

Hertfordshire LEADS (Ecology)
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Application

rection of 14 dwellings and associated
infrastructure. 25/00886/FP Reed House
Jacksons Lane Reed Royston
Hertfordshire -

Documents:

- Preliminary Ecological, April 2024
- The Metric Calculation Tool (Mandatory Metric) completion date 01 October 2024

Consultancy: Cambridge Ecology Ltd

Summary of Advice:

Application can be determined with
Conditions and Informatives listed

- Mitigation on impacts on **SSSI needed** by NE advised pre-determination.
- No further surveys or BNG information required pre-determination.
- Conditions for CEMP, HMMP, compliance Condition for ecological enhancements,
- significant enhancements secure with 106
- advise on further information required at the BGP stage

Comments and recommended Conditions and Informatives:

I am not aware of any fundamental Ecological constrain relating to this development.
No further surveys are required pre determination.

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Protected Species: Standard safeguards for badgers, hedgehogs, nesting birds, and non-licensed mitigation for bats are set out in the Preliminary Ecological Assessment. It is recommended that these measures are secured by a planning condition requiring the submission and approval of detailed method statements for each species group, to be included within a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP). These method statements should be prepared in accordance with the recommendations in Section 5 (Ecological Evaluation, Constraints and Recommendations) of the report and implemented in full to ensure legal compliance and best practice for biodiversity.

Ecological Enhancements: The Ecological report includes recommendations for species enhancements I advise the installation of these will allow the application to be policy compliant with section 187 of the NPPF and Local policy- I advise these are secured by the following Condition or similar.

The development shall be completed in strict accordance with the recommended enhancements set out in Section 5 (Ecological Evaluation, Constraints and Recommendations) of the report titled "Preliminary Ecological Assessment" (Cambridge Ecology Ltd, April 2024). All the recommendations shall be implemented in full according to the timescales specified in the report, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and thereafter permanently maintained for the stated purposes of biodiversity conservation.

Therfield Heath SSSI: I note NE advise that this application should therefore include an assessment of the recreational effects of the proposed development on the SSSI and provide details of mitigation measures to address any adverse impacts. This should be provided Pre-determination.

BNG- Pre Determination

A base line habitat map and statutory metric sufficient meet the minimum requirements for BNG predetermination have been submitted

The Metric Calculation Tool (Mandatory Metric) completion date 01 October 2024 shows baseline values of 5.96 Habitat Units and 1.36 Hedgerow Units. I have no reason to doubt these values.

No further information is required prior determination.

BNG- Determination

Significant Onsite Enhancement: The proposed BNG includes areas of medium distinctiveness habitats (other neutral grassland). These are areas of grassland outside of private areas such as the central amenity area, Given the vulnerability of these areas to management and use that reduces their distinctiveness to amenity grassland, I advise that the On-Site enhancements should be considered Significant Enhancement and in this case this is **secured by a S106, or a conservation covenant**, for at least 30 years after the development is complete. I advise that account is taken in any such agreement of the cost to the LPA of reviewing any

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required monitoring reports, this should reflect the small (1- 5 ha) and medium difficulty of creating and managing the habitats.

Habitat Management and Maintenance Plan (HMMP): I advise the means by which the proposed on-site habitats will be created and enhanced (the capital works) and then managed for 30 years should be shown within a Habitat Management and Maintenance Plan (HMMP). The approved HMMP should be secured by **Condition**. I would also advise that the approved HMMP uses the Template published by Natural England. Where onsite BNG is being secured by an S106 the appropriate condition should be referenced.

BNG-Post Determination.

A net loss of approximately 26% in habitat units has been shown in the metric calculation, and the trading rules have not been met. In line with government guidance, it would generally be inappropriate for concerns about the ability to discharge the biodiversity net gain condition to be used as a reason to refuse an application at this stage. However, the applicant should be made aware that the general biodiversity condition is a pre-commencement condition. If the applicant chooses not to address these matters prior to determination, they will need to do so at the post-determination stage.

At the biodiversity gain plan stage, an updated metric will need to be submitted showing how a net gain can be delivered. This could be achieved by providing further on-site enhancements, securing additional on-site measures post-determination, or by using an off-site location. As a last resort, if an off-site location cannot be found, statutory biodiversity credits would need to be purchased. In this latter case, the applicant must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority that all other options have been fully explored and that the biodiversity net gain hierarchy has been followed.

Biodiversity Gain Plan: I advise this is completed using the government template.

In order the Biodiversity Gain Plan to be discharged it should be submitted with the following minimum information either within the body of the plan or as supporting information.

- completed metric tool calculation including off site values or biodiversity credits demonstrating a minimum 10% net gain within the trading rules.
- pre-development and post-development plans (showing the location of on-site habitat, the direction of north and drawn to an identified scale)
- condition sheets
- biodiversity net gain register reference numbers if they're using off-site units
- proof of purchase if they're buying statutory biodiversity credits

- a description of how they will manage and monitor significant on-site gains (for example, With a habitat management and monitoring plan)

I trust these comments are of assistance and kind regards.

Simon Richards

Senior Ecologists, Hertfordshire LEADS