

Ecology response for F/24/97314 82 ST JOHNS ROAD, HEDGE END, SOUTHAMPTON, SO30 4DF

Erection of a four-bedroom bungalow with associated parking, storage, and amenity space.

Rachael Morris

13/6/24

The applicant is claiming the self-build exemption from provision of 10% biodiversity net gain, however, as with all previous applications, biodiversity enhancements (at least some gain in biodiversity and no net loss) are still required in accord with Local Plan policy DM 11 and NPPF paragraph 180.

An updated ecological assessment by Peach Ecology (April 2024) has been submitted. Photos in this report show that the site has been partially cleared and footings had been dug out. The ecological value of the site is now lower than it was in 2019, but it can still be enhanced as part of this proposal.

The biodiversity enhancement proposals in this report are appropriate and can be implemented. Recommended enhancements include a built-in bat box, a built-in swift nest box, at least two bee bricks, new native hedgerow planting, hedgehog access points (13 x 13 cm minimum) in the closed board fencing. These are shown in Appendix E of the Ecological Assessment by Peach Ecology.

The design statement also mentions a part pitched and part sedum planted roof which would be a welcome biodiversity enhancement.

I would recommend the following changes:

Two hedgehog openings should be created rather than just one.

The hedgerows should be planted with an understorey of a shade tolerant hedgerow mix.

The lawn should be planted with a flowering lawn mixture. Additional flowering plants to attract pollinators are strongly recommended.

The tree must be removed either outside of bird nesting season (which is usually March through August, inclusive) or under ecological supervision.

A detailed lighting plan is required to be submitted and approved, to avoid light spillage on the trees and pond to the north and west. This must accord with the BCT/ILP guidance note Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night (GN08/23) (available at <https://www.bats.org.uk/news/2023/08/bats-and-artificial-lighting-at-night-ilp-guidance-note>)

A CEMP is required and must include a precautionary working method to protect small animals during construction. Any excavations must either be covered at night or contain a small mammal escape ramp (slanted rough board).

A surface water drainage plan is required. Rainwater storage and use in the gardens is strongly encouraged. If a soakaway is proposed, an infiltration test is required to show that this is feasible.

Additional biodiversity enhancement 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