

David Elmore

Subject: 6/2020/0311/MAJ – Nyn Park, Well Road, Northaw, Potters Bar, EN6 4BS

From: Alastair Davie
Sent: 15 March 2021 11:49
To: David Elmore
Cc: hmansford@btinternet.com; Nicolas DEBENEY (n.debeney@gmail.com); Alison Hood (alison.hood@maydencroft.co.uk)
Subject: RE: 6/2020/0311/MAJ – Nyn Park, Well Road, Northaw, Potters Bar, EN6 4BS

David

Apologies for the delay in responding. In order to answer the ecology elements of your email it was necessary for additional site visits to be carried out, which has delayed us.

~~With regard to the LLFA holding objection, in their letter dated 21 January 2021 it is noted that they “reserve the right to require removal and reinstatement of all structures on the watercourse should any issues relating to flooding arise”. As the LLFA cannot give retrospective approval for the changes made as a result of the works, this statement will remain valid after any planning decision is issued. Therefore should the Local Authority be minded to approve the planning application the LLFA will still have the right to enforce any elements of remedial works in relation to the ordinary watercourses. We remain committed to achieving compliance with the LLFA requirements after their inspection in the summer and are confident that there will be no issues following their visit which cannot be resolved. We would hope that the Local Authority would not be waiting until the LLFA summer visit in August /September before determining our planning application.~~

Detailed below are comments made by our ecology team in respect of the concerns raised by Hertfordshire Ecology in their letter of 6 January 2021. These should be read in conjunction with the attached and updated Biodiversity Metric Assessment Report and Metric. We have also updated the Landscape Management plan, which we will send over via WeTransfer due to file size. The overall result of the biodiversity metric is still showing a positive outcome for the estate with a greater than 10% net gain.

North Parkland

The habitat is not described as species rich and does not seem to meet criteria for LWS according to SELECTION CRITERIA FOR WILDLIFE SITES IN HERTFORDSHIRE Reviewed 2007 Developed by the Hertfordshire Habitat Survey Project in conjunction with HMWT, HBRC and English Nature, which states;
Neutral, calcareous, acidic and marshy grassland supporting a high diversity of plant species and species indicative of substantially unimproved swards which are >0.25 ha in area with;

- a) Calcareous grassland with 5 indicator species (Appendix 4),
- b) Neutral grassland with 5 indicator species (Appendix 5),
- c) Acidic grassland with 5 indicator species (Appendix 6),
- d) Marshy grassland with 3 indicator species (Appendix 5),

or with a combined total of 8 or more indicator species for differing grassland types within a distinct land unit.

North Parkland appears to have 5 indicator species for neutral grassland but is not an unimproved sward. Only one acid/heathland indicator is present.

We have altered the recommendations for enhancement for this grassland to include selective harrowing/herbicide and re-seeding of areas where the undesirable species are dominant. Smaller areas which are more species-rich can be retained if suitable as selected by the ecologist. However although a number of species have been recorded, including some indicator species, the coarse grasses and thistle do dominate this habitat and will require management to control and reduce them.

Grazing North Parkland

We are already proposing grazing the area of the North Parkland on the other side of forest road, which could lead into the SSSI. Regarding the appropriateness of grazing the rest of North Parkland, as far as we are aware it all comes down to the owner's enjoyment of the estate, and not wanting to see grazing that close to the house, golf course or access drive.

Vineyard Wood ancient woodland area

The compartment is down for a light thin favouring the retention of the best tree and only a small volume is coming out, as a little selective thinning was deemed more appropriate than wholesale coppicing. When we do our thinning we aim for an irregular matrix creating clumpiness and open areas (within the scope of the thinning licence). We have developed a graduated thinning procedure which Natural England have endorsed across similar oak/hornbeam SSSI's which allows for a wide degree of variability in the thin. Some areas get hardly any at all while other areas will be thinned to 30% to create light airy spaces. This creates dark areas for bryophytes, Barbastelles and some fungi whilst other areas are more open; suitable for invertebrates, insects and ground flora. We are not adverse to a selective area of coppicing in the future but would rather open the space up gradually first. We can see how the stools respond to thinning and how the ground flora reacts.

Well Wood SSSI

Andrew Mills at NE had requested that we include the SSSI improvements within the metric and we wanted to make sure it was incorporated in the agreement, however in order to follow the best practice principles of net gain, this has now been excluded. We have kept it within the management plan to ensure the required remedial and enhancement works are carried out.

Historic orchard

A remnant orchard now remains on the site of the original orchard and has been encroached on by scrub and woodland, therefore so it was not identified as an orchard during survey work. We have however revisited the site and assessed this habitat to include it within the metric. A plan for the restoration of this orchard will be created following further study and liaison with Orchards East.

Grassland monitoring

We have extended the monitoring to cover later years also at 7 and 10 years.

Please advise if you need anything further.

Regards

Alastair Davie

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