

Ecology response 13/1/25 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.

Rachael Morris

13/1/25

We have now received the PRA report which states that the internal loft space of the main house was not accessible at the time of the survey. The photos show the holes in the soffits and fascia, and particularly the hole on the south aspect with bat droppings found below (photos 7 and 8).

No bats were seen emerging on the three dusk emergence surveys conducted between July and September 2024, and only two droppings were found below a hole in the fascia on the southern aspect of the main building, it is possible that bats may have used this site for a non-breeding day roost, a feeding perch or an occasional roost. However, the PEA reports that the internal loft space was not able to be inspected so there could be more droppings in the loft, which could provide more information. Also bat droppings disintegrate easily when outdoors so it cannot be assumed that there were ever only two droppings here.

Nesting birds have not been mentioned in the PEA report, but the holes in the north aspect of the fascia and the south aspect of the soffit could also be used by nesting birds.

The survey work provides evidence that a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence is not required, however as a precaution the following conditions must be agreed:

A pre-works inspection of the loft by a bat licensed ecologist will be required. A report of this inspection with photos will be required to discharge this condition. If further droppings or other evidence of bats are found during this inspection a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence may be required.

Any demolition work involving the disturbance or removal of the potential bat roost and bird nesting features as shown in the PRA must be supervised by a bat licensed ecologist. A bat box must be mounted on a suitable tree in the garden in advance of demolition in case any bats are found during this process. This bat box can also be part of the biodiversity enhancement requirement as described below.

As compensation for the loss of these potential bat roost and bird nesting sites at least two replacement bat roost features must be added to the house, as close as possible in aspect (southern and western) to the features that would be lost due to this proposal. A swift nest box or brick (which can also be used by other bird species) must be added to the north, northeast or north-west out of direct sunlight, five metres above the ground, with clear adjacent airspace. Photos of these features in situ will be required to discharge this condition.

Additional bat or bird features, planting for wildlife and pollinators or enhancements for hedgehogs must be added as biodiversity enhancements. Further information is available on the websites recommended in the ecology response of 20/12/24. Photos of these features in situ will be required to discharge this condition.

A Biodiversity Enhancement Mitigation and Management Plan which shows the location of these features on the house and in the garden and provides management information can be provided before determination or can be conditioned. This plan must also show any exterior lighting to ensure that the bat roost entrances will be kept dark and undisturbed.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist

23/12/24

I have reviewed the site photos. I don't see any suitable natural habitat for amphibians, reptiles or hedgehogs immediately adjacent to the house, however there are piles of rubble, building supplies and already cleared vegetation and branches which could be used as shelter for these species and should be carefully dismantled by hand in case any animals are using them.

A precautionary working method must be submitted and agreed. It should include:

All building materials to be stored on hard standing or on pallets, as far as possible from hedgerows, scrub or potential habitat.

Any excavations must be covered at night or be fitted with a small animal escape ramp

No fires can be lit on site.

Waste must be stored in a skip and not be allowed to accumulate in piles which could be used by wildlife.

Any animals found on site should not be handled but be allowed to move away to a place of safety on their own.

Any vegetation to be removed to facilitate the development must be removed outside of bird nesting season (which is usually between the beginning of March and the end of August) or if this is not possible then only after being checked for nesting birds by a suitably qualified ecologist up to 24 hours before the start of works. If any active nests are found, work must stop, and a 5 m buffer must be erected around the nest to protect it from disturbance until after the birds have fledged and left the nest.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist

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](http://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>

Lisa Malter

Ecologist