

From: Derek Richardson <derek.richardson@tameside.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 February 2018 10:29
To: Devcon Mailbox
Subject: 06/2018/0055 Land North of Eastway - Ecology response

Dear Natalie,

Thank you for consulting the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit on the following planning application:

Application:06/2018/0055

Location: Land north of Eastway, Preston

Proposal: Outline planning application for the erection of 1no. supermarket (Class A1) (up to 1800sqm), 6no. commercial units (Class A1/A3) (up to 1160sqm total), 1no. restaurant / public house (Class A3/A4) (up to 900sqm), 1no. drive-thru restaurant/cafe (Class A3/A5) (up to 200sqm) (all matters reserved except for access)

Having considered the available information, I would make the following comments.

1) Several ecology surveys of the site have been undertaken by ERAP Ecological Consultants. The most recent survey was undertaken in September 2017, and contains an updated survey of the site in relation to the current proposals. A reptile survey was also undertaken on the site in 2014 and is included as Appendix A of the report. All survey work was undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologists following best practice guidance, therefore there are no reason to doubt the findings of the report.

2) The ecology report found that the site is predominantly grazed species poor-semi improved grassland, tall herb vegetation and 2 hedgerows (to the south and east). The hedgerows are classed as 'priority' habitats, however do not fall within the definition of 'Important' under the Hedgerow Regulations, 1997. The ecology report recommends that these hedgerows are retained and adequately protected during any development. However from the 'Proposed Concept Plan' it is not clear if this has been achieved. The Proposed Concept Plan does show new native linear planting to the north and east of the site, and new native tree planting to the southern boundary.

I would therefore **recommend that a condition** is used to ensure that no development shall take place until a detailed landscaping scheme for the proposals has been submitted to the LPA for approval. This should make provision for the retention of hedgerow 1 and 2 (as per the ecology report) and where this cannot be achieved adequately compensatory planting of native species-rich hedgerow should be provided. All retained trees and hedgerows should be adequately protected following British Standards 5837:2012

3) No ponds are present on the site, however 1 pond is within close proximity to the east of the site. ERAP undertook full amphibian surveys of this and two other ponds (which have since been lost) in 2010 in relation to another development. No great crested newts were recorded in any of the ponds, and there are no other ponds with 1km which don't have significant dispersal barriers for amphibians. It is therefore reasonable to assume that great crested newts have not colonised this pond since 2010. However three other amphibian species were recorded in the pond, including common toad (Priority Species).

I would therefore **recommend** that:

- a 10m undeveloped area is maintained around the existing pond, in line with guidance in section 5.2.3 of the ecology report.
- No development takes place until A Reasonable Avoidance Method Statement for the site has been submitted to the LPA for approval, following the guidance with section 5.5.2 and 5.5.3 of the ecology report.

4) No opportunities for roosting bats were observed in any of the trees on the site. However they could be using the site for foraging or commuting. Therefore, I would **recommend** that the measures outlined in sections 5.3.1-5.3.4 are incorporated into the lighting design of the site for all phases of the development (construction and operation).

5) A reptile survey was undertaken between March and May 2014, and 120 artificial refugia were placed and monitored within and surrounding the site. A small population of slow worm (1 female) were detected on the motorway verge adjacent to the site. No reptiles were recorded on the development site, however suitable habitat for foraging reptiles is present, and there are no barriers for dispersal. The risk of killing or injuring slow worms (which are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 as amended) cannot be ruled out without suitable mitigation.

I would therefore **recommend** that the mitigation and enhancement strategy in section 5 and figure 3 and 4 of the reptile survey (Appendix A of the ecology report) is followed in full and is secured through a suitably worded **condition** to any planning permission which may be granted.

6) The vegetation on site could support nesting birds. The nests of all wild birds are protected, when active, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended). A condition or informative should therefore be used to ensure that no vegetation clearance takes place in the bird nesting season, March - August inclusive, unless it can be otherwise demonstrated that no active birds nests are present.

7) No invasive species or other protected species were discovered on site. I would advise that an informative is used so that the applicant is aware that if at any time any protected or invasive species are discovered on site, and may be impacted upon by the proposals, work should cease immediately and an ecologist/LPA should be contacted.

8) Opportunities to enhance the site for biodiversity should be encouraged in line with national and local planning policy. There are numerous recommendations within the ecology report (sections 5.3.5-5.3.6, 5.4.3-5.4.4, 5.5.6-5.5.7, 5.7.1-5.7.5) which should be followed, and further information/guidance can also be provided by GMEU on this if required.

If you have any queries about these comments, please do not hesitate to be in touch.

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Principal Ecologist

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