



Date: 11 June 2026

Our ref: 18036

Sophie Moore  
Horsham District Council  
Parkside,  
Chart Way,  
Horsham,  
West Sussex  
RH12 1RL

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*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.*

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**Application:** DC/26/0696

**Location:** Land North West of The Hermitage Tower Hill Horsham West Sussex  
RH12 1XP

**Proposal:** Erection of 5no. glamping pods for holiday accommodation, associated decking, footpaths, permeable track, parking and turning area, secure bicycle storage and recycling/refuse storage. Minor landscaping of the site, planting of native species trees, hedgerows, shrubbery and meadow grass with wildflowers throughout the site.

Thank you for consulting Place Services on the above application.

|                                                                                                           |                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>No ecological objection</b>                                                                            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>No ecological objection subject to attached conditions</b>                                             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Further information required/Temporary holding objection</b>                                           | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>Recommend Refusal</b>                                                                                  | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>Subject to Natural England's formal comments on the conclusion of the LPA's Appropriate Assessment</b> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

[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 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and BNG Baseline Report Version R01 (Leith Ecology Consulting, December 2025), relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected and Priority species and habitats and the identification of proportionate mitigation. Please note that comments on Biodiversity Net Gain are provided by Horsham District Council in-house.

We note from the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and BNG Baseline Report Version R01 (Leith Ecology Consulting, December 2025) that there are no buildings or trees on site. We therefore agree that no further surveys for bats are required.

The site lies approximately 12.7km northeast of The Mens Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and is therefore outside the 12km Wider Conservation Area for the SAC. Therefore, a project level Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) will not be required.

As there are records for Slow-Worm, Common Lizard and Grass Snake within 1km of the site, we support the implementation of a Precautionary Method Statement for reptiles and mobile protected and Priority species (including Hedgehog, which is a Priority and threatened species) in the Ecological Impact Assessment Revision 01 (Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology, August 2023). This should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full.

We are satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available to support determination of this application. Please note that 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 recommend that the NatureSpace Partnership is consulted on this application.

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 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and BNG Baseline Report Version R01 (Leith Ecology Consulting, December 2025) 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, including bats, reptiles and mobile protected and Priority species.

If external lighting is required, we support the recommendation that a Wildlife Friendly Lighting Strategy is implemented for this application (Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and BNG Baseline Report Version R01 (Leith Ecology Consulting, December 2025) to avoid impacts from light disturbance. This should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full. Therefore, technical specification should be submitted prior to occupation, which demonstrates measures to avoid lighting impacts to foraging / commuting bats, which are likely to be present within the local area. This should summarise the following measures recommended by [Guidance Note:08/23 \(Institute of Lighting Professionals\)](#) will be implemented:

- Do not provide excessive lighting. Light levels should be as low as possible as required to fulfil the lighting need.

- All luminaires should lack UV elements when manufactured. Metal halide, compact fluorescent sources should not be used.
- Warm White lights should be used at <2700k. This is necessary as lighting which emits an ultraviolet component or that has a blue spectral content has a high attraction effect on insects. This may lead in a reduction in prey availability for some light sensitive bat species.
- Where appropriate, external security lighting should be set on motion-sensors and set to as short a possible a timer as the risk assessment will allow.
- Luminaires should always be mounted horizontally, with no light output above 90° and/or no upward tilt.
- Only if all other options have been explored, accessories such as baffles, hoods or louvres can be used to reduce light spill and direct it only to where it is needed. However, due to the lensing and fine cut-off control of the beam inherent in modern LED luminaires, the effect of cowls and baffles is often far less than anticipated and so should not be relied upon solely.

We also support the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected, Priority and threatened species, which have been recommended in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and BNG Baseline Report Version R01 (Leith Ecology Consulting, December 2025) 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 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) and delivery of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain.

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 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and BNG Baseline Report Version R01 (Leith Ecology Consulting, December 2025), 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 COMMENCEMENT: PRECAUTIONARY METHOD STATEMENT FOR REPTILES AND MOBILE PROTECTED AND PRIORITY SPECIES**

*“A Precautionary Method Statement for reptiles and mobile protected and Priority species shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This will contain precautionary mitigation measures and/or works to reduce potential impacts to reptiles and mobile protected and Priority species during the construction phase.*

*The measures and/works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.”*

**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).

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

*“A Biodiversity Enhancement Layout for biodiversity enhancements listed in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and BNG Baseline Report Version R01 (Leith Ecology Consulting, December 2025) 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).

If external lighting is required:

**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 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.*

*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.

**Hayley Dean MCIEEM MSc BSc (Hons)**  
**Senior Ecological Consultant**

Place Services at Essex County Council

Email: [PlaceServicesEcology@essex.gov.uk](mailto: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.*