



ECOLOGICAL ADVICE SERVICE

TO: Lisa Fisher

FROM: Nancy Inman

DATE: 26 September 2025

SUBJECT: Ashleigh , 39 Rhododendron Avenue, Meopham 20250518

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 RECEIVED

A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) has been completed (Native Ecology, Sept 25) which determined that the onsite building was of moderate potential to support roosting bats, therefore two bat emergence surveys were recommended. No bats were recorded emerging from the building and they are therefore presumed likely absent. Low numbers of bat were recorded foraging in the garden habitat.

We have included suggested informative wording in the chance that bats or nesting birds are encountered during construction.

BATS

Suggested Informative Wording:

There is a risk that bats may occur at the development site. Many species of bat depend on buildings for roosting, with each having its own preferred type of roost. Most species roost in crevices such as under ridge tiles, behind roofing felt or in cavity walls and are therefore not often seen in the roof space. Bat roosts are protected all times by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) even when bats are temporarily absent because, being creatures of habit, they usually return to the same

roost site every year. Planning permission for development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation or substitute for the need to obtain a bat licence if an offence is likely. If bats or evidence of bats is found during the works, the applicant is advised to stop work and follow advice from an independent ecologist or to contact the Bat Advice Service on 0345 1300 228, email enquiries@bats.org.uk or visit the Bat Conservation Trust website.

NESTING BIRDS

Suggested Informative Wording:

All wild birds and their nests are protected from harm under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. As such, any works which may result in impacts to nesting birds should be conducted outside of the core nesting season which is March through August (inclusive) or under ecological supervision. A suitable exclusion zone should be established around any active bird nest in the event one is discovered during works; this exclusion zone should be maintained until all nesting birds have fledged and the nest is unoccupied.

ARTIFICIAL LIGHTING

It is understood that no external lighting is included within the proposals. We advise that an informative is attached to any approved planning permission to remind the applicant that written agreement would need to be sought from the local planning authority prior to any future installation of outside lighting. This is to avoid impacts of artificial lighting on the behaviour of protected and priority species which may inhabit the adjacent tree lines and hedgerows.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN – EXEMPT

Having reviewed the proposals we consider this application to be exempt from mandatory biodiversity net gain, so that mandatory biodiversity net gain of 10% will not apply. We consider this application exempt because:

- The development will not impact any onsite priority habitat; AND
- The development will not impact more than 25 square metres of onsite habitat with a biodiversity value greater than zero; AND
- The development will not impact more than 5 metres of onsite linear habitat.

Additionally, we consider this application exempt from statutory BNG because it is a householder application as defined within article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

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

Nancy Inman
Biodiversity Officer

This response was submitted following consideration of the following documents:

- Site Photographs (Cadguys, May 25)
- Location and Block Plan (Cadguys, May 25)

- Bat Report (Native Ecology, Sept 25)