

Site Name	Land East Of Leicester Road Earl Shilton Leicestershire	Advice Request	Ecology
Planning Ref	24/00484/OUT	Response Deadline	13 th June 2024
Planning Officer	Sullivan Archer	Completed By	Kirsten Hunter BSc ACIEEM
Date of Request	-	Date of Issue	13 th June 2024

Stance: Object, pending update of metric

Dear Sullivan,

Thank you for inviting Red Kite to comment regarding the above proposed outline application (some matters reserved except for means of access and scale) for the erection of up to 33 dwellings, including affordable housing, public open space, landscape planting, sustainable drainage system and new access arrangements from the Un-named Road. I have accessed Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre (LRERC) and the planning portal and reviewed the following documents:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) report by Aspect Ecology dated May 2024;
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) report;
- BNG Metric;
- Landscape Plan and Site Plan.

Pre-app comments requested production of a PEA and BNG assessment (including a baseline metric) with a site visit between May and September for grassland, and not straight after cutting or grazing. These reports have been provided. However, the survey visit occurred in Feb 2024 - suboptimal for grassland surveys. As such, key species for evaluating grassland type may have been missed leading to potential undervaluing of grassland condition. **An update site visit between May and September should be carried out** (as noted in the BNG report Table 3.1). This is of extra importance given the noted presence of Priority Species *Centaurea cyanus* adjacent to the Site (Section 4.1.2 of the PEA) to determine presence on Site and appropriate safeguarding. Metric should be updated as appropriate.

The other neutral grassland listed within Table 3.1 has been missed from the metric calculation and should be included within the calculation. Individual trees including those located within hedgerows H5 and H7 (Section 5.3.7) and indicated on page 37 of the PEA are missing from the baseline metric. **These trees should be individually condition assessed and captured within the metric.** Additionally, **H5 and H7 should be assigned as 'hedgerows with trees'** in the metric as appropriate.

At present, the recommendations for protected species are based on the assumption that boundary vegetation (hedgerows and trees) will be retained. Proof that this is the case should be provided in the form of a **landscape scheme clearly indicating retained and removed habitat** with the understanding that if the scheme changes, further protected species surveys will be necessary.

Given the historic presence of GCN, **update HSI and eDNA surveys should be carried out** on ponds within the buffer zone.

At present the concept masterplan does not demonstrate that BNG hierarchy has been followed. In the first instance, existing habitat should be retained where possible and enhanced where possible to the habitat and condition indicated by the metric.

In addition, the following pre-commencement conditions are advised:

- A robust Reasonable Avoidance Measures Methods Statement (RAMMS) detailing precautionary method of working regarding how reptiles will be safeguarded during the works. This should be produced and in-place prior to commencement of works;
- No development shall take place (including ground works or vegetation clearance) until a Construction Environment Management Plan for biodiversity (CEMP: Biodiversity) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The CEMP shall include the following details:
 - Identification of potentially damaging construction activities;
 - Identification of any biodiversity protection zones (BPZs) for retained trees and hedgerows as per industry standards;
 - Practical measures and sensitive working practices to avoid/reduce impacts on habitats and protected species during construction;
 - Timing of works to avoid harm to nesting birds;
 - Measures to ensure safeguarding of hedgehogs and priority mammals during works;
 - Responsible persons for overseeing sensitive works; and
 - Use of protective fencing where required

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA;

- Production of a Biodiversity Enhancements and Mitigation Plan (BEMP) to cover installation and management of ecological enhancements on Site as presented Section 6.2 of the PEA;

- No development shall take place (including ground works or vegetation clearance) until a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The LEMP shall include the following details:
 - Description and evaluation of the habitats and biodiversity features to be created/managed;
 - Aims and objectives of management;
 - Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives;
 - Prescriptions for management actions;
 - Work schedule;
 - Species/seed mixes to be planted/sown; and
 - How proposed habitats will be monitored, by whom and remedial measures to be undertaken.

The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details; and

- Production of a bat-friendly sensitive lightning plan should be conditioned which will require review and approval by a bat ecologist and submission to the LPA.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K Hunter".

Dr Kirsten Hunter BSc, ACIEEM

Senior Ecologist

On behalf of Leicestershire County Council (Ecology Team)