Ecology response for F/24/98419 UNIT 20 FIRST FLOOR, CHALCROFT DISTRIBUTION PARK, BURNETTS LANE, WEST END, SOUTHAMPTON, SO30 2PA

First floor rear extension to provide additional office space

Rachael Morris

4/11/24

I have reviewed the Design Statement by Boyle & Summers (September 2024). The proposal will be built in the same footprint, with a spiral fire escape stair extending further to the southwest. The distance from the SINC boundary to the existing extension is approximately 11.5 m.

I have reviewed the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by The Ecology Partnership (October 2024). The proposal qualifies for the de minimus exemption from providing 10% biodiversity net gain but biodiversity enhancements are required in accord with Local Plan policy DM 11 and NPPF paragraph 180.

As discussed in section 4.12, no roof tiles are proposed to be removed where the new flat roof would meet the existing pitched roof. If anything changes, a bat licensed ecologist will be required to supervise any tile removal.

In the unlikely event of any bats being found during demolition or construction, all work must stop immediately, and Natural England must be informed. 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.

I don't think the addition of a first-floor extension and a metal spiral fire escape stair will have a shading impact on the SINC boundary however, as recommended in section 4.14 a bat-sensitive lighting scheme will be required so that light from this building (either exterior lighting or interior light spill) does not shine onto any vegetation which might be used by foraging, commuting or roosting bats or nesting birds either on or off site. The lighting recommendations in section 4.14 can be conditioned with no more than 1 lux illuminating any areas which may be used by wildlife.

The construction of a new footpath from the escape stair to the front of the building is mentioned in the Design Statement (p. 10) but not shown on the plan. There are trees shown quite close to the building and their root protection zones could be affected by construction of a footpath. A plan showing the route of the proposed footpath, and the root protection zones of the existing trees is required. Is an additional footpath necessary or can an existing footpath be extended?

The reasonable avoidance measures for reptiles and best practice guidelines for hedgehogs mentioned in the report shall be implemented.

A bat box, a bird box, log piles and hedgehog shelters have been recommended as biodiversity enhancements. Built-in boxes are preferred to externally mounted boxes as they cannot fall off and do not require maintenance. Swift nest boxes can be used by other birds

when swifts are not in residence, however the boxes recommended in the report are appropriate.

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)

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 , https://www.hampshireswifts.co.uk/nesting)

A biodiversity enhancements plan can either be provided before determination or can be conditioned.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist