

Ecology response for F/25/100632 OLD OAK FARM, WINCHESTER ROAD, FAIR OAK, EASTLEIGH, SO50 7HD

Replacement of two lawful dwellings with two self-build dwellings

Gary Osmond

11/1/26

More information needed

I have reviewed the Updated Ecological Appraisal by Aluco (September 2025). This is based on an amended site boundary and ecological work for previous applications with update site visits in April 2023 and August 2025.

The precautionary working methods and ecological requirements listed in the report are appropriate and must be implemented. These are required to prevent harm to reptiles, amphibians, badgers, dormice, hedgehogs, and nesting birds which could potentially use this site. The timing of any vegetation clearance would need to be planned with consideration of the different requirements of all of the protected and priority species which could be on site and would need to be done in stages to avoid disturbance during nesting and hibernation times.

Great Crested Newts

The site is in an amber/green risk zone for great crested newts (GCN) but they are unlikely to be present on site.

Bats

The site has been assessed as having foraging habitat for bats. The trees along the eastern site boundary may have some lower potential bat roost features due to the presence of ivy. Ivy should be left on the trees. The trees should be protected during construction and kept dark during construction and occupation.

Badgers

There is potential for badgers to forage on this site and there are badgers in the wider area. A pre-works badger check by a suitably qualified ecologist is required to ensure that badgers have not established setts in or near this area.

Notable Invertebrates

Any invertebrates found during construction must be left to move away from danger on their own. If this is not possible, they should be gently encouraged to move without handling them.

Reptiles

Prior to construction, as per the method statement, a destructive search of the vegetation on site, supervised by a suitably qualified ecologist is required. The precautionary method

statement for removal of habitats in the report is appropriate and must be implemented. A reptile receptor area must be shown on a plan.

Piles of materials already on site must be moved by hand to allow any animals which may be using them for shelter to have time to escape.

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). If this is not possible then vegetation can be cleared 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.

The precautionary working method for all wildlife must 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.

The positions of bat and swift nest boxes must be shown on a plan along with any lighting proposals to ensure that they will be on the correct elevations and kept dark.

Garden plants must include a variety of plants for pollinators as well as night-scented flowering plants to attract moths as food for bats.

The potentially invasive species Field Horsetail and Thorn Apple are mentioned in section 4.3.10 and section 5.3.4. They must not be allowed to spread either on site or off site and should be controlled or eradicated if possible. Site operatives must be made aware of their presence, how to identify them and how to keep them from spreading.

The varieties of native shrubs selected must provide flowers, fruit and seeds and be managed for wildlife. Additional conifers should not be planted on site.

The retained grassland outside the developed area must be managed to develop an irregular tall edge habitat to provide habitat suitable for reptiles as explained in section 5.3.15.

Timber post and rail fencing has been proposed which would not create a barrier for hedgehogs but any if closed board fencing is used it must have holes cut into the baseboards (13 x 13 cm minimum) to allow the free movement of hedgehogs across the site.

Biodiversity Net Gain

This application is exempt from the requirement of 10% biodiversity net gain as a self-build and custom build development. No net loss of biodiversity and some net gain are required by the NPPF and EBC local plan policy DM11. The recommendations for biodiversity enhancements listed in section 5.4.1 of the report are appropriate and must be implemented.

The locations of the bird and bat boxes, dark corridors on site, details of any exterior lighting (only if required for safety or security), planting areas with plant species lists, and management plans and schedules for biodiversity features must be shown on a plan.

The Landscaping Strategy Plan already contains most of this information, so this same plan could be used and annotated with specific bat and bird box positions, proposed exterior lighting and plant species lists.

Surface water drainage

Surface water drainage information will be required before determination.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist