

14. 18/0862/FUL- Demolition of existing single storey rear extensions, construction of two storey rear extension, single storey front extension, loft conversion including extension to roof, insertion of dormers to front, insertion and rooflights and conversion of garage to habitable space at 23 Wyatts Close Chorleywood WD3 5TF (DCES)

Parish: Chorleywood
Expiry of Statutory Period:27.06.2018

Ward: Chorleywood North and Sarratt
Case Officer: Claire Wilson

Recommendation: That Planning Permission be granted.

Reason for consideration by the Committee: The application has been called in by three members of the Planning Committee and by Chorleywood Parish Council.

1 Relevant Planning History

1.1 8/715/77: Single storey rear extension

2 Description of Application Site

2.1 The application site consists of a detached bungalow located on the western side of Wyatts Close, a cul de sac accessed via Wyatts Road, Chorleywood. The existing bungalow has a hipped roof form with accommodation in the roofspace served by an existing front dormer window, the roof over the existing integral garage and dining room projection is set down from the main ridge of the dwelling. The streetscene generally consists of detached bungalows of varied style, many of which have been extended. No.24 to the north of the application has been extended to the side and rear and its roof form has been altered to a Dutch hipped roof form with dormer windows to the front and rear roofslopes.

2.2 The dwellings on this side of Wyatts Close are set at an elevated location relative to the existing highway. It is noted that the building line is stepped with the application dwelling set back relative to the main front elevation of the dwelling to the north, but set forward relative to no.22 to the south. To the front of the dwelling is a part paved driveway with provision for three off street car parking spaces.

2.3 To the rear, the dwelling has an existing pitched roof projection adjacent to the common boundary with no.24; this element appears to be original. The dwelling has been previously extended with a single storey rear extension with flat roof form. This is set in from both boundaries of the site. The boundary treatment with no.22 consists of a mature hedge whilst the boundary treatment with no.24 consists of close boarded fencing and mature vegetation.

2.4 Beyond the rear wall of the extension is a paved patio area with the remaining garden set out a higher level relative to the dwelling itself.

3 Description of Proposed Development

3.1 The applicant is seeking full planning for the demolition of existing single storey rear extensions, construction of two storey rear extension, single storey front extension, loft conversion including extension to roof, insertion of front dormer windows and rooflights and conversion of garage to habitable accommodation.

3.2 The existing roof form is stepped resulting in the roof form over the existing garage and dining room being set down relative to the main ridge. The applicant is proposing a roof extension to infill this area. As a result, the ridge width would be extended by 2.8m to a maximum ridge width of approximately 4.4m. The ridge height would be maintained as existing and the roof form would have a depth of 8.6m. It is noted that the existing dining

room projection located adjacent to the boundary with no.24 would be reduced by approximately 1.9m.

- 3.3 To the front roof slope, two pitched roof dormer windows are proposed. These would have a maximum width (roof form) of 1.8m, a height of 1.9m and a depth of 1.3m. A rooflight would be installed in either flank roofslope. In addition, three rooflights would be installed at single storey level serving the kitchen.
- 3.4 To the rear, the existing single storey rear extension would be demolished and a two storey rear extension is proposed. This would have a depth of 4m and a width of 4.5m. The extension would be gable ended to the rear and would have a height of approximately 5.7m. The extension would be set in from the boundary with no.24 by approximately 3.2m and in from the boundary with no.22 by 4.2m. At first floor level, a Juliet Balcony is proposed.
- 3.5 It is also noted that the existing garage would be converted which would involve the replacement of the garage door with a window which would be flush with the front elevation of the dwelling.
- 3.6 During the course of the application, amended plans have been received. The amendments are as follows:
- Removal of flank dormer windows and provision of flank rooflights;
 - Reduction in depth of two storey rear extension from 4.3m to 4m;
 - Reduction in height of two storey rear extension.

