

Ecology response for F/25/98926 87 SWAYTHLING ROAD, WEST END, SOUTHAMPTON, SO30 3AG

Construction of 1No. detached three-bedroom dwelling with associated off-street car parking and private amenity space

Gary Osmond

21/3/25

Ecology

This site is in a green impact risk zone for great crested newts. There are records of bats, badgers, nesting swifts and hedgehogs near this site.

Current photos of the site submitted in the small sites metric show the existing vegetation and the remains of at least one outbuilding. The photos show that there is potential for nesting birds, hedgehogs, bats, common reptiles such as slow worms and terrestrial great crested newts to be using this site. When potential habitat for protected and priority species exists on site, a preliminary ecological appraisal (Phase 1 survey) completed by a suitably qualified ecologist is required to assess whether these species could be harmed by the development and recommend appropriate mitigation to protect them. In some cases, further Phase II surveys may be required.

The request for a Phase 1 Ecology survey was questioned by Tom Peters of ATP Architectural Design in an email dated 27/2/25. The biodiversity checklist is only a rough estimate of what might be present on site, and states very clearly on the front page of the version submitted: *Local authorities may require further information during the application process.* The checklist submitted is an older version as it refers to ieem.org.uk. IEEM became CIEEM in 2013. For future use, a more up to date copy is available at [Checklists | Environment | Hampshire County Council](#).

Section 3.4 of the current checklist asks whether the proposals will affect any of the following features- mature or overgrown gardens, rough grassland, derelict/brownfield land, which are found on this site. Bat foraging habitat, dormice, nesting birds, badgers, reptiles and other notable species are potentially affected by loss of these features. The small sites metric is used to provide a measurement of baseline habitat and post-development habitat and to demonstrate a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain. It is not designed to assess the potential impacts on specific protected species.

Current photographs of the site were requested in the Ecology response (11/3/24) for F/24/96952 but were not provided. Those photos would have been the basis for requiring a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal/Phase 1 Ecology survey. The application was determined and refused on other grounds without further consultation with Ecology.

Section 6 of the Local List for Validation (February 2024) explains the need for photos to be submitted. Section 7 requires ecological surveys and assessments.

Ecology raises a holding objection until a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been submitted. The report should also contain recommendations for species specific mitigation for loss of habitat such as built-in bat and swift nest boxes, hedgehog holes in fences, areas where hedgehogs can shelter, and hibernacula for common reptiles.

Any closed board fencing will require hedgehog holes (13 cm x 13 cm minimum) to allow free passage of small mammals through the garden.

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>

Biodiversity net gain

The small sites metric shows that with the proposed enhancements a net gain of 440% can be achieved on site.

Surface water drainage

A surface water drainage plan is also required. If a soakaway is proposed, a soil infiltration test will be required if there is no evidence of a working soakaway on site.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist