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**From:** Ben Rainbow  
**Sent:** 28 April 2023 10:38  
**To:** Laura Field  
**Cc:** planning; David Massheder  
**Subject:** WD/2022/3222/MAO LAND TO THE SOUTH OF THE A271 AND EAST OF THE A22, LOWER HORSEBRIDGE, HAILSHAM for LAND TO THE SOUTH OF THE A271 AND EAST OF THE A22, LOWER HORSEBRIDGE, HAILSHAM

**Categories:** Consultee

Dear Case Officer,

Please find below ecology consultation comments for this application:

Ecological appraisal (EA) and ecological impact assessment (EclA) document have been submitted with the application. These are deemed to have been undertaken to a good standard and best practice guidelines.

### **Biodiversity Net-gain/loss**

The areas of the site proposed to be developed have a relatively low biodiversity baseline, predominantly consisting of what has been identified as improved grassland. Features of higher ecological value are proposed to be retained and enhanced. Habitat creation/enhancement includes native urban tree planting, native hedgerow, pond, scrub, woodland and grassland creation. These features are depicted on the illustrative landscape strategy. Losses include largely what has been identified as poor semi-improved grassland and discrete section of hedgerow. A biodiversity net-gain assessment has been supplied with the application; this concludes the application would deliver a 29% gain in habitat units and a 40% gain in hedgerow units. This would meet current BNG policies.

Ecological mitigation measures/enhancements have been recommended in section 5.10 of the ecological appraisal which include herptile refugia, use of flowering seed mixes, wildlife pond creation, bat & bird boxes, swift bricks, hedgehog holes. Ecological enhancements are also recommended in section 7.20 of the EclA including additionally native hedgerow creation and enhancement, scrub creation and native buffer planting.

Recommendations are provided for ongoing management and maintenance of ecological features, which may be secured by suitable landscape and ecological management scheme (LEMP). A CEMP is recommended in EclA to safeguard existing aquatic features onsite.

### **Protected Species**

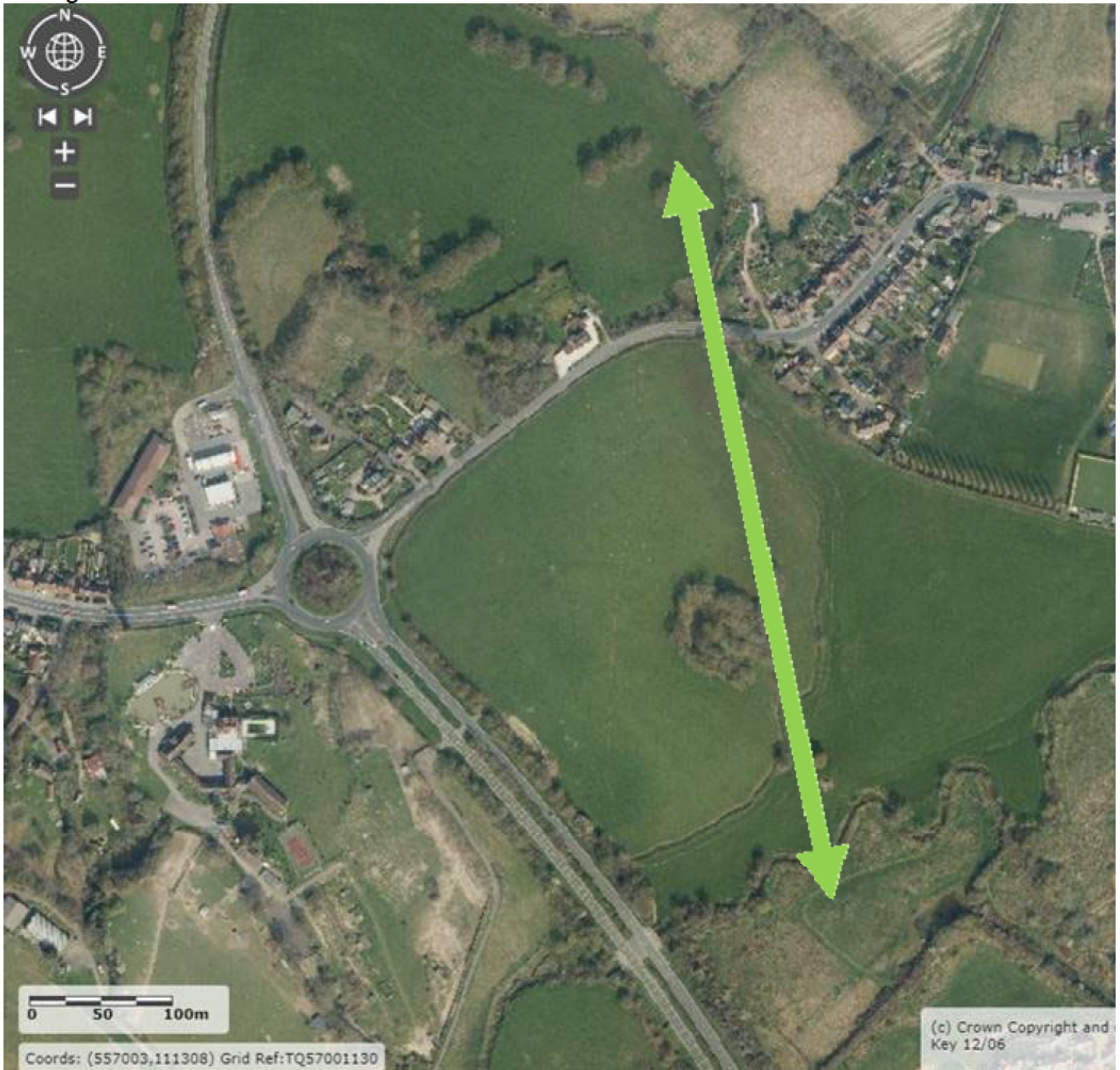
An ecological appraisal and ecological impact assessment documents have been submitted to inform the application. Further surveys/updates recommended in the PEA have been undertaken and results and recommendations provided in the EclA document.

