



23rd March 2023

Chris Tyler
Uttlesford District Council
London Road
Saffron Walden
CB11 4ER

By email only

Thank you for requesting advice on this outline application from Place Services' ecological advice service. This service provides advice to planning officers to inform Uttlesford District Council planning decisions with regard to potential ecological impacts from development. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer who will seek further advice from us where appropriate and necessary.

Application: UTT/22/3258/PINS

PINS Reference: S62A/2022/0014

Location: Land To The West Of Thaxted Road Saffron Walden

Proposal: Consultation on S62A/2022/0014 – Outline application with all matters reserved except for access for up to 170 dwellings, associated landscaping and open space with access from Thaxted Road

Dear Chris,

Thank you for re-consulting Place Services on the above outline application.

No objection subject to securing biodiversity mitigation and enhancement measures

Summary

We have reviewed the Ecological Assessment (Tyler Grange, December 2022), Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Tyler Grange, November 2022) and Skylark Technical Note (Tyler Grange, January 2023) relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected and Priority species & habitats and identification of appropriate mitigation measures.

We have also reviewed the latest Illustrative Masterplan, drawing no. 3118-C-1005-PL Rev D (Omega Architects) and Ecology Technical Note (Tyler Grange, February 2023) relating to minor changes in the access and pedestrian routes throughout the site.

We are satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available for determination of this application.



This provides certainty for the LPA of the likely impacts on designated sites, protected and Priority species & habitats and, with appropriate mitigation measures secured, the development can be made acceptable.

The mitigation measures identified in the Ecological Assessment (Tyler Grange, December 2022) and Ecology Technical Note (Tyler Grange, February 2023) should be secured by a condition of any consent concurrent with reserved matters and implemented in full. This is necessary to conserve and enhance protected and Priority species particularly Badger, bats, reptiles, Great Crested Newt and nesting birds.

In line with the Ecological Assessment (Tyler Grange, December 2022) and Ecology Technical Note (Tyler Grange, February 2023) we recommend a Construction Management Plan for Biodiversity (CEMP: Biodiversity) is secured by a condition of any consent concurrent with reserved matters, outlining the protection measures and method statements required to avoid impacts to protected species including bats, Great Crested Newt, reptiles, Badger and other Priority species such as Hedgehog and Common Toad, during the construction period.

Also in line with the Ecological Assessment (Tyler Grange, December 2022) and Ecology Technical Note (Tyler Grange, February 2023) we recommend a Wildlife Sensitive Lighting Strategy should be delivered for this scheme and secured by a condition of any consent concurrent with reserved matters to avoid impacts to foraging and commuting bats, especially on the vegetated boundaries. This must follow the [Guidance Note 8 Bats and artificial lighting](#) (The Institute of Lighting Professionals & Bat Conservation Trust, 2018). In summary, it is highlighted that the following measures should be implemented for the lighting design, which could be informed by a professional ecologist:

- Light levels should be as low as possible as required to fulfil the lighting need.
- Warm-White lights should be used preferably at 2700k. This is necessary as lighting which emit an ultraviolet component or that have a blue spectral content have a high attraction effect on insects. This may lead in a reduction in prey availability for some light sensitive bat species.
- If light columns are required, they should be as short as possible as light at a low level reduces the likelihood of any ecological impact. However, the use of cowls, hoods, reflector skirts or shields could also be used to prevent horizontal spill.
- Movement sensors and timers could be used to minimise the 'lit time'.

A finalised Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy should be produced outlining the location and extent of the mitigation measures for ground nesting birds such as Skylark. This should be secured by a condition of any consent, concurrent with reserved matters. The mitigation measures should be secured by a legal agreement, for example through the scheme with Whirledge & Nott.

We support the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancements including the creation of areas of wildflower grassland, hedgerow and shrub, as well as the installation of bat boxes throughout the site which have been recommended to secure net gains for biodiversity, as outlined under Paragraph 174d of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021). In line with the latest British Standards Institution guidance (BS42021:2022), which recommends a ratio of 1:1 for the number of integrated bird boxes and new residential dwellings (or proportionate to the size of larger buildings), we would expect proposed enhancements to include provision of integrated bird boxes on site. Integrated Swift boxes



should be considered where possible. The reasonable biodiversity enhancement measures should be outlined within a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy and should be secured by a condition of any consent concurrent with reserved matters.

We recommend that a finalised Biodiversity Net Gain design stage report is secured as a condition of any consent concurrent with reserved matters.

We also recommend that a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) is secured as a condition of any consent concurrent with reserved matters, detailing how the retained and proposed habitats will be managed in order to benefit wildlife.

