

HERTFORDSHIRE ECOLOGY

Providing ecological advice to Hertfordshire's Local Authorities and communities

Environmental Resource Planning, Hertfordshire County Council
County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DN
ecology@hertfordshire.gov.uk
Tel: 01992 555220

Mr D Elmore
Senior Development Management Officer
Planning
Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
The Campus
Welwyn Garden City
Hertfordshire
AL8 6AE

Ask for: Anita Parry
Tel: 01992 556149
Date: 24/04/2018

Dear David,

Application Reference: 6/2018/0457/HOUSE

Proposed development at: 35 Carbone Hill Northaw Potters Bar EN6 4PN

Proposal: Erection of first floor rear extension, roof alterations and 2x rear Juliet balconies following demolition of conservatory and outbuildings. Change of materials and replacement windows and installation of new front access and exit gates.

Thank you for consulting Hertfordshire Ecology on this application. I apologise for the delay with this reply.

The Hertfordshire Environmental Records Centre does not have any habitat or species data for the application site itself, which is a large detached two storey residential dwelling with large wooded garden. The property backs onto Northaw Great Wood, which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) site. In fact, the property falls within the AWI boundary. To the east / south-east is Home Wood, a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) designated for its ancient woodland features. These habitats will provide suitable foraging and commuting opportunities for bats and there are records of them roosting in the area.

I am pleased to see a bat report has been submitted in support of the application – *Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment* by Clive Herbert, 2017.

A daytime inspection on 8 November 2017 found evidence (droppings) of Brown Long-eared bat throughout the L-shaped loft void. The building had potential bat roosting features amongst raised roof tiles, especially on the rear elevation. Consequently, the house was assessed to have *high* potential to support roosting bats.

Following Bat Conservation Trust best practice guidelines, at least 3 follow-up dusk emergence / dawn re-entry surveys are recommended to further inform any use of the

building by bats, and to provide appropriate mitigation to safeguard bats if present and affected.

Dusk emergence / dawn re-entry surveys can only be carried out in the summer months when bats are active, usually between May and August, or September if the weather remains warm. Ideally, they should be at least two weeks apart. We are now approaching the optimum time of year to undertake bat activity surveys. However, due to the recent warm weather bats have started emerging this month. Consequently, in this instance bat activity surveys can start now.

Until the follow-up surveys are undertaken, the LPA does not have enough information regarding the impact on bats in a building identified to have high bat roosting potential. As bats are European Protected Species (EPS) this information is required to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority *prior to determination*, so it can fully consider the impact of the proposals on bats and discharge its legal obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

It should be noted that if bats will be affected by the proposals, appropriate mitigation measures must be carried out under the legal constraints of an EPS development licence obtained from Natural England. I have no reason to believe that a licence will not be issued. Natural England will require a number of activity surveys for a licence to be issued, consequently these need to be factored in to any development timescale.

Lighting

Due to the rural location of the site with plenty of semi-natural habitats and mature trees/woodland in close proximity, I advise an **Informative** for any external lighting is added to any permission granted:

“Any external lighting scheme should be designed to minimise light spill, in particular directing light away from the boundary vegetation to ensure dark corridors remain for use by wildlife as well as directing lighting away from potential roost / nesting sites.”

To conclude

Currently there is insufficient information on bats to determine this application. Once the requested information has been provided, I can advise the LPA as necessary.

I trust these comments are of assistance.

Yours sincerely

Anita Parry
Ecology Advisor
Hertfordshire Ecology