



ECOLOGICAL ADVICE SERVICE

TO: Amanda Cue
FROM: Helen Forster
DATE: 05 January 2026
SUBJECT: Land Adjacent To Thames Way Northfleet 20250730

The following is provided by Kent County Council's Ecological Advice Service (KCC 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 if sufficient/appropriate ecological information has been provided.

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.

We advise that additional information is required prior to determination.

Protected/Notable Species

The submitted preliminary ecological appraisal has detailed that the site or surrounding area contains suitable habitat to support breeding birds, foraging/commuting bats, Great Crested Newts, badgers, hedgehogs, invertebrates and dormouse. Common Lizard were recorded incidentally during the site visit.

The report has recommended that surveys are required for dormouse and reptiles. The PEA was carried out in June 2025 and therefore there was sufficient time to complete these surveys in 2025 unfortunately the surveys have not been submitted as part of the current application.

We advise that the recommended surveys are carried out prior to determination of the planning application. The above is in alignment with paragraph 99 of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) Circular 06/2005¹ 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,*

¹ [odpm-circ-0605.qxd \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision”.

We advise that if species are present within the site there will be a need for appropriate mitigation to be proposed. We highlight that due to the proposed layout it is unlikely that on site ecological mitigation can be implemented.

Priority Habitat

The site has been identified as Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land via the BugLife All Of A Buzz Data Set. [All of a Buzz in the Thames Gateway - Buglife](#)

Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land can be a ‘habitat of principal importance’, or priority habitat, as listed under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

Paragraph 84 of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) Circular 06/2005² -states that “...*potential effects of a development, on habitats or species listed as priorities... ..are capable of being a material consideration in the preparation of regional spatial strategies and local development documents and the making of planning decisions*”.

We advise that insufficient information has been provided to satisfies that the site is no longer meet the requirement for Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land. We advise that further information is provided clarifying why the applicant is satisfied that the site does not meet this criteria.

We recommend that the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment provides a description (supported by photos) of all the habits detailed within the Statutory Metric. The metric details that vacant or derelict land is present on site which could support the presence of Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land.

We highlight that if the assessment of the habitat is incorrect and it is Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land then the BNG assessment is incorrect.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Under the Environment Act 2021 and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), all planning applications⁵⁸ for development (unless exempt^{59,60}), must deliver at least a 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG), shown via use of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric prior to commencement of any development. Having reviewed submitted information⁶¹, we consider a 10% biodiversity net gain is a statutory requirement of this proposed development.

Any application which is required to achieve a 10% BNG must submit the following information as a minimum³:

- confirmation that the applicant believes that planning permission, if granted, the development would be subject to the biodiversity gain condition;

² odpm-circ-0605.qxd (publishing.service.gov.uk)

³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain#para11>

- the pre-development biodiversity value(s), [either on the date of application or earlier proposed date \(as appropriate\)](#);
- where the applicant proposes to use an earlier date, this proposed earlier date and the reasons for proposing that date;
- [the completed metric calculation tool](#) showing the calculations of the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on the date of application (or proposed earlier date) including the publication date of the biodiversity metric used to calculate that value;
- a statement whether activities have been carried out prior to the date of application (or earlier proposed date), that result in loss of onsite biodiversity value ('[degradation](#)'), and where they have:
 - a statement to the effect that these activities have been carried out;
 - the date immediately before these activities were carried out;
 - the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on this date;
 - the completed metric calculation tool showing the calculations, and
 - any available supporting evidence of this;
- a description of any [irreplaceable habitat](#) (as set out in [column 1 of the Schedule to the Biodiversity Gain Requirements \(Irreplaceable Habitat\) Regulations 2024](#)) on the land to which the application relates, that exists on the date of application, (or an earlier date); and
- plan(s), drawn to an identified scale and showing the direction of North, showing onsite habitat existing on the date of application (or earlier proposed date), including any irreplaceable habitat (if applicable).

We have reviewed the submitted information and we advise that insufficient information has been submitted to meet the requirements for mandatory net gain as insufficient information has been provided to fully understand if the site meets the requirements Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land rather than the habitats listed within the submitted metric.

If the additional information requested in the priority habitat section satisfactorily demonstrates that the site is not Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land then we advise that we will accept the conclusions of the submitted metric.

We advise that clarity on the baseline habitats must be submitted prior to determination of the planning application as mandatory BNG requires details of the pre development values to be known when the application is being determined.

We advise due to the proposed layout it will not be possible to achieve a BNG of over 10% for habitats within the site – depending on the landscaping proposed it may be possible to achieve a BNG of over 10% for hedgerows.

As such off site habitat creation will be required to achieve a BNG either through habitat creation within the applicants landholdings (if there is any) or the purchasing of off site units.

We advise that it will be possible to purchase off site units to achieve a BNG if the submitted metric is correct however we advise that it is likely to be more difficult to secure off site units if the site meets the requirements for Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land.

We can advise further on this matter once the additional requested information clarifying if the site is Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land has been provided.

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:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal; Calumma Ecological Services; July 2025
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment; Ecology and Land Management;
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