4 Consultation

4.1 Statutory Consultation

4.1.1 Chorleywood Parish Council: [Objection]

The Committee had objections to this application on the following grounds and wish to call in unless officers are minded to refuse this application:

- The proposed development will increase the bulk and mass of the dwelling
- The impact on the neighbouring properties
- Concerns with the forty five degree splay line
- The development would therefore be contrary to Policy CP12 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011).

4.1.2 Highways England: No objection.

4.1.3 Herts Ecology: [No objection]

Thank you for contacting Hertfordshire Ecology regarding the above. The Hertfordshire Environmental Records Centre does not have any habitat or species data for the application site itself, which is a detached bungalow in an area of low density housing. The neighbourhood gardens are large with plenty of mature trees and there are a number of Local Wildlife Sites (woodlands and grasslands) within 500m in all directions. The mixed semi-natural habitats in the area will provide suitable foraging and commuting opportunities for bats, and there are records of them roosting in the area.

Bats are protected under European and national legislation and in general terms, it is an offence to disturb or harm a bat, or damage or obstruct access to a roost. They will roost in buildings (often underneath tiles and boarding, and in cracks and gaps in roof structures) and in trees if suitable features and conditions are available.

The main ecological issue for a loft conversion is the potential for bats to be present and affected. A house owner will quite often not realise they are there as not all bat species (there are a number in the UK) will enter the house itself.

The photo you have supplied shows the bungalow to be in very good condition with well-sealed roof, ridge and hanging tiles. The soffits, brickwork, windows and doors all look to be in very good repair too. I consider it to be sub-optimal for bats to use for roosting. In this instance, I do not consider any ecological surveys are necessary. Notwithstanding, as bats as known to be in the vicinity, I recommend a precautionary approach to the works is taken and advise the following Informative is added to any permission granted:

“If bats, or evidence for them, are discovered during the course of works, work must stop immediately and advice sought on how to proceed lawfully from an appropriately qualified and experienced Ecologist or Natural England: 0300 060 3900.”

4.1.4 Herts and Middlesex Bat Group: No comments received. Any comments will be verbally reported.

4.1.5 National Grid: No comments received. Any comments will be verbally reported.

4.1.6 Landscape Officer: [No objection]

I am writing to confirm that I have no objection to the above application on tree grounds. There are no trees within the property which are protected by TPO and there are no significant trees within the property. The only tree which could potentially be impacted on by the proposals is that within the rear garden of the neighbouring garden.

While the construction does not appear to extend within what would be the root protection area (RPA) of this tree, it may well be that other associated external landscape works could impact and therefore I would suggest a landscaping condition be included.

4.2 Public/Neighbour Consultation

4.2.1 Number consulted: 5 No of responses received: 2

4.2.2 Site Notice: N.A Press notice: N.A

4.2.3 Summary of Responses:

Loss of light to kitchen, bedroom, utility room and study at no.24 Wyatts Close; Rear extension is too close to our boundary and will result in adverse ground issues to our plot; Loss of light to study/home office at no.22 Wyatts Close; Rear extension and loft conversion will result in light being blocked by the new roof; Loss of view to the side window ; Side window to the proposed lounge will result in overlooking.

5 Reason for Delay

5.1 Committee cycle.

6 Relevant Planning Policy, Guidance and Legislation

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance

On 27 March 2012, the framework of government guidance in the form of Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes was replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). The determination of planning applications is made mindful of Central Government advice and the Local Plan for the area. It is recognised that Local Planning Authorities must determine applications in accordance with the statutory Development Plan, unless

material considerations indicate otherwise, and that the planning system does not exist to protect the private interests of one person against another.

The NPPF states that 'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people'. The NPPF retains a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This applies unless any adverse impacts of a development would 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh the benefits.

6.2 The Three Rivers Local Plan

The application has been considered against the policies of the Local Plan, including the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011), the Development Management Policies Local Development Document (adopted July 2013) and the Site Allocations Local Development Document (adopted November 2014) as well as government guidance. The policies of Three Rivers District Council reflect the content of the NPPF.

The Core Strategy was adopted on 17 October 2011 having been through a full public participation process and Examination in Public. Relevant policies include Policies CP1, CP8, CP9, CP10 and CP12.

