

From: Elaine Walby on behalf of Planning.Responses
Sent: 07 May 2026 16:32
To: Planning Scanning
Subject: FW: AL/27/26/RES

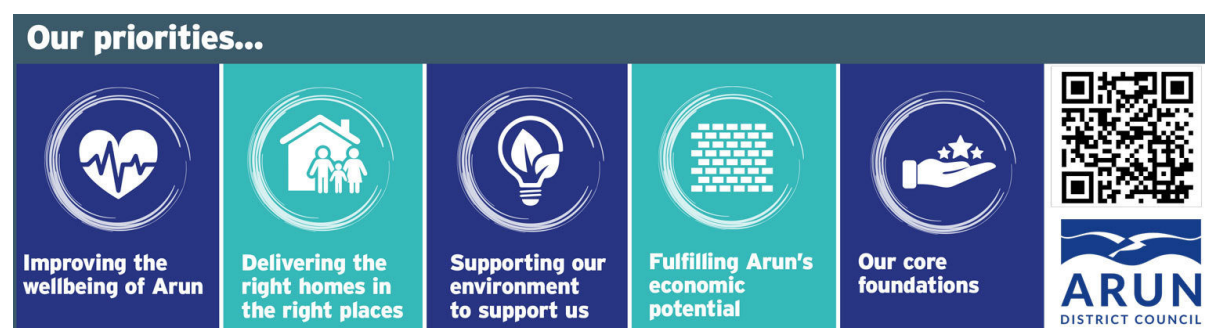
PL- Consultation- Ecologist response

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From: Jonathan Best <Jonathan.Best@arun.gov.uk>
Sent: 06 May 2026 14:08
To: Planning.Responses <Planning.Responses@arun.gov.uk>
Cc: Simon Davis <Simon.Davis@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: AL/27/26/RES

Land adjacent to Woodgate Nurseries Lidsey Road Aldingbourne PO20 3SU.

I have reviewed this application with regards to ecology.

Recommendation: I recommend holding this application until further details are provided on locations and numbers of nesting bricks and bat boxes.

The site is partially within the Singleton and Cocking SAC 1200m HRA buffer. An appropriate assessment is required.

Information on BNG has been provided. The outline application was submitted prior to BNG becoming mandatory so is exempt from statutory BNG. The BNG assessment and Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation has demonstrated that the proposed scheme will results in a likely net gain of:

0.02 habitat units (+0.13%)

The linear feature calculation for the proposed scheme results in a likely gain of **3.81 hedgerow units (+64.01%)**.

The watercourse calculation for the proposed scheme results in a likely gain of **0.84 hedgerow units (+145.68%)**. This is welcomed and acceptable.

The EIA by the Ecology Co-op 2022, includes updated bat and reptile surveys from 2025. Three species of reptile were recorded, Grass snake, common lizard, and slow-worm. Low numbers of each species were recorded on site. Eight species of bat were recorded over three survey periods in May, July, and September 2025. The rare Barbastelle and long eared bats were recoded in low numbers. These bats are sensitive to lighting. The Lighting and Reptile Strategy Addendum dated February 2023 proposes a precautionary approach to reptiles including retention and creation of suitable reptile habitat. For bats a sensitive lighting strategy is proposed with dark corridors. This is acceptable.

The planting plans have increased the number and diversity of tree and shrub species. This is acceptable.

Condition 4 of AL/129/21/OUT: The development shall be carried out in complete accordance with the mitigations and enhancements set out in sections 5 and 6 of the submitted Ecological Impact Assessment (01/09/21, P3816).

The EIA recommended the following mitigations and enhancements:

- 30 new bat boxes divided into three types
- 40 new bird boxes divided into 4 types
- Sowing of SuDS features with species-rich wetland wildflower mixtures. This mixture must include no less than 20 native grass and wildflower species
- Neutral wildflower meadow grassland will be established in new greenspace areas, particularly the areas identified as 'Natural and Semi-natural open space
- containing 29 native grass and wildflower species.
- New native hedgerow planting will be used to create new boundaries with access roads and other features. These hedgerows will be planted at a density of five hedge trees per linear metre and will comprise of 50% hawthorn, with not less than five additional native tree species

forming the remainder of the planting mix, including species such as blackthorn, dogwood, field maple, hazel, purging buckthorn, wild privet and guelder rose.

- Hedgehog gaps in fences.

I have reviewed the recommendations for nest bricks as part of the ecological enhancements set out in the updated ecological impact assessment. The report recommends 45 swift, sparrow, and other nesting bricks and 35 bat bricks.

Research has shown that the 'universal nesting brick' provides the best opportunity for successful nesting on buildings by a range of species including Swifts, House Sparrows, Starlings, and Tits. A ratio of 1:1 swift brick per dwelling is now recommended by Planning Practice Guidance. I recommend following best practice and installing 155 integral swift bricks on the dwellings and a mix of nesting boxes on retained trees. I recommend at least 75 integral bat boxes/tubes on the dwellings and further boxes on mature retained trees. At least one hibernation box would be welcome. Clarity on this issue is sought.

No plans showing the locations of the nest boxes or bat boxes have been provided. This is required to understand where the nest and bat boxes will be located.

The plans show close boarded fences for the garden boundaries. The applicant should demonstrate that hedgehog gaps will be installed for each of the fences.

230 trees are being planted including native species and the elm new horizon. This is good and will provide a gain in biodiversity. There are 2 native hedgerow mixes proposed. These depart from the species recommended in condition 4 of AL/129/21/OUT but are acceptable.

The Lighting Plan is fine and meets best practice for bats.

Regards,

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