

MEMO

**North
Lincolnshire
Council**

To: Emmanuel Hiamey, Development Management
From: Alicia Morley, Place Policy & Strategy
Your Ref: PA/2025/735
Date: 20 August 2025

Subject: Planning permission for a proposed access footpath and pedestrian access turnstile
Land south of entrance to 18 Holyrood Drive, Skippingdale Industrial Estate, Scunthorpe, DN15 8NN

Summary

- Limited potential for protected and priority species aside from nesting birds. No protected or priority species surveys are required.
- However, a nesting bird check should be undertaken before any vegetation clearance.
- The Biodiversity Metric Assessment has been carried out fairly, however a biodiversity enhancement of >10% has not been achieved on-site. The applicant has stated they wish to purchase Statutory Credits due to the small number of units required.
- Planning conditions are proposed to seek a measurable net gain in biodiversity in accordance with Policy CS17, the National Planning Policy Framework and the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

Thank you for consulting Place Policy & Strategy on the above application.

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>.

The site is a road verge in an industrial estate, with scrub and trees located along the eastern boundary. There is potential for nesting birds, however the works will involve the removal of a strip of grassland to provide a surfaced cycle path, which will provide limited disturbance considering the site location and regular use of the road by traffic and pedestrians.

Additionally, a tree, and some small sections of scrub and shrubbery are proposed to be removed to facilitate the path. Before the works, the tree, scrub and shrubbery should be checked to ensure there is no active nest within – if a nest is present, the nesting site should be left undisturbed until the chicks have fledged.

No protected or priority species surveys are required.

Biodiversity Enhancement

The National Planning Policy Framework states that:

“187. 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 and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;

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

“193 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..;”

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

I have assessed the submitted Statutory Biodiversity Metric and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Plan. Comments collated through our assessment software are set out in Appendix 2. Main points are as follows:

- The baseline map and condition assessments have been provided and appear accurate.
- Strategic significance has been applied appropriately to baseline and post-development habitats.
- The road verge baseline consists of modified grassland, urban tree, willow scrub, introduced shrub and developed land; sealed surface.
- Developed land; sealed surface will be retained, with the other habitats lost.
- Habitat creation will comprise of developed land; sealed surface.
- There is a total net loss of biodiversity on the site. On-site habitat provision is not possible, therefore, considering the small number of units required, Statutory Credits will be purchased to provide the uplift.

The headline results are as follows:

Combined	On-site pre-intervention (baseline)	Loss of pre-intervention (baseline) habitats	Post-intervention	Net change	
	BU	BU	BU	BU	%
Area habitats	0.079	0.079	0.0	-0.079	⚠ -100.0
Hedgerows	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0
Watercourses	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0

The applicant has indicated that they wish to purchase Statutory Credits due to the small number of units required (with the risk multiplier applied, it equates to 0.17 units of category A1). This would equal approximately £7,140.

To discharge the Biodiversity Gain Plan, the Statutory Credits proof of purchase and BNG metric should be submitted alongside it.

Recommended Conditions

“Prior to commencement of development, a Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The BGP shall be in accordance with the BNG Assessment Supporting Document V1 and accompanying BNG metric prepared by Crow Ecology Ltd, June 2025. Development shall then be carried out in strict accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan.

Reason: To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.”

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)

Great Crested Newts

The great crested newt is fully 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 it an European Protected Species. Details of the legislation are the same as those for bats (see above).

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 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.