

GMEU recommendation

Summary

Potential ecological issues include bats and nesting birds.

Bat

The proposed gables are so close and of the same height that access to potential roosting sites in 1 Hereford Drive, under barge boards and soffits, would be obstructed and potentially lead to the abandonment of a roost.

I therefore recommend that prior to determination either:

- ***a bat roost assessment is carried out on the gable of 1 Hereford Drive;***
- ***the buildings pulled further apart or;***
- ***the ridge height of the new building reduced so access to the gable end is not obstructed prior to determination.***

Nesting Birds

The building appears to result in the loss of trees and hedgerow, potential bird nesting habitat. All British birds nests and eggs (with certain limited exceptions) are protected by Section 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended. I recommend a condition along the following lines be applied to any permission.

No works to trees or shrubs shall occur between the 1st March and 31st August in any year unless a detailed bird nest survey by a suitably experienced ecologist has been carried out immediately prior to clearance and written confirmation provided that no active bird nests are present which has been agreed in writing by the LPA.

Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Section 174 of the NPPF 2021 states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. The development will result in the loss of garden, including trees, a non-native hedge and associated bird nesting habitat. No mitigation is proposed.

I recommend the majority of the hedge is retained or a new native hedge such as beech replanted on completion of the development; one native tree such as silver birch or rowan included in the landscaping and a bird box added to a retained tree or the new build. ***The details can be conditioned.***