

# Memo

**To:** Matthew Burns

**From:** Giles Sutton (RBC Ecology Consultations)

**CC:**

**Date:** 30 April 2020

**Re:** Planning application ref: 200358

Address: Caversham Lock Thames Side, Reading, RG1 8BP

Description: The installation of two Archimedean Screw Turbines with a hut covering the generators, gearboxes and the control system (hydropower infrastructure) without complying with condition 2 (approved plans) of planning permission ref. 151715 to allow minor changes to the size of the turbines, housing structure and generator hut. Additional details are also submitted in respect of conditions 3 (Public Footpath), 4 (Bat Boxes), 5 (Great Crested Newts Licence), 7 (Tree Protection), 9 (Materials), 10 (Fencing), 11 (Construction Method Statement), 13 (land cleaning procedures) and 15 (Fish and Eel Pass Detailed Design)

---

The amended plans are unlikely to have any additional ecological affects than those approved under application 151715 and as such there are no objections to tis part of the application.

The description of the planning application refers to additional details of a number of planning conditions including three ecology related conditions 4 (Bat Boxes), 5 (Great Crested Newts Licence) and 15 (Fish and Eel Pass Detailed Design)

## Condition 4

This condition reads:

*“4. Construction of the generator building hereby permitted shall not commence until details of bat boxes and or integral bat roosting sites on and around the building have been submitted and approved in writing by the council. The bat boxes and or integral bat roosting sites shall thereafter be installed in accordance with the approved details”*

The details of these are according to the DAS provided in the Tree Protection Plan. This document reads:

*“6.1 10 bird & bat boxes will be installed on appropriate trees on View Island. The boxes will be inline with the RSPB specification from their website - <https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/give-nature-ahome-in-your-garden/garden-activities/buildabatbox/>*

*6.2 These will be installed following guidance from a qualified ecologist onsite. As an indication of the locations please see plan below:”*

Whilst there is no objection to these boxes being installed these are not “integral bat

roosting sites” nor are they “on and around the building” and as such it is advised that this condition cannot be discharged.

[NB The Construction Materials document reads:

*“2.10 A number of wooden bat boxes will be fitted to the outside of the generator hut and distributed around surrounding trees. “*

But no further details are given and furthermore the use of wooden boxes will not provide long term roost sites for bats]

#### Condition 5

This condition reads:

*“5. No works to the fish pass shall commence until a licence for works affecting great crested newts has been obtained from the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (Natural England) and a copy has been submitted to the Council. Thereafter mitigations measures approved in the licence shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details. Should the applicant conclude that a licence for development works affecting great crested newts is not required the applicant is to submit a report to the Council detailing the reasons for this assessment and this report is to be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. “*

The applicant has submitted an updated great crested newt (GCN) report. The updated report details the results of updated surveys of the nearby ponds and concludes that GCN are likely absent from the application site, and as such, subject to the recommendations on page 4 of the report being followed, the proposals are unlikely to affect GCN. As such condition 5 can be discharged.

#### Condition 15

This condition reads:

*“15. No development shall take place until detailed designs of the fish and eel pass and works to the View Island channel have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be subsequently implemented in accordance with the approved details before the commencement of development.”*

In relation to this condition the table on page 5 of The DAS reads:

*“A drawing pack showing the EA approved Fish and Eel pass design to be constructed. This has been approved by the EA National Fish Pass Panel.”*

This drawing pack does not appear to have been submitted. It is however advised that written confirmation be sought from the EA that they have approved the design before this condition is discharged.