



PLANNING CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Application No	2025/1092
Proposal	Demolition of existing non-motorised user (NMU) bridge, and construction of replacement NMU bridge
Address	Non-motorised user (NMU) bridge over A633 Grange Lane (A633), Stairfoot, Barnsley
Date of Consultation Reply	02/07/2026
Consultee	Claire Wilson, Planning Ecologist

Consultation Assessment and Justification

A number of ecological assessments have been submitted in support of the application, including Preliminary Ecological Appraisals (PEAs), a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment, a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA), habitat condition assessments and biodiversity metrics. The red line boundary has been amended since the initial ecological surveys were undertaken in 2023. Consequently, the original PEA is no longer considered current, and update surveys were carried out in March 2026. The findings of these surveys are presented within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment (April 2026).

The updated surveys identify habitats within the site comprising modified and other neutral grassland, introduced shrubs, scrub, woodland, trees and a non-native hedgerow. Several species of cotoneaster were also recorded within the red line boundary. The habitat assessment concludes that these habitats are of ecological importance at the site level, and I agree with this assessment.

Neither the updated PEA nor the metric identifies the habitats that will be affected by the development. Detailed proposals demonstrating how a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain will be achieved should therefore be submitted as part of the discharge of the Biodiversity Gain condition.

The BNG report identifies a target of 20% net gain, which is welcomed. However, given the limited extent of the site, this uplift is unlikely to be achieved within the application boundary and will therefore require the purchase of off-site biodiversity units. There may also be an opportunity to secure the additional uplift in biodiversity units through habitat enhancement works within Stairfoot Local Wildlife Site (LWS).

The BNG report is based on the 2024 habitat survey undertaken by Temple rather than the updated 2026 survey results. This should be updated when discharging the Biodiversity Gain Condition.

There appears to be an error within the updated 2026 biodiversity metric. The total habitat area recorded is 11.67 hectares, whereas the application form states that the site area is 1.16 hectares. The metric should therefore be reviewed and amended to ensure that the baseline habitat areas accurately reflect habitats within the application site.

The PEA recommends eDNA surveys of Ponds 1 and 2 and bat surveys of the bridge, which was initially assessed as having moderate potential to support roosting bats. However, following further assessment, the bridge was downgraded to low suitability and I support this conclusion. I await the submission of the updated ecological reports containing the results of the great crested newt and bat surveys, together with any recommendations required to avoid, mitigate or compensate for impacts to these species.

A Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS) has been prepared to minimise impacts to great crested newts and bats. However, in light of the findings of the PEA, the PWMS should be updated to include appropriate mitigation and precautionary measures for all species with the potential to occur on the site, as discussed within the updated PEA. This can be secured through a suitably worded planning condition.



BARNSLEY

Metropolitan Borough Council

	Defer – further information required	
*Delete as applicable		
<u>Consultation Suggested Conditions:</u>		
<u>Consultation Informative(s):</u>		
<u>Planning Obligations required:</u>		