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Contact: Bernie Fleming
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Date: 31 March 2025

Dear Naomi,

24/02456/DOC

Details reserved by condition 18 (Updated Biodiversity Metric) of planning permission reference no 23/00743/RM granted 18.06.2024

Land Adjacent to Oaklea and South of Cowards Lane, Codicote SG4 8UN

ECOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Overall Recommendation

- ☒ Condition 18 can be discharged

Summary of Advice

- The metric is fit for purpose and aligns with measures secured by Condition 19
- Therefore, I recommend Condition 18 can be discharged

Supporting documents

I have made particular use of the following documents in providing this advice:

- Biodiversity metric v3.1 Rev. F, SES, 24 October 2024

Comments

Thank you for your letter of 20 March 2025 which refers, and for consulting Herts LEADS (Ecology).

Condition 18 is provided in full in Appendix 1.

This application is accompanied solely by a revised (Rev. F) biodiversity metric v3.1.

This Condition relates to and underpins Condition 19 (the Management Strategy); ie, the management measures proposed in Condition 19 must align with those necessary to deliver the net gain predicted here (Condition 18); I recently recommended that Condition 19 could be discharged.

Although this edition of the metric (v3.1) differs from contemporary standards, it is consistent with those produced for previous iterations of this proposed development. It follows best practice, the trading rules are met, I have no reason to doubt the outcomes and I consider it fit for purpose.

In saying this, I acknowledge that the predicted gains first predicted in May 2023, in support of the original outline application (23/00743/RM) differ from those predicted now. This is something we have commented on before (our letter of 14 February 2024 (Ref: 23/00743/RM)).

Specifically, the original prediction of 10.87%/3.96% net gain for habitats and hedgerows now suggests gains 10.05%/12.16% respectively. Both features now indicate net gains in excess of the 10% minimum encouraged in local planning policy at the time.

Importantly, I believe it also aligns with the Management Strategy (Condition 19) and, therefore, **I recommend that Condition 18 can be discharged.**

Yours sincerely,

Bernie Fleming
Ecology Advisor
Hertfordshire LEADS

Hertfordshire LEADS provides Landscape, Ecology, Archaeology, Design and Sustainability support to planning departments in Hertfordshire.

Appendix 1

Condition 18

Prior to commencement of any above ground construction works an updated Biodiversity Metric to reflect all of the relevant habitats and features proposed on the relevant design drawings shall be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the BNG claimed is accurate and can be monitored accordingly and in accordance with Policy NE4 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031).