

Ecology response for H/24/98284 2 WESTERN ROAD, WEST END, SOUTHAMPTON, SO30 3EL

Two storey front extension, hipped to gable roof alteration with (2no.) dormers, a single storey side/rear extension to replace existing garage, and external alterations.

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20/12/24

This site is in an amber impact risk zone for great crested newts. There are nearby records of common reptiles, roosting bats, and nesting birds with records of nesting swifts, badgers and hedgehogs in the wider vicinity.

Photos of the site, including the garden areas which would be impacted by construction and the distance of the proposed extensions to the existing trees are required to determine whether any additional protected species surveys are required. The presence of protected species is a material consideration and must be established before determination.

I have reviewed the Bat Survey report by enims (September 2024). This states that a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was done in July, with three bat emergence surveys conducted on the main house (high bat roost potential) and one survey for the garage (low potential) between July and September 2024. No bats were seen emerging from the house or the garage, however (bat) droppings had been identified at a hole in the soffit on the southern aspect of the main house during the PRA.

This report is not sufficient or acceptable. It does not provide any location information, details or photos of the potential roost features, details about the number of bat droppings found, DNA analysis of the species of bat(s), photos of any internal inspection of the loft or any mitigation/compensation for loss of these features. A Phase II bat survey report should never be submitted without the accompanying PRA report.

The presence of droppings confirms this site as a historic bat roost, which must be protected. Emergence surveys only provide a snapshot of the use of this building by bats at the time of the survey. It is against the law to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection by bats (bats do not have to be in occupation at the time). Further information is available at: www.bats.org.uk/advice/bats-and-the-law.

The trees at the southern end of the site were classified as having some potential bat roost features but were not surveyed *as it was not anticipated they would be impacted by the development proposals*. However, a notable bat flight path was plotted through/along the tree line in this area and seven species of bats were recorded during the surveys. Further information is required on how this proposal would affect the trees.

The only information on ecological enhancements given in the report is a general statement about providing roosting opportunities for bats in the form of bat boxes mounted on buildings away from artificial light. This is not specific enough.

Biodiversity enhancements will be required in accord with Local Plan policy DM 11 and NPPF paragraph 180. A bat brick and a swift brick may be appropriate for this building.

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>

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