

Ecology response for F/23/95549 BRIGHSTONE, BOTLEY ROAD, HORTON HEATH, EASTLEIGH, SO50 7DT

Construction of [5.no](#) dwellings, landscaping, parking and associated works following demolition of existing dwelling (bungalow, garage and 3 sheds), site clearance and preparation.

Gary Osmond

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This site is in the amber impact risk zone for great crested newts. There are records of bats, badgers, hedgehogs and great crested newts within 1 km of the site.

The location of the proposed dwellings and pathways around the dwellings on plots 3, 4 and 5 are very close to the southern hedgerow which is a significant ecological feature in this landscape. Light and activity levels may cause disturbance to foraging and commuting bats and nesting birds that might be using the hedgerow.

I have reviewed the PEA, Phase II Bat survey report and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment reports by Ecosupport (June 2023). Common pipistrelle bats were seen emerging and re-entering the building on two surveys and the presence of brown long eared bats was confirmed by DNA analysis of the droppings found in the roof void below the ridge beam. The building was assessed to be a day roost for a low number of common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats.

Section 5.1.4 Implications should be amended to read *Due to the presence of several (3) bat roosts within the bungalow....* rather than *due to the presence of a bat roost....*

An EPS mitigation license from Natural England will be required, but this can only be applied for after planning permission has been granted. The mitigation work will need to be done as specified in the license.

As noted in the Phase II Bat survey report each dwelling will be required to contain an integrated bat brick to replace the common pipistrelle roosts, however brown long eared bats require a roost they can fly around in, so this will not be an appropriate replacement for the loss of a brown long eared roost site. A portion of the loft of one of the buildings will need to be built and used to accommodate brown long eared bats with similar access and aspect to the roost that is being replaced.

The site is adjacent to an area of arable land to the south and woodland to the east so considered suitable for commuting badgers and hedgehogs. The habitat was not considered suitable for reptiles or GCN due to the regularly closely mown grass sward within the site. There are species poor hedgerows on the southern and northern site boundaries. The southern hedgerow was assessed to have low potential for dormice but will not be impacted by the proposed development. There is low potential for breeding birds on site, with more suitable habitat available in the surrounding areas.

Precautionary working methods are required for the protected species listed above and can be conditioned in the CEMP. Protection for the trees, hedgerows and their root protection zones must also be included in the CEMP.

Section 6.9 in the PEA report states that *a 3 m ecology buffer is proposed along the western boundary*, with biodiversity enhancements proposed within this buffer strip. These include

native species rich hedgerow

hedgerow edge mix grassland under the hedgerow

native and fruit bearing trees

habitat log pile

This is not visible on the plans. The garden of plot 5 appears to include all the land up to the western boundary.

One swift brick and one bat brick are proposed for each dwelling.

At least two hedgehog gaps (15 x 15 cm minimum) in the gravel boards of each closed board fence.

Tree species have been recommended in section 6.10.4, however more plants for pollinators must also be included in the planting schemes.

The habitat proposed to be created on site is described in section 4 of the BNG Assessment report as small public grassland areas and native hedgerow around the parking areas. In order for this to count as biodiversity net gain these areas must continue to be maintained for the benefit of wildlife once the homes have been transferred to private ownership. Further details are required on how this can be achieved.

In summary, there is conflicting information between the three ecological reports, so I am raising a holding objection. I am not opposed to this development in principle, but the issues raised in this response must be resolved before determination.

A surface water drainage plan is also required in accord with DM6. This must also include water quality information using the simple index approach to pollution hazards and mitigation as shown in the Ciria SuDS manual Part E p 568 and 569, tables 26.2 and 26.3..

Lisa Malter

Ecologist