

Memo

To: Louise Fuller

From: Cathy Holwill (RBC Ecology Consultations)

CC:

Date: 18 March 2025

Re: Planning application ref: PL/25/0293

Address: Belle Vue Hotel, 2 Tilehurst Road, Reading, RG1 7TN

Description: Change of use from a hotel (Use Class C1) into 7 x 1-bedroom flats (Use Class C3), together with associated internal works to the listed building and external site works including 3 x car parking spaces, 8 x cycle parking spaces, soft landscaping and provision of communal external amenity space..

The application site is a detached building in a residential and built up area of Reading off the Tilehurst Road. It is proposed to convert the building into seven flats.

Habitats on site comprised mostly hardstanding and buildings with some scattered trees. External changes to the building appear to be limited to changes to windows and as such, the risk of the proposals directly adversely affecting bats is likely to be negligible/minimal. However, two trees will be removed and are likely to be used by nesting birds and as such any vegetation clearance should be carried out outside of the best nesting season (March to August inclusive)

Biodiversity Net Gain

The site is dominated by hardstanding, buildings and two small trees in poor condition (which will be removed). As such the application is not subject to mandatory BNG. The proposals will lead to replacement of much of the hardstanding with landscaped gardens including four new trees and hedges, and a net gain in biodiversity is likely to be delivered. This should be secured by applying the standard landscaping condition.

The proposed site plan shows areas of green, but there is no key to indicate what these areas represent—clarification is needed.

Summary

Subject to clarification of the large green area shown on the proposed site plan, there would be no objection to this application, subject to conditions for vegetation clearance to take place outside of the bird nesting season and for landscaping.