

GMEU recommendation

Summary

A bat assessment is recommended prior to determination. Other potential ecological issues relating to nesting birds and biodiversity mitigation and enhancement can be dealt with via condition and or informative.

Bats

In urban and suburban areas bats are most commonly found in the roof space of residential dwelling, the owner generally not aware of their presence. For a demolition, we would always recommend a bat assessment prior to determination as:

- current guidance states it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development is established before the planning permission is granted otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision (UK Government Guidance within the ODPM Government Circular 06/2005).

For this site, the argument is strengthened by:

- the proximity to high value habitat associated with North Wood;
- the fact that bat roosts have been found in other properties on this estate our records indicating several nearby including a historic record on Hillingdon Rd and;
- for consistency as the neighbouring property provided a bat report for demolition of property and rebuild in 2019.

I therefore recommend that:

Prior to determination a bat assessment is carried out by a suitably experienced bat worker. The assessment should include as a minimum a visual inspection of the existing roof space for evidence of bats and exterior of the building for potential bat access points. Should the property be assessed as more than low risk, further information will be required prior to determination.

Nesting Birds

Birds such as house sparrow, starling and swift are known to nest under eaves of housing in urban and suburban areas. I would expect the bat assessment to report whether or not birds could or do nest on the building. Dependent on the finding either a condition or informative would be applied.

Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Section 170 of the NPPF 2019 states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. The only potential impacts are loss of bird nesting or bat roosting habitats. Whether or not present we recommend inclusion of bat and bird nesting opportunities on the new build. ***The details can be conditioned.***