

The ecological report is in line with my expectations for the site. It does not change my previous recommendation regarding bats that this report does not discuss.

Badgers

I previously recommended a condition for a badger survey prior to earthworks. A survey has now been provided that found no evidence of badgers. This is in-line with my expectations. We are however aware of badgers now been present in the wider areas, it is therefore possible given the long timescale associated with the various phases of the development that badgers could colonise. I am however of the opinion that this risk is low. I therefore recommend that the survey is updated if earthworks are delayed more than 12 months from this survey carried out on the 4th October 2021.

If the development hereby approved does not commence before 1st October 2022, a re-survey of the site and within 30m of the earthworks for badger setts will occur and the findings supplied to and agreed in writing by the LPA.

Nesting Birds

My previous recommendations of the 15th April 2021 remain unchanged.

Invasive Species

A survey of the site has confirmed the presence of himalayan balsam and japanese knotweed in close proximity to the site. No giant hogweed was located. Measures to control the japanese knotweed are recommended but none proposed for the balsam. Whilst accepting that eradication is unlikely to be feasible for balsam, given the seed bank and presence of balsam on adjacent land, this still does not absolve the developer from taking reasonable measures to prevent spreading this species off-site ie carrying out localised control and biosecurity measures during construction.

I now recommend a condition along the following lines is applied to any permission.

Prior to any earthworks a method statement detailing eradication and/or control and/or avoidance measures for himalayan balsam and japanese knotweed should be supplied to and agreed in writing to the LPA. The agreed method statement shall be adhered to and implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA.

Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Section 174 of the NPPF 2021 states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. I accept that the reports general recommendations that mitigation through measures along the BGS boundary are likely to provide net gain. I have been invited to a site visit by the ELR to discuss options for ecological mitigation.

I am satisfied that the details can be conditioned.

Ecologist

Planning

Planning and Transportation

Place