



Date: 16 September 2025

Our ref: 07661

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By email only: Planning Department, [planning@horsham.gov.uk](mailto:planning@horsham.gov.uk)

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*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.*

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**Application:** DC/25/1193  
**Location:** Oaklands Barn Coltstaple Lane Horsham West Sussex RH13 9BB  
**Proposal:** Demolition of 1no. agricultural building and the erection of 2no. dwellings. (Alternative to prior approval reference DC/14/2697).

Thank you for consulting Place Services on the above application.

<b>No ecological objection</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>No ecological objection subject to attached conditions</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Further information required/Temporary holding objection</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Recommend Refusal</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Subject to Natural England's formal comments on the conclusion of the Water Neutrality Appropriate Assessment</b>	<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 Protected Species Walkover Survey (Animal Ecology & Wildlife Consultants, June 2025), relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected and Priority species and habitats and the identification of proportionate mitigation. Please note that comments on Biodiversity Net Gain are provided by Horsham District Council in-house.

We note from the Protected Species Walkover Survey (Animal Ecology & Wildlife Consultants, June 2025) that the metal-framed, breezeblock farm building has negligible bat roost potential and that no trees will be removed. Therefore, we agree that no further surveys for bats are required.

The site lies approximately 13.6km northeast of The Mens Special Area of Conservation (SAC) ([MAGIC maps](#)) and therefore lies outside within the 12km Wider Conservation Area for The Mens SAC. Therefore, a project level Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) will not be required.

We support the Precautionary Method Statement for reptiles and mobile protected species in Sections 6.15 and 6.16 of the Protected Species Walkover Survey (Animal Ecology & Wildlife Consultants, June 2025). This is because there is suitable habitat for reptiles and mobile protected species, such as Hedgehog (which is a Priority and threatened species), in the boundary scrub, grassland and rubble piles and some grassland will be removed. This should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full.

We are satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available to support determination of this application. Please note that 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](#).

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 Protected Species Walkover Survey (Animal Ecology & Wildlife Consultants, June 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, which includes reptiles and mobile protected species.

We also recommend that reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected, Priority and threatened species should be identified and implemented 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 need to be outlined within a separate Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy and 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 Protected Species Walkover Survey (Animal Ecology & Wildlife Consultants, June 2025), as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination. This includes the Precautionary Method Statement for reptiles and mobile protected species in Sections 6.15 and 6.16 of the Protected Species Walkover Survey (Animal Ecology & Wildlife Consultants, June 2025), which avoids impacts on protected species.*

*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 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).

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

**Hayley Dean MCIEEM MSc BSc (Hons)**

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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.*