20th November 2024

Shazia Penne
Horsham District Council
Parkside,
Chart Way,
Horsham,
West Sussex
RH12 1RL

By email only

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/24/1596**
Location: **Barrack Cottages Brighton Road Shermanbury West Sussex RH13 8HQ**
Proposal: **Removal of existing mobile home and four container units and erection of a three bedroom chalet bungalow.**

Dear Shazia,

Thank you for consulting Place Services on the above application.

a) No ecological harm/No objection	
b) Requires further information for European Protected Species (bats)	Yes
c) Recommend grant permission subject to conditions	
d) Recommend refusal	
e) Subject to Natural England's formal comments on the conclusion of the Water Neutrality Appropriate Assessment	Yes
f) Discharge of condition	

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 Suitability Assessment for Bats and Great Crested Newts (Babec Ecological Consultants, February 2023) supplied by the applicant, relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected and Priority species & habitats. 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.

Please note that comments on mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain are provided by Horsham District Council in-house.

We are not satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available for determination. This is because the Suitability Assessment for Bats and Great Crested Newts (Babec Ecological Consultants, February 2023) is out of date to support this application, in line with CIEEM Guidance[1] and paragraph 6.2.1 of British Standard (BS) BS42020 'Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development 2013'. This is because the initial site walkover was undertaken in January 2023.

As a result, we recommend that the applicant's ecologist provides an ecological addendum or an updated ecological report to support this application, which should require an additional site visit and may require updated desk study information. The ecologist will be required to provide appropriate justification, on:

- The validity of the initial report;
- Which, if any, of the surveys need to be updated; and
- The appropriate scope, timing and methods for the update survey(s).

If additional impacts to protected species, particularly bats, are identified as a result of the additional ecological assessment, then any necessary further surveys for protected species should also be provided prior to determination. This is necessary as the Government Circular 06/2005 identifies that the presence of a protected species is a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat. Therefore, it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed application, is established before planning permission is granted.

Therefore, this further information is required to provide the LPA with certainty of impacts on protected and priority species and enable it to demonstrate compliance with its statutory duties, as well as its biodiversity duty under s.40 NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

Additional comments – bespoke species enhancements:

We support the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected and Priority species, 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

[1] CIEEM (2019) Advice note on the Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys - https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Advice-Note.pdf

measures should be outlined within a separate Biodiversity Enhancement Layout and should be secured by a condition of any consent.

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.

Yours sincerely

Genevieve Broad MCIEEM MSc BSc (Hons)
Ecological Consultant
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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.