

Ecology Statement – Conversion Of Store Into Residential Dwelling.

12/04/22

This Ecology Statement accompanies an application for the conversion of an existing store into a residential dwelling.

Guidance on the conservation of protected species is given in ODPM Circular 06/2005. At Paragraph 99 the Circular advises that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent to which they might be affected by the proposed development, must be established before planning permission is granted.

Existing hedgerows are not being affected by the proposal and, therefore, it is clear that the proposal is not such that would give rise to loss of habitat for protected species.

The existing building is of a modern construction comprising block cavity walls with external cladding. The roof has a modern interlocking covering and is underdrawn with modern breathable felt and battens and is finished with well constructed and maintained fascias, bargeboards and soffits. The building finishes are tightly constructed with no visible entry points.

Mitigation and Enhancements.

Precautionary Working Methods for Great Crested Newts

Ground works should be carried out under the following precautionary working methods:

All persons/contractors should be briefed, prior to works starting, on the low risk of protected great crested newts being present, and working methods to ensure that the risk of harming great crested newts is minimised.

Any tall vegetation within the working area (grass or ruderals) should be strimmed (March to October), prior to start of works, to encourage any active animals to leave the clearance zone.

Any paving slabs, bricks, plant-pots, logs, or other loose items which newts could take refuge under, should be moved out of the working area before mid-October. This will avoid GCN hibernation within the working zone.

Storage of Materials

During the construction phase, any temporarily stored materials (bricks, paving slabs, debris piles) should be kept above the ground on pallets to avoid forming refuge opportunities for hedgehogs, reptiles or amphibians.

Nocturnal Mammals

Any deep pits left open overnight should have a shallow-gradient secured scaffold board to provide an escape route for any animals that may become trapped.

Nesting Birds

All vegetation clearance should be undertaken outside the nesting season, due to the risk of being used by nesting birds. If this is not feasible, a precautionary survey of the site prior to start of works should be carried out, to check for active bird nests, and avoid infringing legislation which protects all nesting birds (WCA 1981). If an active nest is recorded, clearance of that part of the site will be postponed until all young birds have fledged and left the area.

Enhancements

Birds and bats:

To encourage bats and / or nesting birds, the converted property should include:

Either

- Three bird nesting opportunities (nest boxes) located on the dwelling. Suggested nest boxes are noted below, however, there are many suitable alternatives available. Bird boxes are self maintaining and require no ongoing maintenance.

1. Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace.
2. Ipstock Eco-habitat for Swifts.
3. Schweglar Swallow Nest No10

or

4. Two bat boxes should be incorporated into the dwelling (Habitat Integrated Bat Box or similar), or on appropriately located timber support post or the trees located within the site boundaries. Locate 3-6m above ground level and out of the reach of cats. Ensure boxes are located away from illuminated lighting. Bat boxes are self maintaining and require no ongoing maintenance.

Lighting

All external lighting should be kept to the minimal feasible level and be directed downward. LED luminaires will be used where possible. Hoods or louvres are to be used to reduce light spill and direct it only to where needed in a downward direction. Any external security lighting should be set on motion-sensors sensitive to large moving objects only, and short (<1 minute) timers.

Construction works will only be undertaken during daylight hours and task lighting will not be used during the construction phase of the development.

Clients responsibility towards protected species.

The site owner/applicant and any visiting workers have a responsibility to ensure that protected species or their resting places are not killed, injured or disturbed as a consequence of their actions.

Nesting birds and reptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended), and hedgehogs are a UK and Suffolk Priority species under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

All bat species and their roosts are fully protected by legislation (Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017)). The combined legislation makes it illegal to deliberately kill, injure or capture (take) bats, deliberately or recklessly disturb bats (whether in a roost or not) or damage, destroy or obstruct access to bat roosts. Natural England, as the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (SNCO) for England, must be notified when a proposed development will affect a bat roost.

It is considered that there conversion of the workshop will have no significant impact on any protected or priority species and the client is fully aware that it is a criminal offence to disturb or harm protected species should they subsequently be found or disturbed.

The client has advised that the building has never shown evidence or signs of protected or priority species, however, If any protected species are discovered during construction works, a qualified ecologist will be contacted immediately for advice or assistance.

Appendix Photographs

Photo 1 – Workshop South Elevation



Photo 2 – Workshop Doors. Note well fitted external finishes.



Photo 3 – Internal View – Note modern roof trusses, breathable felt & block external walling.

