

Ecology response for F/22/94435 MORTIMERS FARM, MORTIMERS LANE, FAIR OAK, EASTLEIGH, SO50 7EA

Alterations and extensions and conversion of 4 existing barns including Grade 2 listed Threshing Barn and Granary to create 4 dwellings, demolition of modern barn and construction of 5 new dwellings with associated gardens parking and car port/bat barn new sewerage treatment and new footpath on the southern side of Mortimers Lane

Summer Sharpe

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I am concerned with regards to the increase in housing density (5 additional dwellings) proposed by these new applications and how the layout differs from the previous applications. I need to see a comparison of this plan compared to the previous plans, particularly with regards to accommodation for the important bat roosts found on site, which include roosts of local and county significance. I have reviewed the updated Ecological Appraisal by Ecosupport (December 2022).

I have reviewed the updated planning statement by Hurrell Architecture Ltd (December 2022).

This states that *the site has the benefit of Planning Approval reference number F/21/91137, Listed Building Consent number L/21/91145 and Prior Approval reference PN/21/90993.*

In Section 2 this states that *the previous application did not include redevelopment of Barn F, prior approval was granted for the conversion into 5 new dwellings, and ..The farm comprises a number of farm buildings with 2 of the buildings being Grade 2 listed, Granary Barn E and Barn B. A large amount of poor quality and modern attached structures exist on the barn buildings ...*

In Section 3 it states that *Barn E has Prior approval for: Prior notification for a change of use of Agricultural buildings to 5no. Dwelling houses and building operations reasonably necessary for the conversion. Reference PN/21/90993. A Pre Application enquiry was submitted June 2022 for the new proposal to convert barns as approved and 5 new dwelling to replace the industrial type Barn E.*

This is confusing. Barn E is described as both a listed Granary barn and then as an industrial type barn. Barn F is the industrial type barn and Barn E is the Granary.

The Ecological Appraisal lists

Building A: a common pipistrelle day roost,

Building B: a common pipistrelle day roost, a brown long eared bat maternity roost, Serotine, soprano pipistrelle and Natterers day roosts

Building C: a common pipistrelle day roost, a brown long eared bat satellite roost

Building D: a common Pipistrelle maternity roost, a historic brown long eared bat satellite roost, and a historic soprano pipistrelle day roost

Building E: a common pipistrelle day roost

Building F: has been assessed as having negligible bat roost potential and no evidence of bat occupation or feeding was identified.

The report later states (in 4.3.5.1) that *there will be a loss of internal foraging opportunities for bats within buildings B, C and F*. Therefore, the loss of building F would not necessarily be negligible.

The latest bat surveys were done between May and July of 2021 and are now out of date as they were only guaranteed for 18 months.

Since building F was not part of the earlier application, bat activity around this building was not recorded. The report states that there will be a loss of internal foraging opportunities for bats within buildings B, C and F. What is proposed to replace this foraging habitat?

Potential for breeding and nesting birds was addressed in section 4.7.2 but a building which has suitable nesting habitat for barn owls was listed as building 2, rather than one of the letter designations now being used. This is most likely to be building B but needs to be checked.

Any works done on buildings A-E would require a bat license from Natural England and be carried out under the supervision of a bat-licensed ecologist. The report recommends that works avoid the bat hibernation period, November through February and the bat maternity period mid- May and mid-September. Work schedules would have to be planned to avoid these seasons on the relevant buildings and areas around these buildings. Construction lighting must be avoided at night or very tightly controlled so as not to add additional light to any of the areas used for roosting, foraging or commuting bats.

Additional biodiversity features must be added to the buildings proposed to replace barn F. Any trees that would be impacted by this updated scheme will need to be checked for potential bat roost features as this was not done previously (stated in Ecological Assessment, 4.3.2).

Surface water drainage proposals must be updated to match the new proposed layout.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist