

Officer Liz Anderson – Ecologist
Date 02/10/2026

Ref: 26/02208/FP
Att: Thomas Howe

Trees , Gosmore Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 9AN

Erection of 3no detached dwellings with garages following demolition of existing house and outbuildings. Formation of vehicular access onto the highway.

Consultee comments;

Thank you for consulting me, having read through the submitted documents I welcome the amendments to improve the relationship between the new buildings and existing trees / hedgeline.

I note that the site area has been reduced to below 0.2Ha so is now exempt from statutory Biodiversity Net Gain. Never-the-less North Herts local Plan policy NE4 still requires measurable net gains for biodiversity and, based on the previous metric submitted, it is still likely that this proposal would result in a net loss.

No impact to protected species is predicted and I acknowledge the suggested change from wall mounted bat and bird boxes to integrated features in the built fabric of dwellings. That said, the latest proposed site plan is dated June 2024, still shows the boxes as wall mounted and the location of the bat box on plot 1 and the bird box on plot 2 are unlikely to be used as they are located in a tight alley between the two properties which could be subject to light disturbance. This plan needs to be amended so I suggest the following condition should the officer be minded to approve the application;

Ecological Enhancements

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 boxes in buildings/structures, 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.