



Date: 23 April 2026

Our ref: 15876

Tamara Dale  
Horsham District Council  
Parkside,  
Chart Way,  
Horsham,  
West Sussex  
RH12 1RL

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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/26/0472  
**Location:** Land North of Eastlands Lane Cowfold West Sussex  
**Proposal:** Erection of 9no. dwellings with associated car parking spaces, detached carports, garages and landscaping.

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 type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>Further information required/Temporary holding objection:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Protected species</li></ul> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Recommend Refusal</b>                                                                                                             | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>Subject to Natural England's formal comments on the conclusion of the LPA's Appropriate Assessment</b>                            | <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 documents supplied by the applicant, relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected & Priority species and habitats and identification of proportionate mitigation. Unfortunately, no information has been submitted in relation to ecology. 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 available for determination of this application and recommend that details of survey results, mitigation and enhancement measures for protected species are provided prior to determination. The reasons for this are outlined below:

### **Protected and Priority species (including reptiles)**

We recommend that a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal should be undertaken in order to assess any impacts to Priority species, including reptiles. We note from the Biodiversity Net Gain (Environmental Assessment Services Ltd., January 2026) that there is modified grassland on site, which may provide suitable habitat for reptiles and other mobile protected species (such as Hedgehog). We also note from [MAGIC maps](#) that there is a pond adjacent to the site to the east and at least eight additional ponds within 500m of the site. [Government Standing Advice](#) says you should ask for a survey if:

- *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 survey information for protected species and Priority species is 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.

### **Additional comments**

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 should be outlined within a separate Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy 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

recommend that the NatureSpace Partnership is consulted on this application as there are numerous ponds within 500m of the site.

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

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.
- We are unable to respond directly to applicants/agents or other interested parties.
- Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant/agent or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer at the relevant LPA, who will seek further advice from us where appropriate.