

70563 - Ecology Response

Thank you for your consultation on the above application at 78-80 Church Street West.

As you are aware, we provided advice on the previous application at the site (70102) and the same bat survey has been submitted with the current application. This survey found the building to be converted to have very low bat roosting potential. However as bats are highly mobile creatures we would advise that the following informative be attached to any permission, should it be granted:

Whilst the building to be converted has been assessed as very low risk for bats, the applicant is reminded that under Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 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). Natural England should also be informed.

The survey also found that there was “potential for both roosting and nesting birds around the site perimeter”. We would therefore advise that the following condition be attached to any permission

No removal of or works to any hedgerows, trees or shrubs or works to or demolition of buildings or structures that may be used by breeding birds shall take place during the main bird breeding season 1st March and 31st August inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check of vegetation and structures for active birds' nests immediately before the vegetation is cleared or the works commence and provided written confirmation that no birds will be harmed and/or that there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting bird interest on site. Any such written confirmation should be submitted to the local planning authority.

Details of bat and bird boxes have been submitted with the current application but there appears to be no indication of how many or where these will be erected. Clarification on this matter is therefore required.