



16th August 2022

Planning Officer
Havant Borough Council

Dear Ms Wells

APP/21/00989 | Outline planning application for the development of 150 dwellings (3-bed; 4-bed and 5-bed dwelling houses and 1-bed and 2-bed apartments) addressing layout, scale and access, including biodiversity enhancements and buffers and species-specific enhancements, SUDS and car parking (with appearance and landscaping matters reserved).
| Cabbagefield Row, opposite 123-133, Swanmore Road, Havant

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.

The revised Ecology and Landscape Plan published on 26 July 2022 but still dated July 2021 shows that 34 'bird boxes' are now proposed for this development. No information is provided as to what type of bird box this refers to and the number proposed falls far short of current best practice. Current best practice guidance dictates that nest boxes on buildings should be integral swift brick types, as these are permanent, require no maintenance, have better temperature regulation with future climate change in mind, and are aesthetically integrated with the design of the development. Swift bricks are a universal nest brick as they are readily used not just by Swifts but also by House Sparrows, Starlings (provided the entrance is large enough), Great Tits, Blue Tits and other species. The British Standard BS 42021:2022 Integral nest boxes recommend that in new residential developments the number of integral swift bricks should be at least equal to the number of dwellings. We request that swift bricks should be installed in accordance with British Standard BS 42021:2022 Integral nest boxes.

Swift, House Sparrow and Starling are all now red-listed because they are at high risk of extinction. All 3 species are undergoing major declines caused mainly by the loss of nesting sites on existing houses due to re-roofing and replacement of soffits and fascias and the lack of nest sites in new buildings. Between 1994 and 2021, for example, Swifts declined by 62% in the UK as a whole and by 70% in the South-East. All these species readily use Swift bricks when these are integrated into new developments.

A summary of the British Standard BS 42021:2022 Integral nest boxes is given overleaf.

Yours sincerely


Trustee of Hampshire Swifts



Summary of British Standard BS 42021:2022 Integral nest boxes

The standard is aimed at building-integrated nest boxes for the following cavity nesting species (although other species may potentially use the boxes): Swift, Starling, Great Tit, Blue Tit, House Sparrow.

The document notes that House Martins do sometimes use nest bricks [e.g. Schwegler 1A bricks], and there are further details of nest cups as stated below.

The standard does not cover glass buildings - which are often inappropriate locations to attract birds, nor metal frame buildings with insulated or fire-rated cladding which have additional considerations, nor exterior nest boxes.

An installation plan must be prepared in consultation with interested parties, and on completion the local authority must be sought to confirm suitable installation.

Integral nest boxes must be installed in all new developments (in cases where BS 42021 is specified), including modular pre-fabricated construction, with the exception of buildings in or near fully glazed buildings due to collision risk.

Integral nest boxes must be weather resistant, temperature change resistant, and have easy entrance and exit.

<i>Internal dimensions of integral nest boxes</i>			
	Preferred	Minimum dimensions	
Floor area	>400 cm ²	300 cm ²	
Shorter floor dimension	>14 cm	10 cm	
Headroom	>10 cm	7.5 cm	
These dimensions ensure there is adequate space for a brood of, for example, three nestling swifts and two parents, as well as adequate space for swifts to manoeuvre without difficulty. As such, this provides adequate space for target species.			
Some examples of successful integral nestboxes have floor dimensions of: (10 cm x 30 cm), (17.5 cm x 20 cm) and (18 cm x 40 cm). Internal heights range from 7.5 cm to 17.5 cm			

External dimensions to be compatible with standard brick and/ or block sizes.

Entrance hole to be less than 50mm from the floor of the box, or the inside to provide grip to enable the birds to easily climb out of the box.

Entrance hole to be minimum 30mm x 65mm, except where a suitably competent person advises 28mm x 65mm to exclude starlings and favour smaller species.

Integral nest boxes to be labelled top/ bottom for installation.



Summary of British Standard BS 42021:2022 Integral nest boxes cont.

Integral nest boxes to be constructed of materials that prevent high levels of humidity and are resistant to overheating and cooling.

Integral nest boxes shall be installed in buildings dispersed around the development site. The positioning of integral nest boxes shall take into account: a) open sources of clean water accessible to birds; b) suitable habitat within and around the development for birds to occupy, and c) suitable nearby natural sources of food through provision of suitable habitat; and minimise potential for droppings nuisance.

The following positions shall be avoided: 1) areas that are exposed to extended periods of direct sunlight or prevailing weather conditions; 2) near perches that could be used by avian predators; and 3) areas where cats, rats and squirrels have easy access, e.g. near ledges.

Integral nest boxes shall be a) in gable ends or under eaves; b) inserted into walls: 1) backing onto cold voids, i.e. adjacent to the roof space; and/or 2) where installation of the box avoids cold (thermal) bridging; c) in association with external wall features, e.g. under eaves, near the verge in a gable, beneath ledges and inserted into parapets; and d) at a suitable height above ground: for buildings up to three storeys at the highest possible point, and for buildings over three storeys the integral nest boxes shall be a minimum of 4m above ground level.

New residential developments to have a number of integral nest boxes at least equal to the number of dwellings, i.e. the ratio of integral nest boxes to dwellings is 1:1. In practice this means that some dwellings could receive more than one box while others might contain none due to suitability of the location.

For larger developments, the number of integral nest boxes to be installed shall be *“proportionate to the size and design of the building”*.

For colonial species, integral nest boxes shall be installed close together, e.g. two boxes located in every other house, or three in every third dwelling.

To encourage swifts, integral nest boxes shall be installed so that there are: a) two to four on a medium to large house; b) from four to 10 on a small block of flats; and c) 10 to 40 or more on a large site, such as a school, hospital, warehouse, or a major apartment development.

Swallows and house martins can be accommodated using commercially available man-made swallow cups and house martin nests, which should be positioned: a) for swallow cups: in open access structures, such as pergolas, verandas, open entrance lobbies, open-sided car ports, or suitable open-sided structures; and b) for house martin nests: under eaves. To reduce mess, boards to catch droppings can be installed under the nest site. Provision for swallows and house martins can be provided in any suitable location on site, such as open-sided car ports and garages.