



19<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Jason Hawkes  
Horsham District Council  
Parkside,  
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RH12 1RL

By email only

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*Thank you for requesting advice on this scoping opinion from Place Services' ecological advice service. This service provides advice to planning officers to inform Horsham District Council planning decisions with regard to potential ecological impacts from development. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer who will seek further advice from us where appropriate and necessary.*

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**Application:** EIA/24/0006  
**Location:** Brookvale Land at Kingsfold Dorking Road Kingsfold West Sussex  
**Proposal:** EIA scoping opinion request for development of the site for a new garden village comprising approximately 2,125 homes, including extra care provision, employment uses, primary school provision, a solar farm, a new railway station and a local centre.

Dear Jason,

Thank you for consulting Place Services on the above scoping opinion.

**Baseline Information:**

We understand from the Request for an Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Opinion (North Horsham Estates Limited, July 2024) that no detailed ecological information is available yet and an ecology technical assessment will be provided in the Environmental Statement Vol II.

**Potential Impacts:**

The potential impacts of the proposed project on designated sites, both SSSI and LoWS should be considered. We understand there are four SSSIs within 2km of the site (Warnham, Clock House Brickwards and Auclayte and Vann Lake and Oakley Woods) and two LoWSs (Brookhust Wood and Gill and Morris's Wood) (Request for an Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Opinion (North Horsham Estates Limited, July 2024)).

We also understand there are approximately 115 areas of ancient woodland (irreplaceable habitat) within 2km of the site, including Old Barn Gill which bisects the north of the application site. We recommend that impacts to ancient woodland, on Old Barn Gill in particular, should be considered in accordance with [Government Standing Advice on ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees](#).



The ecology report should consider the potential impacts on all the relevant protected and Priority species as the LPA needs certainty of likely impacts on protected species prior to determination and this is necessary for the Local Planning authority to demonstrate they have met their strengthened s40 biodiversity duty. Survey and assessment should meet the requirements of Government Standing Advice and support habitat assessment for preparation of Biodiversity Net Gain baseline for the development.

**Methodology:**

We highlight that nationally agreed guidelines should be followed for the ecology surveys and all survey work should be undertaken in the appropriate season by appropriately qualified ecological consultants. Survey and assessment for protected species should meet the requirements of Government Standing Advice.

In accordance with Regulation 14 of the EIA Regulations, the ES should provide a statement about the relevant expertise or qualifications of the competent experts involved in its preparation.



**Opportunities:**

To comply with NPPF, the EIA should thoroughly explore all reasonable options to enhance the development for protected and Priority species and meet the requirements of mandatory biodiversity net gain.

**Conclusion:**

We agree that Biodiversity should be scoped in for further assessment within the Environmental Report.

In addition to the EIA report, it will be necessary to also provide sufficient information on non-significant impacts on protected and Priority species and habitats at submission either in a non EIA chapter or separate documentation. This is necessary in order that the LPA has certainty of all likely impacts, not just significant ones, from the development and can issue a lawful decision with any mitigation and compensation measures needed to make the development acceptable, secured by condition.

Please contact us with any further queries.

Yours sincerely,

**Genevieve Broad MCIEEM MSc BSc (Hons)**

Ecological Consultant

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**Place Services provide ecological advice on behalf of Horsham District Council**

Please note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.