

Ecology response for H/23/95847 13 SATCHELL LANE, HAMBLE-LE-RICE, SOUTHAMPTON, SO31 4HF

Single/two storey front extension to incorporate balcony, single storey side extension, new roof with gable ends to provide habitable accommodation, two and single storey rear extensions, elevational alterations and enlargement to front parking area

Claire Campbell-Best

20/9/23

There are records of bats, slow worms, hedgehogs and stag beetles near this site.

I have reviewed the Phase 1 Bat Survey (PRA) report by Vesper Conservation and Ecology (March 2023). The building has been assessed to have moderate bat roost suitability with gaps under the ridge, bonnet and roof tiles where bats could roost. In accordance with best practice guidelines a minimum of two bat activity surveys are required. These need to be done before determination, as the presence of protected species is a material consideration. The surveys must be at least two weeks apart, in suitable weather and temperature conditions, during the bat survey season which starts in May and ends at the end of September. There is not enough time to have them done this season. The survey season starts again in May 2024.

The planning statement says that the applicant has already obtained a bat survey which shows no evidence of bats present. The PRA report did not provide any evidence that the two required emergence and re-entry surveys have been done. Without this evidence, it is not possible to determine probable absence of bats. The Phase 2 bat survey report will provide additional information and mitigation recommendations.

The photos of the garden in the PRA report show that there is potential habitat for slow worms, hedgehogs and stag beetles. A precautionary working method for hedgehogs, stag beetles and slow worms will be required and could be conditioned as part of a CEMP. Mitigation for loss of habitat and a landscaping plan demonstrating sufficient green infrastructure will also be required. Any exterior lighting will need to follow wildlife-sensitive guidelines.

Biodiversity enhancements will be required. A bat brick and a swift brick may be appropriate for this building.

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))

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>)

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/>

Lisa Malter

Ecologist