



ECOLOGICAL ADVICE SERVICE

TO: *Amanda Cue*

FROM: *Helen Forster*

DATE: *29 August 2025*

SUBJECT: *Hopehill Campsite Meopham 20250820 – Deemed Condition*

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.

BIODIVERSITY GAIN CONDITION DISCHARGE and DISCHARGE OF CONDITION 5

This development requires a 10% mandatory biodiversity net gain under legislation.

Deemed Condition: *The general biodiversity gain condition as per Schedule 7A, Section 13(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that the development may not be begun unless—*

- (a) a biodiversity gain plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and*
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.*

Condition 5 states: *Prior to the commencement of works, a biodiversity gain plan, a habitat management and monitoring plan shall be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The plan must detail how any on site habitat creation and enhancement is managed and monitored in the long term. The plan must be implemented as approved.*

We have reviewed the submitted documents (Biodiversity Gain Plan and Statutory metric) in relation to the general biodiversity gain condition of permission and advise that sufficient information has been provided to discharge the deemed condition and condition 5. Off-site BNG has been achieved through the purchase of 0.02 units at an off site habitat bank site.

We advise that as BNG is being achieved via an off site habitat bank we advise that the Habitat Management Plan is not required for the discharge of the condition 5.

Table 1 shows a summary of the information as submitted. Further details are provided in Table 2.

Table 1: To show a summary of our review of submitted information

Percentage Net Gain Required	Percentage Net Gain/Loss Reported for Area Habitats	Percentage Net Gain/Loss Reported for Linear Habitats	Net Gain Proposed: 1 – all on-site; 2 – no significant on-site and off-site; 3 – significant on-site and off-site 4- All Off Site	On-site 'significant' Net Gains Proposed (Yes/No)
10%	10%	N/A	All Off Site	No

Detailed Comments

Legislation and government standing advice indicates that the information shown in Table 2¹ needs to be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority as part of the 'deemed condition' biodiversity gain plan prior to commencement of development.

References to the biodiversity value of any habitat or habitat enhancement are to its value as calculated in accordance with the biodiversity metric. As such, a copy of the completed biodiversity metric calculation tool, in excel spreadsheet format, has been submitted as part of this submission in conjunction with the biodiversity gain plan. The local planning authority must approve the biodiversity gain plan; without approval, the development may not commence.

Table 2: To show the information required for the biodiversity gain plan under legislation and as indicated by government standing advice, and whether the submitted information is sufficient.

Information Needed	Provided	Comments
The steps taken or to be taken to minimise the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the on-site habitat and any other habitat. And, (except for onsite irreplaceable habitats) a description of how the biodiversity gain hierarchy will be followed and where to the extent any actions (in order of priority) in that hierarchy are not followed and the reason for that.	Yes	The applicant is required by law to deliver biodiversity gains in accordance with the biodiversity gain hierarchy, as defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 Section 37A. We are satisfied that the applicant has appropriately applied the hierarchy to this development.
The relevant date , for the purposes of calculating the pre-development biodiversity value of onsite habitats and if proposing an earlier date, the reasons for using this earlier date.	Yes	With the original application, the applicant has provided the date of 20th June 2024 as the date of the pre-development biodiversity value calculation, which is the date the metric was completed post ecological walkover survey. This is considered acceptable to inform the application.
The completed biodiversity metric	Yes	We have reviewed the metric and we are

¹ For development not proceeding in phases. For phased development there are different requirements for the Biodiversity Gain Plan.

calculation tool(s) , stating the publication date of the tool(s), and showing the calculation of the pre-development onsite value on the relevant date , and post-development biodiversity value. And, evidence that biodiversity gain objective can be met.		satisfied that it has been correctly filled in and no amendments are required.													
Pre-development and post-development plans showing the location of onsite habitat (including any irreplaceable habitat) on the relevant date , and drawn to an identified scale and showing the direction of North.	No	No pre and post development plans have been submitted as part of this condition discharge.													
A description of any irreplaceable habitat on the land to which the plan relates which exist on the relevant date , and any part of the development for which planning permission is granted where the onsite habitat of that part is irreplaceable habitat, arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat.	N/A	None present on site													
If habitat degradation has taken place: • a statement to this effect, • the date immediately before the degradation activity, • the completed biodiversity tool showing the calculation of the biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on that date, and • any available supporting evidence for the value.	Yes	The applicant indicated that no on-site habitat degradation has occurred since 30th January 2020. This is corroborated by a review of aerial imagery (Google Earth Pro, accessed August 2025).													
Where any registered off-site biodiversity gain is specified in the plan and allocated to the development: - o The registered off-site biodiversity gain is so allocated (and, if the allocation is conditional, that any conditions attaching to the allocation have been met, or will be met by the time to development begins), and - o The registered off-site biodiversity gain has the biodiversity value specified in the plan in relation to the development.	Yes	We advise that we are satisfied that an off-site BNG of at least 10% can be achieved through the creation of <i>other neutral grassland</i> An off-site habitat bank will be used to achieve the BNG and the biodiversity gain site register number is BGS-091024001 We are satisfied that the reasons for using a BNG habitat bank are appropriate for this application. The Biodiversity Gain Site Register has confirmed that the required units have been purchased. Planned habitat Planned habitat enhancements from this gain site that have been allocated to a development Local Planning Authority Grazesham LPA Planning reference number 20241003 Project name BNG00986 - Hopehill scout Campsite, Kent, DA13 0QJ Biodiversity value <table><tr><th>Habitat type</th><th>Value</th></tr><tr><td>Area</td><td>0.02</td></tr></table><table><tr><th>Area</th><th>Condition</th><th>Area in hectares (ha)</th></tr><tr><td>Grassland - Other neutral grassland</td><td>Good</td><td>0.007</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td></td><td>0.0</td></tr></table>	Habitat type	Value	Area	0.02	Area	Condition	Area in hectares (ha)	Grassland - Other neutral grassland	Good	0.007	Total		0.0
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Evidence that any biodiversity credits specified in the plan have been purchased.	N/A	
Name and address of the person completing the Plan, and (if different) the person submitting the Plan.	Yes	
A description of the development and planning permission reference number (to which the Plan relates).	Yes	
A description of arrangements for maintenance and monitoring of habitat enhancement to which paragraph 9(3) of Schedule 7A to the 1990 Act applies (habitat enhancement which must be maintained for at least 30 years after the development is completed).	N/A	As the off-site provision is proposed to be through a habitat bank provider, the gain site reference number is considered sufficient evidence that appropriate management will be implemented for the relevant habitats.

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:

Biodiversity Gain Plan
Statutory Metric