

Ecology response for F/24/96970 Land to the South of Peewit Hill, Bursledon, SO31 8BL

Erection of 2no. semi-detached 3-bed dwellings, with associated access, parking and landscaping

David Huckfield

Q/21/91707- pre app advice for 4 dwellings (Nov 2021), a PEA is required for any planning application on this site as it is just across the road from Peewit Hill SINC. Planning statement from pre-app. The site has four closed boundaries with standard 6-foot fencing used as a boundary treatment, and a semi-open boundary face on the other with varying road accessways. The site is currently left with an eyesore of mixed overgrown shrubbery. The parcel has one tree preservation order on the site (TPO No: 514-E), which has been identified at the design stage and every measure possible has been taken to protect the tree in the proposed design. The site has no other major significant arboricultural features or any heritage assets. This concept respects these factors, however if taken into planning, a full arboricultural report will be produced.

11/6/24

This site is in an amber impact risk zone for great crested newts. There are records of bats, hazel dormice, harvest mice, badgers, common lizards, slow worms and adders nearby. There are protected and notable plant and insect species recorded in this area. There are records of nesting swifts in the wider area. Peewit Hill SINC is located to the north of the site, Windhover (Netley Common South) SINC is to the northwest, and Bursledon Common is to the south.

I have reviewed the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by LHB Ecology (May 2024). It identified potential impacts on nesting birds, reptiles, hedgehogs, badgers, and foraging and commuting bats.

A Phase 1 habitat survey was done in April 2024. Comparing the site photos in the report to aerial photos from Google Earth (March 2022) shows that the site was cleared in advance of the survey. The report shows a pile of mulched vegetation and describes the site as containing recently cut scrub, whereas the aerial photos show quite a few large shrubs, some of which can be seen above the level of the site fence. There is one mature English oak tree on site with a dead birch tree next to it.

The site area is 527 m², which is 0.05 ha. The application was submitted on 23 February 2024 so is exempt from the requirement of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain based on the temporary

exemption for non-major developments in effect at that time (submitted before 2 April 2024), even though it was not validated until 22 May 2024.

Although this application is exempt from providing 10% biodiversity net gain, no net loss of biodiversity and some net gain is required in accord with Local Plan policy DM 11 and NPPF paragraph 180. The baseline for determining no net loss must be taken from before the site clearance.

The proposed site layout shows that at least 75% of the site would contain a large building set within a paved area. The two garden areas would cover only 25% of the site. I don't think it is possible to have any biodiversity net gain with this layout and I object to the application on this basis.

Should the application progress, the precautionary working methods and biodiversity enhancements recommended in the PEA report (table 5.1 and section 6.1.1) can be implemented. A landscape plan which includes biodiversity enhancements would be required and can be conditioned.

Additional information on biodiversity enhancements is available on the following websites:

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/>

<https://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/foodplants.php>

The drainage plan submitted does not include any information about surface water drainage for the site. A surface water drainage strategy is required. If soakaways are proposed, the plan must be informed by infiltration test results.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist