

Memo

To: Marcie Rejwerska
From: Cathy Holwill (RBC Ecology Consultations)
CC:
Date: 07 March 2024
Re: Application ref: 240149
Address: 122 Kidmore Road Reading RG4 7NB
Description: Replacement dwelling

The application site is a detached property with garage in a residential area of Caversham which will be demolished and replaced by a much larger dwelling.

The Bat Survey report (Arbtech, February 2023) concludes that the building is unlikely to host roosting bats. As such, since the proposals are unlikely to affect bats or other protected species, there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds.

Biodiversity Net Gain and Biodiversity Enhancements

The house is located adjacent to at Green Link as per policy EN12.

Policy EN12 of the Reading BC local plan reads: "On all sites, development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity, and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible." As such and to demonstrate compliance with this policy (as well as forthcoming national policy for mandatory BNG), it is recommended that the applicant supplies a net gain calculation, using the DEFRA 4 metric to demonstrate how a net gain in biodiversity will be achieved.

Paragraph 180 of the NPPF reads

"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment".

[...] minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

Paragraph 186 of the NPPF reads

[...] development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate."

As per the above policies, enhancements for wildlife are recommended (such as integrated bird and bat boxes and wildlife friendly planting).

Summary

The applicant should be asked to submit a net gain calculation, using the latest DEFRA metric to demonstrate how a net gain in biodiversity will be achieved.

Once this issue is resolved, there would likely be no objections to this application on ecology grounds.