19th November 2024

Marie Riggs
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.

Dear Marie

Application: **DC/24/1565**
Location: **Buchan Country Park, 2 Laundry Cottages Horsham Road Southgate Crawley West Sussex RH11 9HQ**
Proposal: **Creation of vehicular access and parking area to serve 2 Laundry Cottages.**

Thank you for consulting Place Services on the above application.

a) No ecological harm/No objection	
b) Requires further information	
c) Recommend grant permission subject to conditions	Yes
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 Technical Response – DC/24/0928 (The Ecology Partnership, October 2024) and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (The Ecology Partnership, May 2024) supplied by the applicant, relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected & Priority species and habitats, and identification of identification of appropriate mitigation measures. Please note that comments on mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain are provided by Horsham District Council in-house.

We note from the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (The Ecology Partnership, May 2024) that the greenhouse on site has negligible bat roost potential and there are no trees on site with bat roost potential. We therefore agree that no further surveys for bats are required for buildings or for trees.

We support the implementation of the non-licensed Precautionary Method Statement for Hazel Dormouse in the Technical Response – DC/24/0928 (The Ecology Partnership, October 2024). This is because the small areas of bramble and mixed scrub on the boundaries provide potential Hazel Dormouse habitat and the scrub is well connected to nearby suitable habitat in deciduous and ancient woodland. This should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full.

We also support the implementation of a Precautionary Method Statement for mobile Priority species (such as Hedgehog and reptiles) in Sections 4.23, 4.26 and 4.30 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (The Ecology Partnership, May 2024). This is because the boundary scrub habitats are suitable for reptiles and the site has potential to support Hedgehog. This should be secured by a condition of any consent.

We are satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available for determination. 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.

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.

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

The mitigation measures identified in the Technical Response – DC/24/0928 (The Ecology Partnership, October 2024) and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (The Ecology Partnership, May 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, 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 enhancement measures should be outlined within a Biodiversity Enhancement Layout and secured by a condition of any consent for discharge prior to beneficial use.

Impacts will be minimised such that the proposal is acceptable subject to the conditions below based on BS42020:2013. In terms of biodiversity net gain, the enhancements proposed will contribute to this aim.

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 and enhancement measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Technical Response – DC/24/0928 (The Ecology Partnership, October 2024) and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (The Ecology Partnership, May 2024), as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination. This includes the Precautionary Method Statements for reptiles and mobile Priority species in Sections 4.23, 4.26 and 4.30 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (The Ecology Partnership, May 2024), which avoids impacts on protected species.

   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 and enhance 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) and Policy 31 of the Horsham Development Framework.

2. **PRIOR TO BENEFICIAL USE: BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT LAYOUT**
   "A Biodiversity Enhancement Layout, providing the finalised details and locations of the enhancement measures contained within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (The Ecology Partnership, May 2024), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

   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 and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

Please contact us with any queries.

Yours sincerely

Genevieve Broad 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.