

CONSULTATION TEMPLATE RESPONSE FROM LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL:

ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY PLANNING ADVICE

COUNTY, DISTRICT OR BOROUGH	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
APPLICATION NUMBER	25/00542/FUL (2 nd Reconsultation)
ADDRESS	Trout Ponds Farm Twycross Road Sheepy Magna Leicestershire
DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	Proposed change of use of existing livery buildings and hardstanding to storage and distribution (Class B8)
PLANNING CASE OFFICER	Sullivan Archer
DEPARTMENT	Ecology
PLANNING ECOLOGY OFFICER	Olivia Larter
DATE OF COMMENTS	1 December 2025
ECOLOGICAL DOCUMENTS REVIEWED:	
• The Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Calculation Tool (October 2025) • Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (Midnorth Ecology, May 2025) • Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Midnorth Ecology, April 2025) • Preliminary Roost Assessment (Midnorth Ecology, April 2025) • Nocturnal Emergence Survey report (Midnorth Ecology, May 2025)	
SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:	
No comment	☐
No objection (for recommended conditions or informatives- see below)	☐
Recommend Refusal	☐
Holding Objection - Further information required (Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain)	☒
REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:	
We have reviewed the additional documents supplied by the applicant and we are still not satisfied that appropriate information with regard to mandatory biodiversity net gains has been supplied for the application prior to determination. The reasons for this are outlined below: Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gains (BNG): Applications are required to deliver a mandatory 10% measurable biodiversity net gain, unless exempt under paragraph 17 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024. As a result, we have reviewed the submitted Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Calculation Tool (October 2025) and associated Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (Midnorth Ecology, May 2025) and are not satisfied that appropriate information has been provided prior to determination. This is because of the reasons set out below:	

- Whilst it is indicated that the metric includes the habitats present on site prior to site degradation, no information is provided about when the degradation took place and confirmation of the date immediately prior to this upon which the baseline has been assessed (using aerial imagery).
- No condition assessment sheets have been provided for the baseline habitats, and no justification has been given as to how the habitats have been classified and condition scores assigned.

Additional Comments – Mandatory BNG:

Since mandatory biodiversity net gains applies, the planning authority will be required to secure a biodiversity gain condition as a pre-commencement requirement. The biodiversity gain condition has its own separate statutory basis, as a planning condition under [paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#) and should be included as an informative within the decision notice. The biodiversity gain condition should secure the provision of a Biodiversity Gain Plan prior to commencement, which includes the following:

- a) A Biodiversity Gain Plan form (Ideally using the Government's template: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-gain-plan>)
- b) The completed metric calculation tool showing the calculations of the pre-development and post-intervention biodiversity values.
- c) Pre and post development habitat plans.
- d) Legal agreement(s)
- e) Biodiversity Gain Site Register reference numbers (if using off-site units).
- f) Proof of purchase (if buying statutory biodiversity credits at a last resort).

In addition, a [Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan](#) (HMMP) should be secured for all [significant on-site enhancements](#). Based on the submitted post-intervention values as they are currently submitted and Government Guidance on what constitutes a significant on-site enhancement, recommendations on the habitats that should be classified as a significant on-site enhancement have been outlined in the BNG tables below.

The decision on whether significant on-site enhancements are present is ultimately up to the Council. Where present, the maintenance and monitoring of significant on-site enhancements should be secured via planning obligation for a period of up to 30 years from the completion of development. This will be required to be submitted concurrent with the discharge of the biodiversity gain condition. Therefore, the LPA is encouraged to secure draft heads of terms for this planning obligation at application stage, to be finalised as part of the biodiversity gain condition. Alternatively, the management and monitoring of significant on-site enhancements could be secured as a condition of any consent. The monitoring of the post-development habitat creation / enhancement will need be provided to the LPA at years 1, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, unless otherwise specified by the LPA. Any remedial action or adaptive management will then be agreed with the LPA during the monitoring period to ensure the aims and objectives of the Biodiversity Gain Plan are achieved.

We note that post-intervention values have also been provided. As a result, it is recommended that the following matters will also need to be addressed as part of the biodiversity gain condition:

- The 'Lowland Meadow' proposed is outside of the site's red line boundary and therefore should be included within tab D2 'offsite habitat creation' in the metric, whilst the baseline 'Modified grassland' should be recorded as lost. This is because with reference to the proposed habitats plan provided in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Midnorth Ecology, April 2025), all of the Modified grassland and Mixed scrub is lost to the development whilst the post intervention consists of Developed land; sealed surface only.

- If off-site measures are to be provided as part of the applicants own land ownership i.e. blue line boundary, then a HMMP and legal agreement will need to be agreed with the LPA as part of the Biodiversity Gain Condition. In addition, the applicant will be required to register the off-site units as part of the Biodiversity Gain Site Register.
- It is also highlighted that we do not consider that provision of Lowland meadow Priority habitat to be realistic or deliverable. This is because this habitat contains a very high distinctiveness and is a difficult habitat to create, requiring 16 species per m2 with species that reflect specific grassland communities (e.g. NVC MG5), with at least four positive indicators for lowland meadows present within the sward.