The Development Management Policies Local Development Document (DMLDD) was adopted on 26 July 2013 after the Inspector concluded that it was sound following Examination in Public which took place in March 2013. Relevant policies include DM1, DM6, DM13 and Appendices 2 and 5.

6.3 Other

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (adopted February 2015).

The Localism Act received Royal Assent on 15 November 2011. The growth and Infrastructure Act achieved Royal Assent on 25 April 2013.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and the Habitat Regulations 1994 may also be relevant.

7 **Planning Analysis**

7.1 Streetscene

7.1.1 Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011) seeks to promote buildings of a high enduring design quality that respect local distinctiveness and Policy CP12 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011) relates to design and states that in seeking a high standard of design the Council will expect development proposals to 'have regard to the local context and conserve or enhance the character, amenities and quality of an area'. Development should make efficient use of land but should also respect the 'distinctiveness of the surrounding area in terms of density, character, layout and spacing, amenity, scale, height, massing and use of materials'; 'have regard to the local context and conserve or enhance the character, amenities and quality of an area' and 'incorporate visually attractive frontages to adjoining streets and public spaces'.

7.1.2 The application includes a front extension which would be located centrally. It is acknowledged that this would have a glazed gabled appearance which would appear relatively prominent due to its width and height and the elevated nature of the dwelling relative to the adjoining highway. However, it would project minimally beyond the existing front elevation and the roof form would still be subordinate to the main roof of the dwelling. Given the varied nature of the streetscene, it is not considered that demonstrable harm

would occur as a result of the front extension. It is also noted that the existing integral garage would be converted to habitable accommodation which would involve replacing the existing doors with a window. The fenestration style is considered appropriate and sympathetic to the character of the host dwelling and therefore this would be acceptable.

- 7.1.3 Roof alterations are proposed including a roof extension over the existing integral garage. The existing bungalow has a stepped roof form, with the roof over the integral garage set down relative to the ridge of the main dwelling. The extension would bring the ridge of this element in line with the ridge of the main dwelling. The roof extension would retain a hipped roof form, thereby minimising the increase in bulk of the dwelling and also ensuring that the development remains sympathetic to the character of the original host dwelling.
- 7.1.4 The applicant is also proposing the provision of front dormer windows. Appendix 2 of the Development Management Policies LDD advises that front dormer windows may not always be appropriate in the streetscene and multiple dormers should be proportionate in scale and number to the host roof. Many of the dwellings within Wyatts Close have dormer windows within the roofspace, and it is noted that the existing dwelling is already served by a front dormer window. As such, it is not considered that the provision of two dormer windows to the front roofslope would be uncharacteristic of the host dwelling or wider vicinity. Furthermore, they would be subordinate additions which would be set down from the main ridge, in from both sides and back from the plane of the walls. The original plans also included side dormer windows. These were considered unnecessary and increased the perceived bulk of the roof form when viewed from the frontage. Amended plans have been received removing both side dormer windows and therefore minimising the visual impact of the development. Flank rooflights are now proposed, however, these would be low key additions which would have limited visual impact as they would be set within the roof plane.
- 7.1.5 To the rear, a two storey extension is proposed which would be gable ended in terms of design. The original plans indicated that this would have a depth of 4.3m with the ridge of the gabled projection in line with the ridge of the dwelling. The depth and height of the gable was considered to increase the bulk and prominence of the development and as such amendments were requested. Amendments received have reduced the depth of the extension to 4m and the ridge of this element would now be set down from the main ridge. Whilst the gabled design can be perceived as prominent, the extension would be set in from both the flank elevations and flank boundaries of the site and given the stepped building line within Wyatts Close would not be readily visible from the frontage. As a result, it is not considered that this element would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of Wyatts Close.
- 7.1.6 Given the amendments made and subject to a condition requiring the use of matching materials, the development would be acceptable and in accordance with Polices CP1 and CP12 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM1 and Appendix 2 of the Development Management Policies LDD.

