



ECOLOGICAL ADVICE SERVICE

TO: Katherine Parkin
FROM: Helen Forster
DATE: 23 December 2025
SUBJECT: Land At Dalefield Way, Gravesend 20250596

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.

The proposal is for: *Use of the land for open storage of construction related equipment and operations related to Dalefield Way Industrial Park (B8 use) with associated installation of hardstanding/surface treatment.*

We have reviewed the submitted information and are satisfied that sufficient information has been submitted to determine the planning application.

Protected/Notable Species

We advise that we are satisfied that the conclusions of the ecological reports is valid.

The site has some limited areas of vegetation which have the potential to support reptiles, breeding birds and foraging/commuting bats. However the areas of vegetation are limited we are satisfied that further surveys are not required and instead the impact can be avoided with the submission of a precautionary mitigation strategy.

We recommend the following wording:

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No development shall be undertaken (including any ground works, site and/or vegetation clearance) until a construction ecological management plan (CEMP) which contains full details of the ecological mitigation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP shall be based on up-to-date ecological survey information, as advised by a suitably qualified ecologist and include the following:

- *Measures to avoid impacts to the retained habitats including identification of a construction exclusion zone (and the use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs);*
- *Extent and location of proposed construction and mitigation works, shown on appropriate scale maps and plans;*
- *Specific measures (which may be presented as a series of method statements) to avoid impacts to protected/notable species and a timetable for implementation of the measures;*
- *Persons responsible for implementing the measures, including times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on-site;*
- *The role and responsibilities of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECOW) or similarly competent person(s);*
- *Contingency plans should a protected species be encountered;*

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period in accordance with the approved details.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Under the Environment Act 2021 and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), all planning applications⁵⁸ for development (unless exempt^{59,60}), must deliver at least a 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG), shown via use of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric prior to commencement of any development. Having reviewed submitted information⁶¹, we consider a 10% biodiversity net gain is a statutory requirement of this proposed development.

Any application which is required to achieve a 10% BNG must submit the following information as a minimum¹:

- confirmation that the applicant believes that planning permission, if granted, the development would be subject to the biodiversity gain condition;
- the pre-development biodiversity value(s), [either on the date of application or earlier proposed date \(as appropriate\)](#);
- where the applicant proposes to use an earlier date, this proposed earlier date and the reasons for proposing that date;
- [the completed metric calculation tool](#) showing the calculations of the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on the date of application (or proposed earlier date) including the publication date of the biodiversity metric used to calculate that value;

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain#para11>

- a statement whether activities have been carried out prior to the date of application (or earlier proposed date), that result in loss of onsite biodiversity value ([‘degradation’](#)), and where they have:
 - a statement to the effect that these activities have been carried out;
 - the date immediately before these activities were carried out;
 - the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on this date;
 - the completed metric calculation tool showing the calculations, and
 - any available supporting evidence of this;
- a description of any [irreplaceable habitat](#) (as set out in [column 1 of the Schedule to the Biodiversity Gain Requirements \(Irreplaceable Habitat\) Regulations 2024](#)) on the land to which the application relates, that exists on the date of application, (or an earlier date); and
- plan(s), drawn to an identified scale and showing the direction of North, showing onsite habitat existing on the date of application (or earlier proposed date), including any irreplaceable habitat (if applicable).

The ecologist carrying out the BNG assessment was given the wrong redline boundary and they have only assessed the area which is to be converted in to the hard standing area. It has not included the vegetated buffer around the site of the boundary. However from reviewing the site plan we understand that the vegetated buffer between the site and the ditch will be retained therefore we accept that baseline does not need to be updated as part of the application.

We note that the baseline information differs slightly between the BNG assessment and the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. However we agree with the BNG assessment that the site does not meet the criteria for the priority habitat Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land.

We are satisfied that an updated BNG metric is not required prior to determination however the correct baseline information covering the whole of the redline boundary will have to be included within the metric submitted as part of the biodiversity gain plan.

The submitted information has detailed that a BNG loss of 100% for habitats will occur due to the loss of all habitat on site and it has detailed that 0.94 units will be required to achieve a BNG of over 10%. We advise that the number of units required to achieve a BNG of over 10% is likely to be higher as the baseline value will be higher once the vegetated boundary between the ditch and the fencing is included.

Off site habitat creation will be required to achieve a BNG either through habitat creation within the applicants landholdings (if there is any) or the purchasing of off site units Further details of off site habitat creation can be found at the end of the report. We advise that it will be possible to purchase off site units to achieve a BNG as part of this proposal and we direct the applicant towards the Kent Biodiversity Net Gain Site Register for off site habitat providers in Kent [Kent Biodiversity Net Gain Site Register | Making Space For Nature Kent](#).

