



25th May 2022

Tim Dawes
Planit Consulting
3 Innovation Place
Douglas Drive
Godalming
Surrey
GU7 1JX

By email only

Thank you for requesting advice on this application from Place Services' ecological advice service. This service provides advice to planning officers to inform Uttlesford District Council planning decisions with regard to potential ecological impacts from development. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer who will seek further advice from us where appropriate and necessary.

Application: UTT/21/2509/OP

Location: Land South Of (East Of Griffin Place) Radwinter Road Swards End

Proposal: Outline application for the erection of up to 233 residential dwellings including affordable housing, with public open space, landscaping, sustainable drainage system (SuDS) and associated works, with vehicular access point from Radwinter Road. All matters reserved except for means of access

Dear Tim,

Thank you for re-consulting Place Services on the above outline application.

No objection subject to securing biodiversity mitigation and enhancement measures

Summary

We have reviewed the Addendum to the Environmental Statement Volume 1: Chapter 8 Ecology (Harris Lamb, January 2022) relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected species and Priority species & habitats and identification of appropriate mitigation measures.

We are now satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available for determination of this application.

This provides certainty for the LPA of the likely impacts on designated sites, protected and Priority species & habitats and, with appropriate mitigation measures secured, the development can be made acceptable.



The mitigation measures identified in the Addendum to the Environmental Statement Volume 1: Chapter 8 Ecology (Harris Lamb, January 2022) should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full. This is necessary to conserve and enhance protected and Priority species particularly bats, nesting birds, reptiles and mobile mammal species.

Bat survey results have been provided which indicate that Barbastelle have not been recorded utilising the site for foraging. Tree T5 was identified as supporting a Brown Long-eared Bat roost although this tree is to be retained as part of the proposals.

We recommend a Wildlife Sensitive Lighting Strategy should be delivered for this scheme to avoid impacts to foraging and commuting bats, especially on the retained vegetated boundaries. This must follow the [Guidance Note 8 Bats and artificial lighting](#) (The Institute of Lighting Professionals & Bat Conservation Trust, 2018). In summary, it is highlighted that the following measures should be implemented for the lighting design, which could be informed by a professional ecologist:

- Light levels should be as low as possible as required to fulfil the lighting need.
- Warm-White lights should be used preferably at 2700k. This is necessary as lighting which emit an ultraviolet component or that have a blue spectral content have a high attraction effect on insects. This may lead in a reduction in prey availability for some light sensitive bat species.
- If light columns are required, they should be as short as possible as light at a low level reduces the likelihood of any ecological impact. However, the use of cowls, hoods, reflector skirts or shields could also be used to prevent horizontal spill.
- Movement sensors and timers could be used to minimise the 'lit time'.

Hazel Dormouse surveys are now complete with no evidence present on site and so no mitigation or further consideration for this species are required.

Breeding bird surveys undertaken by FALCO Ecology (October 2021) were undertaken mid-June to mid-July 2021 which missed the early breeding bird season, however, it was considered unlikely that many early breeding species that would be impacted by the proposed development would be present within the survey area.

Four Skylark territories were identified within the site. Other species recorded breeding on site included Dunnock, Song Thrush, Linnet, House Sparrow and Yellowhammer. Although mitigation during construction has been recommended in the Breeding Bird Survey Report (FALCO Ecology; October 2021), mitigation for the loss of foraging and nesting habitat for ground-nesting birds, including Skylark, has not been considered. The open habitats that are provided as part of the proposals are not equivalent to what will be lost.

A bespoke Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy is required to ensure that impacts upon nesting Skylark are mitigated and compensated for as part of this application. This will require compensation measures to be provided on site or offsite in nearby agricultural land. This should be secured as a condition of any consent if suitable land can be delivered in the applicant's control. However, if suitable land is not available in the applicant's control, then the compensation measures may be required to be secured via a legal agreement.



We support the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancements including the creation of species-rich hedgerows, species-rich grassland, Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, planting of native trees, shrubs and hedgerow and the installation of bat/bird boxes, reptile refugia and insect boxes, which have been recommended to secure net gains for biodiversity, as outlined under Paragraph 174d of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021). The reasonable biodiversity enhancement measures should be outlined within a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy and Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) and should be secured by a condition of any consent.

This will enable LPA to demonstrate its compliance with its statutory duties including its biodiversity duty under s40 NERC Act 2006.

Impacts will be minimised such that the proposal is acceptable, subject to the conditions below based on BS42020:2013.

We recommend that submission for approval and implementation of the details below should be a condition of any planning consent.

Recommended conditions

1. ACTION REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL RECOMMENDATIONS

“All mitigation and enhancement measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Addendum to the Environmental Statement Volume 1: Chapter 8 Ecology (Harris Lamb, January 2022) as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

This may include the appointment of an appropriately competent person e.g. an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) to provide on-site ecological expertise during construction. The appointed person shall undertake all activities, and works shall be carried out, in accordance with the approved details.”

Reason: To conserve and enhance protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).



2. CONCURRENT WITH RESERVED MATTERS PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT: FARMLAND BIRD MITIGATION STRATEGY

“A Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority to compensate the loss or displacement of any Farmland Bird territories identified as lost or displaced. This shall include provision of offsite compensation measures to be secured by legal agreement or a condition of any consent, in nearby agricultural land, prior to commencement.

The content of the Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy shall include the following:

- a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed compensation measure e.g. Skylark nest plots;*
- b) detailed methodology for the compensation measures e.g. Skylark plots must follow Agri-Environment Scheme option: ‘AB4 Skylark Plots’;*
- c) locations of the compensation measures by appropriate maps and/or plans;*
- d) persons responsible for implementing the compensation measure.*

The Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and all features shall be retained for a minimum period of 10 years.”

Reason: To allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species)

3. CONCURRENT WITH RESERVED MATTERS PRIOR TO ANY WORKS ABOVE SLAB LEVEL: BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY

“A Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy for protected and Priority species shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy shall include the following:

- a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;*
- b) detailed designs to achieve stated objectives;*
- c) locations of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans;*
- d) timetable for implementation demonstrating that works are aligned with the proposed phasing of development;*
- e) persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures;*
- f) details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant).*

The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to occupation and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.”

Reason: To enhance protected and Priority species & habitats and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).



4. CONCURRENT WITH RESERVED MATTERS PRIOR TO OCCUPATION: LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

"A Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to, and be approved in writing by, the local planning authority prior occupation of each phase of development.

The content of the LEMP shall include the following:

- a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed.*
- b) Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management.*
- c) Aims and objectives of management.*
- d) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives.*
- e) Prescriptions for management actions.*
- f) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a five-year period).*
- g) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan.*
- h) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.*

The LEMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery. The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme. The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details."

Reason: To allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species)

5. CONCURRENT WITH RESERVED MATTERS PRIOR TO OCCUPATION: WILDLIFE SENSITIVE LIGHTING DESIGN SCHEME

"A lighting design scheme for biodiversity shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall identify those features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance along important routes used for foraging; and show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans, Isolux drawings and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent bats using their territory.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the scheme and maintained thereafter in accordance with the scheme. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority."

Reason: To allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species)



Please contact us with any queries.

Yours sincerely,

Ella Gibbs ACIEEM BSc (Hons)

Senior Ecological Consultant

placeservicesecology@essex.gov.uk

Place Services provide ecological advice on behalf of Uttlesford District Council

Please note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.