Place Services
Essex County Council
County Hall, Chelmsford
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Date: 11 September 2025 Our ref: 07873

Halima Chowdhury
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/25/1072
Location: Brook House Nuthurst Road Maplehurst West Sussex RH13 6RB
Proposal: Removal of existing side extension. Conversion of existing barn and associated sheds into domestic ancillary use following structural and repair works. Relocation of existing carport and construction of pergola (Householder Application).

Thank you for 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 Water Neutrality Appropriate Assessment	☒

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 Bat Survey Report (Lizard, October 2024) 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 mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain are provided by Horsham District Council in-house.

We are satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available to support determination of this application. We have no objections on ecological matters excluding Great Crested Newt as we have been instructed to leave comments on this European Protected Species to the NatureSpace Partnership.

European Protected Species: Bats

A preliminary roost assessment (PRA) was completed on the 1st of August 2024, in conjunction with the first survey visit. During the visit, whiskered Myotis mystacinus and brown long-eared Plecotus auratus bat droppings were found within the barn. The survey recorded day roosts of common pipistrelle, brown long-eared and whiskered bats utilising the barn building. No bats were recorded emerging from the attached single storey annex / cart shed building. As a result, a bat licence from Natural England will be required to implement any works consented that affect the bat roosts. A copy of either a EPS mitigation licence should be submitted to the LPA and secured by a condition of any consent.

An increase in artificial light would negatively impact foraging bats. We recommend lighting details are outlined within a wildlife sensitive lighting scheme, in line with best practice guidance GN:08/23 from the Institute of Lighting Professionals[1] and secured by a condition of any consent.

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.

The mitigation measures identified in the Bat Survey Report (Lizard, October 2024) should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full. This is necessary to conserve and enhance protected and Priority species particularly those recorded in the locality.

We also support the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected, Priority and threatened species, which have been recommended 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 Layout and should be secured by a condition of any consent.

This will enable LPA to demonstrate its compliance with its statutory duties including its biodiversity duty under s40 NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

[1] https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/

Impacts will be minimised such that the proposal is acceptable, subject to the conditions below based on BS42020:2013. We recommend that submission for approval and implementation of the details below should be a condition of any planning consent.

Recommended conditions

1. **ACTION REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

"All mitigation measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Bat Survey Report (Lizard, October 2024) as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

This may 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. **PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF ANY WORKS WHICH WILL IMPACT THE RESTING PLACE OF BATS: SUBMISSION OF A COPY OF EPS MITGATION LICENCE OR EVIDENCE OF SITE REGISTRATION UNDER A BAT MITIGATION OR EARNED RECOGNITION CLASS LICENCE FOR BATS**

"Any works which will impact the breeding / resting place of bats, shall not in in any circumstances commence unless the local planning authority has been provided with either:

a) *a licence issued by Natural England pursuant to Regulation 55 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) authorizing the specified activity/development to go ahead; or*
b) *evidence of site registration supplied by an individual registered to use a Bat Mitigation or Earned Recognition Class Licence; or*
c) *a statement in writing from the Natural England to the effect that it does not consider that the specified activity/development will require a licence."*

Reason: To conserve protected 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 s17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998.

3. **PRIOR TO ANY WORKS ABOVE SLAB LEVEL: BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT LAYOUT**

"A Biodiversity Enhancement Layout for biodiversity enhancements listed in xxx report 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)

4. 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 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).

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.