

10th April 2026

To ***Whom it may concern.***

LAND ADJACENT TO JOLESFIELD COTTAGES, JOLESFIELD, PARTRIDGE GREEN, HORSHAM, RH13 8JT

Dear Sir/Madam

A Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) was undertaken by Sylvatica Ecology Ltd on 24th October 2025 in accordance with BS 42020, CIEEM guidelines and UKHab methodology, the findings of which are set out in the report dated 29 December 2025.

The PEA identified that the site supports a range of habitats including deciduous woodland along the eastern boundary, a native species-rich hedgerow, mixed scrub around the western pond margin and south-eastern corner, a semi-natural pond and modified grassland. Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) potential habitat was identified within the hedgerows, scrub and woodland. In light of this, an avoidance strategy was recommended: Heras fencing buffer zones between the development footprint and the deciduous woodland, and between the footprint and the hedgerow and scrub habitats, to be maintained throughout construction.

Dormice are afforded full legal protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019. It is an offence to deliberately capture, injure or kill a dormouse, to deliberately disturb a dormouse in a way that impairs its ability to survive, breed or rear young, or to damage or destroy any structure used for shelter or protection.

The proposed development footprint falls within the existing modified grassland, which offers no suitable dormouse habitat. However, a small area of mixed scrub is required to be cleared as part of the works. Where scrub or hedgerow removal is limited in scale, a Method of Works incorporating a pre-clearance hand search by a suitably qualified ecologist represents the proportionate and appropriate response. Full dormouse survey programmes and mitigation licensing are only warranted where large areas of suitable habitat are to be removed, which is not the case here. A Dormouse Method of Works would then be prepared.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Richard Law'.

Richard Law BSc (Hons) MRes CEnv MCIEEM FLS

Sylvatica Ecology Ltd

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