This will enable LPA to demonstrate its compliance with its statutory duties including its biodiversity duty under s40 NERC Act 2006.

Impacts will be minimised such that the proposal is acceptable, subject to the conditions below based on BS42020:2013.

We recommend that submission for approval and implementation of the details below should be a condition of any planning consent.



Recommended conditions

1. ACTION REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL RECOMMENDATIONS

“All mitigation and enhancement measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Ecological Assessment (Tyler Grange, December 2022) and Ecology Technical Note (Tyler Grange, February 2023) as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

This may include the appointment of an appropriately competent person e.g. an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) to provide on-site ecological expertise during construction. The appointed person shall undertake all activities, and works shall be carried out, in accordance with the approved details.”

Reason: To conserve and enhance protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

2. CONCURRENT WITH RESERVED MATTERS PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT: CONSTRUCTION ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY

“A construction environmental management plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall include the following.

- a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.*
- b) Identification of “biodiversity protection zones”.*
- c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).*
- d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.*
- e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.*
- f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.*
- g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.*
- h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.*
- i) Containment, control and removal of any Invasive non-native species present on site*

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority”

Reason: To conserve protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).



3. CONCURRENT WITH RESERVED MATTERS PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT: FARMLAND BIRD MITIGATION STRATEGY

“A Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority to compensate the loss or displacement of any Farmland Bird territories identified as lost or displaced. This shall include provision of offsite compensation measures to be secured by legal agreement, in nearby agricultural land, prior to commencement.

The content of the Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy shall include the following:

- a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed compensation measure e.g. Skylark plots;*
- b) detailed methodology for the compensation measures e.g. Skylark plots must follow Agri-Environment Scheme option: ‘AB4 Skylark Plots’;*
- c) locations of the compensation measures by appropriate maps and/or plans;*
- d) persons responsible for implementing the compensation measure.*

The Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and all features shall be retained for a minimum period of 10 years.”

Reason: To allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species)

4. CONCURRENT WITH RESERVED MATTERS PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT: BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN DESIGN STAGE REPORT

“A Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report, in line with Table 2 of CIEEM Biodiversity Net Gain report and audit templates (July 2021), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority which provides a measurable biodiversity net gain, using the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric 3.1 or any successor.

The content of the Biodiversity Net Gain report should include the following:

- Baseline data collection and assessment of current conditions on site;*
- A commitment to measures in line with the Mitigation Hierarchy and evidence of how BNG Principles have been applied to maximise benefits to biodiversity;*
- Provision of the full BNG calculations, with plans for pre and post development and detailed justifications for the choice of habitat types, distinctiveness and condition, connectivity and ecological functionality;*
- Details of the implementation measures and management of proposals;*
- Details of any off-site provision to be secured by a planning obligation;*
- Details of the monitoring and auditing measures.*

The proposed enhancement measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.”

Reasons: In order to demonstrate measurable net gains and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the NPPF (2021)



5. CONCURRENT WITH RESERVED MATTERS PRIOR TO ANY WORKS ABOVE SLAB LEVEL: BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY

“A Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy for protected and Priority species shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy shall include the following:

- a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;*
- b) detailed designs or product descriptions to achieve stated objectives;*
- c) locations, orientations, and heights of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans;*
- d) timetable for implementation demonstrating that works are aligned with the proposed phasing of development;*
- e) persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures;*
- f) details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant).*

The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to occupation and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.”

Reason: To enhance protected and Priority species & habitats and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the NPPF 2021 and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

6. CONCURRENT WITH RESERVED MATTERS PRIOR TO OCCUPATION: LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

“A Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to, and be approved in writing by, the local planning authority prior to occupation the development.

The content of the LEMP shall include the following:

- a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed.*
- b) Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management.*
- c) Aims and objectives of management.*
- d) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives.*
- e) Prescriptions for management actions.*
- f) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a five-year period).*
- g) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan.*
- h) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.*

The LEMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery. The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme. The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details.”



Reason: To allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species)

7. CONCURRENT WITH RESERVED MATTERS PRIOR TO OCCUPATION: WILDLIFE SENSITIVE LIGHTING DESIGN SCHEME

“A lighting design scheme for biodiversity shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall identify those features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance along important routes used for foraging; and show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans, Isolux drawings and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent bats using their territory.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the scheme and maintained thereafter in accordance with the scheme. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.”

Reason: To allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species)

Please contact us with any queries.

Yours sincerely,

Ella Gibbs ACIEEM BSc (Hons)

Senior Ecological Consultant

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Place Services provide ecological advice on behalf of Uttlesford District Council

Please note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.