



ECOLOGICAL ADVICE SERVICE

TO: Katherine Parkin

FROM: Emma England

DATE: 02 May 2024

SUBJECT: 20230320 / Little Cottage, Meopham

The following is provided by Kent County Council's Ecological Advice Service (KCC 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 if sufficient/appropriate ecological information has been provided.

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.

SUMMARY – SUFFICIENT INFORMATION PROVIDED

We have reviewed the additional information submitted by the applicant and advise that sufficient ecological information has been provided.

It should also be noted that directly to the south and east of the site is woodland designated as ancient semi-natural woodland. As such, we highlight paragraph 180 of the NPPF which states that “*development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists*”. The submitted arboricultural report indicates that measures can be put in place during construction (including site clearance) to avoid significant adverse effects on the adjacent ancient woodland.

Under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 and paragraphs 180 and 186 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023, biodiversity should be maintained and enhanced through the planning system. Enhancement refers to providing net benefits for biodiversity over and above requirements for avoidance, mitigation and compensation. As such, if planning permission is granted, we advise the condition(s) below are/is included.

Ecological Mitigation

Badgers

Prior to commencement (including site clearance), to avoid impacts to badger setts, an updated site walkover by a suitably qualified ecologist will be undertaken six weeks prior to commencement to identify if there are any sett entrances within 20m of the site boundary. Should additional entrances be identified, details of any additional survey and mitigation requirements will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for written approval prior to the onset of works.

Protected/Priority Species and Ancient Woodland

From commencement of works (including site clearance), methods for the protection of retained habitats and precautionary mitigation measures for protected species will be followed in accordance with the details contained in Section 5 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report (David Archer Associates, December 2023) and the Briefing Note Re: Little Cottage, Ridge Lane, Meopham, Kent, DA13 0DP: Arboricultural Impact Assessment on ASNW (David Archer Associates, December 2023).

Lighting

Local authorities have a duty to ensure impacts upon legally protected species are avoided and impacts upon bats and dormice are a material consideration in any planning permission under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 and through the NPPF 2023.

Therefore, to mitigate against potential adverse effects on biodiversity, the Bat Conservation Trust/Institute of Lighting Professionals's 'Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night'¹ should be consulted in the lighting design of the development.

We advise that the incorporation of sensitive lighting design for biodiversity is submitted to the local planning authority and secured via an attached condition with any planning permission.

Lighting Condition:

Prior to occupation, a lighting design plan for biodiversity will be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The plan will show the type and locations of external lighting, to demonstrate that areas to be lit will not adversely impact biodiversity. All external lighting will be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the plan and will be maintained thereafter.

Lighting Informative:

Lighting in the vicinity of a bat roost or along commuting / foraging routes could constitute an offence both to a population and to individuals. Artificial lighting has been shown to be particularly harmful to bats along river corridors, near woodland edges and near hedgerows. Hazel dormice which can inhabit woodland, particularly ancient woodland, may also be sensitive to lighting. To mitigate against potential adverse effects on biodiversity, the Bat Conservation Trust/Institute of Lighting Professionals's 'Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night' (or subsequent updates) should be consulted in the lighting design of the development.

¹ [Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting | Institution of Lighting Professionals \(theilp.org.uk\)](https://theilp.org.uk/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting-at-night/)

Ecological Enhancement

Prior to completion, the ecological enhancement measures detailed in Section 5.3 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report (David Archer Associates, December 2023) will be implemented and maintained thereafter.

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

Emma England
Biodiversity Officer

This response was submitted following consideration of the following documents:

David Archer Associates (December 2023) Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report.

David Archer Associates (December 2023) Briefing Note Re: Little Cottage, Ridge Lane, Meopham, Kent, DA13 0DP: Arboricultural Impact Assessment on ASNW.

WS Planning and Architecture (12 April 2023) Cover Letter and Planning Statement.

WS Planning and Architecture (February 2023) As Existing, Block Plan.

WS Planning and Architecture (February 2023) As Existing, Site Plan.

WS Planning and Architecture (February 2023) As Existing, Site Plan with PD Extensions.

WS Planning and Architecture (February 2023) As Proposed, Site Plan.