



ECOLOGICAL ADVICE SERVICE

TO: *Amanda Grout*

FROM: *Helen Forster*

DATE: *25 October 2021*

SUBJECT: *Willow Tree Farm And Holly Cottage, Meopham 20211118*

The following is provided by Kent County Council's Ecological Advice Service (EAS) for Local Planning Authorities. It is independent, professional advice and is not a comment/position on the application from the County Council. It is intended to advise the relevant planning officer(s) on the potential ecological impacts of the planning application; and whether sufficient and appropriate ecological information has been provided to assist in its determination. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant or other interested parties may have must be directed in every instance to the Planning Officer, who will seek input from the EAS where appropriate and necessary.

We have reviewed the preliminary ecological appraisal submitted in respect of this application and we advise that we are satisfied with the conclusions of the ecological report but additional information is sought prior to determination of the planning application.

- Further surveys along with any necessary mitigation measures for reptiles

Any further necessary surveys, and mitigation measures, will need to be submitted prior to determination of the planning application. This is in accordance with paragraph 99 of the ODPM 06/2005 which states: "*it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision*".

We highlight that if the recommended reptile surveys were not carried out in 2021 the reptile surveys can not commence until at least March 2022. Reptiles hibernate and therefore by October they are not sufficiently active to carry out a reptile survey.

Due to the proposed site layout it is unlikely that the reptile population, if present, can be retained on site. Therefore if reptiles are present details of a suitable off site reptile receptor site must be included within the submission.

One of the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework is that *“opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design”*. We advise that a plan is submitted including details of how the site will enhance biodiversity (over and above any reptile mitigation required).

If you have any queries regarding our comments, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Helen Forster MCIEEM
Biodiversity Officer

This response was submitted following consideration of the following documents:
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal; Arbtech; July 2021