

Land between Tamworth Road and Fivefield Road, Keresley, Coventry

Ecological Response Note

edp3854_r018

1. Introduction and Purpose of this Ecology Response Note

- 1.1 This Ecology Response Note been prepared by The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP) on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd, in relation to the proposed development at Land between Tamworth Road and Fivefield Road (hereafter referred to as 'the site'), Application number: OUT/2019/0022. The proposed development forms part of the allocated Keresley Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE).
- 1.2 This note has been produced in response to the Warwickshire Wildlife Trusts comments to the Application and should be read in conjunction with the response produced by Sylvan Consulting in relation to Ancient Woodland. The Wildlife Trust, as well as raising issues with the Ancient Woodland impacts, also identified concerns with the net gain (biodiversity impact) calculations and great crested newt mitigation. This note specifically deals with these points, which are set out individually below.

2. Biodiversity Impact Assessment (Net Gain)

- 2.1 The Wildlife Trust had concerns regarding the data that had been used to calculate the Biodiversity Impact Assessment (BIA) for the proposed development, both with the habitat descriptions present within the baseline calculations and the proposed habitats within the site.
- 2.2 Although the semi-improved grassland is shown within the Phase 1 habitat plan as being mostly semi-improved neutral grassland, the detailed botanical surveys undertaken within the application site identified that the grasslands were patchy in their distribution of botanical diversity within each field. This is most likely due to grazing pressure and management regimes that have been implemented within the site. The biodiversity calculator figures represent the detailed view of the ecologist that undertook the surveys and represents the depleted nature of areas of these habitats within the site.
- 2.3 The proposed habitats are shown within the illustrative masterplan and within Plan EDP 1 within Appendix 6.2. this shows the areas of woodland buffer planting, which will be planted along existing woodland edges to strengthen the woodland edge buffers, and within strategic areas within the Application Site; especially areas of existing scrub and immature trees. These areas of woodland will be planted within the existing habitats and managed to ensure their transition from one habitat type to the other and therefore will act as enhancement rather than new habitat. Given that they are adjacent to areas of woodland or are within areas where existing trees can be retained, their transition to woodland will be expediated through the existing or

adjacent ground flora colonisation. Therefore, it is considered that the 25-year establishment figure is appropriate.

- 2.4 The semi-improved grassland is proposed to be created and enhanced within the areas of open space and the majority of the grassland will be standard meadow grassland with some areas of greater wildflower grassland created. The attenuation areas and swales will mostly be seeded with the marshy grassland and only small proportions of the attenuation areas will contain standing water for long periods of time. The meadow grassland surrounding the marsh grassland will be semi-improved grassland, adding a transition from the wetter areas.

3. Great Crested Newts

- 3.1. The illustrative masterplan shows a buffer to the south-west of the pond of 7.5m to the proposed re-alignment of the public right of way. A greater buffer of up to 15m or more is provided north of the pond. These buffer strips along the site boundaries will be planted with a mixture of meadow grassland and native shrub planting, that will be managed to maximise their potential for terrestrial amphibians and will maintain connectivity with the wider landscape.
- 3.2. The buffer strip will run from the pond to the south-east, where it will provide access to the swale and habitat corridor that will run down to the attenuation features and stream corridor, providing access to good areas of terrestrial habitat.
- 3.3. As is recommended within the Environmental Statement at 6.6.1, the development would need to be undertaken under a European Protected Species (EPS) licence and the details of protection measures would be set out within an Ecological Construction Method Statement (ECMS) that would detail the measures for protection and enhancement for great crested newts. These measures should be secured through a suitably worded condition attached to any planning permission. This would ensure that the population of newts within the site are maintained at a favourable conservation status.

4. Hedgerows

- 4.1 The majority of the hedgerows that are to be lost are species poor hedgerows that consist of very few species. Given this, a specific hedgerow regulations survey was not undertaken of these hedgerows as it was assumed given their poor structure and diversity, they would not have qualified as important.
- 4.2 Those hedgerows that are species rich and will be subject to losses for access, will be more than off-set by the provision of greater lengths of new hedgerow, which will consist of a species rich hedgerow mixture and be managed to ensure maximum benefits to biodiversity.