



18th December 2025

Planning Officer
Eastleigh Borough Council

Dear Mr Chapman

RM/25/100575. ONE HORTON HEATH, UPPER ACRE, HORTON HEATH, FAIR OAK, EASTLEIGH. Reserved Matters relating to Layout, Scale, Appearance, and Landscaping pursuant to Condition 4 (RM Requirements) of Outline Planning Permission O/20/89498 for the erection of 424 dwellings within Phase 10 (The Upper Acre), with associated public open space, landscaping, and cycle and vehicular parking, to include details relevant to the following Outline Planning Permission conditions: including Condition 64 (EMMP)

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.

On page 56 of the Ecological Impact Assessment by Johns Associates, it says "*Each new suitable residential building facing the boundary habitats to have provision of one built-in bird nesting feature*". The same text appears on page 22 of their Ecological Mitigation and Management Plan. If this is the extent of the provision proposed for nesting birds in this development, it does not meet current best practice guidance as regards bird boxes for buildings, or the latest government guidelines in the National Planning Policy Framework or Eastleigh Council's current Biodiversity Strategy (see below).

According to current best practice guidance as laid out in BS 42021:2022, bird boxes on buildings should be integral swift bricks and new developments should include at least 1 swift brick per home and from four to 10 on a small block of flats. 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). While a range of cavity nesting species can use swift bricks, swifts are not able to use house sparrow terraces.

Swift bricks are the only type of bird box specifically mentioned as valuable to wildlife in national planning guidance (NPPG Natural Environment 2019 paragraph 023). The National Model Design Code Part 2 Guidance Notes (2021) also recommends bird bricks (Integrating Habitats section on page 25 and Creating Habitats section on page 26).

The latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for England (<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/675abd214cbda57cacd3476e/NPPF->



Hampshire Swifts

[December-2024.pdf](#) states in Paragraph 187 (d) on page 54 "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment 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."

According to Eastleigh Borough Council's Biodiversity Strategy 2024-34, swifts are one of its key species for nature recovery and one aim is to "Use the planning system to maximise species restoration opportunities (e.g inclusion of built-in habitat such as swift bricks". See <https://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/media/15850/1267010-biodiversity-strategy-2024-2034-update-aug-2025.pdf>

We request that there should be at least 1 swift brick per home on average across this development.

Yours sincerely

Prof Catharine Gale
Trustee