



Date: 21 November 2025

Our ref: 10666

Matthew Porter
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/23/0189
Location: Sandgate Nursery West End Lane Henfield West Sussex BN5 9RD
Proposal: Outline application for erection of a extra care retirement community of up to 72 units of accommodation (Use Class C2) and up to 10 supported living units (Use Class C3) with associated community facilities including medical centre and on-site laundry and catering facilities, with access, infrastructure, open space, landscaping and associated works (all matters reserved except for access).

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

No ecological objection	☐
No ecological objection subject to attached conditions	☒
Further information required/Temporary holding objection	☐
Recommend Refusal	☐
Subject to Natural England's formal comments on the conclusion of the LPA's Appropriate Assessment	☐

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 Memorandum relating to an Update Walkover (The Ecology Partnership, October 2025) and agree with the recommendations. Our previous comments dated 1st October 2024 and 21st October 2023 refer.

We understand from the Memorandum relating to an Update Walkover (The Ecology Partnership, October 2025) that the habitats on site have not changed materially. Therefore, we have no other comments in addition to our response dated 1st October 2024, 21st December 2023 and those above.

However, we highlight our previous comments that paragraph 4.7 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (The Ecology Partnership December 2022) states that the mature Ash tree in the south-west of the site was identified as having low potential for roosting bats owing to the presence of two small Potential Roost Features. As this application is for outline consent, we highlight that the Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines 4th edition (Collins, 2023) now require trees with low potential for bats to have suitable compensation for loss of roost resource provided in advance and works need to be carried out under a precautionary working method statement to manage the residual risk to roosting bats. It is possible that the reserved matters application will therefore need further checks for bats to inform the need for a mitigation licence from Natural England at that time.

We are still satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available for determination. 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. Please note that we have no comments on Great Crested Newt. We have been instructed to leave comments on this European Protected Species to the NatureSpace Partnership.

As previously advised, submission for approval and implementation of the details below should be a condition of any planning consent. Please note these conditions have been updated with appropriate wording:

Recommended conditions

1. ACTION REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL RECOMMENDATIONS

"All mitigation and and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Memorandum relating to an Update Walkover (The Ecology Partnership, October 2025), Memorandum relating to an Update Walkover Survey (The Ecology Partnership, August 2024), Ecological Impact Assessment (The Ecology Partnership, January 2023), Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (The Ecology Partnership, December 2022), Bat Activity Surveys 2022 (The Ecology Partnership, December 2022), and Reptile Survey Report 2022 (The Ecology Partnership, December 2022), as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

This will 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. CONCURRENT WITH ANY RESERVED MATTERS: FURTHER SURVEYS FOR PROTECTED SPECIES

"Further supplementary ecological surveys for protected species including bats and reptiles shall be undertaken to inform the preparation and implementation of the corresponding ecological measures required. The supplementary surveys shall be of an appropriate type for the above species and survey methods shall follow national good practice guidelines."

Where the survey results indicate that changes have occurred that will result in ecological impacts not previously addressed in the approved scheme, the original approved ecological measures will be revised and new or amended measures, and a timetable for their implementation, will be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to the commencement of development. Works will then be carried out in accordance with the proposed new approved ecological measures and timetable."

Reason: To 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) and Policy 31 of the Horsham Development Framework.

3. CONCURRENT WITH RESERVED MATTERS: PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT: CONSTRUCTION ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY

"A construction environmental management plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority."

The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall include the following.

- a) *Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.*
- b) *Identification of "biodiversity protection zones".*
- c) *Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).*
- d) *The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.*
- e) *The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.*
- f) *Responsible persons and lines of communication.*

- g) *The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.*
- h) *Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.*

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority”

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).

4. CONCURRENT WITH RESERVED MATTERS PRIOR TO ANY WORKS ABOVE SLAB LEVEL: BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT LAYOUT

“A Biodiversity Enhancement Layout for the biodiversity enhancements listed in the Ecological Impact Assessment (The Ecology Partnership, January 2023), Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (The Ecology Partnership, December 2022), Bat Activity Surveys 2022 (The Ecology Partnership, December 2022), and Reptile Survey Report 2022 (The Ecology Partnership, December 2022), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Layout shall include the following:

- a) detailed designs or product descriptions for biodiversity enhancements; and*
- b) locations, orientations and heights for biodiversity enhancements on appropriate drawings.*

The enhancement measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to occupation and all features shall be retained in that manner thereafter.”

Reason: To enhance protected and Priority species & habitats and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under paragraph 187d of the NPPF 2024 and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

5. CONCURRENT WITH RESERVED MATTERS: PRIOR TO OCCUPATION: WILDLIFE SENSITIVE LIGHTING DESIGN SCHEME

“Prior to occupation, a “lighting design strategy for biodiversity” in accordance with Guidance Note 08/23 (Institute of Lighting Professionals) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

- a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and*
- b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.*

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the scheme and maintained thereafter in accordance with the scheme. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority."

Reason: To 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).

6. CONCURRENT WITH RESERVED MATTERS: PRIOR TO OCCUPATION: LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

"A Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to, and be approved in writing by, the local planning authority prior to the occupation of the development [or specified phase of development].

The content of the LEMP shall include the following:

- a) *Description and evaluation of features to be managed.*
- b) *Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management.*
- c) *Aims and objectives of management.*
- d) *Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives.*
- e) *Prescriptions for management actions.*
- f) *Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a five-year period).*
- g) *Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan.*
- h) *Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.*

The LEMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery. The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme. The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details"

Reason: To 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)

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

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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.