



Blue Moon Paddock

Mr. Nigel Bennett

Pre-Application Response Report

09/09/2016

Status	Issue	Name of Author/Reviewer	Date
Draft	0	Simon Pidgeon, BSc (Hons) MRSB	09/09/2016
Reviewed	0	Chris Formaggia BSc (Joint Hons) CBiol CEnv MCIEEM MRBS VR - Principal	15/09/2016
Final	1	Simon Pidgeon, BSc (Hons) MRSB	15/09/2016

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REFERENCE: S6/2015/0524/FP – Blue Moon Paddock

This report is written with reference to the pre application letter date the 14th March 2016 from Colin Haigh – Head of Planning.

The initial letter has been read and various points relating to ecology have been noted.

The initial extended phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken by Simon Pidgeon, BSc (Hons) in October 2014. An assessment of the site, showed that half (or slightly more than half) of the site was occupied by mixed woodland, a section of semi-improved grassland and scrub was also present. The two buildings present on site were dilapidated structures, with the proposed developing occupying most of their existing footprint.

The areas of grassland and scrub resulted in the recommendation of a reptile presence/likely-absence survey. I can confirm that this is being undertaken at the time of writing this letter, with the results being sent to you in due course.

The following points raised by Hertford Ecology were noted:

“...Proposals for additional tree planting as part of a Woodland Trust national scheme and a Poppy Field as part of a British Legion national scheme would damage any open grassland interest by modifying its natural interest in what would be regarded as unacceptable ways. Trees will influence the character and quality of the grassland whilst poppies are a species of disturbed ground, hence their association with arable fields. They are not found in permanent grassland.”

Response:

The phase 1 habitat survey identified the grassland on site as being species poor. This was dominated by common grasses and herbs and provided little diversity in its structure. Simply put, the area in its present state does not provide much habitat value, bearing in mind the site’s geographical location. A scheme to enhance and expand the woodland I would welcome. I believe that such a scheme would provide more ecological benefit than enhancing a small area of grassland such as the one on site, with the loss of most of the present grassland having little in the way of a negative effect to the ecology on site. This is obviously taking into consideration the outcome of the current reptile survey. Woodland is also regarded as a priority habitat, as are some special areas of grassland.

As such, the following statement also noted within the letter and agreed:

“New tree planting would also have a positive impact on the removal of carbon from the atmosphere thereby helping to deal with climate change. These are positive factors to which are attributed moderate weight in favour in both cases”.

It is assessed that no reassessment of the site is necessary, with the proposals having no contributing factor towards any of the local wildlife sites, either positive or negative. Any enhancements to the site, both in terms of woodland and reptile habitat would be beneficial to the site and the local environment.

The following figures below confirm the site’s location, in terms of local statutory and non-statutory sites and surrounding priority habitats.

Figure 1: Surrounding Designations within 2km of the site.

