

Hertfordshire LEADS (Ecology)
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06/02/2026

<u>Application</u> Change of use of 2 two-storey commercial units to No.2 residential dwellings and erection of bike sheds (development has commenced). 25/01846/FP Land Adjacent 2 And 3 Wells Cottages Smiths End Lane Barley Hertfordshire SG8 8LJ	<u>Documents:</u> Biodiversity Assessment, 12 November 2025, ACJ Ecology. • Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Mandatory Biodiversity Metric Tool), Completion date: 12 November 2025 (from Start Page), ACJ Ecology. Habitat Condition Assessments (ACJ Ecology) <i>(These are condition sheets rather than standalone reports but appear as formal ecological assessments)</i> • Individual Trees Condition Assessment, 15 October 2025, ACJ Ecology. • Modified Grassland Condition Assessment, 15 October 2025, ACJ Ecology. • Modified Grassland Condition Assessment (southern parcel), 18 December 2025, ACJ Ecology. • Hedgerow Condition Assessment, 15 October 2025, ACJ Ecology. <u>Consultancy:</u> ACJ Ecology
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Summary of Advice:	
Advise- Insufficient information to determine application. The planning officer should either: 1. Refuse the applicant or advise it is withdrawn or, 2. Request further information from the applicant and re-consult the Ecology Service (LEADS) when it is furnished.	Pre-determination • <u>Protected</u> species, no further surveys advised • <u>BNG</u> - insufficient information to have confidence in the habitat assessment, Determination • <u>Protected species</u>, Sufficient information for determination

Comments

Hertfordshire LEADS provides Landscape, Ecology, Archaeology, Design and Sustainability support to planning departments in Hertfordshire.

Protected species

Hertfordshire Records Centre has a number of nearby records relating to bats. Available imagery on google street view shows the agricultural barn that was subject of an approved application for conversion into two storey commercial units in 2022. Given the apparent characteristics, history and age of the building, on this occasion I do not consider there is sufficient likelihood of bats being present and affected for the LPA to require a formal survey prior to determination

BNG- Pre Determination

Habitat Assessment: Insufficient information has been provided to allow the LPA to consider the habitats distinctiveness as measured using the uk habitat classification. Although habitat Condition Assessments have been provided, neither quadrat date nor species lists are provided. The botanical survey date on the condition sheets 18/12/2025 is outside of the optimal time and can not be relied upon to inform a reasonable assessment of the distinctiveness or the condition of these habitats.

Consequently, the Uk Habitat assessment is not supported by sufficient information to allow the LPA confidence in its findings. With out this confidence I cannot advise the LPA to accept the BNG calculations submitted.

I trust these comments are of assistance and kind regards.

Simon Richards

Senior Ecologists, Hertfordshire LEADS