To:	Kate Turner, Senior Planning Officer, HDC Planning Department
From:	Bill Gover
Date:	27 May 2024
Reference:	DC/24/0193
Location:	Springvale Fields, Woodlands Lane, Colgate RH13 6HU
Re:	Arbtech's Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment 14th May 2024

Responses to Recommendations made within Arbtech's report

Habitats and plants

Arbtech recommendations: Ecological enhancement and best practice pollution prevention measures.

My response regarding ecological enhancement:

1) Native fruit trees will be planted along the length of the driveway between the track and the NE boundary of the property, adjacent to the public footpath. Species such as Native Pear (black, white and/or red), Native Plum, Black Thorn (Sloes), Elderberry and Medlar.

2) A hedgerow will be planted along the fencing line adjacent to the driveway and the field where the proposed sand school will be located. This is preferred to having it along the fencing to the sand school, as suggested by Place Services (Landscaping – 27/3/24) for the following reasons:

a) If the hedgerow was running along the sand school boundary, any emerging wildlife could startle the horses, especially young horses undergoing training.
b) Managing the hedgerow (i.e. trimming/cutting), would be difficult to prevent cuttings from mixing with the sand surface.

As suggested by Place Services, the hedgerow will be planted in double staggered rows, with 5 plants per linear metre and consisting of the following mix:
45% Hawthorn Crataegus monogyna;
20% Field maple Acer campestre;
15% Hazel Corylus avellana;
10% Wild Privet Ligustrum vulgare;
5% Trees (Oak, Wild Cherry, Silver Birch or Hornbeam);
5% made up of Dogwood, Elder, Holly, Common Plum, Blackthorn, Guelder Rose and Buckthorn (only a few % of each if they are present in the locality).

Any gaps in the existing hedgerow adjacent to the footpath will also be filled in with native species as above.

3) As outlined before in this planning application, approximately ¾ of an acre has already been set aside at the bottom of the land by Pyefall Gill and Blindman's Wood (NW end), with woodland, scrub and meadow (i.e. retained grassland with mixed sward height).

4) A minimum of 10 bat boxes will be installed around the property boundaries in accordance with advice given by the Bat Conservation Trust (www.bats.org.uk).

5) A minimum of 10 bird nesting boxes will be installed around the property boundaries in accordance with advice given by the RSPB (www.rspb.org.uk).

6) A number of log piles will be placed along northern boundaries and at the bottom of the land by Pyefall Gill and Blindman's Wood (NW end).

7) The grassland outside the grazing areas (e.g. either side of the driveway), will be seeded with a wild flowers mix.

8) Once the proposed new property construction is completed, the garden area will be managed giving a diverse mix of flowers, fruiting trees and vegetables. There will also be a compost heap located at the end the stables.

My response regarding best practice pollution prevention measures:
This will be a 'Self Build' with no building contractors used. I will be carrying out the build with the applicants (family), and will responsible for the build and ensuring best practice will be adhered to as per government guidelines. Licensed contractors will be used for disposing of any waste products as and when required.

Locality and Designated Sites

Arbtech Recommendation: Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution must be implemented during construction.

My response: As stated above, I will be carrying out the build with the applicants (family), and will responsible for the build and ensuring best practice will be adhered to as per government guidelines.

Invasive / Non-native species

Arbtech Recommendation: Rhododendron should be sensitively removed using hand tools, including roots, and disposed of in line with appropriate controlled waste measures. The rhododendron should be replaced using native species of local provenance, such as hawthorn, blackthorn, elder, field maple, and hazel.

My Response: This recommendation will be carried out.

Invertebrates
Arbtech Recommendation: No further surveys.

Bats

Arbtech Recommendation: Two bat emergence/re-entry surveys are required on B1 during the active bat season (May – September) to confirm presence/likely-absence of bats roosting in or on the building.

My response: As stated in the report no evidence of bat activity could be found during their preliminary survey. However, they do identify the property has moderate suitability for

crevice dwelling bats and further surveys are recommended (as detailed in their report). I await your advices on how to proceed on this matter.

Birds

Arbtech Recommendation: Any building removal should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August.

My Response: This recommendation will be carried out.

Reptiles

Arbtech Recommendation: A precautionary working method will be implemented for widespread reptiles during construction. The site could be enhanced for reptile's post development with the inclusion of a compost heap and further log piles.

My Response: This recommendation will be carried out. NB: Inclusion of log piles and a compost heap has already been mentioned above.

Amphibians

Arbtech Recommendation: A precautionary working method will be implemented for common amphibians during construction. The site could be enhanced for amphibian's post development with the inclusion of hibernacula (i.e. scrub) or retained grassland with mixed sward height.

My Response: This recommendation will be carried out. NB: Inclusion of scrub and grassland has already been mentioned above.

Badgers

Arbtech Recommendation: Basic precautionary mitigation during works is recommended:

My Response: This recommendation will be carried out.

Riparian animals

Arbtech Recommendation: No further surveys required

Hazel dormouse

Arbtech Recommendation: No further surveys required. However, a 5m buffer will be retained between the hedgerow and working area.

My Response: This recommendation will be carried out.

Other e.g. hedgehog

Arbtech Recommendation: Similar to the badgers, a precautionary working method will be implemented during construction

My Response: This recommendation will be carried out.