

Our Ref: 8590/JS/002.let.lpa  
Your Ref: PA/19/00804

30 September 2019

London Borough of Tower Hamlets  
Planning  
Place Directorate  
Mulberry Place  
5 Clove Crescent  
London  
E14 2BG

Dear Sir / Madam

### **RE: PANDA HOUSE, COMMERCIAL ROAD – BAT APPRAISAL**

Ecology Solutions was commissioned in September 2019 by Rapleys, on behalf of Wayview Limited, to undertake a preliminary bat appraisal of Panda House, Commercial Road, Tower Hamlets.

The site is subject to a current planning application (planning ref: PA/19/00804) for its redevelopment. The proposals are for the demolition of existing building and erection of a building of up to five-storeys and two set back floors plus a lower ground floor to provide 109 rooms for short-term hostel and HMO accommodation. On submission of the planning application the planning authority requested a preliminary bat survey report to be submitted. It was deemed that the potential for the site to support roosting bats was the only potential concern in respect of biodiversity.

The site comprises the existing built form of Panda House. The residential block is of brick construction across three floors with concrete supports and a flat roof structure. The building is devoid of any loft void, soffit and barge boards. Furthermore, the building is seen to be in a good state of repair with no damage to the brick mortar.

The site located off the busy A13 / Commercial Road, and flanked by Mill Place and Island Row with Regents Canal House to the west, Rose Court to the south, and Our Lady Immaculate church to the east.

The site has been subject to an appraisal of its likely value to support roosting bats. The site and building structure are considered to offer negligible opportunities for roosting bats being of a build type and structure typically unfavoured by bats on account of the complete lack of roosting opportunities and available voids.



**ECOLOGYSOLUTIONS**

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The site is also noted as being subject to relatively high levels of artificial street lighting which would further detract from the site's suitability for roosting bats.

The site is also considered to be relatively isolated from available foraging and commuting corridors for bats. Although in the wider area it is noted that there are suitable foraging and dispersal resources in the form of Ropemakers Field together with Limehouse Basin, Limehouse Cut and the connecting River Thames. A dismantled railway now dominated by recolonising ground to the south-west of the site provide a further area of potential foraging interest.

Based against a detailed review of the site in terms of its structure, build type and condition together with the availability of roosting opportunities it is considered highly unlikely that any bat population would utilise the site for roosting.

On account of the survey findings it is in the professional opinion of myself and Ecology Solutions that no further survey work or regard to the potential presence of roosting bats is required as part of the proposed demolition and redevelopment.

The findings of the appraisal are detail above and supported by the enclosed graphics which I trust is of assistance.

It is considered that the concerns raised in respect of this application can be addressed in full. The proposed redevelopment of the site provides the opportunities to offer a number of biodiversity enhancements over the existing situation, and these should be fully considered by the applicant. Such measures could extend to the provision of bat, bird and insect bricks incorporated into the fabric of the proposed development together with any new landscape planting based around a diverse section of native species or species of known wildlife value.

I trust the above is clear, but should you have any questions or queries please do not hesitate in contacting me.

Yours sincerely

**Josef Saunders**  
Director

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Enc.