

Consultation Response: Kirklees Council Conservation & Design (Biodiversity)

<i>Is this a response to an informal consultation request?</i> Yes ☐ No ☒	
Date	<i>14/06/2017</i>
Officer responding	<i>Tom Stephenson</i>
Application number	<i>2017/91677</i>
Purpose	<i>Review of submitted ecological information, pre-determination</i>
Location	<i>Land at, Serpentine Road, Cleckheaton, BD19 3NA</i>

Assessment and Recommendation

The applicant has submitted Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey report, a Bat Presence/Absence survey report and a Biodiversity Plan, which provides information on how ecological enhancement will be achieved, and a landscape plan.

The reports indicate that the proposals are unlikely to result in significant ecological impacts. The reports also make a number of recommendations for mitigation and enhancement, which include:

- Invasive plant survey;
- Avoidance of vegetation clearance and demolition outside of the breeding bird season;
- Installation of bat and bird boxes as part of the final scheme.

The report indicates the possible presence of the invasive species giant hogweed and Japanese knotweed. This could not be confirmed at the time of year that the initial survey was undertaken and the presence or absence of these species should be determined and, if required, measures implemented for eradication within the site. This could be conditioned, but it may be more expedient to confirm this prior to determination of the application.

Avoidance of clearance/demolition during the bird breeding season can be conditioned (see suggested condition 1).

The installation of bat and bird boxes is detailed on the Biodiversity Plan. I support the measures outlined in the Biodiversity Plan in general; however, this only covers the retirement apartments and surrounding landscaped area. This should be extended to cover the whole site.

The Biodiversity Plan also provides outline detail on the proposed lighting scheme. I strongly support the measures outlined and would suggest a condition (see suggested condition 2) to secure detail and implementation.

I also recommend some amendments to the landscape proposals, which could be improved by including a greater proportion of native trees and shrubs, and specifying a seed mix for the wildflower grassland.

If the above can be secured I have no objection.

Suggested Condition(s)

1. No removal of vegetation or works to or demolition of buildings or structures that may be used by breeding birds shall take place between 1st March and 31st August inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check of vegetation for active birds' nests immediately before the vegetation is cleared and provided written confirmation that no birds will be harmed and/or that there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting bird interest on site. Any such written confirmation should be submitted to the local planning authority.

Reason: to avoid direct impacts to birds, their eggs, nests and young and a consequential offence under section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

2. Prior to occupation, a "lighting design strategy for biodiversity" for the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:
 - a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for foraging bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and
 - b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

References

There are no sources in the current document.