



29th October 2025

Planning Officer
Eastleigh Borough Council

Dear Mr Osmond

F/25/100154 91B The Crescent, Eastleigh SO50 9BJ. Construction of 2No. two bedroom and 4No. three bedroom terrace dwellings with associated parking and landscaping following demolition of existing site structures

I am writing to you on behalf of Hampshire Swifts, a charity devoted to the conservation of Swifts in Hampshire and part of a national network of Swift groups throughout the UK.

No information appears to have been provided with this application on proposed ecological enhancements for birds in this development. The end gables on the north side of the proposed terrace, or the east side of the terrace are suitable for swift bricks, an enhancement which would be of great value not just for Red-Listed Swifts which breed in this area of Eastleigh but also for other Red-Listed cavity nesting bird species such as House Sparrows.

According to current best practice guidance as laid out in BS 42021:2022, *all* bird boxes on buildings should be integral swift bricks and new developments should include at least 1 swift brick per home on average. See <https://knowledge.bsigroup.com/products/integral-nest-boxes-selection-and-installation-for-new-developments-specification-1?version=standard&tab=overview>.

Swift bricks are a universal integral nest brick for small bird species, including Red-Listed swifts and house sparrows (e.g. see NHBC Foundation: Biodiversity in New Housing Developments (April 2021) Section 8.1 Nest sites for birds, page 42: https://www.nhbcfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/S067-NF89-Biodiversity-in-new-housing-developments_FINAL.pdf). Swifts are unable to use sparrow terraces.

Swift bricks are the only type of bird box specifically mentioned as valuable to wildlife in the latest national planning guidance (NPPG Natural Environment 2025 Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 8-017-20250609) where it states “The National Planning Policy Framework expects development proposals to bolster wildlife by incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs. The use of swift bricks is particularly important in this context because swifts rely on urban cavities for nesting, and the national loss of suitable nesting sites through building renovation has been part of the reason for the species’ decline. Developments should include integrated nest boxes (commonly known as swift bricks) where possible, with the general aim across a development of a minimum of one nest box per unit. Nest boxes can provide important habitat for other species as well as swifts, such as starlings and sparrows.



Extensive guidance is available on wildlife friendly features, including the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code which illustrate how well-designed places can support rich and varied biodiversity by facilitating habitats and routes for wildlife. More specific support for the selection and installation of swift bricks can be found in the British Industry Standard BS 42021:2022 the Future Homes Hub Homes for Nature Guidance, and the RSPB's Guide to Nestboxes."

We therefore request that if this application is approved there should be at least one swift brick per home in this development, installed according to BS 42021:2022 and this should be secured by condition, perhaps as part of a Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancements Plan. Bird boxes/ bricks and other species features are excluded from the DEFRA Biodiversity Net Gain metric, so require their own clear conditions.

Yours sincerely

Prof Catharine Gale
Trustee