



ECOLOGICAL ADVICE SERVICE

TO: Alison Webster

FROM: Helen Forster

DATE: 14 October 2024

SUBJECT: Cherry Dene, Meopham 20240580

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 our advice is unchanged since when we previously commented in September. The metric has not been updated to confirm the number of small, medium and large trees present within the site. The metric details that all trees are small which, based on the information within the arboricultural report is incorrect.

We have reviewed the submitted information and we advise that we have the following comments to make:

Protected/Notable Species

We have reviewed the protected/notable species survey information submitted by the applicant and we are satisfied that sufficient information has been provided. We have taken the view that no further species survey information is required as the site is largely a well managed lawn and the mature trees on site will be retained.

Biodiversity Net Gain

In July 2024 the statutory metric guidance has been updated to address what information should be included within the metric for private gardens. It has stated the following:

A private garden is a garden within the curtilage of a privately owned or tenanted dwelling house. Private gardens can contain important features for biodiversity, including mature trees and hedgerows. When recording habitats at baseline within a private garden you may need to assess any important features as individual habitat parcels to avoid under-recording biodiversity.

This may include:

- *recording individual trees*
- *recording hedgerows*
- *recording other habitats, such as ponds*

Recording baseline trees within private gardens

Record all medium, large and very large individual trees within private gardens.

We advise that the existing baseline information has been filled in incorrectly as all the trees have been referred to as small trees. From reviewing the arboricultural report it is clear that there are trees which have a larger diameter than 300mm at breast height. The legislation requires the existing habitat baseline to be correct within the submitted BNG Metric. Therefore we recommend that the BNG metric is updated to clearly demonstrate the different sizes of trees within the site.

As detailed above it is only medium, large and very large trees which need to get recorded within private gardens. Details of the sizing can be found below.

Small - DBH $\leq$ 30cm
Medium - DBH > 30 to ≤ 60 cm
Large - DBH > 60 to ≤ 90 cm
Very Large - DBH > 90 cm
Total

We highlight that as part of mandatory BNG there is a requirement to have an accurate baseline assessment submitted prior to determination of the planning application. While not required under the legislation we also recommend that the proposed development footprint is included within the revised metric.

The metric is currently stating that a loss of 5% is anticipated but we highlight that due to larger trees being present within the site which will be impacted we highlight that it may be a higher loss than depicted within the metric.

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:
Ecological Impact Assessment; Kent Sussex Ecology; November 2023

Small Sites Metric dated 10th September 2024
Arboricultural Impact Assessment; Cantia; September 2024