



ECOLOGICAL ADVICE SERVICE

TO: Kelly Joyce

FROM: Jonathan Lynch ACIEEM

DATE: 02 October 2025

SUBJECT: 20250725 / 96 Beaumont Drive Northfleet Gravesend Kent DA11 9NW

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 – NO FURTHER INFORMATION REQUESTED

We have reviewed the ecological information submitted in support of this application and advise that **no further** information is requested from the applicant prior to determination of the planning application. Condition wording is recommended as appropriate.

ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS AND MITIGATIONS

No ecological information has been submitted with this application. As a result of reviewing the data available to us and the information submitted with the planning application, we advise that none will be needed. This is due to the small scale/urban setting of the proposals and limited potential for impacts to protected and priority species and habitats.

The below informative regarding nesting birds should be attached to any decision notice as some limited vegetation clearance is proposed:

NESTING BIRD INFORMATIVE: *All wild birds and their nests are protected from harm under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. As such, any works which may result in impacts to nesting birds should be conducted outside of the core nesting season which is March through August (inclusive) or under ecological supervision. A suitable exclusion zone should be established around any active bird nest in the event one is discovered during works; this exclusion zone should be maintained until all nesting birds have fledged and the nest is unoccupied.*

DESIGNATED SITES

The application site falls within the 6km zone of influence of the Thames Estuary & Marshes SPA/Ramsar. This type of development may cause additional recreational disturbance, and likely significant effects on birds using the SPA and Ramsar sites. As such, the North Kent Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) applies and the applicant will be required to make a tariff payment which is based on the net number of additional dwellings proposed. The payment is to mitigate for additional recreational effects on the designated sites. The local planning authority must ensure that adequate means are in place to secure this mitigation before first occupation. The submitted SAMMS Contribution Agreement (July 2025) indicates that the applicant has already committed to this.

A decision from the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU: C-323/17) has detailed that mitigation measures cannot be considered when carrying out a screening assessment to decide whether a full 'Appropriate Assessment' is needed under the Habitats Directive. Therefore, we advise that there is a need for the local planning authority to carry out an Appropriate Assessment as part of a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG)

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 April 2nd 2024. Where required, the Statutory Biodiversity Metric will need to be used to demonstrate a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain. Local policy may request a higher level of net gain. Significant gains will need to be secured for at least 30 years.

Biodiversity net gain is a statutory requirement of this proposed development. References to the biodiversity value of any habitat or habitat enhancement are to its value as calculated in accordance with the biodiversity metric.

The submitted Small Sites Metric (July 2025) describes the application site as being 519m² in area. It is currently composed of developed land and vegetated garden with four small trees. One tree and 142m² of garden will be lost to facilitate the proposals. This will result in an onsite biodiversity net loss of -32.15%. A 0.08 biodiversity unit deficit will need to be made up offsite to achieve the necessary 10% net gain. This can be addressed post-permission 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 deemed 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 included 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](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-gain-plan). Please note that the submission of the finalised Statutory Biodiversity Metric/BGP is required by law prior to the commencement of any development.

OTHER ENHANCEMENT MEASURES

Integral swift and bat features are supported by the NPPF 2024 187(d). The adopted Kent Biodiversity Strategy 2020-2045¹ also contains the target: *"stop the decline of swifts by ensuring that every new house built in Kent contains one swift-box or nest-brick."*

As such, the proposed dwelling should contain at least one in-built swift nesting brick, with its make, model and location clearly depicted in revised elevations drawings which can be secured via condition. Nest boxes should be provided in accordance with BS 42021:2022 'British Standard for integral nest boxes'. Swift bricks are a 'universal' bird brick, used by a range of species. Integral nest boxes should be located a minimum of 4m above ground level on north or east elevations.

SWIFT BRICK: *Prior to the commencement of works above slab level, updated elevations drawings showing the model and location of at least one integrated swift nesting brick located on the north elevation a minimum of 4m above ground level with a clear drop underneath shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Swift bricks shall be provided in accordance with BS 42021:2022 (British Standard for integral nest boxes) and shall be constructed of durable material, i.e. not wood.*

Reason: In accordance with BS 42021:2022 and with consideration for swifts in accordance with paragraph 187(d) of the NPPF 2024.

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

Jonathan Lynch ACIEEM
Biodiversity Officer

This response was submitted following consideration of the following documents:

¹ [Kent Nature Partnership Biodiversity Strategy 2020-2045 \(kentnature.org.uk\)](https://kentnature.org.uk/kent-nature-partnership-biodiversity-strategy-2020-2045/)

- Site Location and Existing Block Plan (GSP, January 2025)
- Proposed Block Plan (GSP, August 2025)
- Biodiversity Gain Statement (July 2025)
- SAMMS Contribution Agreement (July 2025)
- Small Sites Metric (July 2025)