

Planning application comment was submitted on the **07 February 2024 21:34 PM**

The following is a comment on application **P240222/F** by **John Davison**

Nature of feedback: Submitting a general comment

Comment: Noting the positive proposals in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, I would like a feature that uses the fabric of the buildings to enhance the wildlife capacity of the site.

The government wishes to build 300,000 homes per year over the next few years. At the same time, planning guidelines are proposed that any new development should attain a "10% net gain in biodiversity".

Biodiversity net gain is measured in terms of changes in habitat: green roofs, meadows, woodland, water features, etc.

If you create the habitat, the wildlife will turn up: birds, bats and bees as well as amphibians, reptiles, mice and hedgehogs to name a few. The 'habitat' will generate food, shelter, places to forage and roost and somewhere to breed.

The habitat is not solely about ground level landscaping. Such landscaping of an area that had been soil into one that is paved over, is not likely to achieved the same or better ecological value. Housing can, however, provide for birds that rely on crevices in buildings to nest. One of these birds is the swift. Swifts are in trouble, having declined by 57% between 1995-2017. Swifts are now a 'Red-listed' species on the list of Birds of Conservation Concern .

Without our help, swifts will be lost as a breeding species in the UK. Swifts are entirely reliant on buildings to nest. Nest sites are being lost when buildings are demolished or refurbished. It is important that new houses include integral nest sites during their construction. The RSPB and the British Trust of Ornithology believe loss of nest sites is a key driver behind the dramatic decline of swifts.

Swift bricks last the lifetime of the building and do not detract from its appearance. There are various designs of nest bricks on the market, suited to blend with the exterior of a building, thus not affecting its appearance.

Swift bricks are a universal nest brick for small bird species including 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/> [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Attachment:

Their contact details are as follows:

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Infrastructure from section 106 to consider: Provision of tarmac path in the verge of rural road. Vehicular traffic has grown so that shared use is uncomfortable

Link ID: https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/planning_application_search/details?id=240222

Form reference: FS-Case-584969054