

Summary

Further information on bats is recommended. Issues relating to nesting birds and biodiversity mitigation and enhancement can be dealt with via condition.

Bats

The trees and garage were assessed for bats. One tree was assessed as having low potential and the canopy over the garage door also assessed as having bat roosting potential. Low risk trees can be felled under pre-cautionary working measure such as soft felling. The consultant has recommended her presence on the site to supervise the tree with the potential bat roosting feature. I have no objection to this approach. I recommend a condition along the following lines is applied to any permission.

The removal of trees within Group G2 may have the potential to cause harm to bats as identified in Bat Survey Report Angela Graham Bat Consultancy Service Report Date 17/12/24 and shall not in any circumstances occur unless a bat consultant is present during felling or a precautionary working measures method statement has been provided to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority

The canopy over the garage door was also assessed as having bat roosting potential, with further survey required if removal was proposed. *I therefore recommend that prior to determination clarification is provided on whether or not the canopy is to be retained. If removal is proposed further survey should be provided prior to determination*

Nesting Birds

Trees and shrubs will be lost, 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 precautionary working method statement for nesting birds by a suitably experienced ecologist has been supplied to and agreed in writing by the LPA.

Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment & Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Section 180 of the NPPF 2023 states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. 10% BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).

The development will result in the loss of trees and garden, along with associated bird nesting habitat. The area lost is small but difficult to mitigate on the site, as the remainder of the site is already garden with boundary trees. Native tree and hedge planting is however feasible along with provision of bird boxes.

The developer has declared the application to be exempt from mandatory biodiversity net gain under the self-build rule. If this is a self-build application then they are correct.

I recommend biodiversity enhancement measure ie tree, hedge and bird and bat boxes are provided via condition.

Ecologist

Planning and Transportation

Planning and Transportation

Place