

Memo

To: Marcelina Rejwerska

From: Cathy Holwill (RBC Ecology Consultations)

CC:

Date: 11 November 2024

Re: Planning application ref: PL/24/1353

Address: 7 BLAGRAVE STREET, READING, RG1 1PJ

Description: Demolition of the existing building (façade retained) and erection of a five-storey building with a café, bed and breakfast, and ancillary spaces

The application site is a two-storey mid terrace building located in central Reading, surrounded by taller buildings. It is proposed to demolish the building and replace with a five-storey building.

The bat emergence survey report (Cherryfield Ecology, September 2023) presents the results from two bat emergence / re-entry surveys undertaken in July and September 2023. Although no bats were seen entering or emerging from the building during these surveys, the report recommends non-licensed precautionary measures during construction due to significant bat activity observed at the rear of the building where views were limited. A condition should be set to ensure that the measures outlined in the document are implemented - suggested wording for the condition is provided below.

Biodiversity Enhancements

in accordance with paragraph 186 of the NPPF, which states that “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” a condition should be set to ensure that enhancements for wildlife are provided within the new development. Example wording is given below

Conditions:

Condition: Works are to be carried out in full accordance with the precautionary non licensed working method statement given in Section 4 (Conclusions, Discussion, Impacts and Recommendations) of the submitted bat survey report [Cherryfield Ecology, September 2023] unless otherwise approved in writing by the Council.

Should development not commence prior to May 2025, an updated bat survey is to be undertaken (by an appropriately qualified ecologist) and the results submitted and approved in writing by the Council. If the survey shows that a bat roost is present, no development that may affect the bat roost is to commence until any relevant licence(s) have been obtained from Natural England and a copy submitted to and approved in writing by the council. Should bats or evidence of bats be found and the applicant conclude that a licence for development works affecting bats 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 council

Reason: To ensure that bats, a protected species (as per the NPPF), are not adversely affected by the proposals.

Condition: Prior to commencement of the development, details of biodiversity enhancements, to include two bird and two bat boxes, bricks or tiles built into the walls of the new extension shall be submitted and approved in writing by the council. The biodiversity enhancements shall thereafter be installed as approved and a short letter report (including photos of the bricks/boxes/tiles in situ), stating that the bat and bird roosting facilities have been installed as per the approved plan is to be submitted to the Council prior to the occupation of the dwelling.

Reason: To incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments in accordance with paragraph 186 of the NPPF and policy EN12 of the Reading Local Plan (2019)