

Ecology response for F/23/95982 WILLOW MEAD, WILDERN LANE, HEDGE END

Construction of 4 new 1no Bedroom retirement flats and associated parking.

Gary Osmond

20/12/23

It is not clear that the latest site plan has been added to the system, as both the Site Plan (SD-2005-00 D) and the Superseded Site Plan (SD-2005-00 Rev D) seem to be the same, are labelled with a red D and are both dated January 2020.

Although the Planning Design and Access Statement (3.2) states that the SO Ecology report(s?) have informed the design and layout of the proposal, however I don't see this reflected in the proposed site plan. I raise an objection to this application until the site plan reflects the site layout as proposed in the Ecological Impact Assessment report by SO Ecology (May 2023).

The Compensation and Enhancement Plan in section 8.4 (dated 27/4/23) has been designed to demonstrate sufficient compensation for loss of habitat as well as areas of habitat enhancement. The vegetation shown on the proposed site plan does not include the hedgerow on the northern boundary, or any scrub, either inside or outside the red line boundary, which is essential habitat to be retained and enhanced on site. Green infrastructure/ wildlife habitat must be continuous around the perimeter of the site, with the same size and extent as proposed in the Ecological Impact Assessment report.

The Arboricultural Implications plan (8/11/23) shows that the southern corner of the proposed building would intrude on the root protection zone and canopy of tree 2. As this proposed building is 2 stories high, this would be a significant intrusion. The site plan does not show the same distances from the trees or the southern boundary as the Arboricultural Implications plan.

This site is within an amber impact risk zone for great crested newts. There are records of bats, common lizards near this site.

The Ecological Impact Assessment by SO Ecology (May 2023) recommends no further surveys but precautionary mitigation measures for foraging and commuting bats, nesting birds, priority invertebrates (such as stag beetles), amphibians, and hedgehogs. The mitigation, compensation and management recommendations for habitat and protected species in sections 5.2.1, 5.2.2, and 5.3.1 – 5.3.5 of the report are appropriate for this proposal and can be conditioned. These can be combined into a CEMP which provides detailed precautionary working methods, and a detailed biodiversity enhancement and landscape management plan. Exterior lighting must be minimised and only what is required for security purposes. The lighting plan must conform to Guidance Note GN08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting, by the Institute of Lighting Professionals and the Bat Conservation Trust, as

recommended in section 5.3.4 of the Ecological Impact Assessment report. Light spill on any features which could provide habitat for bats and nesting birds must be avoided.

The report states that survey results are considered valid for 12 months from the date of the last site visit which appears to have been the end of April 2023. If the development is delayed past April 2024, a walkover update survey will be required to determine whether conditions have changed and whether any additional surveys would be needed.

A surface water drainage plan will be required. The SO Ecology report states that the total area of the site is approximately 0.046ha so permeable paving will be considered, however it must be established that suitable soil conditions exist for infiltration to be successful.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist