



ECOLOGICAL ADVICE SERVICE

TO: Kelly Joyce
FROM: Clair Thackray
DATE: 08 February 2023
SUBJECT: 20221362/The White House, Meopham

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.

SUMMARY – FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED

No ecological information has been submitted with this application. As a result of reviewing the data we have available to us (including aerial photos and biological records) and the information submitted with the planning application, we advise that further information is sought from the applicant with regards to the potential for ecological impacts, as follows:

- An Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), to include a preliminary roost assessment of the existing property and preliminary ground level roost assessment of any trees likely to be impacted by the works.

The property includes features with potential to support roosting bats (such as hanging tiles) and adjacent scrub and trees provide suitable foraging/commuting habitat. The site also has good connectivity to highly suitable foraging habitat in the wider area including ancient woodland to the south and Henley Wood and Pasture Local Wildlife Site (LWS) 60m to the east. These features indicate ecological value and potential for protected species presence. Potential impacts on these features and the immediate surrounding area through pre-works clearance, construction/renovation, access, lighting, landscaping proposals and future use must be taken account of in the planning decision. As such, an

Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) should be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist¹, in accordance with good practice guidelines.

The EcIA will include the following:

- Details of the impacts of development proposals on the ecological baseline established via a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and any additional surveys required;
- Details of any necessary and achievable ecological mitigation and/or compensation measures;
- Details of ecological enhancement measures, and;
- Provision of sufficient information to determine whether the project accords with relevant nature conservation policies and legislation.

To ensure that the planning determination is adequately informed in respect of all potential ecological impacts, we advise that the EcIA is sought prior to determination of the planning application. This is in alignment with paragraph 99 of 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*”.

The EcIA will also ensure alignment with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021) and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) Act 2006. Under section 40 of the NERC Act (2006) and paragraph 174 of the NPPF (2021) biodiversity should be maintained and enhanced through the planning system. Additionally, in alignment with paragraph 180 of the NPPF 2021, the implementation of measurable net gains for biodiversity (integrated as part of design) should be encouraged. As such, we advise that information is submitted with the EcIA to demonstrate that the development can achieve net gain and enhancements.

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

Clair Thackray
Biodiversity Officer

This response was submitted following consideration of the following documents:

Proposed Block Plan. Penfold. November 2022.

Plans and Elevations Proposed. Penfold. October 2022.

Block Plans Existing. Penfold. October 2022.

¹ Suitably qualified ecologists can be found using either the: [CIEEM Registered Practice Directory](#) or the [Environmental Data Services Directory](#).