The site has been identified as of value for foraging and commuting bats. Linear features and existing habitats of value are to be retained with creation of mosaic semi-natural habitat retaining and strengthening existing bat commuting/foraging areas on the site. Recommendations are provided to prevent impact or displacement of bat species or local populations including creation of lighting strategy in line with BCT guidance.

Reptiles species were not recorded on the site however low populations of slow worm and common lizard on land nearby. Recommendations for protected species are provided including timing, precautionary methodology and ecological supervision for breeding birds and habitat manipulation for reptile displacement. As discussed creation of a LEMP is recommended.

### **Ecological Connectivity and Local Ecological Network**

The developable area is concentrated on the west of the site near existing roads (A22 & A271). The existing woodland and river onsite are proposed to be buffered and enhanced. Proposals also include creation of woodland & scrub, scattered trees, native hedgerow, lowland grassland/meadow and SUDs bordering development and native habitat planting. This is considered to provide benefits to connectivity in the local ecological network, buffering and expanding existing 'island' of woodland onsite and providing higher quality habitat linking existing ecological links to the north and south/south-east of the site.



*MAGIC plan of site with illustrative landscape strategy inlaid. Green arrow depicts retention and enhancement of existing local ecological network connections.*

### **Protected Habitats**

The site supports limited existing priority habitat. Existing hedgerows are largely retained with enhancements proposed. Onsite lowland deciduous woodland is proposed to be retained and enhanced.

## **Recommendation**

No ecological objection, subject to following recommended conditions:

### **Recommended Conditions**

#### *EL02 - External Lighting - No Floodlighting (B)*

*No floodlighting, security lighting or other external means of illumination of the site shall be provided, installed or operated within the development, except in accordance with a detailed scheme which shall provide for lighting that is low level, hooded and directional, and has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority for that phase. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter.*

Reason: To prevent impacts to local bat populations, European protected species, ref: Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

#### *NC08 Nature Conservation - Wildlife Management Plan*

*Before preparation of ground levels for development approved a wildlife management plan shall be submitted and approved, to include as appropriate detailed proposals for the protection of protected species including breeding birds, bats, [REDACTED] reptiles and amphibians and measures for the avoidance and mitigation of any harm to them likely to be caused by the development. The works and other measures forming part of that plan shall be carried out in accordance with it.*

Reason: To prevent impacts upon and provide ecological mitigation for protected species and European protected species, ref: Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

#### *NC09 Nature Conservation - Implementation of biodiversity enhancement as in Ecological Survey Report*

*Prior to preparation of ground levels for the construction of the development hereby approved, a scheme for the enhancement of the site for biodiversity purposes, in accordance with sections 5.10 of the submitted ecological appraisal, dated April 2020, and section 7.20 of the submitted ecological impact assessment, dated January 2023, to include timescales for implementation and future management, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme of enhancements shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and thereafter so retained.*

Reason: To mitigate ecological impacts of development and provide biodiversity net-gain, in accordance with local and national policy.

A suitably worded soft landscaping condition is recommended.

A condition for landscape and ecological management plan (LEMP) is recommended. The British Standard for Biodiversity BS42020 2013 LEMP standard condition wording which may provide helpful, is below:

#### *Landscape and ecological management plans (LEMPS)*

*A landscape and ecological management plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to, and be approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority prior [ ... to the commencement or occupation ...] of the development [or specified phase of development]. The content of the LEMP shall include the following:*

- a) description and evaluation of features to be managed;*
- b) ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management;*
- c) aims and objectives of management;*
- d) appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives;*
- e) prescriptions for management actions, together with a plan of management compartments;*

- f) preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a five-year period;
  - g) details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan;
  - h) ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.
- The LEMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery. The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme. The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Regards,

**Ben Rainbow | Biodiversity and Arboricultural Officer**

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