



ECOLOGICAL ADVICE SERVICE

TO: Kelly Joyce

FROM: Phillip Lomax

DATE: 29 April 2022

SUBJECT: 20220215 Luxon Farm, Luddesdown

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 Information – more information needed.

No ecological information has been submitted with this application. As a result of reviewing the data we have available to us (including aerial photos and biological records) and the information submitted with the planning application, we advise that further information is sought with regards to the potential for ecological impacts to arise as a result of the proposed development.

Habitats and features (*including buildings, trees, rough grassland and shrubs,*) are present on and around the site, indicating ecological value and the potential for protected species presence that must be taken account of in the planning decision. Therefore, a preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA) must be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist, in accordance with good practice guidelines. We recommend that the ecological appraisal is informed by an appropriate data search through Kent and Medway Biological Records Centre (KMBRC) and any other appropriate records centre. The PEA will describe the habitats and features within and around the site and assess their potential to support protected species and identify if there is a need for further ecological surveys to assess ecological value and/or confirm protected species presence/likely absence. The PEA should in particular consider the potential of the site to support the following protected species:

- Bats – The building proposed for alterations and surrounding mature trees have the potential to support roosting bats;
- Badger – The deciduous woodland surrounding the application site has the potential to support badgers;
- Reptiles – There is suitable habitat for reptiles within the application site.

To ensure that the planning determination is adequately informed in respect of all potential ecological impacts, we advise that the PEA report, OR, if further surveys are required, an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) report, detailing all surveys and outcomes, must be sought as part of the planning application. This is in accordance 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”*. An EcIA is a process of identifying, quantifying and evaluating the potential effects of development on habitats, species and ecosystems, so providing all ecological survey information alongside any necessary avoidance, mitigation and compensation proposals within one document.

One of the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework is that planning policies and planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment, including by: *“minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures”*.

We are concerned that development activities appear to have been taking place within the application site for some time. The aerial images taken from Google Earth Pro show the application site in 2013 and 2020. From these images it can be seen that there has been significant removal of trees and shrubs and significant disturbance of the ground and the removal of some outbuildings and the erection of a new building. We are not certain as to whether these works which could have a significant effect on wildlife and biodiversity were supervised by an experienced ecologist or not.

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

Phillip Lomax
Biodiversity Officer

This advice is based on a review of the following submitted plans and documents:

Image Date 2013

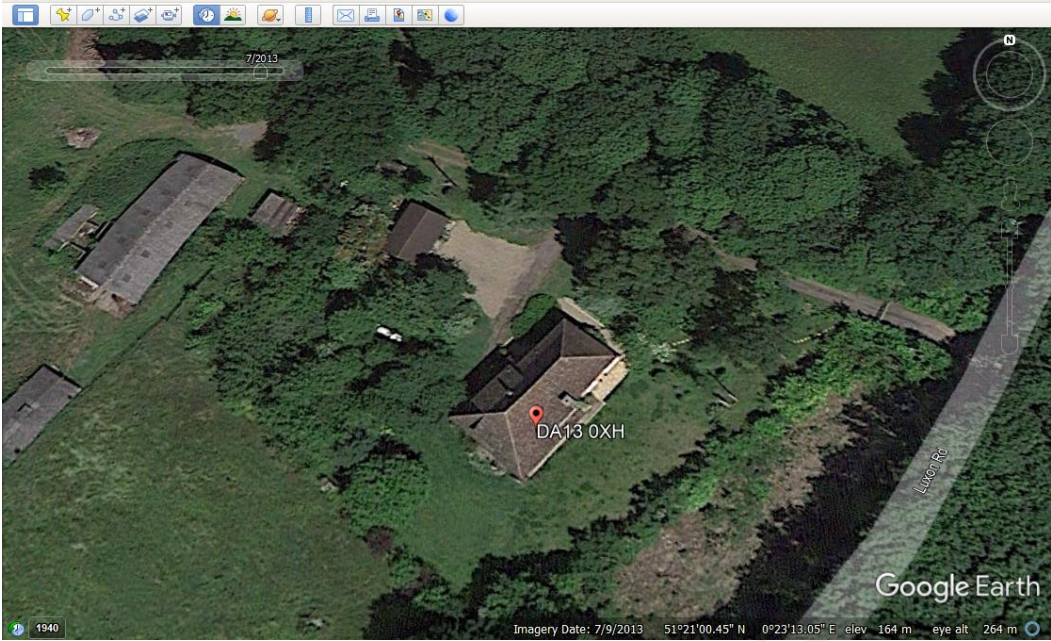


Image Date 2020

