Planning Application Ref: 26/01485/HHFUL

8 Hawkes End, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Dr Pat Doody (Ecological consultant)

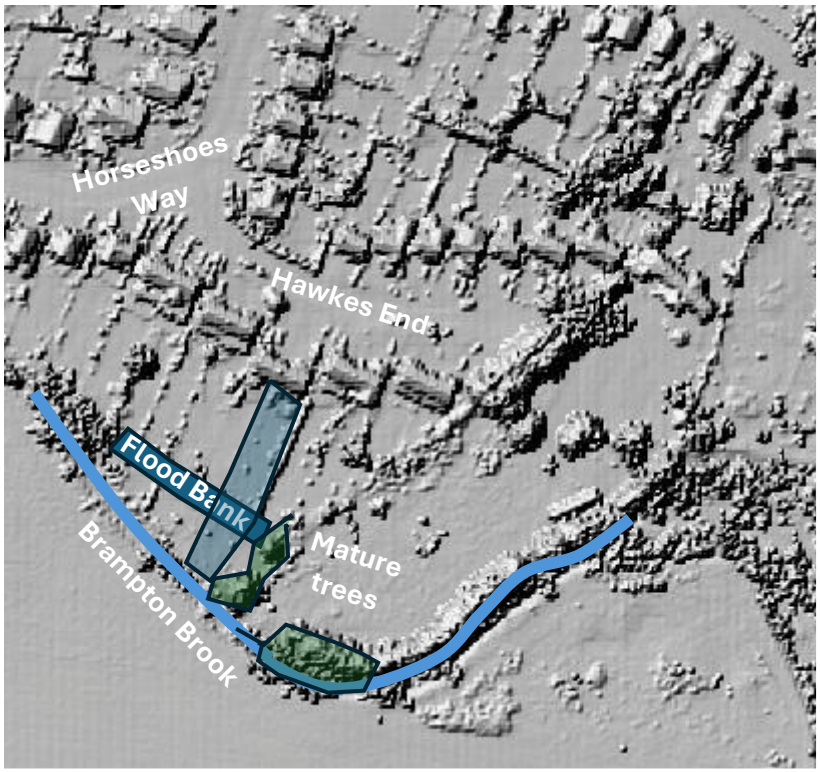
The proposed development consists of a two-storey extension and a first-floor extension to the property. I visited the site on 28 August 2026 to inspect the garden and ecological setting, as requested in the letter from HDC dated 14 August. This preliminary ecological appraisal addresses the following matters:

1) Roof space - House Martins nest along Horseshoes Way, but there was no evidence of nesting under the eaves of this property. No evidence was found to suggest that bats are roosting in the roof space.
2) Garden layout - The LIDAR image below shows the general layout of the garden, including a hedge along the southeastern boundary. Most of this area consists of lawn grasses with occasional shrubs. The hedge ends at a raised flood bank, which is incomplete and does not provide flood protection.
3) Flood Zone - Approximately one third of the southern garden lies within the flood zone and is inundated when Brampton Brook overtops its bank. The area supports rough grassland with Common Bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), and Creeping Cinquefoil (*Potentilla repens*). Although a full species list was not compiled, the vegetation appeared typical of agriculturally unimproved acid grassland and has some biological value. The applicant has indicated that he will consider sowing a native wildflower mix. The area is also of historical interest: RAF aerial photographs from 1947 show medieval ridge and furrow grassland in and around the village. Many houses along Horseshoes Way and Hawkes End have been built on these archaeological features, and this small section appears to be a species-poor remnant of the associated vegetation.
4) Protected species - Bats are the only protected species known to use the garden. Mature trees beyond the property boundary offer potential roosting sites, while shrubs within the garden provide foraging habitat. Common Pipistrelle and Brown Long-eared Bats are the species most likely to be present.
5) Brampton Brook - Brampton Brook forms the southern boundary of the property and has some biological interest. Recorded aquatic and marginal plants include Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), Broad-leaved Pondweed (*Potamogeton natans*), Water Horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*), Yellow Flag (*Iris pseudacorus*) on the banks, and Pendulous Sedge (*Carex pendula*) in shaded areas. The brook is maintained by Alconbury and Ellington Internal Drainage Board and is dredged periodically. Horse stables upstream occasionally contribute to pollution. Otters and occasional Kingfishers have been recorded here.

Conclusions

- The proposed extension will have no direct impact on the garden.
- No rare or protected species are likely to be affected by the development.
- Biodiversity net gain will be achieved through the following measures:
    1. Installing bat tiles or bat boxes.
    2. Sowing the acid grassland with a wildflower mix suited to the soil conditions.
    3. Planting a new hedge along the flood bank.

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LIDAR image showing the location of Horseshoes Way and Hawkes End and the garden in relation to the flood Bank, mature trees and Brampton Brook.