

Ecology response for H/24/96996 FOX FIELDS, DODWELL LANE, BURSLEDON, SOUTHAMPTON, SO31 1AD

Two storey side extension to include side dormer window, alterations to existing northwestern dormer window, single storey rear extension and elevational alterations (Revised scheme to H/23/96605)

Claire Campbell-Best

12/3/24

The changes in this application do not significantly affect the ecology advice given for the previous application H/23/96605 which was supported by the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment Reports by Hampshire Ecological Services (both in November 2023). These reports are still in date, stated as valid for 12 months, and applicable to this revised application.

The house has been assessed to have negligible bat roost suitability.

Please could you add the following informative 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>.

This site is within a red impact risk zone for great crested newts with several ponds within 600 m of the site. There are no records of great crested newts at these ponds but there is a record at a pond approximately 680 m to the south. The ponds are all separated from the site by roads which would be barriers to dispersal. There are also records of bats and hedgehogs nearby.

A precautionary working method to protect amphibians and small mammals will be required. This can be conditioned. It will involve covering excavations on site at night or fitting them with small animal escape ramps. All operatives must be briefed on procedures and recognising these species. In the unlikely event of any great crested newts being found during demolition or construction, all work must stop immediately, and advice taken from the ecological consultant or from Natural England.

The site visit photos from the previous application show that areas of the rear garden could be used by hedgehogs and nesting birds. Hedgehogs should not be handled but be allowed to move away from the area of impact on their own.

Comparing the site photos to the aerial photos, large areas of vegetation in the front garden and to the side of the house have already been removed and replaced with gravel. A tree in the rear garden appears to have been felled recently.

The two areas of climbing plants on the eastern elevation shown in Image 4.3.1.2 could cover potential bat roost features and could be used by nesting birds.

Any vegetation (including climbing plants) required to be removed to facilitate the building work should be removed outside of bird nesting season (which is usually mid-February through August inclusive). If this is not possible, then it should be removed only after a careful check by a suitably qualified ecologist up to 24 hours before the start of work. If there are any active bird nests, all work must stop, and a 5 m buffer must be installed to protect the nest from disturbance until after the chicks have fledged and left the nest.

The biodiversity enhancements and lighting recommendations proposed in section 5.6 are appropriate and should be implemented. These include an integrated bat box/tube and a swift box to be built into /onto the house, and a 32mm hole bird box to be mounted on a tree in the wider site. The additional enhancements recommended in Appendix C of the Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment report are appropriate and can be implemented. Flowering plants to attract insects as food for bats and birds are especially helpful for biodiversity.

Due to the size of the proposed extensions, additional surface water drainage capacity may be required. A surface water drainage plan is required and can be conditioned.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist