

Northern Planning Committee 13th March 2019

UPDATE TO AGENDA

APPLICATION No.

18/5811M – Reurbishment and extension of existing Leisure Centre to include demolition of existing swimming pool and auxiliary buildings, new build pool including Reception and Changing Areas, plus refurbishment of existing Sports Hall and Gym Areas

LOCATION

Congleton Leisure Centre, Worrall Street, Congleton, CW12 1DT

UPDATE PREPARED

7th March 2019

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

APPRAISAL

Ecology

The original application was supported by a Phase One Habitat and Bat survey. Since the drafting of the committee report, a further bat survey was received. This is considered below.

Bats

The buildings on site were identified during the habitat surveys as having low suitability for roosting bats. Consequently a single bat activity survey was undertaken. The bat activity survey was undertaken very late in the survey season and the original submitted report did not provide any details of the level of qualifications of the surveyors that undertook the survey or the number of surveyors present on site. In addition the survey was undertaken over three years ago and the report advises that if works have not commenced by spring 2016 then an updated survey should be undertaken. As such, during the course of the application, it was recommended that an updated bat survey should be undertaken.

This was subsequently done, and no evidence of bats was recorded during the survey however, as the building was identified as having moderate potential to support roosting bats the ecologist who undertook the survey has recommended that a bat activity survey is undertaken to establish the presence/absence of roosting bats.

In order to make a fully informed assessment of the potential impacts of the proposed development upon protected species, the Council's Nature

Conservation Officer advises that a further bat activity survey must be submitted to the Council prior to the determination of the application. Following a judicial review a number of years ago and the advice contained in the 2006 legal circular it is not considered appropriate to condition such surveys.

River Dane

To avoid any impacts on the River Dane located to the north of the proposed development site, the Council's Nature Conservation Officer has advised that it must be ensured that all construction activity including the storage of materials and works compounds are restricted to the red line of the planning application. It is proposed that this be added as an informative in the event of approval.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

As the original conclusions and recommendation were made to delegate to Approve subject to the resolution of ecology matters in relation to bats and this still remains the case, no change to recommendation is required.