

Ecology response for H/24/96959 CASTLENAU, KNOWLE LANE, HORTON HEATH, EASTLEIGH, SO50 7DZ

Retrospective application for Retention of 1.8 metre high close-board timber fence adjacent to highway

Gary Osmond

20/3/24

This site is in an amber impact risk zone for great crested newts. There are records of bats and slow worms in the area.

The applicant has implied that there was a bramble hedge before the fence was erected. The photos of the hedge on Google maps (image capture August 2023) shows a diverse hedgerow with trees along the road frontage. I can see vegetation that looks like ash, hawthorn and hazel but the photo is not clear enough to determine all of the species present. This can be assumed to be the ecological baseline for the site. This hedgerow would have provided habitat for nesting birds and foraging and commuting habitat for bats.

The site frontage measures approximately 90 metres. This may have been a protected hedgerow under the Hedgerow Regulations. This website explains the characteristics of protected hedgerows [Countryside hedgerows: protection and management - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/countryside-hedgerows-protection-and-management).

Photos are required to show the extent of vegetation loss and the fence in situ.

A new hedgerow will be required as compensation, mitigation and biodiversity enhancement. The position of the new hedgerow would depend on the position of the fence and whether or not it will be given retrospective permission to be retained.

The replacement hedgerow must be composed of a variety of flowering and fruiting native species. This will provide green infrastructure on site for foraging and commuting bats, birds and other wildlife. Once established, it should be managed on a 3-year rotation (front, back and top in successive years) to ensure a continuous supply of food for wildlife.

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