

MEMO

**North
Lincolnshire
Council**

To: Scott Jackson, Development Management
From: Alicia Morley, Place Policy & Strategy
Your Ref: PA/2025/680
Date: 12 September 2025

Subject: Planning permission to vary condition 1 of PA/2023/56 (Approval of reserved matters dated 27/09/2023 namely to undertake external alterations to all plots and changes to the approved landscaping scheme
Land south of King Edward Street, Belton, Doncaster, DN9 1QN

Summary

- The LC11 buffer has been reduced from the initial planning permission, and we are concerned that the buffer – as proposed with the gated areas for four of the five dwellings – could simply be absorbed into the residential gardens once the dwellings are occupied.
- Furthermore, no information has been provided to establish how the buffer will be retained, monitored or maintained.
- Since the Biodiversity Net Gain provisions (per PA/2021/1136 planning permission) are to be delivered on-site within the buffer area, we question how this to be secured for the required 30 years.
- Additional information on the above is requested to resolve the issues.
- We would also like to remind the applicant of the pre-commencement condition regarding Japanese Knotweed eradication that has not yet been discharged, despite the development commencing.
- This needs to be resolved suitably to prevent the spreading of a highly invasive, non-native species before the dwellings become occupied and the issue gets inherited by the houseowners.
- I would like to register a HOLDING OBJECTION until the applicant has provided the information reasonably required for us to resolve our concerns regarding the LC11 buffer and the Biodiversity Net Gain provisions to be created on the site.

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

Landscape

On the initial application (PA/2021/1136), the following comments was provided regarding Policy LC11:

“This proposal would affect a significant proportion of the area protected by Local Plan Saved Policy LC11 off King Edward Street in Belton. Policy LC11 is as follows:

“LC11 - Areas of Amenity Importance

Within important amenity areas, development will only be permitted where it would not adversely affect their open character, visual amenity or wildlife value or compromise the gap between conflicting land uses. Where development is permitted, measures shall be taken to minimise their impact or, where necessary, make a positive contribution to such areas.”

The supporting text is as follows:

“There are many areas of landscape which make a significant contribution to the character and amenity of settlements. In larger settlements they provide breaks between built up areas and often serve as important buffers between conflicting land uses such as housing and industry. Within settlements they also provide valuable havens and corridors for the establishment and Page 2 of 6 movement of a variety of wildlife. Within smaller settlements they provide open areas important to the character and setting of villages, and may also contain interesting plants and animals. These important amenity areas are defined on the proposals map. These areas should be protected from development which would adversely affect them. It is, therefore, essential that such areas are retained and enhanced wherever possible. This could be promoted in the rural areas, through future parish appraisals and the preparation of Village Design Statements.”

In this case, the LC11 area does provide an area with an open character and a degree of visual amenity, particularly for users of the Greenway, but does not protect a gap between existing land uses, as it is surrounded by housing on all sides. In terms of wildlife value, the protected species survey report reveals little potential for protected species. However, if additional survey work had been carried out further into the breeding season, then a greater diversity of breeding birds would be anticipated, including summer migrants. None of the bird species recorded in March were priority species, but priority species such as house sparrow, dunnock and starling are likely to use the habitat for both feeding and nesting.

In our view, development should only be permitted in this area if it can be demonstrated that the open character will be protected and the visual amenity and wildlife value will be enhanced.”

The landscaping plan was then provided in PA/2023/56 showing the proposed landscape buffer to compile with LC11. On the subsequent Discharge of Conditions application (PA/2025/697), this buffer had been reduced and segmented into fenced areas behind four of the five dwellings, with gates between them. We are concerned that the buffer is incrementally being reduced with each subsequent application, and no specific information has been provided to clarify how the buffer will be retained as a LC11 buffer and not just absorbed into the various residential gardens once the dwellings are occupied.

No clarification has been provided regarding the monitoring and management of the buffer, which would additionally be required considering the Biodiversity Net Gain measures are intended to be implemented within the buffer and secured for 30 years. How can this be achieved when the areas can be privately secured by the residents and used (and presumably maintained) as they wish?

Once again, this has been raised in previous comments from Ecology, and has never been resolved:

“The applicant has submitted a Biodiversity Metric 2.0 assessment showing a post-development gain in biodiversity units of +72.84% for habitat units and +97.21% for hedgerow units. This is welcome. However, the proposed net gain in biodiversity appears to depend on the provision and retention of an LC11 buffer zone of “Urban – Introduced shrub” around the proposed houses. It may not be realistic to assume that the new residents would retain and manage such a feature. Presumably if permission were to be granted, the whole Page 3 of 6 application site would be deemed to have a residential use, making it difficult to control any future felling or clearance of trees and shrubs.

Therefore, we may need one or more of the following:

- A reliable mechanism to secure long-term retention and management of biodiversity features;
- Alternative proposals, offering at least a 1% net gain in biodiversity units, that have good prospects of being retained.”

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

We would like to see the updated metric that will be in accordance with the amended site plan and deliver the required uplift, alongside information regarding how the site is to be retained, monitored and managed for the next 30 years.

Invasive Species

As raised in previous applications, it is essential that Japanese knotweed is properly eradicated from this site before development begins. Development has begun, and as the applicant will be aware, the pre-commencement condition regarding Japanese Knotweed removal was not discharged by us recently (PA/2025/697). We would once more remind the applicant that the appropriate measures must be undertaken to ensure the eradication of this invasive non-native species without simply passing the issue on to the future occupiers and other sites where the contaminated soil may be tracked or disposed of incorrectly.

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-l1g81

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk>http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2010/uksi_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.