Additional Comments – Biodiversity Enhancements:

We also support the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected, Priority and threatened species, which have been recommended in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Midnorth Ecology, April 2025) to secure net gains for biodiversity, as outlined under Paragraph 187d and 193d of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). Reasonable biodiversity enhancement measures are a separate matter to mandatory biodiversity net gains, and the finalised details should be outlined within a separate Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy to be secured as a condition of any consent.

This will enable LPA to demonstrate its compliance with its statutory duties including its biodiversity duty under s40 NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and delivery of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain.

Additional Comments – Protected and Priority species:

The mitigation measures identified in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Midnorth Ecology, April 2025) and the Nocturnal Emergence Survey report (Midnorth Ecology, May 2025) should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full. This is necessary to conserve and enhance protected and Priority species particularly those recorded in the locality.

In addition, we note that the Nocturnal Emergence Survey report (Midnorth Ecology, May 2025)) recorded significant bat foraging and commuting activity was recorded, whilst the wider connecting landscape offers good suitability for foraging and commuting bats. Therefore, we recommend that any new lighting proposed is included within a sensitive lighting strategy for bats following Guidance Note 08/23 (Institute of Lighting Professionals) and secured as a condition of any consent.

We look forward to working with the LPA and the applicant to receive the additional information required to support a lawful decision and overcome our holding objection.

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS TO BE APPLIED:

N/A

ANY RECOMMENDED INFORMATIVES TO BE APPLIED:

N/A

PRE-DEVELOPMENT HABITAT BASELINE FOR BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG)

THIS IS THE MINIMUM NATIONAL ESSENTIAL INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS (PPG paragraph 11) AND MUST BE SATISFIED PRIOR TO DETERMINATION:

Confirmation that development is subject to statutory biodiversity gain condition	Y
Pre-development Habitat Plan of existing onsite habitat (to scale)	Y
Pre-development Habitat Value (on date of application or earlier)	Y
Completed Metric Calculation Tool	Y

Statement of Habitat Degradation where present (with dates and details)	N
Reason for proposing an earlier date if applicable (ie. degradation)	N
Description of Irreplaceable Habitat where present	N/A
SMALL SITES METRIC ONLY: "Competent person" information (ie. qualifications, skills, experience)	N/A
BNG METRIC INFORMATION missing or incorrect:	
Incomplete or incorrect cells are shown in metric (eg. habitat quantity, type or condition, strategic significance)	Y

POST DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG)	
PLEASE NOTE: THIS IS NOT ESSENTIAL INFORMATION PRIOR TO DETERMINATION. Post-development information is indicative only ; final proposals must be confirmed at Biodiversity Gain Plan statutory condition stage.	
ON-SITE SIGNIFICANT* BNG is proposed (If Y, please see later table)	N
OFF-SITE APPLICANT-OWNED BNG is proposed (ie. Land shown on plan within the "blue line" boundary and inserted in "offsite" tab of statutory metric)	TBC
PLEASE NOTE: Where applicant-owned off-site or significant on-site BNG proposals are present, these should be secured and monitored for 30 years. The determining authority is responsible for monitoring for compliance.	
OFF-SITE PURCHASE** of BNG	
BNG units purchase from a third party to achieve 10% BNG uplift	TBC
Statutory biodiversity credits	TBC
PLEASE NOTE**: Where purchased BNG units are proposed, any purchased units from the national register are secured and monitored for 30 years by conservation covenant, separately from this planning application process.	

POST DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS:		
*TYPE OF SIGNIFICANT ON-SITE HABITAT PROPOSED: (using the current government definition ¹)		
SIGNIFICANCE AS DEFINED IN PPG	POST DEVELOPMENT HABITAT TYPE PROPOSED	NUMBER OF UNITS
Medium or High Distinctiveness	TBC	
Large number of units at Low Distinctiveness	TBC	
Significant increase in Distinctiveness, Condition or Area	TBC	

Note for applicants: Please be aware that this advice is provided to the Local Planning Authority through a Service Level Agreement between the Local Planning Authority and Leicestershire County Council Ecology Team. Its purpose is to discharge the legal duties of the determining authority under The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) Regulations (2000), Regulations 4.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/make-on-site-biodiversity-gains-as-a-developer#significant-on-site-enhancements>

If you have any queries about the content, please correspond directly with the Planning Officer assigned to the planning application or discharge of condition application. We are unable to respond directly to applicant enquiries regarding the advice that we have provided to the determining authority.

The following legislation is used to assist in the assessment of planning applications:

Legislation source	Reference
National Planning Policy Framework	Paragraphs relevant to biodiversity, biodiversity net gain, ecological connectivity and protected species
Environment Act 2021	Mandatory Net Gain Biodiversity Duty Local Nature Recovery Strategy
District or Borough Local Plan and supporting SPD's	Local Plan policy
ODPM circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation	Requirement for species survey work and mitigation recommendations to be carried out prior to the determination of a planning application. Paras. 98 and 99
NERC Act 2006	Biodiversity Duty (see also Environment Act 2021) Section 41, habitats and species of Principal Importance (previously BAP)
Various International, European and National laws in relation to the protection of species and habitats	International and national site protection: Ramsar sites (from Ramsar Convention), Habitat and Birds Directives (Natura 2000 sites include SAC's and SPA's), SSSI's, National Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves. Habitats and Species protection: Habitat and Species Regulations (protected sites and species). Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended including special Schedule 1), Natural England Standing Advice. Badger Act.