

Ecology response 26 3 24 for F 23 96629 Land at Fieldfare Road, adjacent to the roundabout with Winchester Road
Erection of 70-bed C2 Care Home with new vehicular access to Fieldfare Road
Liz Harrison

26/3/24

I have forwarded to you and reviewed two additional documents from Ecosupport, an email from Lewis Lakuzala (15 March 2023) and a document titled Boorley Green Ecology Addendum (13 March 2023) sent by Lyndsey Barratt (19 March 2023).

In summary, Ecosupport has changed their recommendations from the September 2023 PEA with regard to grassland type and reptile mitigation.

I don't see any evidence of suitable reptile habitat or of continuous reptile fencing from the officer site photos or aerial photos, but the areas adjacent are built out housing site, bare earth, road and tarmac, all of which are unsuitable for reptiles, so I agree that it is not likely that reptiles would be using this site now.

Ecosupport have discussed re-classifying the 0.49 ha of grassland from Other Neutral Grassland (UK Hab g3c) to Modified Grassland (UK Hab g4). The other habitat type on site is 0.173 ha of artificial unvegetated unsealed surface (UK Hab u1c).

Whilst these changes make a difference to the site baseline value for the Biodiversity Metric, pragmatically this application was submitted before the requirement for 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (12 February 2024) so achieving a full 10% net gain is not really an issue. Therefore, the proposed change in classification of this grassland is not important at this stage.

The amount of biodiversity gain available on site will be dependent on the landscaping plan. I agree with Tim Dyer in the Landscape response of 22 January 2024 in that *the present layout shows that the proposed building footprint, footpaths and drives/parking occupy more than 50% of the site area. The remnant areas of soft landscape are rather disjointed in form, with some being narrow slithers of land.* It will be difficult to provide biodiversity net gain in this layout.

Tim's suggestions include a robust and continuous landscape buffer which wraps continuously around the building, a regular avenue of tree planting around all sides of the development, with the trees underplanted with clipped hedges. He recommends further trees along the northern boundary and the western edge of the site (parking bays 5-22). He requested some of the hedge to be a native mix and evergreen hedge being used to create year-round screening for the rear garden areas. Tim also questioned whether the proposed meadow mix would establish and grow under the existing oak trees or whether a shade tolerant mix is required in this area.

I would also recommend including that a green roof on the building and planted green walls would provide more biodiversity net gain.

Once the soft landscaping proposals are amended, then along with the bat bricks and swift bricks recommended in the PEA report this site would be able to make a positive contribution to biodiversity within the wider development.

The Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy by Coast Consulting Engineers (November 2023) shows only surface water drainage pipes with the combined surface water drainage entering an existing main surface water sewer to the west of the site. There is no information about how surface water drainage water quality will be addressed to accord with Local Plan policy DM6. The simple index approach from the Ciria SuDS manual should be used to show that pollutants from parking areas and the rooftop will be mitigated appropriately. Further biodiversity enhancement could be obtained using rainwater planters in addition to permeable paving. Rainwater planters could also provide raised beds for therapeutic gardening activities for residents.

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