

Officer Liz Anderson – Ecologist
Date 29/09/2026

Ref: 26/02084/FP
Att: Henry Thomas

Southern Green Farm, Southern Green, Rushden, Hertfordshire, SG9 0SX

Erection of four detached dwellings with air source heat pumps, parking and landscaping following demolition of existing agricultural building.

Consultee comments

I have no objection to the principle of development on this site. The development area is below 0.2Ha and as such it is exempt from mandatory BNG. Never-the-less North Herts Local Plan policy NE4 would still apply. Recommendations made for ecological enhancements in the August 2026 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) are welcomed. In conjunction with policy NE4, 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 and bee bricks in buildings/structures (swift bricks should be used where building heights allow), hedgehog holes in fences and hibernacula 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 PEA cautions potential impacts from lighting disturbance and I recommend a lighting strategy be conditioned.

A lighting strategy for biodiversity on the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall;

a) identify those areas/features on site to which bats and other nocturnal species are particularly sensitive and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places, or along important routes used to reach key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging;

and b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

A Precautionary Method of Working is also advised in relation to site clearance as the PEA advises habitats on site have the potential to support protected and/or notable species. As such, the report outlines important measures to protect species during site clearance, the following condition is advised;

No development shall take place (including vegetation/site clearance) until a Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS) informed by the August 2026 Preliminary Ecological has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved PWMS shall be implemented in full according to the specified timescales, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.