



Date: 19 June 2026

Our ref: 18555

Sophie Moore
Horsham District Council
Parkside
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 1RL

By email only: 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.

Application: DC/26/0627
Location: Furzeffield Farm Honeybridge Lane Ashurst West Sussex
Proposal: Demolition of existing stable buildings and erection of a single barn structure

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 Council's advice regarding Water Neutrality requirements following Natural England's Withdrawal Statement (31st October 2025).

Summary

We have reviewed the Revised Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., March 2026), supplied by the applicant, relating to the likely impacts of development on protected & Priority species and habitats, and identification of proportionate mitigation. Please note that comments on Biodiversity Net Gain are provided by Horsham District Council in-house.

We are now satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available to support determination of this application.

Our previous query has now been addressed, and the applicant's ecologist has confirmed that the building has negligible bat roost potential, and no further surveys are required.

We note from the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., March 2026) that there are no trees on site. Therefore, we agree that no further surveys for bats and trees are required.

We have considered the likely impacts on European Protected Species and applied the Favourable Conservation Status licensing test to demonstrate that the LPA, as a competent authority, has had regard to the requirements of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as this must not be left until the licence application stage when reaching planning decisions.

We support the implementation of a Precautionary Method Statement for reptiles, common amphibians and mobile protected and Priority species (including Hedgehog, which is a Priority and threatened species) in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., March 2026). This needs to be 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.

Please note 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 also support the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected, Priority and threatened species, which have been recommended in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., March 2026) 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).

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 Revised Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., March 2026) 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. PRIOR TO ANY WORKS ABOVE SLAB LEVEL: BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY

“Prior to any works above slab level, a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy for protected, Priority and threatened species, prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist in line with the recommendations of the Revised Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., March 2026), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

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

- a) *Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;*

- b) *detailed designs or product descriptions to achieve stated objectives;*
- c) *locations of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans (where relevant);*
- d) *persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures; and*
- e) *details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant).*

The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details shall be retained in that manner thereafter.”

Reason: To enhance protected, Priority and threatened species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under paragraph 187d of NPPF 2024 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.

Hayley Dean MCIEEM MSc BSc (Hons)

Senior Ecological Consultant

Place Services at Essex County Council

Email: PlaceServicesEcology@essex.gov.uk



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.