple measures such as heras fencing and sand bagging along the edge of the channel to minimise the risk. *The details can be conditioned.*

Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment & Biodiversity Net Gain

Section 174 of the NPPF 2021 states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. There appears to be no vegetation on the site, that requires mitigation. Measures for bats and or nesting birds may be required. *The details can likely be condition once clarification on bats has been provided.*

Ecologist

Planning

Planning and Transportation

Place