We advise that details of the off site habitat creation are not required prior to determination however we advise that how the offsite habitat creation will be implemented must be agreed and registered on the biodiversity gain site register **prior to** the submission of the biodiversity gain plan (if granted). [Search the biodiversity gain sites register - GOV.UK](#)

The development, if permitted, will be subject to the deemed condition of planning permission relating to biodiversity gain as per Schedule 7A 13(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The condition 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.

The condition cannot be varied or removed. An application must be made to discharge it as any other condition. We recommend it is referred to in decision notices in the form of an informative. The government's published Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) template should be used to discharge it: [Biodiversity gain plan - GOV.UK](#). Please note that the submission of the finalised Statutory Biodiversity Metric/BGP is required by law prior to the commencement of any development.

We advise that as no habitat creation or enhancement is proposed it doesn't meet the requirements of on site significant habitat and therefore the site does not require monitoring reports to be submitted to the LPA.

Designated Sites

The site is within 500m of the South Thames Estuary and Marshes SSSI and as the site is largely compacted ground and is adjacent to an existing industrial estate we are satisfied that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant impact on the designated site due to loss of habitat or impacts from noise.

The site is within 10m of a ditch which is connected to the SSSI and we advise that the LPA must be satisfied that any drainage has been designed to ensure that any water run off will not negatively impact the SSSI.

The proposal may result in an increase in lighting if any is proposed. We advise that if any lighting is required the lighting condition must include the following requirement:

- Be designed following best practice guidance within Bat Conservation Trust/Institute of Lighting Professional's '*Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night*'²
- Site plan showing the location and types of lighting
- Lighting to be operational only when required.

Helen Forster MCIEEM
Biodiversity Officer

This response was submitted following consideration of the following documents:

² ['Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night' ILP Guidance Note update released - News - Bat Conservation Trust](#)

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal; Eco Assistance May 2025
Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment; ACJ Ecology; July 2025
Proposed Site Layout; Darling Associates Architects; December 2025

OFF-SITE GAINS (NEEDS TO BE REGISTERED)

'Off-site' biodiversity gains are any BNG measures proposed outside of the red line boundary. The statutory Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) must contain the biodiversity gain site register reference number for any offsite units if these are used. BNG sites must be registered here: [Register a biodiversity gain site - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/register-a-biodiversity-gain-site).

If off-site habitat creation is required, we direct the applicant towards the Kent Biodiversity Net Gain Site Register⁶⁹ available on the Making Space for Nature in Kent and Medway website. Biodiversity Net Gain Guidance for Kent is also available on this website.

If any off-site habitat creation/enhancement is proposed outside of the LPA boundary/National Character Area of the impact site these will be subject to spatial risk penalties.

Where off-site gains are secured on land owned by the developer (but outside the redline boundary), or on third-party land (but not through a 'habitat bank operator'⁷⁰), the biodiversity net gain needs to be subject to a deed of conservation covenants or Section 106 (as appropriate). Section 106 agreement templates are available on the Planning Advisory Service website. It is generally inappropriate to rely solely on conditions to secure off-site biodiversity net gain. The following needs to be secured as part of the off-site biodiversity net gain:

- The submission of a habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP);*
- Notice of HMMP implementation and completion of the habitat creation and enhancement works;*
- Timescales for completion of habitat creation, and the submission of a completion report;*
- Submission of a monitoring report;*
- A habitat monitoring fee to be paid to the local planning authority on every habitat management monitoring event.*

The HMMP shall be submitted when the general BNG condition is discharged and shall contain the following information ⁷¹:

- (a) a non-technical summary;*
- (b) the roles and responsibilities of the people or organisation(s) delivering the HMMP;*
- (c) the planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan;*
- (d) the management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan for a period of 30 years from the completion of development; and*
- (e) the monitoring methodology and frequency in respect of the created or enhanced habitat to be submitted to the local planning authority.*

Monitoring reports shall be submitted to local planning authority in writing in accordance with the methodology and frequency specified in the approved HMMP.

Where off-site gains are to be secured through a 'habitat bank operator' (which has its own legal agreement and HMMP), no additional conditions or section 106 obligations are

required, above a condition requiring biodiversity net gain to be delivered as set out in the planning application.

The submission of provisional/draft legal documents outlining the agreement between the applicant and the provider of any off-site gains are advisable prior to determination to confirm that the proposed route to delivering net gain is feasible, but this information is not required until submission of the pre-commencement Biodiversity Gain Plan.