

Ecology response amended for F/23/95085 HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
HEADQUARTERS, LEIGH ROAD, EASTLEIGH, SO50 9SJ

Renewal of the plain tile roof covering to the two joined pitched roof wings of the main office building. The new roof covering is to remain as plain tiles and the existing solar PV panels to the east and south facing roof elevations are to be removed and refitted to the same configuration as currently

Alex Webb

10/7/23

I have reviewed the Bat Survey report by Hampshire County Council Ecology Team (July 2023). Three bat emergence/re-entry surveys were done, and no bats were seen emerging from or entering the building. One dusk emergence survey was done in May 2022, and a dusk survey was done in May 2022 and a dawn survey was done in June 2023. The site is brightly lit, and bat activity was very low in this area.

No further survey work is required, however please add the following informative to the decision notice:

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>.

Biodiversity enhancements are required. If the area is not suitable for bats due to the existing high light levels, then swift boxes/swift bricks or sparrow terraces could be installed, either on this building or in other suitable areas on site. If this is not possible, then habitat enhancements elsewhere on the wider site could be considered. The Hampshire County Council Ecology Team has not made any specific biodiversity enhancement recommendations, but could be consulted for their recommendations.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist

2/6/23

There are records of bats at several properties in the industrial estate immediately to the east of this site. The Ecology section of the planning statement (April 2023) states emergence surveys were undertaken for applications relating to previous works to the site but does not give any dates or application numbers. The photo of the roof on page 3 of the planning statement show that the existing tiles are in poor condition. The planning statement reports that survey work has been arranged with further surveys dependent on the outcome of an initial visit in early May.

I am not satisfied that this is sufficient ecological information. This is not the correct way to assess this building nor is it in line with best practice guidelines. A current preliminary bat roost

assessment must be provided with photos of potential bat roost features, the locations on the building, and extent of these potential features in addition to the one photo of the roof tiles. An internal inspection of the loft spaces by a bat-licensed ecologist is required to accompany this assessment. The building must then be assessed as having low, medium or high bat roost potential and the number of surveys required will be related to the bat roost potential (one for low, 2 for medium and 3 for high), not the results of the first emergence survey. Biodiversity enhancement recommendations must be provided in the final bat survey report in addition to the mitigation required based on the survey data.

As there are very close HBIC records of both crevice dwelling pipistrelles and brown long-eared bats (which fly inside of loft spaces) nearby (despite this being a well-lit urban location) and the roof tiles are shown to be in poor condition, there is a good possibility that the building has either medium or high bat roost potential and sufficient survey effort must be demonstrated. It is possible that this is already being done and just not reported accurately in the planning statement, but this should be confirmed now by the ecological consultants so that time is not wasted.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist