

Ecology response for H/24/98641 4 ST SWITHUN WELLS WAY, FAIR OAK, EASTLEIGH, SO50 7QY

Single-storey wrap around extension.

Alex Stone

31/12/24

There is a record of bats very close to this site, with nesting swifts and hedgehogs in the wider area.

Vegetation would need to be removed to build this extension, both outside and inside the walled garden. This would result in biodiversity net loss which is contrary to local plan policy DM 11 and NPPF paragraph 180. I raise an ecology objection on this basis. Construction might also affect the root protection zone of the tree located to the east of the house.

Further comments:

This is a new build house with hanging tiles on the front elevation which wrap around to the side. There is a box located on the apex of the eastern side elevation which appears to be either a bird box or a bat box, but I cannot tell which from the photo on Google maps. The decision notice for the previous application, F/19/85028, specifies bird boxes in condition 6c and bat boxes in 6d so it could be either. Further information or a close -up photo is required.

The documents with DC/20/88289 contain a LEMP (Rev 5 by Kingfisher Ecology June 2020). This specifies an integrated bat and swift nest box (Schwegler 1MF in section 7.4.2) but this box looks different to the box shown in the report. The LEMP required annual monitoring of ecological features, so information on the type of box may be available from the ecological consultant doing the monitoring.

A swift nest box requires 5 m of clear flying space for swifts to enter and exit the box. It is not clear whether this space would still be available if the extension were to be permitted.

Either bats or swifts might be disturbed by construction activities under the nest box if the box was occupied. If this extension were to be permitted, a survey would be required to determine if there had been any use of this box and seasonal timing of works would need to be planned so that construction would not affect any future occupants.

If the application is to be permitted, in addition to no net loss of biodiversity, some net gain is required.

Additional information on biodiversity enhancements 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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