

Planning Consultation Request

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO DEVELOP LAND

Observations By:	KC, Ecology Unit
Application No.	2020/92546
Proposed Development:	Outline application (with details of points of access only) for the development of up to 770 residential dwellings (Use Class C3), including up to 70 care apartments (Use Classes C2/C3) with doctors surgery of up to 350 sq m (Use Class D1); up to 500 sq m of Use Class A1/A2/A3/A4/A5/D1 floorspace (dual use), vehicular and pedestrian access points off Blackmoorfoot Road and Felks Stile Road and associated works.
Location:	Land off, Blackmoorfoot Road and Felks Street, Crosland Moor, Huddersfield, HD4 7AD
OS Map Reference	SE 411329.1154 414683.3657
Applicant/Agent:	Gerald Eve LLP
Class:	Other Developments

Your comments on the above proposal are requested. Please e-mail your comments in either a Microsoft Word or PDF Document to DC.Admin@kirklees.gov.uk by **04-Sep-2020**.

If you would like to contact the Case Officer: Kate Mansell for any reason then please do so on: Tel. 72130 .

The submitted plans and documents for the application can be viewed online at the Planning Service Website by holding down Ctrl and Clicking the link below:
<http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92546> *

*If the plans are not available online after 5 working days of the date of this letter then please e-mail: DC.Admin@kirklees.gov.uk

If I do not receive your response by **04-Sep-2020** then the application may be decided without the benefit of your views.

Dated: 14-Aug-2020

Mathias Franklin
 Head of Planning and Development

Consultation Response from KC, Ecology Unit		
2020/92546 Land off, Blackmoorfoot Road and Felks Street, Crosland Moor, Huddersfield, HD4 7AD		
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Date Responded: 11/09/2020	Responding Officer: Amy Reddick	Responding Ref:

Assessment

The application is outline with all matters reserved except access. An ecological addendum has been submitted with the application which combines survey data from the original application (2018/90748) with an updated walkover of the site from 2020. In general, the suite of surveys undertaken appears to be suitable for the site in order to determine likely ecological impacts at outline stage. However, there are some further clarifications and considerations of the ecological constraints required in order to design an acceptable scheme.

Protected species

No changes to the baseline habitats in regards to protected species appear to have changed since the surveys undertaken in 2017 and 2018, however the full suite of surveys will require updating as part of any reserved matters application to ensure decisions are made using an accurate understanding of current ecological conditions.

The original bat roost assessments determined several of the buildings had potential for roosting bats and evidence of previous usage by bats was also evident in several of the buildings, although only one active roost was identified within the dusk/dawn assessments. Although none of the baseline values have changed with regards to bats, due to the highly mobile nature of roosting bats, all of these surveys will require updating at a reserved matters stage, in accordance with Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (2016). The current status of bats on the site will need to inform the mitigation required on the site to maintain favourable conservation status of local bat populations, and the loss of any roosts will need to be licensed by Natural England.

Habitats and Biodiversity Metric

The development plans do not appear to have changed significantly since the previous application in 2018, therefore many of the comments made by KC Ecology are still relevant.

The current plans indicate that areas of woodland (W1, W2 and W3) and heathland, which are considered of local importance, are to be removed to facilitate the development proposals. Heathland is also considered to be a habitat of principal importance within Kirklees. Therefore, the removal of these habitats is undesirable, and the lack of adequate mitigation or compensation does not demonstrate correct application of the mitigation hierarchy.

The use of the biodiversity metric is welcomed however, the calculations further illustrate that the areas of heathland require replacement of the same habitat and the woodland the same broad habitat in order to address the losses. There are also some errors in the metric which require addressing in order to accurately reflect the biodiversity value pre and post-development-

- The ecological assessment identified an area of semi-improved grassland on the site, however only modified grassland is accounted for within the metric. Further clarification on the classification of this habitat within the attached metric is required.
- The post-development habitats of suburban mosaic and amenity grassland have been assigned a condition of 'moderate', this is considered an error in the metric due to be revised in future updates. Therefore, these habitats should be assigned a condition of 'poor'. This amendment results in a change to the habitat units provided, resulting in a -36.24% loss post- development.

With the changes to the post-development habitats the current proposals do not demonstrate that a biodiversity net gain can be achieved on the site. However, the ecological appraisal does make several recommendations for habitat enhancement and creation which could be incorporated into the scheme in order to achieve a net gain. These measures will need to include suitable mitigation for the loss of heathland and woodland, which will require the same habitats to be created and no net loss of woodland cover on the site. Options to include these within the open space/green infrastructure on the site and within the blue line boundary should be explored to inform the final designs and layout of the site. In order for the proposals to accord with National and Local policy, a 10% net gain in biodiversity will be required post-development.

Kirklees Wildlife Habitat Network

The northern section of the site (outside of the redline boundary but under the ownership of the applicant) is included within the Kirklees Wildlife Habitat Network. Although this area is to be retained, adequate protection from indirect impacts of the development will be required. The current design plans indicate that a buffer zone will be included between residential properties and the KWHN and this is welcomed and encouraged. Local Plan policy LP 30 (iii) requires developments to safeguard and enhance the function of the Kirklees Wildlife Habitat Network and to establish ecological links to the network, where opportunities exist. In this case there are opportunities for enhancement and of establishing links. The current masterplan illustrates planted corridors at the boundaries and across the centre of the site which would provide additional links to the KWHN. However, the KWHN could be strengthened and protected from additional recreational pressures due to the development via the provision of a habitat management and creation plan.

Summary

In general, the principal of development at this site is acceptable, subject to the correct application of the mitigation hierarchy and the achievement of a 10% biodiversity net gain at a reserved matters stage. Several conditions will be required to ensure the development accord with local and nation policy including-

- The update of ecological surveys for bats, badgers and breeding birds to inform the subsequent phases of the development;
- A Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP);
- An Ecological Design Strategy (EDS);
- A Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP);
- A "lighting design strategy for biodiversity"

The provision of a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain post-development as will also require securing via a condition or an appropriate legal agreement. Any layout and landscape proposals at a reserved matters stage will require recalculation utilising the most up to date version of Defra's Biodiversity Metric.

Advice to Planning Officer

Further clarification from the applicant is requested regarding the status of protected species on the site and the submitted details included within the biodiversity metric calculations, in order to determine this application.