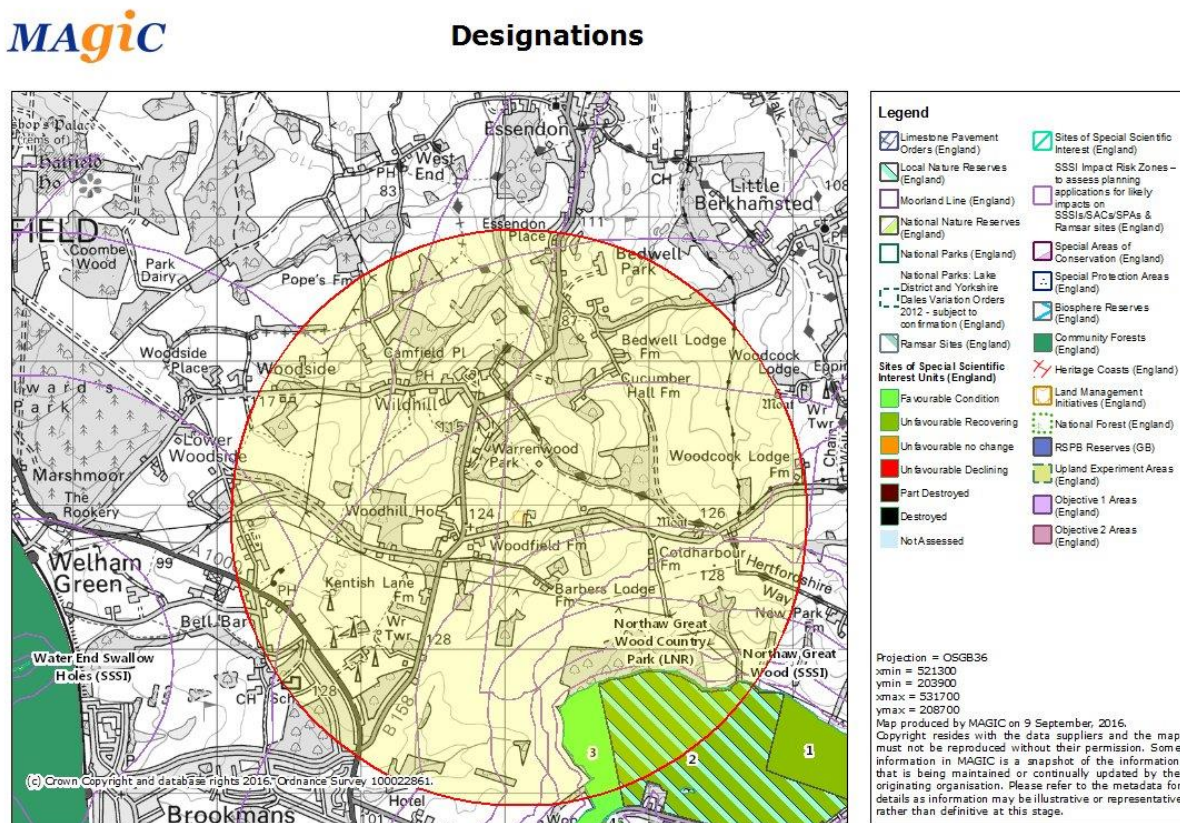
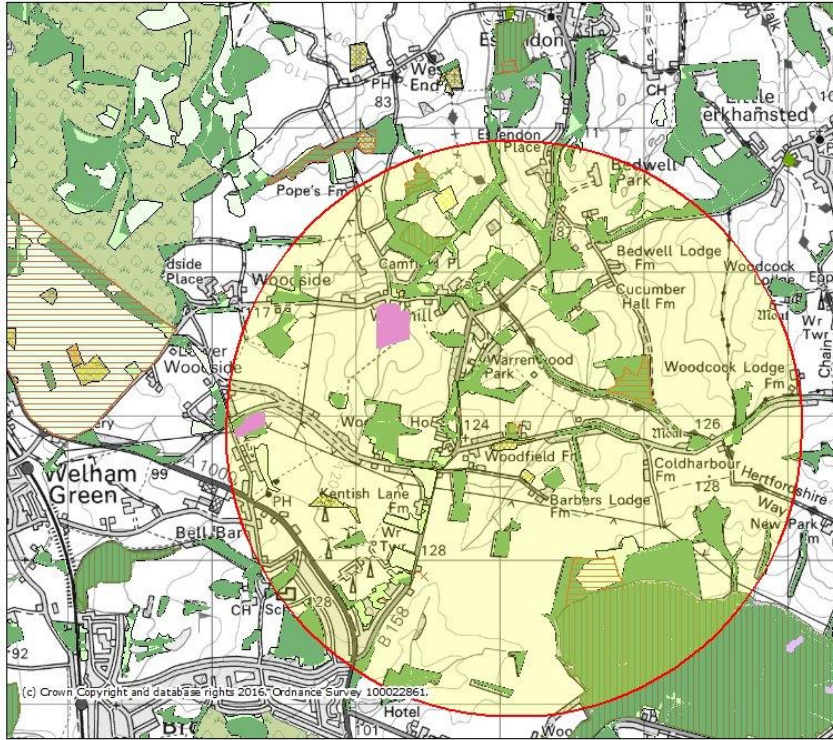


Figure 2: Priority Habitats within 2km of the site

MAGIC

Habitats



Legend

Priority Habitat Inventory - Coastal Saltmarsh (England)	Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland Calcareous Grassland (England)
Priority Habitat Inventory - Coastal Sand Dunes (England)	Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland Dry-Ad Grassland (England)
Priority Habitat Inventory - Coastal Vegetated Shingle (England)	Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland Meadows (England)
Priority Habitat Inventory - Maritime Cliffs and Slopes (England)	Priority Habitat Inventory - Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture (England)
Priority Habitat Inventory - Mudflats (England)	Priority Habitat Inventory - Upland Calcareous Grassland (England)
Priority Habitat Inventory - Saline Lagoons (England)	Priority Habitat Inventory - Upland Hay Meadows (England)
Saline Lagoons (Wales)	Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland Heathland (England)
Sand Dunes (Wales)	Priority Habitat Inventory - Mountain Heaths and Willow Scrub (England)
Priority Habitat Inventory - Calaminarian Grassland (England)	Priority Habitat Inventory - Upland Heathland (England)
Priority Habitat Inventory - Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh (England)	Priority Habitat Inventory - Limestone Pavements (England)
Priority Habitat Inventory - Good quality semi-improved grassland (Non Priority) (England)	

Projection = OSGB36
 xmin = 521300
 ymin = 203900
 xmax = 531700
 ymax = 208700
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Arbtech Consultant's Contact details:

Simon Pidgeon, BSc (Hons) MRSB
07711 591700
sp@arbtech.co.uk

Arbtech Consulting Ltd
<https://arbtech.co.uk>