10 April 2024

Giles Holbrook
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 Giles,

Application: **DC/23/1892**
Location: **Land Platts Roundabout, Newbridge Road, Billingshurst**
Proposal: **Variation of condition 1 of previously approved application reference DC/19/0295 (Hybrid application for the erection of petrol filling station with convenience store and sandwich bar, car wash, jet wash and car parking; motorcycle showroom and workshop with associated car parking; outline planning permission for flexible employment space (B1b/B1c/B2/B8) totalling 4,627sqm with associated car parking and circulation space (scale, landscaping and appearance reserved); new access to the site from A272 and pedestrian link to footbridge over A29.) To increase size of building for the provision of additional display space. Two car park spaces revised to electric charging spaces.**

Thank you for re-consulting Place Services on the above s73 variation of condition application.

a) No ecological harm/No objection	
b) Requires further information	
c) Recommend grant permission subject to conditions	
d) Recommend refusal	
e) Recommended variation of condition 1	Yes

Summary
We have reviewed the Lighting Assessment (Tetra Tech, January 2024), Update Ecological Walkover and Ecology Review (Tetra Tech, January 2024), Proposed Site Plan Drg No 3493-DMWR-RF-PL099 Rev F (DMWR, 14 July 2023) and the Covering letter (Alder King, 13 October 2023).

We note that the Lighting Assessment (Tetra Tech, January 2024) and Update Ecological Walkover and Ecology Review (Tetra Tech, January 2024) have been submitted to the LPA following our response dated 7th November 2023 and Natural England's comments (Ref 455181, 2 November 2023) that a HRA is needed for this s73 application.

We understand that the aim is to slightly increase the showroom display space and space for motorcycle related accessories and clothing. This will result in an increase in the size of the building by approximately 180sqm.

We understand from the Lighting Assessment (Tetra Tech, January 2024) that there is now a low risk of light levels exceeding 1 lux along potential bat foraging and commuting routes. In particular, we welcome the confirmation in Section 5.1.1.2 that the lux level criteria of 0.4 lux will be used on the northwestern border where Barbastelle bat presence has been confirmed.

We also welcome the Update Ecological Walkover and Ecology Review (Tetra Tech, January 2024) which confirms that the loss of hedgerow for visibility splays will be kept to a minimum; retention of the hedgerow and 25m buffer along the western boundary; hedgerow planting to create a new dark corridor for commuting and foraging bats; enhancement of habitats, such as hedgerows and field margins; and that construction activity will be timed during daylight hours.

Subject to the LPA securing the Lighting Assessment (Tetra Tech, January 2024), we consider that the HRA Appropriate Assessment (Place Services, 21 August 2019) does not need revising in relation to this application. We recommend that a record of this HRA decision is kept on file and there is no need to further consult Natural England.

We are now satisfied that there is sufficient information on likely impacts from the development on designated sites (The Mens SAC) and protected species (bats).

In addition, as the site now has suitable habitat to support a 'low' population of reptiles, we support the reptile mitigation measures in Change in site suitability for reptiles on p. 3.

This information provides certainty for the LPA and, with appropriate mitigation measures secured, the revised development can be made acceptable.

We recommend that any ecology conditions from DC/19/0295, not yet discharged, are added to any consent for this application.

Yours sincerely

Genevieve Broad MCIEEM MSc BSc (Hons)
Ecological Consultant
Place Services at Essex County Council
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.