

Ecology response for H/24/96963 ROSEWOOD, BROOK LANE, BOTLEY, SOUTHAMPTON, SO30 2ER

Replacement garage with home office in roof space

Claire Campbell-Best

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This site is in a red impact risk zone for great crested newts with 3 ponds within 500 m of the property. Gould Copse Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (1A/1B SINC) is adjacent to the southern boundary. There are records of badgers, bats, grass snakes, common toads, stag beetles near this site.

I have reviewed the Ecological appraisal & bat surveys report by LC Ecological Services Ltd (September 2022). This report was commissioned for a previous application for both the house and the garage and submitted with H/22/93216, which was permitted for an extension to the main house. At that time the garage was assessed to have low potential for roosting bats due to some access and potential roost features. One emergence survey was done in August 2022, 19 months ago.

The ornamental planting beds around the site have been assessed as having potential to support foraging badgers, when flowering they could also attract insects which would support foraging bats and four species of bats were recorded foraging during the Phase 2 emergence survey.

I object to this proposal. A two-storey garage in this area would impact the trees and hedgerow much more than the existing single storey garage. A home office is proposed in the roof space, however from the elevation drawings, the proposed replacement garage would be much taller than the existing structure and have a much greater impact on the vegetation along the site boundary. Because it is larger, it would also be located closer to the SINC boundary than the original building. The proposed roof windows would allow light to shine up onto the trees, which would have a negative affect commuting and foraging bats.

Should you be minded to permit a two-storey garage in this location, the following information must be considered:

From the description of the existing garage and site photos from the previous application, I don't think an additional survey will be required at this point. Although the report does not have an explicit expiry date, if conditions change or if demolition of the garage is delayed past August 2024, then an update walkover survey will be required to be submitted to the LPA. This must be done by a suitably qualified ecologist before the garage can be demolished.

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>.

A check for nesting birds must be made in the hedgerow, existing shrubs and existing trees (T001, H002, T004, T003, T002, and A001 before the start of demolition. If evidence of an active bird's nest is found, either in the garage or in any vegetation within 10 m of the proposed building, all work must stop and a 5 m buffer must be erected around the nest to protect it from disturbance until after the chicks have fledged and left the nest.

Replacements for trees T001 and T004 will be required. Flowering native species which attract pollinating insects would be beneficial as replacement trees.

The report recommended a root protection zone for the trees along the boundary with Gould Copse SINC and a construction method statement (CMS/CEMP). In addition to the information recommended in section 5.12, 5.22, the CEMP should also include a statement that any piles of soil or materials will be kept covered at night and stored on hard standing to prevent animals from sheltering in these piles. Any chemicals must be stored securely so they cannot be accessed by wildlife. If required at night temporary lighting during the construction phase must be limited and not be allowed to shine on the SINC boundary.

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-%20Institution%20of%20Lighting%20Professionals).

The ecological enhancements recommended in the report were all proposed for the main house, so for this application, biodiversity enhancements will be required for the replacement garage building. These enhancements can be conditioned and could be similar to the enhancements recommended in the report, with locations on the proposed garage to be shown on a plan.

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/>

www.bats.org.uk/resources/guidance-for-professionals/landscape-and-urban-design-for-bats-and-biodiversity

<https://ptes.org/my-garden/>

Lisa Malter

Ecologist