

Ecology response for F/23/96152 CHERRY COURT, SALTERNS LANE, BURSLEDON,
SOUTHAMPTON, SO31 8DH

Construction of five-bedroom detached dwelling over three levels, together with
topographical changes to the rear garden, following demolition of existing dwelling

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4/12/23

This site is in a red impact risk zone for great crested newts and there are several records of great crested newts within 150 to 200 m of the site. There are also records of bats, stag beetles and Eurasian water shrews nearby. The Solent Maritime SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA, Lincegrove and Hackett's Marshes SSSI and the River Hamble are located approximately 105 m from the site. The railway lies between the site and these designated sites.

I have reviewed the Ecological Appraisal and Bat Roost Assessment Report by FPCR Environment and Design (September 2023). The property was assessed to have negligible bat roost potential and no nesting birds were found.

Great crested newt terrestrial habitat was not considered in the report, but potentially could be impacted by this proposal, particularly during the construction phase. Topographical changes to the rear garden would involve changes to the retaining wall and shrubs. This area cannot be ruled out as a potential place of shelter for great crested newts. The report states that no other habitats for protected species would be affected, since the proposal is only to replace the house, however an email from the agent also mentions removal of the shrubs around the house. Due to the potential for presence of great crested newts, a destructive search of this area supervised by a suitably qualified ecologist will be required. All site operatives must be briefed on how to identify great crested newts. If great crested newts are found on site, all work must stop, and a mitigation license will be required. Use of the district level licensing scheme may be appropriate.

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>.

Pruning, removal or disturbance of any vegetation to facilitate demolition and/or construction must be done outside of nesting bird season or only immediately after a nesting bird check by a suitably qualified ecologist.

If any active nests are found the area must be protected from disturbance by a 5 m buffer until the chicks have fledged and left the nest.

The vegetation along the property boundaries and between the site and the designated sites would provide visual and noise screening so it is not considered likely that this proposal would affect Solent waders and Brent geese.

New exterior lighting should be avoided, but if necessary for security purposes, then the latest updated lighting guidance note (GN08/23) should be followed. This is available at [Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting | Institution of Lighting Professionals \(theilp.org.uk\)](https://theilp.org.uk/Guidance%20Note%208%20Bats%20and%20Artificial%20Lighting%20-%20Illumination%20Guidance%20Note%20GN08%2F23.pdf)

All building materials to be stored on hard standing or on pallets; any excavations must be covered at night or be fitted with a small animal escape ramp; and no fires can be lit on site. Any stag beetles or their larvae found on site should be moved to a place of safety. This can be conditioned in a CEMP.

Two swift bricks, 5 bat boxes and two bee blocks are proposed as biodiversity enhancements. These are appropriate. From the photos in the Ecological Appraisal report it looks as if flowering shrubs are proposed to be removed. These should be replaced with flowering and fruiting native shrubs rather than evergreen shrubs, to maintain a supply of flowers for pollinating insects and fruit and seeds for wildlife.

Built-in bat boxes and swift bricks are preferred to externally mounted boxes as they do not require 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](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>)

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Ecologist