

Ecological Addendum

Site Address: 21-57 Willow Way, London, Lewisham SE26 4QP

Client Name: Kitewood Estates Ltd

Reference: Ecological Addendum

Date: 04/05/2023

Background

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed to write an Ecological Addendum in support of Kitewood Estates Ltd (Kitewood), the appellant who submitted a Full Planning Application Lewisham Council (DC/22/129789) for the demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment of the site comprising a block rising to 5/6 storeys accommodating 1,401sqm of employment floorspace (Use Classes E(g)(i)(ii)(iii)) at ground and mezzanine floors and 60 residential units (Use Class C3) above, with associated landscaping, amenity areas, cycle, car parking and refuse/recycling stores. This was refused in March 2023.

The purpose of this addendum is to summarise the original Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA), prepared by ECOSA in December 2022 and its recommendation for further survey work together with results of those, in the aim of providing evidence that the Ecological officer comments, dated 21st March have been considered. Arbtech was instructed to carry out the surveys in accordance with the ECOSA PEA.

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

The site is within one kilometre of two designated sites Dacres Wood LNR and Fern Bank LNR. With no direct connectivity between these and the site no impacts are anticipated. The site has been assessed as hosting only hard standing and buildings. The risk of the site hosting notable or protected species is considered negligible other than roosting bats within the building complex and breeding birds associated with trees and buildings.

Bats

ECOSA's original PEA identified that two buildings (B1 and B5) had low suitability to support roosting bats and a bat emergence or reentry survey (BERS) should be carried out during the bat activity season (May-September). Kitewood Estates hoped to undertake this during the determination period, and the lack of survey data was cited as a reason for refusal.

In the planning officer's report, it was noted that the aforementioned surveys had not yet been conducted or provided with the application as recommended, therefore we cannot "fully assess the potential effects of the proposals on protected species". Sydenham is one of the hotspots for bats in Lewisham (see appendix 3 of BAP) so bats in this area need to be properly considered.

To this end Kitewood Estates commissioned Arbtech Consultancy Ltd to undertake a bat emergence survey as per the recommendations within the PEA. This was undertaken on the 3rd of May 2023.

Bat survey executive Summary, from the dedicated report dated 4th May 2023

Arbtech Consulting Ltd was commissioned by Kitewood Estates Ltd to undertake a bat Emergence survey at 21-57 Willow Way, Lewisham, London SE26 4QP. The survey was completed on 3rd May 2023. The aim of the assessment was to confirm the presence/likely-absence of a bat roost and to provide a current status on all survey features. This includes providing evidence for species, numbers and levels of activity, to identify any entrance and egress points, and to gain an understanding of the activity of bats using the site in the local landscape.

Evaluation of survey features on site for roosting bats

Ref	Survey conclusions (with justification)	Foreseen impacts	Recommendations / Mitigation	Enhancements The Local Planning Authority has a duty to ask for enhancements under the NPPF (2021)
Site buildings including B1 and B5, the subjects of the night survey	There is a likely absence of roosting bats in B1 and B5 and the other site buildings based on the evidence gathered to date.	Bats are very unlikely to be roosting within B1 and B5, and the other site buildings and as such, there are not anticipated to be any impacts on bats in this location as a result of the	No further surveys required, but enhancement recommended. In the unlikely event that bats are unexpectedly found during any stage of the development, work should stop immediately, and a suitably qualified ecologist should be	The installation of a minimum of eight bat boxes on the new buildings will provide additional roosting habitat for bats Bat boxes could be incorporated into new buildings on the site e.g. Habibat Bat Box or other wall integrated model Bat tubes should be inserted into the fabric of the building during construction, positioned 3-5m above

		<i>proposed development.</i>	<i>contacted to seek further advice.</i>	<i>ground level facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance and facing landscapes areas, away from artificial light.</i>
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It should be noted that this is rather early for a single visit survey, which following professional guidelines should ideally take place in mid-May, however it would appear that the contractually obligated appeal date leaves Kitewood Estates with no alternative option. As outlined in the bat survey report however, the early May weather was considered suitable for the survey and did not present a limitation to the evidence gathered.

The above is deemed adequate to address the concerns regarding bats.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity net gain was another issue referenced in the Planning officer's report and reasons for refusal. This was addressed via the commissioning of a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, which was completed on 27th April 2023. This included condition assessments of the habitats present on site (where relevant) and predicted conditions of proposed new habitats. The landscaping scheme for the development will result in the loss of 5 poor condition Category C trees, which will be replaced and augmented within the new development. This will increase the acreage of urban green space as well as increasing local biodiversity value when augmented with the installation of wildflower lawns, ground level planting, living walls and living roofing. Much of the planting uses species of known wildlife value. This was calculated to result in a net gain of 82.6%.

Wildlife Protection

A further concern highlighted within the reasons for refusal stated the follow;

"The outline CMP does not even mention biodiversity or any provisions on how to avoid impact on wildlife during construction"

Precautionary measures have been laid out in the PEA by ECOSA, for example sensitive timings of works and compensation for habitat losses via bird and bat boxes. It is considered that risks to other wildlife is negligible but it would be good practice to ensure trenches are left with means for wildlife to escape and are checked before backfilling. Materials and rubble should be kept raised on pallets to prevent animals

from using it as refugia. If any protected species such as GCN is found on site all works must stop whilst a licenced ecologist is approached for advice.

Author

The addendum is written by Fay Brotherhood BSc (Hons) MSc, a botany and habitats specialist with qualifications in Countryside Management, Wildlife Conservation and Environmental Management and

Reviewer

Craig Williams, BSc (Hons), MSc, DIC, MRSB

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