

File Note

Site Address: Markfield Road, Ratby, Leicester, LE6 0LU

Client Name: Ryan Pasch

Reference: River condition assessment

Date: 1st July 2025

In accordance with the guidance in [Section 8.3 – River Condition Assessment Requirements \(page 36\) of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide \(July 2024\)](#), a formal river condition assessment is not considered necessary for the proposed glampsite development near Slatebrook. The justification is as follows:

1. Nature of the Watercourse

Slate brook is a seasonal, non-perennial brook, active only during wetter months to convey surface water. It lacks a continuous aquatic habitat or baseflow typically associated with rivers under the Biodiversity Metric definitions.

BNG User Guide, Section 8.3:

“A river condition assessment is required where the watercourse meets the definition of a river in the metric. This includes permanent rivers, streams or ditches with flowing water, or watercourses that provide aquatic habitat on a near-permanent basis.”

Slate brook does not meet this definition and should not be treated as a river for BNG purposes.

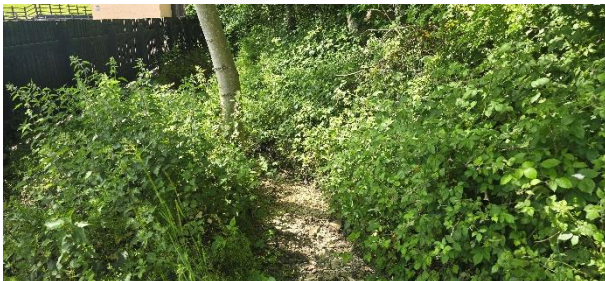


Figure 1: slate brook looking north from the entrance on 2nd June 2025.



Figure 2: Slate brook looking south from the entrance on 2nd June 2025.



Figure 3: slate brook, taken 3rd July 2025.

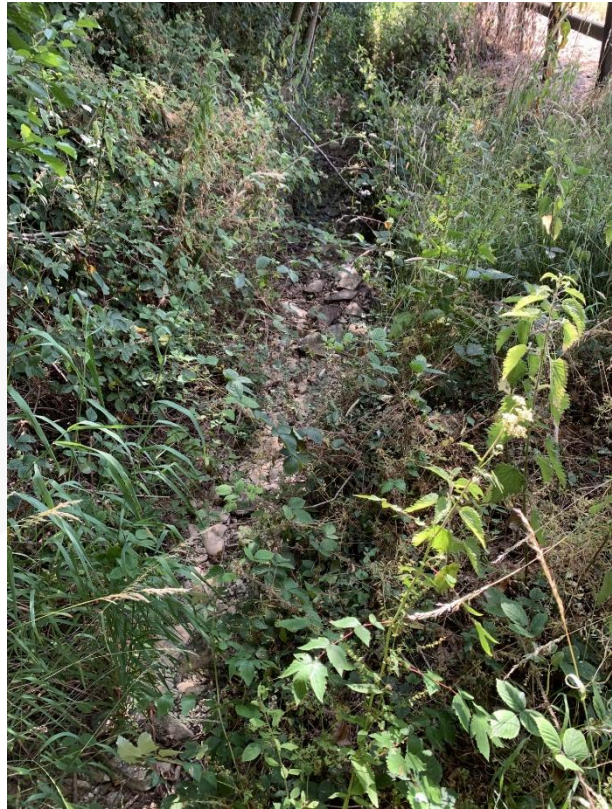


Figure 4: slate brook, taken 3rd July 2025.

2. Low-Impact, Small-Scale Development

The proposed development consists of:

- Three shepherds huts
- A non-permanent, permeable grass walkway
- Use of an existing hardstanding car park (unchanged)

All built elements are located outside the buffer zone of the seasonal watercourse. The shepherds huts are situated 12.4 metres east of Slatebrook, well beyond the minimum recommended setback. The car park is an existing feature and, as such, is excluded from Biodiversity Net Gain calculations.

The grass walkway, located 7.2 metres to the west of the brook, is designed as a temporary, low-impact feature that does not require surfacing or ground modification. As it introduces new habitat without affecting the brook's structure or hydrology, it poses no ecological risk. Importantly, no modifications are proposed to the brook or its banks, and natural vegetation will be retained in full to protect riparian habitats.

3. Environmentally Compliant Wastewater Treatment

The project will use a self-contained sewage treatment system with controlled discharge of treated effluent into the brook, aligned with Environment Agency standards. This mirrors a recently approved local scheme (Planning Ref: 23/00212/FUL), establishing precedent for such discharge into Slatebrook.

4. Existing Public Use

A public footpath already crosses Slatebrook, forming part of the established rights of way network in the area. This long-standing crossing demonstrates that occasional, managed human access does not adversely affect the brook's ecological function or physical integrity. The brook has shown no signs of erosion, structural degradation, or habitat fragmentation as a result of this use, suggesting it is capable of withstanding low-intensity foot traffic without ecological harm.

This precedent supports the inclusion of a non-permanent, permeable grass walkway, which will be situated 7.2 metres from the brook. Unlike the existing footpath, the proposed walkway does not cross the brook and will involve no surfacing, excavation, or compaction, ensuring the underlying soil structure and hydrology remain undisturbed.

The grass walkway is intended to guide pedestrian access in an ecologically sensitive way, and its installation will be aligned with the principles of the BNG mitigation hierarchy—specifically, avoidance and minimisation of ecological harm ([Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide, p. 6](#)).

This demonstrates a consistent approach to land use that balances access with biodiversity enhancement, building on the brook's proven resilience to public use.

5. Commitment to Environmental Best Practices

The project will implement:

- Sustainable drainage design
- Silt fencing where necessary
- Monitoring of treated outflow

Conclusion

Given:

- The intermittent and ecologically minor nature of Slatebrook,
- The modest scale and distance of the development,
- The use of Environment Agency-approved treatment systems, and
- Clear alignment with the BNG User Guide [Section 8.3](#),

a river condition assessment is not warranted. The proposed glampsite upholds Biodiversity Net Gain principles while safeguarding local watercourse ecology.

Author

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