

125 MAR 2024

22nd March 2024

Mr. Llywelyn Lloyd
Chief Planning Officer
Civic Centre
Castle Hill Avenue
Folkestone
CT20 2QY

Dear sir

Planning application 23/2005/FH

I am writing to you in regard to the enclosed letter which I delivered in person to the civic centre on the 10th February. I submitted this with the intention of obtaining an assurance from FHDC planning department that the developer of the property had been informed that he has certain legal obligations under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Basically, I expected a reply from one of your officers, addressing my concerns. However, far from receiving a response, I found that the letter had been included in the comments section of the application in the planning portal. Had I wished for this to happen, I would have made it clear that I was submitting an objection rather than a request for information. This suggests that whoever in your department processed the letter did not actually read it.

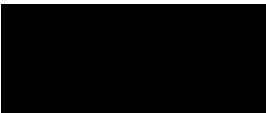
I have completed a Wildlife Assessment Check on the Bat Conservation Website and the result suggests that bats may be present in the building and thus adversely affected by the construction work being proposed.

Work on the extension to the house has still not commenced in the absence of planning permission and I am asking again for a response from your department to the questions asked in the letter. Has the developer been made aware that he needs to commission an ecological survey and if so, what measures have been put in place to ensure that this has been done?

Yours Sincerely



Peter Worden



10th February 2024

Mr. Llywelyn Lloyd
Chief Planning Officer
Civic Centre
Castle Hill Avenue
Folkestone
CT20 2QY

Dear sir

Planning application 23/2005/FH

The above planning application concerns a large extension including a hip to gable roof extension of a property at 119 Downs Road, Folkestone. The application has generated a considerable number of objections from neighbours and Folkestone Parish council, based on the size and overbearing nature of the development.

In addition to the reasons given by the objectors, I would like to draw your attention to the effects on wildlife of the building works, in particular bats and nesting birds. There is a significant bat population in the immediate area of the house in question. I have observed as many as a dozen bats of at least two different species flying over neighbouring gardens and have frequently seen bats emerge from the gap between numbers 119 and 121. The property in question was inhabited by an elderly gentleman and has not been the subject of any significant repair work for many years. I am concerned that bats may well be using the roof space for roosting and hibernating, given their proximity to the house when seen at dusk. As you are aware, all species of bats are given protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Could you please provide an assurance that the owner of the property has been informed by your department that it is his legal responsibility to arrange a survey by a suitably qualified ecological consultant?

On the question of nesting birds, I know beyond doubt that starlings nest in the soffits of the roof annually, having observed them entering and exiting the soffits through ventilation or drainage holes, carrying food for their young. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) makes it an offence to disturb any species of bird while nesting and specifies that this period commences in March and extends to August. Can you please provide an assurance that this condition imposed by the Act has been made known to the planning permission applicant?

Yours Sincerely

Peter Worden