

Thank you for consulting the GMEU

### Summary

There are no significant ecological issues associated with this development.

### Bats

A valid bat report has been provided. No evidence of bats was found and the building assessed as having very low bat roosting potential, with no dusk surveys required. I have no reason to doubt the findings of the report. As individual bats can on occasion turn up in unexpected locations, I recommend an informative along the following lines is applied to any permission.

*Whilst the building to be demolished has been assessed as negligible risk for bats, the applicant is reminded that under the 2019 Regulations it is an offence to disturb, harm or kill bats. If a bat is found during demolition all work should cease immediately and a suitably licensed bat worker employed to assess how best to safeguard the bat(s).*

### Nesting Birds

There appears to be no habitat for nesting birds, with no evidence of nesting on the building. I am satisfied that no further information or measures are required.

### Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment & Biodiversity Net Gain

Section 180 of the NPPF 2023 states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. There appears to be a net loss of garden as a result of the development, with no significant wildlife issues to mitigate. With regards biodiversity net gain, it is unclear whether the development would have required a net gain assessment as it is borderline with regards the de minimis exemption threshold of 25sqm of vegetation lost. As BNG is not yet mandatory, I would regard it as unreasonable to request an assessment for such a very low loss of lawn.

Some form of mitigation/enhancement should however be required, such as a tree or a hedge or as suggested by the ecological consultant a bat box. The details can be provided via a condition along the following lines.

*Prior to development a biodiversity enhancement scheme should be provided to and agreed in writing by the LPA*

**David Dutton**

**Ecologist**

Planning

Investment, Development and Housing

Place