7.2 Impact to Neighbours

- 7.2.1 Policy CP12 of the Core Strategy states that the 'Council will expect all development proposals to protect residential amenities by taking into account the need for adequate levels and disposition of privacy, prospect, amenity and garden space'. Appendix 2 of the Development Management Policies LDD states that 'oversized, unattractive and poorly sited development can result in loss of light and outlook for neighbours and detract from the character and appearance of the streetscene'.
- 7.2.2 The neighbouring dwelling, no.24 has raised concern that proposed front extension would result in a loss of light to two side windows, one of which serves a utility room and the other which serves a study. It is acknowledged that the extension would have a relatively high roof form, however, given that it would minimally project beyond the front elevation

and be set in from both flank boundaries (4.3m from no.24 and 5.5m from no.22), it is not considered that this element would be unduly overbearing or result in any loss of light to either adjacent neighbour. Furthermore, it is noted that windows located to flank elevations can be said to be borrowing light and as such no significant objection can be raised. It is noted that the design of the front extension includes full height glazing serving the stairwell and entrance and as such there may be some perception of overlooking to neighbours opposite the site given these are located at a lower land level. However, it is not considered that any harm would occur given the separation distance as a result of the highway and the driveways which is in excess of 45 metres. With regard to the garage conversion, this would result in the provision of a further window to the front elevation. Given this would be flush with the front wall of the dwelling; it would not result in any overlooking to adjacent neighbours.

- 7.2.3 The applicant is also proposing roof alterations including a roof extension over the existing integral garage/dining room located adjacent to no.24. Again concern has been raised that this alteration would result in loss of light to flank windows. In response, to this concern, the height of the proposed roof form would be no higher than the existing dwelling and roof form would be hipped away from the boundary, thereby minimising the visual prominence of the development. Furthermore, it is noted that the existing dining room projection would be reduced in depth by 1.9m which therefore reduces the extent of built form along the boundary closest to no.24. Whilst the flank windows may experience some loss of light, given built form already exists along the boundary, it is not considered that significant increased harm would occur as a result of the roof alterations. The plans also indicate the provision of rooflights at single storey level over the kitchen. It is not considered that these would result in overlooking to no.24 as they would be sited within the roof over the kitchen, however, a condition shall be suggested requiring that these are set a minimum of 1.7m above floor level.
- 7.2.4 The alterations to the roof form also include the provision of front dormer windows. These would have outlook over the front amenity spaces of neighbouring properties, however, given the front gardens are visible from public vantage points anyway it is not considered that harm would occur. The original plans also indicated flank dormer windows, one of which would have served a bathroom and one would have served a bedroom. The plans stated that these would include obscure glazing; however, concern was raised that these would result in perceived overlooking to neighbours, particularly the side dormer window serving a bedroom. In response to these concerns, amendments have been made removing both dormer windows. The plans now indicate a rooflight to be located in their place. To ensure that these would not result in overlooking, a condition shall be added to ensure that they are located 1.7m above floor level.
- 7.2.5 To the rear of the dwelling, a two storey extension is proposed. Appendix 2 of the Development Management Policies LDD advises the following with regard to two storey rear extensions:
- ‘Rear extensions should not intrude into a 45 degree splay line drawn across the rear garden from a point on the joint boundary, level with the rear wall of the adjacent property. This principle is dependent on the spacing and relative positions of the dwellings and consideration will also be given to the juxtaposition of properties, land levels and the position of windows and extensions on neighbouring properties’.
- 7.2.6 Given no.22 is set back further to the rear than no.23, there would be no intrusion of the 45 degree splay line. With regard to no.24, there would be no intrusion of the 45 degree line as a result of the two storey rear extension when taken from the rear of the single storey extension at no.24. However, there would be some intrusion of the 45 degree line when taken from first floor level. However, on balance, it is not considered that any significant harm would occur to justify refusal. The two storey rear extension would be set in from the common boundary with no.24 by approximately 3.225m and given the existing relationship; it is not considered that there would be any increased harm. Furthermore, it

is noted that the extent of development along the flank boundary would actually be reduced due to the dining room projection being reduced by approximately 1.9m.

