

Our Ref: 922.1/AS

20th May 2019

Monica Lozano Subiranas
Reading Borough Council

Dear Ms Lozano Subiranas

Response to comments on planning application at 28 Highdown Avenue, Emmer Green, Reading (190535).

Many thanks for your comments of 29th April 2019 regarding the current planning application at 28 Highdown Avenue (190535).

The Ecological Appraisal (HDA, 2019) which accompanied the planning application describes in detail the Phase 1 bat scoping survey that was carried out at the site. The survey recorded the bungalow building as having 'very low' potential to support roosting bats while the adjoining garage was considered to have 'negligible' potential.

Following careful consideration of the conditions on site the bungalow was specifically given a category of 'very low' potential rather than 'low' or negligible' as described under the BCT 2016 Good Practice Guidelines as it was not considered to meet either of these described categories. The building was not considered to meet the criteria for 'low' potential due to:

- the low number of potential bat roost features present,
- the small size and poor suitability of the features present;
- the good condition of the building overall;
- the formal nature of the surrounding gardens providing limited opportunity for foraging bats; and
- the abundance of more suitable alternative roost sites in the wider area.

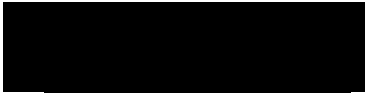
In view of the above, we do not agree that further surveys should be required in order to allow the planning application to proceed. However, as two possible, albeit low value, bat roost features were noted, it has not been considered appropriate to categorise the building as having 'negligible' potential, which would mean no follow up surveys are required prior to demolition.

A precautionary approach, proportional to the level of bat interest identified, has therefore been recommended. This would involve a survey for roosting bats immediately prior to demolition, either through endoscope inspection or a dusk/dawn emergence/re-entry survey, or supervision of removal of suitable features during demolition by a licensed bat worker. This approach is expected to ensure the

protection of any individual bats present, and the maintenance of the favourable conservation status of the local bat population, without placing any disproportionate or unreasonable obligations on the client prior to the granting of planning consent.

We trust that the above provides the sufficient information required to explain our approach to survey and assessment and addresses any concerns you may have.

Yours sincerely



Anna Senior
Principal Ecologist
Hankinson Duckett Associates