

MEMO

**North
Lincolnshire
Council**

To: Deborah Oikeh, Development Management
From: Alicia Morley, Place Planning & Housing
Your Ref: PA/2024/867
Date: 25 July 2024

Subject: Planning permission to erect a general-purpose agricultural building
Land off West End Road, Epworth, Doncaster, DN9 1LE

Summary

- Natural England's SSSI Impact Risk Zone Tool indicates that Natural England should be consulted.
- If permission is ultimately granted, there will be a need to secure a measurable net gain in biodiversity in accordance with Policy CS17, the National Planning Policy Framework and Statutory Biodiversity Metric.
- We would encourage the use of bat boxes, barn owl boxes and habitat enhancements.

Thank you for consulting Place Planning & Housing on the above application.

Landscape

Alison Williams' comments in relation to the historic landscape are very pertinent in this case. In the relatively open landscape of the Isle of Axholme, both new buildings and any trees planted to screen them can dramatically alter the landscape character.

Landscape and visual impacts will need to be considered in terms of the adopted Landscape Assessment and Guidelines and the Countryside Design Summary. I would also recommend the use of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (GLVIA3, 2013), produced by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment.

Core Strategy Spatial Objective 10, policies CS5 and CS16 and Saved Local Plan Policies LC7, LC14 and RD2 should also be considered.

Protected and Priority Species

I have considered this application in accordance with Natural England's standing advice for protected species-
<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/planningtransportlocalgov/spatialplanning/standingadvice/default.aspx>.

For this location, Natural England's SSSI Impact Risk Zone Tool indicates that Natural England should be consulted as "there is potential for the proposed development to have a harmful effect on terrestrial Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and those Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or Ramsar sites that they underpin".

This application meets that criterion, so there is a need to consult Natural England on this occasion.

Biodiversity Enhancement

The National Planning Policy Framework states that:

"180. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils [...]

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;

[...]

d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans;

[...]

and

"186 d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate..;"

With this proposal, biodiversity enhancement should be encouraged by:

- Installing bat boxes
- Installing nesting features for bird species such as barn swallow and barn owl
- Restrictions on lighting to avoid impacts on bat roosts, bat foraging areas bird nesting sites and sensitive habitats
- The planting, aftercare and ongoing management of native wildflowers of high biodiversity value

Biodiversity Net Gain

If permission is ultimately granted, there will be a need to secure a measurable net gain in biodiversity in accordance with Policy CS17, the National Planning Policy Framework and Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

In order to make sure that biodiversity net gain is quantified and deliverable, the applicant is advised to make use of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric:

[Statutory biodiversity metric tools and guides - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/statutory-biodiversity-metric)

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Alicia Morley
Ecologist

Annex- Ecology and Legal Protection

Bats

All species of bat are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 making all species of bat European Protected Species. Details of the legislation can be found at:

Wildlife and Countryside Act

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/contents>

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act:

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2000/ukpga_20000037_en_7#pt3-pb8-l1q81

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017:

[The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/20100490/en/1)

[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/20100490_en_1](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/20100490/en/1)

Nesting birds

It is an offence under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981(WCA 1981) to intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built. The WCA 1981 also provides that all wild birds and their eggs are protected and cannot be killed or taken except under licence.