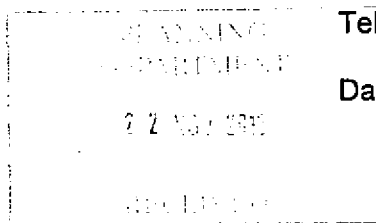


Mr M Peacock
Case Officer
Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
The Campus
Welwyn Garden City
AL8 6A

Ask for: B. Tranter
Our Ref:
Your Ref: S6/2013/1910/MA
Tel: 01992 555220
Date: 21/11/2013



Dear Mr Peacock,

Planning application: S6/2013/1910/MA. Park Farm Equestrian Centre, Northaw Road West. Erection of 2 stable blocks and office together with retention of existing hardsurfacing.

Thank you for consulting us on the above application. We have the following comments to make.

1. Database and ecological evaluation

The field within which the proposed stable and office blocks are proposed is in the LRC database as Ecology Site (ref no.79/042), and is recorded as an area of grassland with some plant species interest.

Ecology Sites are non-statutory and may be of wildlife interest, at least at a local level; though they may be included in the database purely as some ecological information is held on them. Whilst these sites are often a valuable starting point in identifying the county's wildlife resource, they do not meet the rigorous and quantifiable assessment criteria needed to identify them as Local (County) Wildlife Sites

From aerial photographs (Bing Maps) the proposal site appears heavily disturbed and in the submitted documents (e.g. block plan PKFM_001_004) there is reference to hardstanding in this area. Therefore, we presume that the grassland in this area has been lost in the recent past and therefore there is no longer any biodiversity interest.

2. Conclusion and recommendation

We conclude that there are no known ecological constraints regarding the proposed development. Therefore, the application can be determined accordingly.

We recommend that to compensate for the loss of the area of grassland some native hedgerow planting is undertaken within the ownership boundary. We can advise on suitable species, if required.

We trust these comments are of assistance and should you require any further information or advice, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Barry Tranter PhD MCIEEM
Ecology Advisor, Hertfordshire Ecology
Natural, Historic & Built Environment Advisory Team,
Environmental Resource Planning

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Hertfordshire County Council, County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DN

[Please note that the BRC function has now transferred to the Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust (and is now known as the Hertfordshire Environmental Records Centre). The advisory service is still hosted by HCC and our email address is changing from hbrc.planning@hertscc.gov.uk to ecology@hertfordshire.gov.uk.]

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