Ecology response for DC/25/99034 HATTS COPSE FARM, BROOK LANE, BOTLEY, SOUTHAMPTON, SO30 2ER

Discharge of Conditions 3 (Materials), 4 (Construction Environmental Management Plan) and 5 (Landscaping) of planning permission ref. F/22/93781, for the demolition of the existing main house and replacement 5-bedroom dwelling.

Rebecca Altman

20/3/25

Condition 4 CEMP

I have reviewed the CEMP by Knight Consulting (April 2022). The site plan in section 10 shows areas for contractor parking, waste, storage and plant. It does not show welfare facilities although they are mentioned in section 8.2. In section 3.3.4 it states that the annex will not be demolished until Phase 3 and that it will remain in use during construction (3.3.1). Is the annex planned to be used as a site office and contractor welfare facility? If not, where would they be located?

A bunded storage area for refuelling and chemical storage is mentioned in section 8.6.3 but is not shown on the site plan.

A project Dust Management Plan is mentioned in section 9.2.3 but has not been provided with this CEMP. The measures outlined in 9.2.5 are likely to be sufficient for this development.

Section 9.4.1 Ecology and Arboriculture only states: *While the Site is not of significant ecological value, with no outside habits, amenity planting and limited tree habitat do offer some limited opportunities for nesting birds.* This is not sufficient.

Condition 4 part f requires the following information which is missing from the CEMP: *Precautionary working methods to protect badgers, hedgehogs, nesting birds, reptiles and amphibians.*

The CEMP condition also states Demolition and construction work shall only take place in accordance with the approved method statement.

The Phase II Bat Surveys and Mitigation Strategy report by Ecosupport (June 2023) recorded roosting bats in the main dwelling. A European Protected Species license is required (5.4.1) and the method statement from the license must be understood and followed by all contractors and managers.

The relevant information from the Phase II Bat Surveys and Mitigation Strategy report must be included in the CEMP.

6.2.1 EPS Licence

All works that affect the bat roosts carried out on the main dwelling at Hatts Copse Farm (as per Fig 4 & 5) must take place under an EPSL obtained from Natural England and the destruction of the roosts and capture of bats (if required) will need to be carried out under the

supervision of a licensed Ecologist. All works would be detailed within the EPSL Method Statement required as part of the licence application.

6.2.2 Timing

It is recommended that works avoid the hibernation period (November – February), when bats are in a torpid state and therefore more vulnerable, but also within the optimum period for carrying out works (as per Bat Mitigation Guidelines). Given that the roost present is a day roost, no further timing restrictions will be required. It is therefore recommended that works are carried out between March and October. Works will take place in suitable weather conditions (i.e when overnight temperatures do not drop below 8 degrees immediately prior to or after works to the roost take place) as defined by best practice guidance (Mitchell-Jones et al. 2004).

6.2.3 Supervision

Prior to any works getting underway the licensed bat worker will give a Toolbox talk which will detail best practice methods of sensitive stripping/removal of roofing tiles/materials of the building (i.e tiles around the new roof skylight and the new extension) once the areas surrounding the roost have been stripped and identifying signs of bats.

Personnel will be educated on signs of bats and that, in the unlikely event a bat is found whilst the licensed ecologist is not on site, that all works should stop immediately until the licensee returns to site. The licensed bat worker will then assist contractors with the removal of construction materials surrounding the roost and any other areas which are considered to be high risk for roosting bats.

From the Ecology response of 15/8/23 for F/22/93781:

The site was assessed to have negligible potential for great crested newts but is within a red impact risk zone so precautionary measures for great crested newts are also recommended to avoid any potential risk of GCN impact.

Recommendations for mitigation are given in the report.

These include:

Bat-sensitive lighting if external lighting is required for security purposes, as described in the report. (including during demolition and construction)

Any open excavations or pipes will be covered overnight to prevent animals falling in or escape ramps will be provided (slanted rough boards) to allow them to exit on their own. These must be checked by a site manager in the morning and any animals must be allowed to move to a place of safety on their own and not be handled except by a suitably qualified ecologist.

Building materials and piles of soil must be stored on pallets or kept covered and away from the boundary vegetation to prevent animals sheltering under them. All vegetation near the building must be kept mowed to a short sward before and during construction to prevent reptiles from using the vegetation as habitat.

To avoid disturbance to nesting birds or damage to nests, any works impacting the building, hedgerow or trees must be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season, (March through September depending on weather).

If this is not possible, a nesting bird check must be done by a suitably qualified ecologist immediately before demolition and vegetation clearance. Any active nests must be protected from all disturbance by a 5 m buffer and monitored until the chicks have fledged and left the nest.

The trees, hedgerows, ponds, and any suitable habitat for protected and priority species (badgers, reptiles, amphibians, hedgehogs, and nesting birds) must be protected from damage by fencing during the works which must remain in place until all work is completed. This fencing will exclude any vehicles, machinery, and storage of materials from potential habitat areas.

Condition 5 Landscaping

I have reviewed the Proposed Landscaping Plan by Knight Consulting (Rev F, August 2024). If the proposed wild meadow planting area labelled 9 on the plan could be extended into the area to the west it would provide a greater ecological benefit. If this is not possible then additional garden beds with a range of flowering plants to provide a long flowering season to benefit pollinators, to attract insects as food for bats and birds, and other wildlife would be beneficial to the site.

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

Lisa Malter

Ecologist