

Additional Ecology response for F/23/96224 32A QUEENS VIEW, NETLEY ABBEY,
SOUTHAMPTON, SO31 5EA

Construction of part 3-storey, part 2-storey building to provide 18 flats and a ground floor retail unit, following demolition of existing building, to include vehicle access, parking, landscaping and footpath access to recreation ground.

Rebecca Altman

3/1/24

Two videos have been submitted, one (1000009485.mp4) shows a bat landing and then clearly crawling behind the 2nd tile down from the top at the right of the door frame. The second video (100009486.mp4) clearly shows a bat flying back and forth very close to the building. At one point it lands on one of the tiles but then flies off again. The flying back and forth is common foraging behaviour, but bats can often fly around a bit before they re-enter a roost. When they emerge, they usually drop down and move away from the roost entrance quite quickly, so I would interpret this behaviour as re-entering in the first video and foraging in the 2nd video.

Given this video evidence, the building is a confirmed bat roost, and a license from Natural England will be required before any work can be done. The license application will need to be supported by three surveys done within the same season (2024) and a license can only be applied for after planning permission has been granted.

The revised documents (December 2023) submitted before the videos have addressed the points made in the ecology response of 7/12/23. The Phase II bat report now refers to the locations mentioned in table 6 of the PEA, and the precautionary working method was clarified to include the presence of the licensed bat worker and appropriate training for site operatives.

However, since video evidence of a bat roosting under the tiles has been submitted, the Phase II bat report will need to be re-written after the three required Phase II bat surveys have been done. It must contain the mitigation license method statement rather than a precautionary working method. The demolition work can only be done under the approved license method statement. Compensation will be required for loss of a confirmed roost (or possibly several roosts), with the replacement roosts using the same or similar materials and with the entrance in a similar orientation and position on the building and will depend on the species of bats found to be using the building. A lighting plan in accord with the BCT/ILP guidance note 08/2023 will be required and can be conditioned.

The BEMP has been amended with a new enhancements plan showing the correct positions of the recommended biodiversity enhancements. The enhancements are required in addition to compensation.

The plan does not show the positions of the recommended flowering and fruiting tree and shrub species or the species rich grassland, but this can be conditioned in a detailed landscaping plan to ensure that there will be enough flowering species to attract the pollinating insects which provide food for bats and swifts.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist