

Ecology response for H/24/98294 71 LAKEWOOD ROAD, CHANDLER'S FORD, EASTLEIGH, SO53 5AE

Proposed first floor extension to form additional living accommodation, single storey front and rear extensions

Rachael Morris

5/11/24

I have reviewed the Preliminary Roost Assessment by Daniel Ahern Ecology Ltd (September 2024).

A Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment was done in 2022 where c80 droppings were recorded in the roof void, with one bat activity survey in September 2022 and two further activity surveys in June and July 2023.

The presence of droppings makes the building a confirmed bat roost, although the bats do not appear to have been identified to species. No bats were seen emerging on either of the three dusk emergence surveys. The report states *that any bats which may have roosted in the building are believed to have abandoned the roost*, however as mentioned in section 2.2, bats are known to move between roosts and 3 emergence surveys are only 3 snapshots of roosting activity on those particular dates.

The proposal involves extensive works to the roof. I am concerned that the mitigation recommendations could allow work to proceed without adequate ecological supervision. I am also concerned that the report does not provide photos of all elevations of the house, close up photos of the roof and photos of the interior of the loft.

The Bat Conservation Trust recommends installing a bat brick/box at least 4 m above the ground (not 3 m), 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>

The bat box recommended on a tree must be installed before the end of March 2025 to be in place before start of any works to the house. The demolition phase is recommended to take place between late March and late October. This must only be done when temperatures are above 10°C in dry weather and avoiding the maternity season (June and July) when bats are most vulnerable. If this timing is not possible, then a pre-works check by a bat licensed ecologist will be required.

Before the start of work, all construction operatives must be briefed by a suitably qualified ecologist on how to recognise signs of bats, how to remove roof tiles sensitively in case a bat is roosting underneath and what to do if a bat is found during the roof strip. The report has not listed any specific potential bat roost features which will be removed during the development, but since this is a confirmed roost it is highly likely that there are features that attracted bats to this building.

Please add the following informative to the decision notice:

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>.

The proposed elevations show that there are suitable locations for bat and bird boxes/bricks to be built into the house. At least one bat box/brick/tube must be included in the building as mitigation for the loss of potential roosting opportunities in the building. The other enhancements recommended in the report can be mounted on trees or on the building.

Swift bricks are also recommended as other bird species can use them when swifts are not in residence. Built in features do not require maintenance and cannot fall off. 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> )

In addition to nearby records of bats, this property is located in a green impact zone for great crested newts. There are records of stag beetles, and hedgehogs near this site with records of common toads and nesting swifts in the wider area. The aerial photos of the site available on Google Maps show many large trees on site which could be used by nesting birds.

The proposal involves large front and rear extensions to the house which could affect hedgehogs, toads, terrestrial newts, nesting birds and stag beetles or their larvae. Precautionary working methods are required to protect these species during construction. A Precautionary Working Method Statement can be conditioned.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist