

Memo

To: Marcie Rejwerska

From: Cathy Holwill (RBC Ecology Consultations)

CC:

Date: 9th September 2024

Re: Application ref: 240415

Address: Land to South Of 104 Berkeley Avenue Reading RG1 6HY

Description: Erection of a detached dwelling with parking and amenity space

The application is for the erection of an additional two storey dwelling within the garden of 104 Berkeley Avenue. The site is located in a residential area of Reading and adjacent to a Green link as per Policy EN12

A previous application for two pairs of new semi-detached houses was withdrawn (application ref 210420)

An application for a single house was approved (application ref 220413)

An application for the erection of a single house was withdrawn (application ref: 231643)

This application is for an additional larger single house, which will result in the loss of much of the remaining garden.

It is our advice that the application does not comply with policies EN 12 and H11. It will result in the loss of private garden land, on a designated green link and would does not provide “*appropriate hard and soft landscaping, particularly at site boundaries*” nor does it provide “*biodiversity net gain wherever possible*” (the submitted BNG metric shows that there is a net loss in habitat units – see further details below) and therefore does not accord with Policy H11. It also does not maintain, protect, consolidate, extend or enhance the identified Green Network and instead will lead to its fragmentation (Policy EN12)

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

The applicant has stated on the application form that this is a self-build and custom build development and therefore exempt from mandatory BNG. It seems unlikely that the application is, given that an additional house has already been built on the plot, presumably by the same individual or company. I would suggest that you ask the applicant to confirm why they have concluded it is a self build application and if so, provide evidence that it is.

Assuming that it is not, our advice would be that the application does not comply with the BNG hierarchy set out in the Articles 37A and 37D of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 or the mitigation hierarchy as per the NPPF and EN12. This is because there are likely to be alternative sites where houses could be built with less harm to biodiversity.

If you are minded to refuse the application, please let us know and we will provide wording for the reason for refusal. Conversely, if you are minded to approve the application let us know and we will recommend appropriately worded conditions for the proposed scheme.