

Site Name	Land At Cliffe Lane Markfield Leicestershire	Advice Request	Ecology
Planning Ref	23/01090/OUT	Response Deadline	19 th December 2023
Planning Officer	Matt Jedruch	Completed By	Dean LeFeuvre
Date of Request	28 th November 2023	Date of Issue	12 th December 2023

Stance: Object.

Dear Matt,

I am writing in respect of ecological matters for the above application advice request regarding the proposed outline planning application for the construction of employment units (Use Classes E(g)(i), E(g)(ii), B2 and B8) (some matter reserved except for access).

I have reviewed the following documents on the Hinkley & Bosworth Borough Council's online planning portal.

- **Site Location Plan, Drg No. 2023-775-P-03 and Indicative Site Layout, Drg No. 2023-775-P-01A**

I have also consulted Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre (LRERC) for existing protected species data and designated sites within the locality, which may incur potential impacts depending on the proposals. This identified the presence of badger records within close proximity to the Site.

No ecological appraisal or Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment has been submitted as part of the application. Both are required at this stage, before any decision is made on the application. They cannot be left to reserved matters stage as plans may need to change to accommodate protected species mitigation or biodiversity enhancements. The optimal time of year for grassland surveys is May-Sept, as it is very difficult to carry out a condition assessment (part of the process for completing the metric) of grassland outside of this time unless done by a demonstrably experienced botanist. If net gain cannot be achieved within the site, the provision of off-site compensation can be conditioned (although details of the proposed strategy should be provided). However, a baseline assessment and metric value of the existing habitats on site is still required at this stage.

Therefore I would advise that this application is delayed until the following information has been submitted:

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) - This needs to include a UKHabs survey, protected species survey, as well as an assessment of impacts and proposed mitigation and enhancement measures. Any recommendations will need to be incorporated into the submitted plans. Measurable biodiversity net gain will also need to be demonstrated, using the DEFRA 4.0 (or later) Metric.

The reason for this is that the NPPF (section 180. d) states that 'opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate'. DEFRA have released biodiversity net gain calculations (Metric 4.0), further details can be found here: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6049804846366720> and here: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6047259574927360> which can be used to confirm whether the requirements of the NPPF have been met. Metrics should be submitted (in Excel format) with an accompanying biodiversity enhancement report/plan.

A list of consultants able to do this work is available via the CIEEM website here: <https://events.cieem.net/RegisteredPracticeDirectory/Registered-Practice-Directory.aspx>

Yours sincerely,



Dean LeFeuvre BSc (Hons) MCIEEM

Principal Ecologist

On behalf of Leicestershire County Council (Ecology Team)