

Officer Liz Anderson – Ecologist
Date 25/09/2026

Ref: 26/01724/FP
Att: Thomas Howe

134 High Street, Kimpton, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 8QP

Erection of two semi-detached 3-bed dwellings following demolition of existing dwelling and double garage including landscaping, parking, bin and bike storage and installation of two air source heat pumps. Installation of pedestrian access.

Consultee comments;

Thank you for consulting me, having looked at the submitted documents I would have no ecological objection to the proposal.

The Statutory Metric provided identifies the site baseline as 0.51 habitat units and 0.1 Hedgerow units and the proposal is expected to be able to demonstrate the mandatory 10% BNG on site.

In addition to mandatory BNG the North Herts Local Plan also advises development should consider additional ecological enhancements, some of which are noted in the September 2026 Ecological Appraisal & Bat Roosting Assessment. Taking this into account the following condition is advised;

No development shall take place until an Ecological Enhancement Plan (EEP) for the creation of new wildlife features such as the inclusion of integrated bird/bat or bee boxes in the building has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure development is ecologically sensitive and secures biodiversity enhancements in accordance with the North Herts Local Plan policy NE4.

The Ecological Appraisal & Bat Roosting Assessment also notes that whilst no evidence of roosting bats was identified during the surveys the potential for the house to be used as a hibernation roost could not be ruled out. As such I recommend a Biodiversity Method Statement be conditioned, suggested wording follows;

No development shall take place (including any demolition, ground works, site clearance) until a method statement for the demolition of the main house and site clearance has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The content of the method statement shall include the:

- a) purpose and objectives for the proposed works;*
- b) detailed working method(s) necessary to achieve stated objectives*
- c) extent and location of proposed works shown on appropriate scale maps and plans;*
- d) timetable for implementation, demonstrating that works will avoid ecological sensitive times;*
- e) persons responsible for implementing the works;*
- f) disposal of any wastes arising from works.*

The works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved details

The case officer should note Biodiversity Gain condition wording should be added to the decision notice, the biodiversity gain condition is a pre-commencement condition having its own separate statutory basis and is deemed to apply to every planning permission granted for the development of land in England. To ensure the applicant is clear about this distinction the biodiversity gain condition should not be included in the list of conditions imposed in the written notice when granting planning permission but should remain separate.

Biodiversity Net Gain

*The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition “(the biodiversity gain condition)” that **development may not begin** unless:*

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and*
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.*

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be North Herts Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.