

Site Name	Horiba Mira Ltd Mira Drive Lindley Nuneaton Leicestershire CV10 0TT	Advice Request	Ecology
Planning Ref	23/00789/FUL	Response Deadline	12 th September 2023
Planning Officer	Christopher Brown	Completed By	Dean LeFeuvre BSC MCIEEM
Date of Request	23 rd August 2023	Date of Issue	5 th September 2023

Stance: No objection.

Dear Chris,

I am writing in respect of ecological matters for the above application advice request regarding the proposed construction of a multi-use hardstanding pad and associated parking. I have reviewed the following documents on the Hinkley & Bosworth Borough Council's online planning portal.

- **Site Location Plan, Drg No. 7045-XX-NW08-XX-DR-X-02 Rev P1, Proposed Block Plan, Drg No. 7045-XX-NW08-XX-XX-X-04 Rev P1, Ecological Survey and Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Index Assessment & eDNA Survey.**

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 that the site is located within numerous great crested newt risk zones due to the presence of ponds and records of this species within close proximity. There is also the 'Mira Boundary Hedge' local wildlife site (LWS) situated along the southeastern boundary.

Ecological Walkover Survey

The 'Ecological Walkover Survey' report dated May 2023 by Middlemarch Environmental Ltd is sufficient as a preliminary appraisal of the proposed development site. The assessment identified the following pertinent points;

Bats

Trees along the eastern boundary are suitable for roosting bats but are due to be retained within the development proposals, should this change further assessments will be required to determine their usage by roosting bats. The habitats within and adjacent to the site are suitable for commuting and foraging purposes, therefore I recommend that the following planning condition is attached to any approved scheme;

- **A lighting plan showing the location and specifications for any proposed external lighting on the site. The plan should reflect the latest Bat Conservation Trust's Bats and Lighting in the U.K. guidance should be submitted to the LCC for approval and to discharge the condition then implemented in full thereafter.**

Great Crested Newts

Two waterbodies were located immediately adjacent to site, five further ponds within 250m, and up to fifteen additional ponds within a 500m radius. A Habitat Suitability Index Assessment (HSI) and eDNA survey for great crested newts was carried out by Middlemarch in June 2023 the results of which are discussed separately below.

Breeding Birds

The hedgerow and scrub provide suitable habitats for a range of breeding bird species. A technical note relating to nesting birds should be attached to any approved scheme as follows;

- **Nesting birds are protected from disturbance under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended); therefore all removal of trees/shrubs/hedges should take place outside the breeding season (March - September inclusive) unless carefully checked beforehand by a suitably qualified person.**

The main body of the site (grassland) was considered to have limited suitability for ground nesting birds (e.g. skylark). Appropriate timings and vigilance should be maintained, and protection measures provided within a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP) which can form a planning condition as follows;

- **A Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP) should be produced for the site setting out the safeguards and appropriate working practices that will be employed to minimise adverse effects on biodiversity and ensure compliance with UK Wildlife Legislation. The details of the CEMP will be informed by the final site design and ongoing ecological survey works but should include as a minimum:**
 - Development standoffs and safeguards for all retained habitats;
 - Construction timetables to avoid sensitive periods such as nesting bird season;
 - Vegetation management measures to minimise the risk to protected or notable species (nesting birds, brown hare, badger, and grass snake); and,
 - Compliance with any specific mitigation measures that will be required to acquire a Development Licence for works affecting protected species.

The CEMP should be submitted to the LCC for approval and to discharge the condition then implemented in full thereafter.

Reptiles

There is the potential for individual or low numbers of common reptiles to occur within the grassland on site and overall, the risk of encountering this species is considered low. However, protection measures should be provided within a CEMP to reduce this risk to negligible.

Terrestrial Mammals

Badger presence was recorded on site, although no setts were recorded on or within 30m. Brown hares have also been recorded on site historically. Therefore protection measures should be provided within a CEMP.

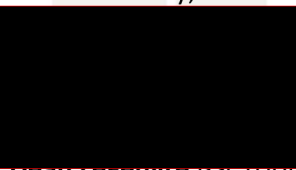
Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Index Assessment & eDNA Survey

The 'Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Index Assessment & eDNA Survey' report dated July 2023 by Middlemarch Environmental Limited is sufficient. The assessment identified that no great crested newt breeding habitat will be lost as a result of the proposed development. However, three waterbodies immediately adjacent to the Site had 'average' to 'good' suitability to support great crested newts. eDNA sampling returned positive results associated with two of these. Therefore great crested newt presence was confirmed within close proximity to the site and the sites grassland/scrub provides terrestrial habitat which will be lost to accommodate the proposed development. In the absence of mitigation this could lead to the killing or injury of great crested newts and a breach of wildlife legislation. In order to ensure compliance with wildlife legislation, the following planning condition should be attached to any approved scheme;

- **Following the approval of planning permission and prior to any works commencing on site, a Natural England great crested newt development licence will be required to proceed lawfully due to the presence of a suspected small population class of great crested newts within ponds immediately adjacent to the Site. A mitigation strategy should be submitted to the LCC for approval and to discharge the condition then implemented in full thereafter.**

Providing the above conditions and technical note (breeding birds) is attached to any approved scheme, I have no holding objections to the proposals.

Yours sincerely,



Dean Lefevre BSc (Hons) MCIEEM

Principal Ecologist

On behalf of Leicestershire County Council (Ecology Team)



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