

Ecology response amended for H/23/94971 2 LAKEWOOD CLOSE, CHANDLER'S FORD, EASTLEIGH, SO53 1EY

External elevational treatments/ upgrades. To remove chimney.

Claire Campbell-Best

1/8/23

I have reviewed the Phase 1 & 2 Bat Survey reports by Vesper Conservation & Ecology Limited (July 2023). The building was assessed as having high bat roost potential. There were three emergence/re-entry surveys, and no bats were seen using the building. Bats were observed foraging in the garden and around the house so the following informative should be added 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>.

The building was a confirmed day roost for soprano pipistrelle bats during previous surveys in 2021. Evidence of historic roosting by brown long-eared bats was also found in 2021 during ecology work for a previous application (O/22/92300). The ecology response of 2/5/23 had explained about the confirmed bat roost and I believe that both enforcement and the wildlife crime officer had visited the site due to the previous site clearance activities and the presence of scaffolding reported by a member of the public on 28 April 2023.

The report states that the chimney had already been removed when the preliminary survey was done on 24 May 2023, and there is a woven breather membrane in the area where the chimney had passed through the roof. The application for removal of the chimney must therefore be considered as retrospective and may have disturbed any bats that might have been using the site.

The report did not recommend any additional bat boxes or swift boxes, however due to the removal of the chimney before the survey at least two bat boxes must be added to the building to replace potential bat roost sites that have been disturbed or lost. If possible integral bat boxes/bricks are preferred to externally mounted boxes as they do not need maintenance and cannot fall off. These can be built into the elevational treatments/upgrades if the application is approved. This can be conditioned, with evidence of their installation and correct positions to be provided.

A swift or sparrow nest box can be added as a biodiversity enhancement.

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>)

Any external lighting should be minimal if required at all. It must be as low level as possible and not shine on any vegetation, boundary, or near the installed bat and bird boxes. Further information on bat-sensitive lighting can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website at [Artificial Lighting Guidance - Buildings, planning and development - Bat Conservation Trust](https://www.bats.org.uk/artificial-lighting-guidance-buildings-planning-and-development) ([bats.org.uk](https://www.bats.org.uk))

Lisa Malter

Ecologist

2/5/23

Bats

The existing elevation drawings show that there are concrete roof tiles and hanging tiles on this building. The proposed elevation drawings show the replacement of hanging tiles with composite boarding, removal of two chimneys and new roof tiles, and replacement of doors and windows.

This dwelling is a confirmed day roost for soprano pipistrelle bats. Evidence of historic roosting by brown long-eared bats was also found in 2021 during ecology work for a previous application (O/22/92300). The proposed works could disturb roosting bats and damage or destroy existing roost sites. Bats and their roosts are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017 as amended). It is illegal to disturb roosting bats or damage, destroy or obstruct their roosting places without a mitigation license from Natural England. Further information is available on the Bat Conservation Trust website (www.bats.org.uk/advice/bats-and-the-law and [/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/building-or-development-works](https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/building-or-development-works)).

The ecology surveys and reports for the previous application were done by Darwin Ecology in October 2021. The report states that it is valid for 12 months from date of issue and the survey data are valid for 12-18 months from date of survey. It is now 19 months since the report was issued in October. The emergence surveys were done between July and September 2021 so they are more than 18 months old.

A preliminary bat roost assessment found brown long-eared bat droppings in the loft. On the emergence surveys soprano pipistrelle bats emerged from gaps under flashing on the southern elevation and under hanging tiles on the northern and western elevations of the house.

A current Preliminary Ecological Assessment/ Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment is required before the application can be determined. It is likely that a protected species mitigation license from Natural England will be required before any work can be done which could affect these features. This will need to be supported by three bat activity surveys done at least two weeks apart in the same season as the application. The survey season has just started at the beginning of May and the phase 2 surveys can be done in suitable conditions until the beginning of September.

The applicant is advised to read the PEA, PRA and Emergence Survey report by Darwin Ecology for further information. A bat licensed ecologist will be required to do the surveys, write the license application and supervise this work.

Precautionary method statement

This site is adjacent to Hiltingbury Lakes SINC and there are records of hedgehogs and breeding birds in the area. A precautionary method statement will be required to ensure that the works do not impact wildlife such as breeding birds, hedgehogs, their habitats or the SINC. Any permanent fencing must have at least 2 holes (13 x 13 cm minimum) in the baseboards to allow free movement of small mammals through the site.

Biodiversity enhancements

Biodiversity enhancements will be required. It may be possible to incorporate a bat brick and a swift brick into this building. The ecologist doing the preliminary ecological assessment will be best placed to recommend the most appropriate biodiversity enhancements.

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](https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/putting-up-your-box))

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Additional information is available at:

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

<https://www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-03/WAG16%20Bats%20updated%202022%20WEB.pdf> - Stars of the Night guide to attract bats into your garden

<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>

<https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/help-hedgehogs/hedgehog-homes/>

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