- 7.2.7 The design of the two storey rear extension includes a large extent of glazing and Juliet Balcony. Whilst there may be some perception of overlooking, the rear facing glazing is such that it would be directed down the rear gardens and as such would not result in significant harm to the private amenity space located immediately adjacent to either dwelling. The plans do include two, three casement windows located in the flank wall of the two storey extension at ground floor level and no.22 has raised concerns with regard to overlooking. Whilst amendments were sought reducing the size of these windows, the amended plans do not indicate any reduction in size of the windows. On balance, given that these are at ground floor level and the resultant distances to the boundary of 4.2m and 3.225m, it is not considered that significant harm in terms of overlooking would occur to justify refusal. The plans also include a new window to the study at ground floor level, again facing no.22. No objection is raised to this, given that windows in an original ground floor flank elevation can be constructed without the benefit of planning permission.
- 7.2.8 It is noted that the neighbouring dwelling at no.22 has raised concern regarding impact to an existing study window located in the flank elevation, stating that the proposed two storey rear extension would result in a loss of light to this window. Given the application dwelling is located to the north of the site it is not considered that there would be a significant loss of light as a result of the extension, furthermore, as a side facing window, this is in effect borrowing light from the application dwelling and as such limited weight is given. The neighbour has also stated that the view from the window would be effected, however, loss of view is not a material planning consideration. Again, it is emphasised that the two storey rear extension is set 4.3m from the common boundary with this neighbour which prevents the development from being unduly overbearing from this window. Furthermore, the two storey rear extension has been reduced in depth to 4m and the ridge has been set down which further minimises harm in terms of prominence.
- 7.2.9 The rear boundary of the site adjoins the flank boundary of no. 26 Wyatts Close. Given that the proposed development would not project significantly beyond the footprint of the existing dwelling, no adverse impact would occur.
- 7.2.10 Given the amendments made including the reduction in depth, the reduced ridge height of the two storey rear extension and the removal of the rear dormer windows, it is not considered that significant harm would occur to the amenities of the neighbours to justify refusal. The development would be acceptable and in accordance with Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM1 and Appendix 2 of the Development Management Policies LDD.

7.3 Trees and Landscaping

- 7.3.1 The Landscape Officer has been consulted and has raised no objection to the application on tree grounds. Whilst there comments regarding a landscaping condition are noted, it is not considered that this would be necessary or meet the relevant planning tests.

7.4 Amenity Space Provision for future occupants

- 7.4.1 The garden has an area exceeding 470square metres; therefore even with the development there would be sufficient amenity space for provision by present and future occupiers of the site.

7.5 Highways, Access and Parking

- 7.5.1 Policy CP10 of the Core Strategy requires development to demonstrate that it will provide a safe and adequate means of access. Policy DM13 and Appendix 5 of the Development Management Policies LDD advises on off street car parking requirements.

7.5.2 Whilst the existing garage would be converted to habitable accommodation, there is provision for three off street car parking spaces to the front of the dwelling which is sufficient for a dwelling of this size.

7.6 Biodiversity

7.6.1 Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 requires Local Planning Authorities to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. This is further emphasised by regulation 3(4) of the Habitat Regulations 1994 which state that Councils must have regard to the strict protection for certain species required by the EC Habitats Directive.

7.6.2 The protection of biodiversity and protected species is a material planning consideration in the assessment of applications in accordance with Policy CP9 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011) and Policy DM6 of the DMLDD. National Planning Policy requires Local Authorities to ensure that a protected species survey is undertaken for applications that may be affected prior to determination of a planning application.

7.6.3 A letter from Herts Ecology was submitted with the application which advises that the mixed semi-natural habitats in the area will provide suitable foraging and commuting opportunities for bats, and there are records of them roosting in the area. However, as the bungalow is in good condition with a well-sealed roof form, ridge and hanging tiles, the dwelling would be sub-optimal for bats to use for roosting. Herts Ecology have therefore advised that a precautionary approach should be taken and an informative should be added reminding the applicant of what to do should bats be found to be present during the course of the development.

8 **Recommendation**

8.1 That PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

C1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In pursuance of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

C2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 08, 09A, 10A, 11A, 12A, 13A, TRDC 001 (Proposed section)

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt, in the proper interests of planning and residential amenity; in accordance with Policies CP1, CP9, CP10 and CP12 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011) and Policies DM1, DM6, DM13 and Appendices 2 and 5 of the Development Management Policies LDD (adopted July 2013).

C3 Unless specified on the approved plans, all new works or making good to the retained fabric shall be finished to match in size, colour, texture and profile those of the existing building.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the building is satisfactory in accordance with Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011) and Policy DM1 and Appendix 2 of the Development Management Policies LDD (adopted July 2013).

- C4 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any other revoking and re-enacting that order with or without modification), no windows/dormer windows or similar openings [other than those expressly authorised by this permission] shall be constructed in the elevations or roof slopes of the extension/development hereby approved.

Reason: To safeguard the residential amenities of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011) and Policy DM1 and Appendix 2 of the Development Management Policies LDD (adopted July 2013).

- C5 The rooflights hereby permitted at ground and first floor level shall be positioned at a minimum internal cill height of 1.7m above the internal floor level.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties in accordance with Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011) and Policy DM1 and Appendix 2 of the Development Management Policies LDD (adopted July 2013).

8.2 **Informatives:**

- 11 With regard to implementing this permission, the applicant is advised as follows:

All relevant planning conditions must be discharged prior to the commencement of work. Requests to discharge conditions must be made by formal application. Fees are £116 per request (or £34 where the related permission is for extending or altering a dwellinghouse or other development in the curtilage of a dwellinghouse). Please note that requests made without the appropriate fee will be returned unanswered.

There may be a requirement for the approved development to comply with the Building Regulations. Please contact Hertfordshire Building Control (HBC) on 0208 207 7456 or at buildingcontrol@hertfordshirebc.co.uk who will be happy to advise you on building control matters and will protect your interests throughout your build project by leading the compliance process. Further information is available at www.hertfordshirebc.co.uk.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - Your development may be liable for CIL payments and you are advised to contact the CIL Officer for clarification with regard to this. It is a requirement under Regulation 67 (1), Regulation 42B(6) (in the case of residential annexes or extensions), and Regulation 54B(6) for self-built housing) of The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (As Amended) that a Commencement Notice (Form 6) is submitted to Three Rivers District Council as the Collecting Authority no later than the day before the day on which the chargeable development is to be commenced. DO NOT start your development until the Council has acknowledged receipt of the Commencement Notice. Failure to do so will mean you will lose the right to payment by instalments (where applicable), lose any exemptions already granted, and a surcharge will be imposed.

- 12 The Local Planning Authority has been positive and proactive in its consideration of this planning application, in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The Local Planning Authority suggested modifications to the development during the course of the application and the applicant submitted amendments which result in a form of development that maintains/improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the District.

13 The applicant is reminded that the Control of Pollution Act 1974 allows local authorities to restrict construction activity (where work is audible at the site boundary). In Three Rivers such work audible at the site boundary, including deliveries to the site and running of equipment such as generators, should be restricted to 0800 to 1800 Monday to Friday, 0900 to 1300 on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

14 Bats are protected under domestic and European legislation where, in summary, it is an offence to deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat, intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in a roost or deliberately disturb a bat in a way that would impair its ability to survive, breed or rear young, hibernate or migrate, or significantly affect its local distribution or abundance; damage or destroy a bat roost; possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat; and intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.

If bats are found all works must stop immediately and advice sought as to how to proceed from either of the following organisations:

The UK Bat Helpline: 0845 1300 228

Natural England: 0300 060 3900

Herts & Middlesex Bat Group: www.hmbg.org.uk

or an appropriately qualified and experienced ecologist.

(As an alternative to proceeding with caution, the applicant may wish to commission an ecological consultant before works start to determine whether or not bats are present. A list of bat consultants can be obtained from Hertfordshire Ecology on 01992 555220).