



Date: 11 July 2025

Our ref: 05698

Matthew Porter
Horsham District Council
Parkside
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 1RL

By email only: Planning Department, planning@horsham.gov.uk

Thank you for requesting advice on this application from Place Services' ecological advice service. This service provides advice to planning officers to inform Horsham District Council planning decisions with regard to potential ecological impacts from development. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer who will seek further advice from us where appropriate and necessary.

Application: DC/25/0894
Location: Land To The South of Broadbridge Way Broadbridge Heath West Sussex
Proposal: Full Planning Application for the erection of 89no. residential dwellings comprising dwellings (54no.) and apartments (35no.), 36% affordable homes, creation of new vehicular access on to Sergeant Way, provision of public open space, landscaping and drainage solutions.

Thank you for consulting Place Services on the above application.

No ecological objection	<input type="checkbox"/>
No ecological objection subject to attached conditions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Further information required/Temporary holding objection	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recommend Refusal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Subject to Natural England's formal comments on the conclusion of the Water Neutrality Appropriate Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Subject to Natural England's formal comments on the conclusion of the Bat Appropriate Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please note that following receipt of Natural England's position statement on developments in the Sussex North Water Supply Zone, decisions on planning applications should await the completion of a Sussex North water neutrality strategy.

Summary

We have reviewed the following documents relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected and Priority species & habitats and identification of appropriate mitigation measures:

- Ecological Assessment (Derek Finnie Associates, April 2025);
- Natural England Consultation Response (Ref: 516209, 26th June 2025);
- Tree Survey Plan (ACD Environmental, July 2024);
- Tree Protection Plan (ACD Environmental, July 2024);
- Site Location Plan (finc, June 2024); and
- Proposed Site Layout (finc, June 2024).

Please note that comments on mandatory biodiversity net gain are provided by Horsham District Council in-house.

We are satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available to support determination of this application. However, please note we have no comments on Great Crested Newt as we have been instructed to leave comments on this European Protected Species to the [NatureSpace Partnership](#).

The Ecological Assessment (Derek Finnie Associates, April 2025) included further surveys for bat activity. We note it is our understanding that no buildings are present on site, therefore, will not be impacted and the existing tree line will be maintained. The Ecological Assessment (Derek Finnie Associates, April 2025) states none of the trees possess any potential roosting features. We therefore agree that no further surveys for bats are required.

The site lies approximately 11.8km northeast of The Mens Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and is therefore within the Wider Conservation Area for the SAC (Sussex Bat Special Area of Conservation Planning and Landscape Scale Enhancement Protocol). The site lies approximately 16.4km east of Ebernoe Common SAC and therefore lies outside the 12km Wider Conservation Area for this SAC. The qualifying feature of the SAC is Barbastelle bat, but this species has not been recorded within 2km of the site. Two European Protected Species Mitigation Licences have been granted within 2km of the site: a) 550 metres to the west in 2013 for a Common and Soprano Pipistrelle; and b) 430 metres to the south 2020 for Brown Long-eared Bat, Natterers, Common and Soprano Pipistrelle bat ([MAGIC maps](#)). There are approximately 113 records of bats within 2km of the site, including Soprano Pipistrelle, Daubenton's bat, Natterer's bat, Brown Long-eared bat, Whiskered bat, Noctule and Common Pipistrelle and Bechstein's bat. The site lies approximately 15.4km north of Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar site.

It is our understanding there will be no severance to the flight lines of foraging or commuting bats from the SAC and habitat connectivity within the site will be maintained. However, the PEA does recommend a wildlife sensitive lighting plan is conditioned to mitigate for any lighting impacts. As such, we believe the mitigation measures are sufficient to maintain

habitat connectivity within the site and that, with mitigation, there will therefore be no Adverse Effect on the Integrity of the Sussex bat SACs. We advise the LPA to prepare a project level HRA Appropriate Assessment to record its decision and consult Natural England on the conclusion.

