

Ecology response for F/23/94918 VILLA CERVINO, BOTLEY ROAD, HORTON HEATH, EASTLEIGH, SO50 7DT

Full demolition of 5 bed bungalow to allow a rebuild of a 4-bed chalet bungalow with store and creating a rear extension with 2 dormer windows

Alex Stone

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There are records of bats, badgers and hedgehogs as well as notable invertebrates in the immediate area of this property.

The applicant has submitted a PEA/PRA report by Arbtech (November 2022) from a previous application for work to the existing house which included raising the roof and several extensions. The report states that bats are very unlikely to be roosting in these buildings and that the buildings have negligible potential for roosting bats. A records search from the local biological information centre (HBIC) would have turned up the records of bat roosts very close to this property. No further surveys will be required for this application, but the following must be considered:

In the unlikely event of any bats being found during demolition or construction, all work must stop immediately, and Natural England must be called. Additional information is available on the Bat Conservation Trust website at <https://www.bats.org.uk/advice/im-working-on-a-building-with-bats/ive-found-a-bat-during-works>.

The report recommends installation of at least two bat boxes on retained trees for the previous application, but since the proposal is to rebuild with a 2-storey building, built in bat bricks/boxes are preferred. They do not need maintenance and cannot fall off. 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>).

We also recommend the installation of swift bricks or swift nest boxes. These can be used by other birds when swifts are not present. 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> )

The property can be enhanced for hedgehogs by creating hedgehog gaps in the base boards of fences (13 x 13 cm minimum) and habitat piles or adding hedgehog houses in shady areas around the garden. Invertebrates can be attracted by piles of dead wood and are eaten by hedgehogs.

The garden can also be enhanced by the addition of flowering plants, flowering and fruiting shrubs and trees and night-flowering scented plants which will attract pollinators, birds and moths (as food for bats).

A precautionary working method for hedgehogs and badgers is required and can be conditioned or amended to the PEA/PRA report if updated for this application.

Surface water drainage information is required. Since this is a replacement dwelling on a slightly different footprint, the existing surface water drainage system may need adjustments.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist