

Reading Link Retail Park – New Building

Addendum Ecology Note

September 2023

Ecology Reports were prepared for a site of a new drive thru coffee shop within the Reading Link Retail Park demise. This addendum report should be read alongside this addendum report.

Holy Brook Local Wildlife Site is situated adjacent to the northern border of the retail park. Holy Brook Local Wildlife Site (LWS) is approximately 4.5km in length and is comprised of a number of different sites which have been combined into one designation. Holy Brook LWS stretches from just west of the Burghfield Road to the Reading Inner Distribution Road. The river within Holy Brook LWS transfers water to and from a stretch of chalk river, known as River Kennet. The section of the LWS that extends along the northern border of the site includes the eastern part of its course which runs through housing and commercial and industrial areas. The LWS is a chalk river which is noted as a Section 41 habitat of principal importance (NERC Act, 2006).

The site borders the Fobney Meadows LWS to the south west which is also a Priority Habitat as defined in the NPPF.

A footpath runs from the western corner of the retail park into Fobney Meadows. A path, not shown on the definitive map, runs alongside the Holybrook to the north of the wider retail site.

The application site sits within the existing car park of the retail park, it is surrounded by the access road and servicing route into and out of the retail park. Some landscaping surrounds site in the form of low quality hedge and tree planting. The use of the building will complement the existing retail and coffee shop uses at the site. The proposals will include minimal lighting on the outside of the building but otherwise relies on existing street lighting and that within the retail park.

The proposals include some landscaping around the building to enhance its setting and to improve on the existing situation (drawing ref RLRPRKL_PLN-GM_010). Furthermore, there will be no impact on footpaths close to the site as it is located within the existing retail park.

Overall, there will no impact on surrounding ecological receptors for reasons of the distances involved as well as the existing site conditions. The proposals for a new building also include some element of landscaping to improve the current quality of the environment. Lighting is kept as minimal as possible and otherwise relies on existing lighting.