

Summary

Ecological issues were resolved at hybrid application stage, with the full application stage already underway providing the most risk to biodiversity and the entire site now cleared. There are therefore no significant ecological issues associated with this application.

Further information on biodiversity enhancement proposals are however required prior to determination.

Protected Species & Condition 33 of the Hybrid Application

The site was previously found to be very low risk for protected species. The site is now clear with development reported as underway on phase 1 of the development. An updated ecological appraisal has been provided for phase 2 which confirms that the site is still negligible risk for protected species. *No further information or measures are required and condition 33 of the hybrid permission can be discharged*

Other Wildlife

Nesting birds are covered by condition 7 of the hybrid permission, *no further information or measures are required at this time*. The site is now bare ground and hardstanding, with development underway on adjacent land and the updated ecological assessment identifying no wildlife issues. *I am satisfied that no further information or measures are required*

Invasive Species

The updated ecological assessment found Himalayan Balsam and Himalayan Cytisus. An invasive species method statement has been provided incorporating the Himalayan Balsam. Given the very small stand of Balsam currently present, hand pulling would appear reasonable but no finalised method statement provided for either species provided, just options for control. I am satisfied that condition 34 can be discharged but recommend that a condition along the following lines will be applied to any permission.

Prior to development and updated and finalised Invasive species method statement in line with the recommendations of the Invasive Non-Native Species Method Statement by Urban Green Ref: UG466 as already supplied and agreed in writing by the LPA, will be supplied to and agreed in writing by the LPA

Protection of LNR

Phase 2 of the application is not adjacent to the LNR with a Construction and environmental management plan agreed as part of the phase 1 application. I am therefore satisfied that condition 8 is discharged with regards the phase 2 application.

Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment & Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Section 180 of the NPPF 2023 states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. 10% BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A

of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).

This application is not subject to mandatory biodiversity net gain.

Condition 32 however requires submission of a biodiversity mitigation strategy to include native trees and a bird and bat box mitigation strategy as part of reserved matters. I was not able to locate any relevant information relating to this condition other than reference to some native tree species within the planting palette of the landscape strategy document. *I therefore recommend that prior to determination information on the biodiversity enhancement proposal for the phase 2 application are provided.*

Ecologist

Planning and Transportation