

HERTFORDSHIRE ECOLOGY

Providing ecological advice to Hertfordshire's Local Authorities and communities

Environmental Resource Planning, Hertfordshire County Council
County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DN
ecology@hertfordshire.gov.uk
Tel: 01992 555220

Mr David Elmore
Senior Development Management
Welwyn Hatfield Council Offices
The Campus
Welwyn Garden City
Hertfordshire
AL8 6AE

Ask for: Anita Parry
Tel: 01992 556149

Date: 03/04/2019

Dear David,

Application Reference: 6/2019/0434/FULL

Proposed development at: 101 Brookmans Avenue, Brookmans Park, Hatfield, AL9 7QG

Proposal: Erection of 5 x detached dwellings with associated landscaping and off-street parking following demolition of existing buildings

Thank you for consulting Hertfordshire Ecology on the above.

The Hertfordshire Environmental Records Centre (HERC) does not have any habitat or species data for the application site, which includes three buildings (main house, coach house, outbuilding) and associated hardstanding (drive) and garden (lawn, bordering trees and beech hedgerow, and ornamental planting). The property backs onto Brookman's Park Golf Course which covers 52 ha and has mixed habitats including long and short neutral grassland, scattered trees and patches of woodland, and ponds and ditches. 130m to the east is George's Wood, which is broadleaved woodland designated as a Local Wildlife Site for its woodland interest. All these habitats will provide suitable foraging and commuting opportunities for bats and there are records of roosting bats in buildings in the area.

Consequently, I am pleased to see a bat report has been submitted with this application - *Preliminary Roosting Assessment, Arbtech, February 2019*. A daytime inspection on 12 February found no evidence of roosting bats in the buildings or trees on site and the property was assessed to have negligible potential to support them. No further surveys were considered necessary.

There are several trees on site; however I understand none are proposed for removal. Infilling of the beech hedge is proposed and 12 new trees will be introduced within the landscape scheme. I am pleased to see the inclusion of native species.

Biodiversity net gain and enhancements

The planning system should aim to deliver overall net gains for biodiversity where possible as laid out in the National Planning Policy Framework and other planning policy

documents. It would be appropriate for this development to enhance the site for bats, birds, hedgehogs and invertebrates. This could be achieved by introducing the provision of breeding and sheltering opportunities, such as: the inclusion of integrated bat bricks/units within the design of the buildings; the installation of bat boxes on suitable retained trees; the inclusion of bird boxes on trees; the installation of nest box terraces on buildings for swifts, swallows and martins; the inclusion of 'bug hotels' for invertebrates; the inclusion of "hedgehog highways", i.e. gaps/holes in garden fencing to allow free movement of small mammals.

Any biodiversity enhancements should be considered at an early stage to avoid potential conflict with any external lighting plans. They should be marked on a Conditioned revised Landscape Plan or new Biodiversity Net Gain Plan for written approval.

I trust these comments are of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Anita Parry
Ecology Advisor,
Hertfordshire Ecology