

Hi there,

Thank you for consulting GMEU regarding the above application, which is accompanied by a Preliminary Roost Assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, both undertaken by Verity Webster in 2024.

The shed to be demolished was found to have negligible bat roosting potential, and no further surveys are required. I have no reason to doubt this assessment. The main building was found to have low bat roosting potential due to the presence of potential crevice roost sites under hanging slates. However, the proposals will not directly impact the structure and for this reason, no further survey work was considered necessary. I agree with this assessment and no further surveys are required; however, as per Section 9 of the PRA, any new external lighting should be designed in line with best practice guidelines (e.g. <https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting>) to ensure that the potential roost features on this building remain unlit.

I would also make the following general recommendations:

- Protected species can turn up in unexpected places and the granting of planning permission does not negate the need to abide by the laws which are in place to safeguard biodiversity. An informative should be used so that the applicant is aware that they must seek ecological advice should they find or suspect that the proposal will impact on protected species.
- Vegetation removal should not be undertaken in the main bird nesting season (March – August) unless suitable checks for active bird nests have been undertaken.
- Measures to enhance the site for biodiversity should also be secured as part of this planning application, for example the integration of bat or bird boxes into the proposed and existing buildings on site as per Section 10 of the PRA.

The metric shows that a loss of 0.05 habitat units will be incurred on site, and as such at least 0.06 units will need to be compensated for off-site. While the UKHab survey found habitats on site to comprise modified grassland, ornamental planting, and non-native hedgerow, these have all been combined in the metric to 'vegetated garden'. We accept this approach, considering the low value of the habitats on site. As such, I have no reason

to disagree with the assessment of the baseline or post-development habitats on site, and given the small number of units required, it is likely that these will be readily available from a nearby habitat bank. The standard BNG condition can therefore be applied.

Do let me know if you have any queries.

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