

Thank you for consulting me with respect to the above application.

You will recall that it was agreed that there was no need for a detailed response with respect to biodiversity issues earlier because I had commented that there was no supporting Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment/ offer or a supporting Biodiversity Metric.

However, given the importance of the proposals to both the applicants and the LPA, I felt it would be useful to provide the below biodiversity comments at this time – despite the continued absence of the requested further information:

- Wildscapes CIC Ltd have been contracted by the LPA to provide certain responses on its behalf in relation to specific Planning-related issues. The current ecological information associated with this application is one of those issues we have asked Wildscapes to comment on and I attach their response dated 12/1/22 for the information of the LPA and the applicants. Wildscapes should not be approached by the applicant's side in relation to this application: any enquiries should be directed via the LPA.
- I fully endorse Wildscapes' comments and request that the applicants respond in turn with updated ecological information.
- I also comment specifically regarding some of the issues raised by Wildscapes thus:
  - BNG – if the applicants had already been evaluating site habitats against the Defra Metric 2.0 before July 2021 then they may continue to use this version.
  - If the applicants do not believe they will be able to deliver the minimum 10% BNG completely on-site then an outline of agreed off-setting sites plus broad habitat type proposals should be provided at this stage. Detailed proposals of both on-site and off-site BNG delivery can be provided at later stages by way of condition.
  - Scattered mature trees – I concur that tree issues pertaining to ecology should be provided in the ecological reports.
  - Hedgerows – I would be content for the Hedgerow Translocation Method Statement to follow by way of condition, but the applicant should comment on the other issues raised by Wildscapes.

**Hence I recommend that the application decision is deferred until the further information is provided, etc. Reason: in the interests of the Barnsley West Masterplan Framework, Biodiversity & Geodiversity policy BIO1, Green Infrastructure policy GI1, and the SPDs Biodiversity & Geodiversity and Trees & Hedgerows.**