

Memo

To: Marcelina Rejwerska

From: Cathy Holwill (RBC Ecology Consultations)

CC:

Date: 28 January 2025

Re: Planning application ref: PL/25/0056

Address: 7 HAWTHORNE ROAD, CAVERSHAM, READING

Description: Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Conditions 3 - (Materials), 4 & 5 - (19% improvement in emissions rate), 6 - (Update for habitat enhancements), 7, 8 - (Tree protection plan), and 14 (Construction method statement) of application PL/23/1733

The application seeks to discharge Conditions 3 - (Materials), 4 & 5 - (19% improvement in emissions rate), 6 - (Update for habitat enhancements), 7, 8 - (Tree protection plan), and 14 (Construction method statement) of application PL/23/1733 [

Condition 6 reads:

No development shall commence on site (including demolition or preparatory works) until details of a habitat enhancement scheme are submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme is to include a programme for implementation and ongoing maintenance. The habitat enhancement scheme shall thereafter be implemented and adhered to in accordance with agreed programme.

REASON: Details are required prior to commencement as insufficient information was submitted with the application and in order to avoid harm to habitats and species whilst securing biodiversity enhancement in the long term. This accords with Paragraph 180 of the NPPF (2023), Policy EN12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

The applicant has submitted a plan (Rammurti Design Ltd), June 2023, Ref HRC07:003 Rev P5) showing the location of ‘a ‘typical hedgehog house; a single ‘typical hedgehog access hole’ and a General purpose Bat Box located on an existing tree’

This is not sufficient to discharge the condition. Significantly, there are no details of how “The scheme is to include a programme for implementation and ongoing maintenance.” as required by the condition.

Furthermore, the provision for roosting boxes is inadequate. As a minimum, one bat roosting box/tile/brick and one bird roosting brick/box must be provided. These must be integral boxes built into the wall of the new building because if they are not, over time they will fall off or be removed and will not provide sustainable long term habitats for birds and boxes. A good example of a universal nest brick (for birds) can be seen here:

https://www.swift-conservation.org/universal_swift_nest_brick02.pdf

Only one hedgehog access hole is shown which is insufficient. The number must be increased and plans updated to show the locations along with details of how these will be labelled

The condition should not be discharged until the plans are updated showing the locations, elevations and specification of all biodiversity enhancements.

Conditions 3, 4 & 5 , 7, 8 - and 14 are not directly related to ecology and there are no ecological objections to the discharge of these conditions.