



Date: 8 July 2025

Our ref: 05704

Shazia Penne
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/25/0760
Location: Lyncote Bentons Lane Dial Post West Sussex RH13 8NW
Proposal: Construction of a two storey detached three bedroom dwelling together with the introduction of vehicular access.

Thank you for 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/Temporary holding objection pending information on protected species (reptiles) | <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 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 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Ecology & Habitat Management Ltd., November 2024), 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 are not satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information on protected species available for determination of this application and recommend that further information is provided prior to determination. The reasons for this are outlined below:

Protected Species: reptiles

We support the recommendation in Section 6.0 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Ecology & Habitat Management Ltd., November 2024) for further surveys for reptiles between April and September. This is because there are records of Slow Worm and Grass Snake within 1km of the site, the habitats onsite are suitable for supporting reptiles, including long grass, scrub, woodland, hedgerows and wood/rubble piles, and the site is connected to suitable habitat for reptiles in the wider landscape. [Government Standing Advice](#) says you should ask for a survey if any of the following apply:

- distribution and historical records suggest reptiles may be present
- the development proposal is likely to lead to harm to individual reptiles or their habitats
- suitable habitat is present at the development site that could support reptiles

The results of these surveys are required prior to determination because paragraph 99 of the 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 therefore required to provide the LPA with certainty of likely 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.

See Appeal Decisions Ref: APP/P1560/W/24/3344547 at The Oaks, Clacton Road Weeley Essex CO16 9EF and APP/W3520/W/17/3174638 Pooles Farm, Thorney Green Road, Stowupland IP14 4AJ, where the appeals were dismissed as one of the main issues was the effect of the proposal on protected species. The Inspector could not be sure that there would be no adverse effect on protected species in the absence of ecological information. We also highlight that this information is also requested by the Inspector even where ecology has not been a reason for refusal.

Additional comments

We note from the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Ecology & Habitat Management Ltd., November 2024) that there are no buildings onsite and all trees onsite are to be retained. We therefore agree that no further surveys are required for bats.

We support the recommendation that a Wildlife Friendly Lighting Strategy is implemented for this application (Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Ecology & Habitat Management Ltd., November 2024) 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.

We support the Precautionary Method Statement for mobile protected species in Section 4.4 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Ecology & Habitat Management Ltd., November 2024). This needs to be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full.

We also support the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancements, which have been recommended to secure net gains for biodiversity, as outlined under Paragraph 180d and 186d of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023). The reasonable biodiversity enhancement measures should be outlined within a Biodiversity Enhancement Layout and should be secured by a condition of any consent.

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.

Please contact us with any queries.

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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.