



ECOLOGICAL ADVICE SERVICE

TO: Peter Price

FROM: Luke Wallace

DATE: 30 December 2022

SUBJECT: 20221241 / Priesthood, Meopham

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 (including aerial photos and biological records), 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.

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 the planning decision. As such, an ecological impact assessment (EcIA) must be undertaken by a suitably qualified, CIEEM-registered ecologist, in accordance with good practice guidelines. The EcIA 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 the planning determination is adequately informed in respect of all potential ecological impacts, an EcIA 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". An EclA 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.

Under section 40 of the NERC Act (2006) and paragraph 174 of the NPPF (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, it must be demonstrated the development can achieve a biodiversity net-gain.

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

Luke Wallace
Biodiversity Officer