

Ecology response for F/22/94044 242 LEIGH ROAD, CHANDLER'S FORD, EASTLEIGH, SO53 3AW

Erection of 1no. four-bedroom detached house with associated car parking, bin and bike storage in rear garden of existing dwelling

Alex Webb

16/11/22

The photos in the DAS show piles of wood chips, no trees or shrubs, and there are outlines of dead brown areas where vegetation was cleared. I don't know how current these photos are, but it is clear that site clearance occurred at some point before the planning application. The ecological baseline for mitigation on the site will need to be taken from the earlier photos and descriptions. A preliminary ecological assessment of the garden will still be required to determine whether there are any remnants of the former habitats or invasive species on site.

In addition to mitigation for loss of habitat, biodiversity enhancement and a surface water drainage plan will be required.

There are records of bats, breeding swifts, toads and hedgehogs in the area. If this application is approved and appropriate habitat exists on site then precautionary working methods for hedgehogs, reptiles and toads may be required. Biodiversity enhancement could include a swift brick and a bat brick built into the new dwelling and a hedgehog house in the garden. Planting a range of flowering plants for pollinators and plants that produce fruit and seeds for birds would also be encouraged.

Any permanent fencing that is erected at the property boundaries must have periodic holes (measuring 13cm by 13 cm minimum) at its base to allow the movement of animals, such as hedgehogs, to promote habitat connectivity and extended foraging ranges.

The Bat Conservation Trust recommends installing a bat brick/box at least 4 m above the ground, away from artificial light sources, sheltered from strong winds and exposed to the sun for part of the day, facing south, south-east or south-west. (<https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/putting-up-your-box>)

Swift nest boxes are best positioned under the eaves or on walls facing north, northeast or north-west out of direct sunlight, five metres above the ground, with clear adjacent airspace so swifts can access them in a high-speed direct flight. (<https://www.swiftconservation.org/Nestboxes%26Attraction.htm> )

Additional information is available at:

<https://sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/discover/in-your-garden/article/31>, planting for bats

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/conservation-biodiversity/wildlife/plants-for-pollinators>

<https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/bat-boxes>

<https://www.hampshireswifts.co.uk/nesting>

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/advice/how-you-can-help-birds/nestboxes/nestboxes-for-small-birds/>

<https://www.swift-conservation.org/OurLeaflets.htm>

Lisa Malter

Ecologist