

Ecology response for F/25/99584 PEAR TREE COTTAGE, BOTLEY ROAD, HORTON HEATH, EASTLEIGH, SO50 7DT

Erection of 1no. 4-bedroom detached dwelling and detached garage with new vehicular access from Botley Road

Clare Martin

15/7/25

Summary

The site plan shows an additional paved drive planned to the north of the site which is labelled separate access required to area adjacent to site. Is this land under the same ownership? It appears to be woodland. Site clearance must not take place in advance of submitting a planning application.

This site is in an amber impact risk zone for great crested newts with a record of great crested newts in a pond approximately 400 m to the south of the site. There are records of badgers and bats nearby.

The following information is required before determination:

The woodland adjacent to this site must be checked for the presence of ponds and badgers.

An updated Statutory metric using the February 2024 pre-clearance baseline data (available in the metric submitted for F/24/96914)

A completed EBC Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy Form available at [Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain for Planning Applications](#) along with the required documents listed at the beginning of the form.

If this application is permitted, the following information can be conditioned:

A CEMP including precautionary methods to avoid harm to wildlife

A specific precautionary clearance method statement for reptiles and great crested newts

A biodiversity enhancements /landscape environmental management plan including the locations of bat and bird boxes, and hedgehog holes in fences

Evidence of purchase of biodiversity units

Ecology

Previous applications include pre-app Q/23/95073 and F/24/96914 (withdrawn)

Habitat degradation in advance of application

Pre-application advice for Q/23/95073 included that site clearance must not take place in advance of submitting a full application or in advance of any survey work to support an application. The same advice was given in the Ecology consultation response for F/24/96914.

I have reviewed the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by Daniel Ahern Ecology (June 2025) submitted for this application.

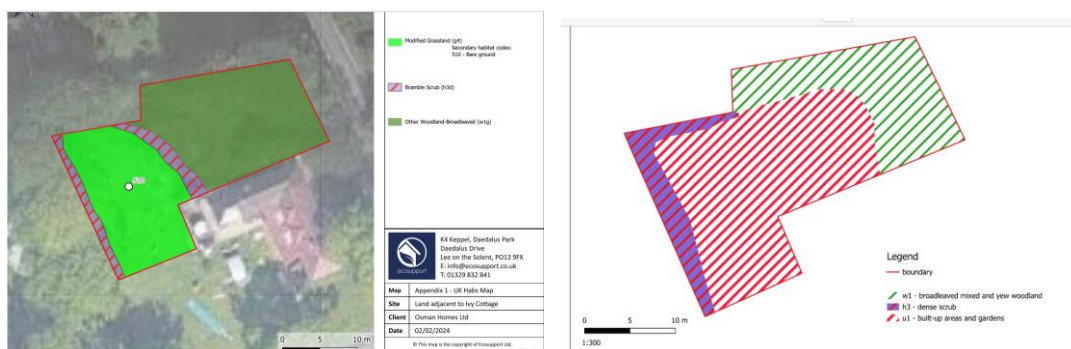
Evidence of existing habitat having been recently cleared, destroyed or degraded (at some point between February 2022 and June 2025), was shown in the photos provided in Appendix 1. Wood chips and tree stumps from the site clearance remain on the site with ruderal vegetation re-growing in some of the areas. A small shed was shown in the site photos but not described in the report. The list of vegetation present on site was based on species present during the survey. No invasive species were listed.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Although it was available to the public on our website, the ecology documents submitted for F/24/96914 do not appear to have been taken into account by the ecologist preparing this report. The ecology survey described in section 4.3 of the Ecosupport report for F/24/96914 can be taken as accurate pre-clearance evidence of vegetation. There is also a condition assessment of the woodland which is important to determine the habitat value. **The UK Hab map and the baseline values in the statutory metric spreadsheet submitted for F/24/96914 are dated 2/2/2024 and must be used for the biodiversity baseline of the site for this application rather than the estimates from satellite data provided in the 2025 report.**

The UK Hab map from F/24/96914 shows a much larger area of woodland existed than has been estimated by the Daniel Ahern Ecology report along with an area of modified grassland and two bands of bramble scrub.

The red line boundary of the previous application does not appear to extend all the way to Botley Road for some reason, so the woodland may have been slightly larger than shown on the UK Hab map. There are tree stumps showing in the photo labelled Fig 4 in the DAS and aerial photos available on Google Earth dated 3/2022 show trees extending all the way towards the road.



Comparison of UK Hab maps from February 2024 (Ecosupport) and June 2025 (Daniel Ahern Ecology)

Protected species

The site has been assessed for protected species habitat potential in June 2025 and found to have low potential for great crested newts, moderate potential for reptiles, low potential for

terrestrial mammals including badger, negligible roosting potential for bats, but moderate foraging and commuting potential. The potential for nesting, foraging and commuting birds was assessed to be moderate.

Great crested newts and reptiles

HBIC records show a record of great crested newts in a pond approximately 400 m to the south of the site (and not in the pond 70 m to the east across the B3354). There is some habitat connectivity between the two sites. The ecology report submitted for F/24/96914 showed a photo of a pond in the woodland adjacent to the site at figure 3b. It is not clear where this pond is located as it is not shown on the map. The woodland adjacent to the site must be checked for the presence of ponds and badger setts.

The 2025 report states that GCN were recorded in a pond 70 m east of the site and that a GCN survey of that pond is required, however I cannot find any records of GCN in this area on our HBIC database or on MAGIC. Please could you ask the ecological consultant for the source of this record? The pond to the east is on the other side of the busy B3354. I think it is very unlikely that GCN would cross this road to access this site when there is more suitable habitat nearer the pond. A GCN survey of that pond is not required for this site.

Precautionary clearance methods for reptiles and great crested newts would be required and can be conditioned. If this application is approved at any point, a suitable receptor site must be identified in case great crested newts or reptiles are found during site clearance.

Precautionary working methods 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 chemicals and fuels must be stored carefully and away from potential wildlife habitat.

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

Lighting must be minimised and directed away from any areas that would be used by wildlife.

Nesting birds

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.

On-site biodiversity enhancements for protected species such as bats, birds and hedgehogs are required and must be shown on a plan.

This could include built in bat bricks and swift bricks or externally mounted boxes for bats and swifts. Built in boxes are preferred as they do not need maintenance and cannot fall off.

New close boarded timber fencing is proposed. Any closed board fencing requires at least two hedgehog holes (13 x 13 cm minimum) in the base boards to allow the free passage of small animals 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>

Surface water drainage

Soakaways and porous block paving are proposed in the site plan. A surface water drainage plan supported by soil infiltration test results will be required before determination to ensure that soakaways would be appropriate for this site. The use of water butts or underground rainwater storage tanks is strongly recommended to save rainwater for use in the garden. This can be shown on the site plan.

Landscaping

A landscape/biodiversity enhancement plan is required, to show more continuous green infrastructure around the site boundaries, and a specific planting plan. Flowering trees and shrubs with a range of plants with a long flowering period included on the site will provide resources for pollinators, birds and other wildlife.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist