

Site Name	The Hinckley School Butt Lane Hinckley Leicestershire LE10 1LE	Advice Request	Ecology
Planning Ref	23/00477/FUL	Response Deadline	28 th Sept 2023
Planning Officer	Christopher Brown	Completed By	Kirsten Hunter BSc ACIEEM
Date of Request	14 th Sept 2023	Date of Issue	8 th Nov 2023

Stance: Holding objection pending further clarification

Dear Chris,

I am writing in respect of ecological matters for the above application advice request regarding the proposed demolition of five school buildings and the construction of a new three-storey school building with associated landscaping, external canopies, and external play area, including the construction and siting of a temporary teaching block and temporary staff car park during construction. I have reviewed the following documents on Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council's online planning portal:

- Technical Annex 1 – Condition Assessment;
- Biodiversity Metric 4.0 Calculation Tool;
- Habs survey and BNG assessment;
- Red Kite's response to the previous planning application (LCC Ecology);
- Tetra Tech (2021). Gleeds, Hinckley College. Ecological Feasibility Study. 17th August 2021;
- Site Location Plan (Dwg No. SPL0001-MAC-XX-XX-D-L-0001);
- Existing Site Plan (Dwg No. SPL0001-MAC-XX-XX-D-L-0002);
- Whole Site Plan (Dwg No. SPL0001-MAC-XX-XX-D-L-0003);
- Site Landscaping Plan Sheet 1 (Dwg No. SPL0001-MAC-XX-XX-D-L-0004);
- Site Landscaping Plan Sheet 2 (Dwg No. SPL0001-MAC-XX-XX-D-L-0005);
- Site Landscaping Plan Sheet 3 (Dwg No. SPL0001-MAC-XX-XX-D-L-0006);
- Tree Survey (Dwg No. SPL0001-TTL-XX-XX-T-O-0005-TreeSurvey-A2-Co1);
- Planning Statement; and
- Bat Survey Report.

In a previous correspondence with Red Kite (dated 19th June 2023) a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment was requested on the basis that the proposed development exceeded the current small site exemption of the Environment Act 2021. It was requested that the application not be determined until a BNG assessment, preferably undertaken at optimal time of year (May-Sept) to ensure the grassland was adequately assessed, was submitted.

A BNG report (Habs survey and BNS assessment) with accompanying calculation (Biodiversity Metric 4.0 Calculation Tool) has been produced by Daniel Wood of ACD Environmental Ltd. Condition assessments for the habitats are also provided (Technical Annex 1 – Condition Assessment) to provide justification for the allocated habitat condition. Condition assessments were carried out on 16th August 2023 and the report was dated 12th September 2023. Clarification is sought on the following points:

- The report states in Section 3.1 that the baseline survey for the habitats was carried out by Tetra Tech (site visit undertaken on 13th July 2021). A separate Site visit for the BNG assessment does not appear to have been carried out. Therefore, data used in the BNG assessment are 2 years old. As per guidance by CIEEM (2019) 'On the Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys' if a report is between 18 months and 3 years, a professional ecologist will need to undertake a Site walkover to ensure no significant change has occurred to the habitats. It is advised, therefore, that an update Site walkover is conducted to ensure that the baseline habitat assessment inputted into the BNG assessment is still valid. Otherwise, at the local planner's discretion, this limitation should be explained in the report text. In addition, in the absence of the site visit, an explanation should be given on assumptions the author used to assess habitat condition assessment criteria in the absence of suitable data relating to their criteria within the Tetra Tech appraisal. For example, working out species counts per metre in order to determine quality of grassland;
- The report should reference local policy's stance regarding biodiversity;
- An explanation on the change of red line boundary (RLB) is required. The original PEA RLB encompasses a larger area whereas the BNG RLB only encompasses the northern part of the Site and the rest of the Site is encompassed by the blue line boundary; and
- Ideally, a 30-year management plan should be provided in accordance with the Environment Act 2021 and requirements for ensuring Biodiversity Net Gain is achieved, although it is accepted that this is not mandatory until January 2024 and can form a condition.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Kirsten Hunter BSc (Hons), ACIEEM

Senior Ecologist

On behalf of Leicestershire County Council (Ecology Team)



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