

Technical Briefing Note

Project: Swansea Road, Reading, Berkshire (1005765)

Technical Briefing Note: Condition Discharge Report

May 2021

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Aspect Ecology has been commissioned by Helix Limited to provide ecological input in respect of bats at Swansea Road, Reading, Berkshire, hereafter referred to as 'the site'.
- 1.2 The existing buildings present within the site were assessed by Aspect Ecology in October 2019 for their potential to support roosting bats, the results of which are detailed within the Bat Roost Assessment report (prepared by Aspect Ecology, dated October 2019) which was submitted to inform the planning application. In summary, the on-site buildings were recorded to provide 'negligible' to 'low' suitability for roosting bats and, as such, a number of precautionary measures were recommended to be undertaken during the works.
- 1.3 The site is in receipt of full planning permission (ref: 191924), which was approved in March 2020 for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of nine dwellings with associated parking, access infrastructure and landscaping, albeit with the following condition relating to demolition of the existing buildings:

Condition 16: *'Demolition shall be undertaken under the supervision of an appropriately qualified ecologist (full member of CIEEM and or a Natural England Bat licence holder with experience of supervising demolitions where there is a risk of bats being present). Works are to follow a method statement agreed between the ecologist and the contractor detailing techniques, including the careful removal of tiles by hand, and the procedure to follow should bats or signs of bats be found. A closing-out report including details of the methods used, and any bats or signs of bats found, is to be issued to the council.'*

2 Approach Implemented

- 2.1 The buildings within the site had previously been assessed to provide 'negligible' to 'low' suitability for roosting bats, and as such, in order to safeguard bats in the unlikely event they would be present at the time of the demolition works, a number of precautionary measures were implemented, as detailed below.
 - **Contractor briefing.** Prior to commencement of any demolition works to the on-site buildings, site staff and contractors were given a 'tool box talk' by an appropriately qualified Ecologist (full member of CIEEM and / or a Natural England Bat licence holder) to make them aware of the possible presence of bats, their legal protection and of working practices in order to avoid potential harm to bats.
 - The appropriately qualified ecologist also provided a detailed briefing with regards the Method Statement document prepared to facilitate the works.

- **Pre-demolition Inspection.** An update visual inspection survey of the building, using ladders, torches and binoculars, where necessary, was undertaken by an appropriately experienced Ecologist to search for the presence of bats immediately prior to demolition of the buildings.
- **Removal of potential roost features.** A soft-strip of any potential roost features on the buildings was carried out under ecological supervision by the appropriately experienced Ecologist and during suitable weather conditions. During this process, care was given to ensure any concealed roosting bats were not harmed in the process, in the unlikely event they would be present during the works. In the event that any roosting bats be uncovered during the roof strip, site staff and contractors were instructed to cease all works immediately and Aspect Ecology be contacted for further advice. In this instance, a Natural England mitigation licence would be required.
- **Demolition.** Following the controlled removal of any potential roost features, once the ecologist had given the 'all clear' the remainder of the buildings were demolished without supervision.

3 Results and Conclusions

- 3.1 A precautionary approach, comprising a soft-strip exercise of features with the potential to support roosting bats, was carried out under ecological supervision at the site, in order to fully safeguard bats in the unlikely event that they were present at the time of works.
- 3.2 It is confirmed that the works are now complete, and that **no bats were encountered** at any point during the demolition works. As such, it is considered that condition 16 has been fully addressed and can be discharged.

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