

Bats

A Preliminary Roost Assessment (CCNW - Ref: JE8372-24 Oct 2024) has been submitted. A full internal and external inspection of the buildings concluded that they had negligible potential to support roosting bats. The Ecology Unit have no reason to question the finding of the report. Having assessed the work planned for the buildings, there is negligible potential for the works to disturb roosting bats and no further surveys are required.

Whilst the works to the buildings have been assessed as having negligible risk for bats, the applicant is reminded that under the Habitat Regulation it is an offence to disturb, harm or kill bats. If a bat and the signs of bats is found all work should cease immediately and a suitably licensed bat worker employed to assess how best to safeguard the bat(s). Natural England should also be informed. We would suggest an informative to this effect be placed on any permission.

Nesting Birds

The buildings to be demolished support nesting swallows. All British birds nests and eggs (with certain limited exceptions) are protected by Section 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Should the demolition be delayed until after the 1st of March, I would recommend the following condition be added.

No building demolition 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 works and written confirmation provided that no active bird nests are present, which has been agreed in writing by the LPA.

Invasive Species

Himalayan balsam was recorded in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CCNW - Ref: JE8372-24 Oct 2024) with Japanese knotweed very close to the site boundary. These species are included within schedule 9 part 2 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended. It is an offence to introduce or cause to grow wild any plant listed under this schedule.

I recommend as a precaution a condition along the following lines is applied to any permission.

Prior to any earthworks, vegetation clearance or demolition a method statement detailing eradication and/or avoidance measures for Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed should be supplied to and agreed in writing to the LPA. The agreed method statement shall be adhered to and implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA.

Biodiversity Enhancement

While the application is not subject to statutory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements, we would still expect any such scheme to include measures to enhance biodiversity at the site and to provide a net gain for biodiversity, in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

There has been no landscaping plan that outlines what vegetation will be retained, protected or lost as part of the application.

We would recommend that a soft landscape plan is provide that details how the development will provide a net gain for biodiversity.

We would also recommend that opportunities for biodiversity enhancement be incorporated into the new development. These should include:

- Bat bricks within the new residential development
- House sparrow terrace on the new residential development
- Swallow cups within the replacement stables

I would recommend the following condition be added;

Prior to determination, a landscape design plan shall be provided to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority that shows that the application will cause a net gain to biodiversity, including details of suitable and correctly located nest and roost boxes for bats, house sparrow and swallow.

In conclusion we are satisfied that the application can be forwarded for determination and that any permission if granted is supported by the **conditions/informative** above.