



ECOLOGICAL ADVICE SERVICE

TO: Amanda Grout
FROM: Luke Wallace
DATE: 25 April 2022
SUBJECT: 20220226 / Former Northfleet Cement Works, Northfleet

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.

Our comments regarding this request for pre-application advice are detailed below.

Protected Species and Biodiversity

Habitats and features (including mature trees) are present on and around the site, indicating ecological value and the potential for protected species presence that must be taken account of in any planning decision. As such, a preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA) must be undertaken by a suitably qualified, CIEEM-registered ecologist, in accordance with good practice guidelines. The PEA will assess the habitats and features within and around the site and identify if there is a need for further ecological surveys to assess ecological value and/or confirm protected species presence/likely absence.

To ensure that any planning determination at this site is adequately informed in respect of all potential ecological impacts, we advise that the PEA must be sought prior to determination of the planning application. The submission must provide appropriate and achievable mitigation measures for any identified ecological impacts. 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*".

Under section 40 of the NERC Act (2006), paragraph 174 of the NPPF (2021) and the Environment Act (2021), biodiversity must be maintained and enhanced through the planning system. Additionally, in alignment with paragraph 180 of the NPPF 2021, the implementation of enhancements for biodiversity should be encouraged. As such, information regarding biodiversity loss offsetting/ecological enhancement should be included with any submitted planning application.

Luke Wallace
Biodiversity Officer