

Summary

Potential ecological issues include bats, nesting birds and biodiversity mitigation and enhancement.

1. Bats

Bats could theoretically roost in the building proposed for conversion. The building appears however to be in good condition and the development involves minimal disturbance to the existing building. I am therefore satisfied that the risk of an adverse effect on bats is very low. I recommend an informative along the following lines is applied to any permission

Whilst the development is very low 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 all work should cease immediately and a suitably licensed bat worker employed to assess how best to safeguard the bat(s).

2. Nesting Birds

The site appears to lack bird nesting opportunities, I am therefore satisfied that the risks of nesting birds being present is very low. However, as no ecological or arboricultural report has been provided and not all the site can be seen from the photographs provided and streetview, as a precaution, I recommend an informative along the following lines is applied to any permission.

The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended it is an offence to remove, damage, or destroy the nest of a wild bird, while the nest is in use or being built. Planning consent does not provide a defence against prosecution under this act. If a birds nest is suspected work should cease immediately and a suitably experienced ecologist employed to assess how best to safeguard the nest(s).

Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment & Biodiversity Net Gain

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 site appears to have no vegetated habitats or wildlife value. It also only covers a very small area. The proposed site will include a small lawn. There will therefore be a nett gain in vegetated habitat. The provision of a small garden should be conditioned.

No further information or measures are required.