

Jennie

Further to your consultation on the above application, I have considered the proposal and the submitted information: -

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd, September 2022)

I have the following comments to make: -

- The Report appears to have used reasonable effort to survey the habitats on site and make an assessment of their suitability to support protected/species of principal importance (Section 41, NERC 2006 [Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act]).
- The survey was conducted in August, which is recognised as suboptimal for the majority of surveys
- The Report concludes that the site supports a building of negligible value to bat roosting and the surrounding habitats within the site are of only local value to biodiversity.
- The ponds within 250m were considered and the proposal run against Natural England's Rapid risk assessment. It is concluded that it is highly unlikely that an offence under the Habitats Regulations 2019 would occur.
- There is currently no known reason to contradict the findings of the Report and **the application can be forwarded to determination in respect of biodiversity without the need for any further work.**
- It is recommended that in order to comply with planning policy a number of conditions/informatives should be attached to any permission if granted, as follows: -
 - Tree protection of retained hedgerows, trees and scrub **conditioned**
 - Design of the external lighting scheme In line with the NPPF (July 2021 para 185 c)) we recommend that applicants follow the Institute of Lighting Professionals guidance (01/21 obtrusive lighting and 08/18 wildlife sensitive lighting). This should include all elements of the proposal such as highways lighting, pedestrian/cycleway access and external domestic/security lighting as appropriate. This should be secured by **condition**.
 - Breeding birds – **Condition** that vegetation clearance including trees, shrubs and undergrowth (eg bramble) should avoid of the breeding season (March – August inclusive) unless it can be demonstrated that there is no nesting activity present. All wild birds are protected whilst nesting (Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981).
 - Amphibian Reasonable Avoidance Measures – The Report has made an adequate assessment of the risk to amphibians and protected/Species of Principal Importance (great crested newt and toad respectively). The Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment has been applied (section 7.6.16) and this conclusion is accepted. The Report recommends however, that a RAMS approach would be suitable for site clearance. The guidance provided at section 9.3 of the submitted Report should be adhered to in the clearance of the site including the removal of any structure bases. This can be secured via a **condition**.
 - Landscape Specification – Should use locally native species
 - Biodiversity Net Gain – Biodiversity Enhancement The landscape scheme should also include details of species specific enhancement in line with the Appendices and section 8.0 of the Report.

I hope you find these comments helpful. If you have any queries, please get back to GMEU via the general email account (gmeu@tameside.gov.uk)