



ECOLOGICAL ADVICE SERVICE

TO: Kelly Joyce

FROM: Elizabeth Fagg

DATE: 29 November 2024

SUBJECT: 20240149 Lighthouse Vessel 21, St Andrews Quay

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.

SUMMARY – SUFFICIENT INFORMATION PROVIDED

The application is for change of use to use class F1 – learning and non-residential institutions to facilitate permanent mooring of a vessel. This is currently an existing vessel mooring and the ecological surveys were carried out with a vessel present. We understand the mooring is currently vacant. No addition impacts are anticipated above current use but we highlight this may change if additional vessels and frequent manoeuvring is taking place.

We are satisfied that sufficient surveys have been conducted and the application pre-dates biodiversity net gain requirements (BNG).

Protected habitats

The site is on the bank of the River Thames, and this is located within UK BAP priority habitats intertidal sediment and intertidal mudflat. An ecological impact assessment has been completed. The surveys conducted assessed the condition of the habitats present and noted that no proposed dredging or impact pathways are expected from the change of use from temporary to permanent.

Changes to the position of the vessel has been noted in the EcIA as having potential to cause loss of foreshore habitats and compaction of sediments. The information provided

notes that there is a potential for a second vessel and as the vessel sits on the mudflat at low tide, a second vessel will increase those impacts to the habitats present. Any increase in manoeuvring and vessel movements may affect the sediment habitats on the foreshore. We anticipate the quayside impacts to be negligible above current use if visitor numbers remain the same.

Pollution control measures will need to be in place for any moored vessel and we agree with the Port of London (PLA) comments regarding protecting the environment from pollution and appropriate waste management for solid and liquid wastes need to be in place.

This application may require a water framework directive (WFD) assessment and marine licence, but this is not our area of expertise.

Protected Species

No impacts were reported by the ecologist from the mooring of a vessel to protected species and we agree no further surveys are required.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Under the Environment Act 2021 and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), all planning applications received in England (with a few exemptions) must deliver at least a 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) from the 12th February 2024 and all minor applications from the 2nd April 2024. The application form is dated 8/2/24 which predates the requirement for BNG and is therefore exempt.

Enhancements

Under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 and paragraphs 180 and 186 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023, biodiversity should be maintained and enhanced through the planning system. Enhancement refers to providing net benefits for biodiversity over and above requirements for BNG, avoidance, mitigation and compensation. As such, we advise that an enhancement plan is provided that includes the actions proposed in the EcIA, and the ownership and responsibilities for future management. A condition wording is suggested below.

Condition

Within three months of planning permission being granted, a detailed plan(s) showing how the development will enhance biodiversity, will be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. This will include measures outlined in the Ecological Impact assessment, Thomson Environmental Consultants, Oct 24 and detail any management measures, with ownership and responsibilities. The approved measures will be implemented and retained thereafter.

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

Elizabeth Fagg
Biodiversity Officer

This response was submitted following consideration of the following documents:

- EcIA Thomson Environmental Consultants, Oct 24

- Location plan, Levitt Bernstein, Jan 24
- Planning statement, Icení, Feb 24
- Block plan, Levitt Bernstein, Jan 24
- Application form dated 8/2/24
- Letter Port of London Authority to LPA 29/4/24