



ECOLOGICAL ADVICE SERVICE

TO: Katherine Parkin
FROM: Helen Forster
DATE: 23 February 2023
SUBJECT: 20221016 Higham Railway Station, Higham

The following is provided by Kent County Council's Ecological Advice Service (EAS) for Local Planning Authorities. It is independent, professional advice and is not a comment/position on the application from the County Council. It is intended to advise the relevant planning officer(s) on the potential ecological impacts of the planning application; and whether sufficient and appropriate ecological information has been provided to assist in its determination.

Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant or other interested parties may have must be directed in every instance to the Planning Officer, who will seek input from the EAS where appropriate and necessary.

No ecological information has been submitted with this application. As a result of reviewing the data we have available to us, and the information submitted with the planning application, we advise that further information is sought from the applicant with regards to the potential for ecological impacts to arise.

We have taken this view as the site has been vegetated for at least 10 years and has good connectivity to the surrounding area and therefore it is possible that protected/notable species are present within the site. As such, an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) should be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist¹, in accordance with good practice guidelines.

The EcIA will include the following:

- Details of the impacts of development proposals on the ecological baseline established via a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and any additional surveys undertaken;

¹ Suitably qualified ecologists can be found using either the: [CIEEM Registered Practice Directory](#) or the [Environmental Data Services Directory](#).

- Details of any necessary and achievable ecological mitigation and/or compensation measures;
- Details of ecological enhancement measures, and;
- Provision of sufficient information to determine whether the project accords with relevant nature conservation policies and legislation.

To ensure that the planning determination is adequately informed in respect of all potential ecological impacts, we advise that the EcIA is sought prior to determination of the planning application. This is in alignment with paragraph 99 of ODPM 06/2005 which states *“it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision”*.

The EcIA will ensure alignment with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021) and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) Act 2006.

Under section 40 of the NERC Act (2006) and paragraph 174 of the NPPF (2021) biodiversity should be maintained and enhanced through the planning system. Additionally, in alignment with paragraph 180 of the NPPF 2021, the implementation of measurable net gains for biodiversity (integrated as part of design) should be encouraged. As such, we advise that information is submitted with the EcIA to demonstrate that the development incorporate measures to benefit biodiversity. The proposal is for industrial buildings and we suggest that green roofs are included on the buildings.

If you have any queries regarding our comments, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Helen Forster MCIEEM
Biodiversity Officer

This response was submitted following consideration of the following documents:
No Ecology Documents