



Splendid Projects Ltd
c/o Adrian Kearley @ QED Planning

30th July 2026
PJC Consultancy Reference: 7251E

To whom it may concern,

RE: PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL UPDATE – HORNCastle, PLAWHATCH LANE, SHARPTHORNE, EAST GRINSTEAD, WEST SUSSEX.

PJC Consultancy Ltd was commissioned by SHC Clemsfold Group Ltd to undertake an update to the initial preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA) in support of the proposed development at Horncastle, Plawhatch Lane, Sharpthorne, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 4JH (hereafter referred to as the ‘Site’).

A full PEA was originally issued by PJC Consultancy on the 1st May 2024. This initial PEA (document reference: 5567E/24/01 (PJC Consultancy Ltd, 2024) was informed by an extended phase 1 habitat survey and a daytime bat walkover survey which were initially undertaken on 26th February 2016 28th February 2024 by Liam Mattingly BSc(Hons) (Natural England class one great crested newt (GCN) *Triturus cristatus* licence holder) and Jess Malim BSc(Hons).

The survey identified a diverse mosaic of woodland, scattered trees, scrub, grassland, hedgerows, orchard and buildings, providing habitat suitable for a range of protected and notable species. Buildings B3–B5 were identified as having low to moderate potential to support roosting bats, whilst the woodland edge, treelines and scrub provide high-quality foraging and commuting habitat. Woodland, scrub and connected linear features also provide suitable habitat for hazel dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius*, although the current proposals largely retain these habitats and, subject to appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures, significant impacts are considered unlikely. Suitable terrestrial habitat for great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*, and widespread reptiles, including common lizard *Zootoca vivipara*, slow worm *Anguis fragilis*, grass snake *Natrix helvetica*, and adder *Vipera berus*, is present within the Site; consequently. Woodland, scrub, scattered trees, buildings and hedgerows provide good nesting opportunities for breeding birds, while suitable foraging habitat is also available for badger *Meles meles*, and European hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*, although no evidence of badger setts was recorded during the survey. The Site has negligible potential to support riparian mammals, including water vole *Arvicola amphibius*, otter *Lutra lutra*, and Eurasian beaver *Castor fiber*, owing to the absence of suitable aquatic habitat. Retained woodland and deadwood provide habitat for protected and notable invertebrates, including purple emperor *Apatura iris*, and common habitats within the Site offer limited potential for protected plant species. However, extensive stands of invasive rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*, are present and will require sensitive removal during development. Overall, bats, hazel dormouse, great crested newt, reptiles and breeding birds represent the principal ecological constraints associated with the proposed development, with further species-specific surveys and mitigation recommended where appropriate.

An updated ecological walkover survey and daytime bat walkover survey (restricted to an external inspection of the buildings only) of the Site was undertaken on the 22nd July 2026 by Thomas Knight BSc(Hons) MSc MCIEEM (Natural England bat class one (CL17), GCN class one (CL08) and beaver class (CL50/51) licence holder) in order to record any changes to the ecological baseline conditions since completion of the initial PEA.

The updated ecological walkover survey comprised a walkover inspection of the Site and its habitats, with particular attention given to identifying any material changes in habitat extent, composition, management or condition, together with any evidence of changes in the Site's potential to support protected or notable species.

The updated ecological walkover survey confirmed that the ecological baseline conditions of the Site remain substantially unchanged since the previous PEA was completed. Whilst some very minor and superficial changes to the structure and species composition of certain habitat types were observed, these are consistent with normal seasonal variation and routine ecological succession, and do not represent any material change to the ecological value of the site or its suitability to support protected or notable species.

Accordingly, the findings, ecological constraints, mitigation recommendations and conclusions presented within the initial PEA remain valid and unchanged, and no amendments to the original assessment are considered necessary.

I hope this letter provides a sufficient update to the original PEA report. However should you require any further assistance then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas Knight', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Thomas Knight BSc(Hons) MSc MCIEEM
Director of Ecology