envirotech

Ecological Consultants
Environmental and Rural Chartered Surveyors

Condition Discharge 21

Application Number 2018/1078

Location: Land off Wentworth Way, Wentworth Park Industrial Estate, Barnsley, S75 3DJ

R1

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Registered in England and Wales. Company Registration Number 5028111

Condition 21

Upon commencement of the development of the development, a detailed scheme of ecological mitigation and enhancement shall be submitted to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority. This scheme shall include but not be limited to a Method Statement detailing the following:

The Method Statement shall detail measures to be taken to survey and mitigate for the presence of Great Crested Newts on the site prior to any development on the site and shall include the following:

- Methods and timing of presence/absence surveys of the site including ephemeral ponds
- Populations of GCN in size class assessments
- Assessment of the Impacts
- Details of mitigation and compensation proposals, including inspection regime for fall pit traps and where appropriate, relocation of GCN subject to licence from Natural England
- Post Mitigation population monitoring.

The approved measures, including the Method Statement shall thereafter be implemented in full and survey results shall be provided to the Barnsley Biological Records Centre.

Survey

A site walkover was undertaken on the 22nd October 2018 by

Mr Andrew Gardner BSc (Hons), MSc, MCIEEM, MRICS, CEnv

- Natural England Bat Class Licence (Level 2)
- Natural England Barn Owl Licence
- Natural England Great Crested Newt Licence (Level 1)
- Natural England Badger Class Licence

The findings and recommendations of report By Envirotech NW Ltd dated 13/01/2016 Ref: 3098 were reviewed.

Amphibians

The development site had previously been fenced with a vertical amphibian fence (TAF) including pitfall traps and Great Crested Newts removed from the site. This was undertaken under Natural England licence EPSM2009-1366F.

The vertical amphibian fence was found to be intact in 2015 and again was intact in 2018. Residual pitfall traps found along the fence line in 2015 were removed at that time by Envirotech.

The site remains impervious to the movement of amphibians onto it due to the amphibian fence.

No ponds occur on the site. Ephemeral splashes have been recorded but these would not support breeding by GCN or other amphibians.

Given past clearance of the site for GCN and the lack of breeding ponds with the fenced area. GCN and other amphibians are considered to remain absent. No additional survey or trapping work is considered necessary at this site.

Badgers

A badger sett comprising two active holes was located on the north boundary in 2015. This was found to be inactive in 2018. No signs of badger feeding or passage were located on the site in 2018. This species may occur in the local area but does not currently occur on site.

Bats

Trees around the site perimeter were assessed in accordance with BCT (2012) and assigned a risk category. All of the trees on site were of narrow stem diameter and are assessed as category 3 (negligible risk). No indications of roosting were found on site in 2015 or 2018.

Birds

Ground nesting birds which nest in open habitat such as lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) may find the centre of the site suitable for use but the limited foraging potential afforded by the compact ground would limit its potential for foraging and the site is not linked to more suitable foraging areas.

The woodland around the site boundaries offer potential habitat for feeding and nesting birds. There were no rot holes or cracks in the trees around the site which would support tree hole dwelling species such as woodpeckers.

Reptiles

Artificial refugia in the form of 50cm^2 rubber tiles were found scattered throughout the site, presumed to be remnants of previous survey/ trapping work.

The site is judged to contain habitats with the potential to support reptiles, comprising grassland, bare ground and woodland areas which would offer foraging and basking opportunities as well as refugia/hibernacula.

The woodland bounding the site also provides linkage across the landscape, however the TAF detailed previously would provide an effective barrier against the ingress of these species. The presence of open pitfall traps along the TAF in 2015 is likely to result in any population which established on the site being rapidly depleted.

Mitigation

Amphibians are absent at the site however a discharge swale will be constructed on site which may provide future breeding sites. Upon the completion of construction the boundary TAF fence will be removed to allow amphibians back onto the site.

Badgers are known to occur in the local area therefore

- All work must take place during daylight hours as badgers are more likely to be commuting over the site at night and this will ensure the risk to any badgers passing through the site will be minimised.

- Should any trenches and excavations be required, an escape route for animals that enter the trench must be provided, especially if left open overnight. Ramps should be no greater than of 45 degrees in angle. Ideally, any holes should be securely covered. This will ensure badgers are not trapped during work.

- All excavations left open overnight or longer should be checked for animals prior to the continuation of works or infilling. Back filling should be completed immediately after any excavations, ideally back filling as an on-going process to the work in hand.

Whilst there is already some artificial illumination from houses and other buildings locally, additional external floodlighting of the site should as far as possible be minimised. Any external lighting at the site should be directed downwards only. In particular light spill onto any retained trees should be avoided. This will retain the foraging potential of boundary woodland for bats.

Works are proposed to commence in November 2018 which is outside the bird nesting season. All vegetation clearance works will therefore occur outside the bird nesting season.

Precautionary works outline for badgers in respect of open trenches also applies to reptiles. Past trapping of reptiles, along with amphibians and a TAF which would restrict there re-taking access, provides sufficient Reasonable Avoidance Measures for these species which are now unlikely to be present.

A landscaping scheme has been prepared to retain and enhance the boundary woodland/ vegetated areas.