We support the recommendation that a Wildlife Friendly Lighting Strategy is implemented for this application (2025) to avoid impacts from light disturbance. This should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full. Therefore, technical specification should be submitted prior to occupation, which demonstrates measures to avoid lighting impacts to foraging / commuting bats, which are likely to be present within the local area. This should summarise the following measures recommended by [Guidance Note:08/23 \(Institute of Lighting Professionals\)](#) will be implemented:

- Do not provide excessive lighting. Light levels should be as low as possible as required to fulfil the lighting need.
- All luminaires should lack UV elements when manufactured. Metal halide, compact fluorescent sources should not be used.
- Warm White lights should be used at <2700k. This is necessary as lighting which emits an ultraviolet component or that has a blue spectral content has a high attraction effect on insects. This may lead in a reduction in prey availability for some light sensitive bat species.
- Where appropriate, external security lighting should be set on motion-sensors and set to as short a possible a timer as the risk assessment will allow.
- Luminaires should always be mounted horizontally, with no light output above 90° and/or no upward tilt.
- Only if all other options have been explored, accessories such as baffles, hoods or louvres can be used to reduce light spill and direct it only to where it is needed. However, due to the lensing and fine cut-off control of the beam inherent in modern LED luminaires, the effect of cowls and baffles is often far less than anticipated and so should not be relied upon solely.

Additionally, the Ecological Assessment (Derek Finnie Associates, April 2025) included the results of reptile surveys, due to the site having suitability for common reptile species. No reptiles were encountered during the presence/ likely absence surveys. Given the site comprising grassland habitat suitable for a range of species, we recommend precautionary mitigation measures to ensure any transient species are not impacted during construction. This should be detailed within a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP): Biodiversity and secured by a condition of any consent.

This provides certainty for the LPA of the likely impacts on designated sites, protected and Priority species & habitats and, with appropriate mitigation measures secured, the development can be made acceptable.

The mitigation measures identified in the Ecological Assessment (Derek Finnie Associates, April 2025) should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full. This is necessary to conserve and enhance protected and Priority species particularly those recorded in the locality.

We also support the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected, Priority and threatened species, which have been recommended to secure net gains for biodiversity, as outlined under Paragraph 187d and 193d of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). The reasonable biodiversity enhancement measures should be outlined within a separate Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy and should be secured by a condition of any consent.

This will enable LPA to demonstrate its compliance with its statutory duties including its biodiversity duty under s40 NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

Impacts will be minimised such that the proposal is acceptable, subject to the conditions below based on BS42020:2013. We recommend that submission for approval and implementation of the details below should be a condition of any planning consent.

Recommended conditions

1. ACTION REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL RECOMMENDATIONS

“All mitigation measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Ecological Assessment (Derek Finnie Associates, April 2025) as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

This may include the appointment of an appropriately competent person e.g. an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) to provide on-site ecological expertise during construction. The appointed person shall undertake all activities, and works shall be carried out, in accordance with the approved details.”

Reason: To conserve protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

2. PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT: CONSTRUCTION ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY

“A construction environmental management plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall include the following.

- a) *Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.*
- b) *Identification of “biodiversity protection zones”.*
- c) *Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).*
- d) *The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.*
- e) *The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.*
- f) *Responsible persons and lines of communication.*

- g) *The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.*
- h) *Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.*

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority”

Reason: To conserve protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

3. PRIOR TO ANY WORKS ABOVE SLAB LEVEL: BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY

“Prior to any works above slab level, a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy for protected, Priority and threatened species, prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy shall include the following:

- a) *Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;*
- b) *detailed designs or product descriptions to achieve stated objectives;*
- c) *locations of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans (where relevant);*
- d) *persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures; and*
- e) *details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant).*

The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details shall be retained in that manner thereafter.”

Reason: To enhance protected, Priority and threatened species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under paragraph 187d of NPPF 2024 and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

4. PRIOR TO OCCUPATION: WILDLIFE SENSITIVE LIGHTING DESIGN SCHEME

“Prior to occupation, a “lighting design strategy for biodiversity” in accordance with Guidance Note 08/23 (Institute of Lighting Professionals) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

- a) *identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and*
- b) *show how and where external lighting will be installed (through provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent*

the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the scheme and maintained thereafter in accordance with the scheme. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority."

Reason: To allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries in relation to this advice.

Hayley Dean MCIEEM MSc BSc (Hons)

Ecological Consultant

Place Services at Essex County Council

Email: PlaceServicesEcology@essex.gov.uk



Place Services provide ecological advice on behalf of Horsham District Council.

Please note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.