



Date: 21 November 2025

Our ref: 10667

Alice Johnson
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/25/1146
Location: Leonardslee Gardens Brighton Road Lower Beeding West Sussex RH13 6PP
Proposal: Extension to the visitor entrance building to house a new ticket sales area and café; Infilling roof to the former generator block courtyard, re-roofing of the Alpine House and internal/external reconfigurations and link extension; Single storey winter garden conservatory to the Stable Block; Terrace extension to the east and internal/ external reconfigurations; Change of use from redundant staff offices and staff accommodation within the stable block to guest accommodation including extension to Honey Cottage; Change of use to the partial first floor of the Red House to staff accommodation; Small WC extension, reinstated chimney stack, and roof alterations to the Engine House; Lightweight wedding pavilion to the lawn, south of Leonardslee House; Landscaping changes including to the forecourt of Leonardslee House.

Thank you for re-consulting Place Services on the above application.

No ecological objection	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recommend approval subject to attached conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Further information required on European Protected Species (bats and Hazel Dormouse)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Recommend Refusal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Subject to Natural England's formal comments on the conclusion of the LPA's Appropriate Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please refer to Horsham District Councils advice regarding [Water Neutrality requirements](#) following Natural England's Withdrawal Statement (31st October 2025).

Summary

We have reviewed the Agent email (21st October 2025) and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Garden Entrance, Honey Cottage, Clock Tower Café and Village Centre) Version 1.0 (Temple Group Ltd., April 2025) relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected and Priority species & habitats, and identification of appropriate mitigation measures. Please note that comments on Biodiversity Net Gain are provided by Horsham District Council in-house. Our previous comments are dated 16th October 2025.

We are still not satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available for determination of this application and recommend that further information for bats and Hazel Dormouse is provided prior to determination. The reasons for this are outlined below:

European Protected Species - bats

As noted in our response dated 16th October 2025, we support the implementation of a non-licensed Precautionary Method Statement for bats as proposed in Section 5.5 of the Dusk Emergence Survey Report (Temple Group Ltd., September 2024). This is because the three dusk emergence surveys undertaken in May, June and July 2024 on the Clocktower Café and Honey Cottage confirmed the presence of a roost for Brown Long-eared bats (Dusk Emergence Survey Report (Temple Group Ltd., September 2024)). However, we understand from Section 4.10 of the Dusk Emergence Survey Report (Temple Group Ltd., September 2024) that the works to Honey Cottage and the Clocktower Café will not impact the roost. Therefore, we agree that a licence for roosting bats is not required at this stage. However, we highlight that the outline measures for the non-licensed Precautionary Method Statement for bats is required prior to determination.

In addition, we note from the Agent email (21st October 2025) that the current proposals will not impact the unclassified bat roost within the Red House and therefore agree that a licence for roosting bats is not required at this stage. However, we also agree that the works should proceed under a non-licensed Precautionary Method Statement for bats (Agent email (21st October 2025)) and highlight that the outline measures for this document are required prior to determination.

European Protected Species – Hazel Dormouse

As advised in our response dated 16th October 2025, we support the implementation of a non-licensed Precautionary Method Statement for Hazel Dormouse as indicated in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment (Stable Block) Version 1.0 (Temple Group Ltd., December 2023). We note that the Agent email (21st October 2025) states that this will be prepared and submitted to the LPA in due course.

We highlight that the outline measures for the non-licensed Precautionary Method Statements for bats and for Hazel Dormouse need to be submitted to the LPA prior to determination in accordance with Government Standing Advice for bats and for Hazel Dormouse, and so that the LPA has certainty of likely impacts on protected species.

The additional information for bats and Hazel Dormouse is required prior to determination because paragraph 99 of ODPM Circular 06/2005 highlights that: “It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision.”

This information is required to provide the LPA with certainty of impacts on legally protected species and be able to secure appropriate mitigation either by a mitigation licence from Natural England or a condition of any consent. This will enable the LPA to demonstrate compliance with its statutory duties, including its biodiversity duty under s40 NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and prevent wildlife crime under s17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

This further information is therefore required to provide the LPA with certainty of impacts on legally protected species and enable it to demonstrate compliance with its statutory duties, including its biodiversity duty under s40 NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

Additional information

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](#).

We look forward to working with the LPA and the applicant to receive the additional information required to overcome our holding objection.

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.