

Officer Liz Anderson – Ecologist
Date 29/01/2026

Ref: 25/03176/FP
Att: Melissa Tyler

35 Grays Lane, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 2HH

**Erection of one self-build dwelling including basement level and first floor area balcony area.
Installation of external swimming pool, garden kitchen structure and pergola, external air
source heat pump and associated hard and soft landscaping works including perimeter
boundary fence, wall and gates following demolition of existing dwelling. Alterations to ground
levels in rear garden.**

Consultee comments;

Thank you for consulting me on the above application. I have read through the submitted documents and welcome the provision of the January 2026 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA).

There is no ecological objection to the proposal but the PEA does advise a precautionary working method statement to prevent harm to ecological receptors and the following condition is advised;

No development shall take place (including any demolition, ground works, site clearance) until a method statement for precautionary working during demolition, vegetation clearance and soil stripping, as detailed in the January 2026 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal 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 design(s) and/or 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 are aligned with the proposed phasing of construction;*
- 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 and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

The application is not subject to mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain as it is a self-build scheme. The PEA discusses enhancement measures that can be incorporated into the development and to ensure the scheme is delivered in accordance with North Herts Local Plan policy NE4, I suggest the following condition should you decide to grant planning permission;

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 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Where height allows swift bricks should be used.

Reason: To ensure development secures biodiversity enhancements in accordance with Policy NE4 of the Local Plan.