



13/03/2024

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Nightingale habitat saved after public outcry

In a rare win for nature, plans to build 21 homes next to an important **Common Nightingale** site in Kent have been rejected following public backlash.

Esquire Developments' proposals for the construction on the Hoo Peninsula near Chattenden Woods and Lodge Hill have been turned down due to the potential adverse effects on the area's nightingale population – a decision backed by more than 30,000 objections and a significant petition against the development.

The rejection of the housing projects by Medway Council, and the subsequent dismissal of Esquire Developments' appeal by the Planning Inspectorate, can be seen as a positive news for nature, with the nightingales' habitat safeguarded.



Common Nightingale is Red Listed and in decline in Britain (Chris Mayne).

Locals rally against development

The inspector's statement highlighted the lack of current data on nightingale numbers, relying instead on a 2012 survey, but recognised the site's conditions as conducive to a significant nightingale population.

The overwhelming public opposition, including a petition with more than 33,000 signatures and the advocacy of environmental organizations such as the RSPB, Natural England, and the Kent Wildlife Trust, played a pivotal role in protecting the habitat.

The developers' attempts to mitigate potential impacts, such as proposing a "no-cat policy" for future residents, were ultimately deemed insufficient in addressing the core environmental concerns.

This is not the first time the Hoo Peninsula's nightingale population has faced the threat of development, with [previous housing plans](#) either rejected or scaled back.

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