

HERTFORDSHIRE ECOLOGY

Providing ecological advice to Hertfordshire's Local Authorities and communities

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Ask for: Simon Richards
Tel: XXXXXXXXXX
Date: 04/08/2022

Dear William

Reference: 6/2022/1563/COND
Address: Northaw House Coopers Lane Northaw Potters Bar EN6 4NG
Application: Submission of details pursuant of condition 9 (landscape and ecology) on planning permission 6/2019/0217/MAJ

Thank you for consulting Hertfordshire Ecology on the application to discharge condition 9 quoted in full below: for which I have the following comments:

Condition 9

Prior to above ground development a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) comprising a written document which must specify the ecological objectives of the development, with details and drawings as appropriate, setting out measures for the management and maintenance of landscape and ecology must be submitted to and be approved by the local planning authority. The plan must be implemented in accordance with these details prior to the first occupation or use of the buildings hereby approved or in accordance with a timetable approved as part of the LEMP. REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure the protection and provision of wildlife habitats and local ecology in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

Supporting documents:

The application is supported by the following report:

- Landscape and Ecological Management Plan by Landscaper collective (report date November 2020).

Comments:

The proposal includes a large amount of retained grassland which represent one of the main ecological resources on the site. The Landscape and Ecological

Management Plan, also gives details of areas to be sown with specific seed mixes.

The area to be sown with meadow grassland seed (mix for clay soils EG3) appears to be within a surface drainage feature (see App 1, Detailed Planting Plan -Wider Site). This feature appears to correspond to one shown on the proposed drainage general arrangement plan (sheet 2 of 3) drawing 1-046-CCE-XX-XX-DR-C-002.9 (see Submission of details pursuant to condition 1, surface water drainage, on planning permission 6/2019/0217/MAJ). This drainage plan shows this feature to be a permanent pond. This is obviously incompatible with it being an area of meadow.

The management prescriptions within the LEMP include details for the management of the wetland grass, meadow grassland and amenity (roadside) grassland. The management objectives for meadow grassland (p15) outline an overall aim to maintain existing grassland areas at specified height and for cuts to take place in late autumn/winter, and again in spring. However, the plan in Appendix 1 of the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan states that the grassland to the north of the site is to receive a "low level of maintenance for ecological enhancement i.e., reduce cuts to maximum 3 times a year". This appears contradictory. In addition, does this management objective extend to the area proposed to be sown with meadow grass seed? It is also not clear what ecological objective the prescribed cutting regime is designed to achieve. If it is to achieve a sward of high floral diversity, autumn/winter cutting times would need to be replaced, with an initial cut between July and August depending on whether a hay crop for animal feed was required and a second cut in late September / October.

Consequently, prior to the LPA discharging this condition I advise that the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan needs to be updated to account for any conflicts with the requirements of the surface drainage plan and to ensure the ecological objectives for the management of the retained grassland are clearly stated, and consistent with the methodology proposed to achieve them.

Yours sincerely

Simon Richards
Ecology Advisor, Hertfordshire Ecology