

Memo

To: Matthew Burns

From: Cathy Holwill (RBC Ecology Consultations)

CC:

Date: 16 September 2024

Re: Application ref: PL/24/1131

Address: 17 Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green, Reading, RG4 8SQ

Description: Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 19 (closing out letter for Bovis Phase 1 and Linden Phase 2) of planning permission ref. 221312 VAR

The application is for the discharge of Condition 19 (closing out letter for Bovis Phase 1 and Linden Phase 2) of planning permission ref. 221312 VAR (*Outline planning application with matters reserved in respect of Appearance for demolition of clubhouse and erection of a new residential scheme (c3 use) including affordable housing and public open space at former reading golf club without complying with conditions 5 (Plans), 8&9 (Emissions) 10&11 (SuDS), 12 (Levels), 13 (Mix), 17 (AMS), 19 (Habitat Enhancement), 20 (CEMP), 22 (Biodiversity), 25&26 (Contamination), 29 (CMS), 34 (Cycle Parking), 35 (Refuse), 39 (Car Parking), 41 (Traffic Calming) & 44 (Archaeology) of outline permission 211843 for amendments including changes to layout, mix, parking, drainage, landscaping, open space and energy)*

Condition 19 reads:

Prior to commencement of development of each approved phase of the development hereby permitted (excluding demolition and preparatory works) a habitat enhancement scheme (showing the provision of bird nesting, bat roosting boxes and hedgehog holes in fences) shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme is to include a programme for implementation and ongoing maintenance of the habitat enhancement measures and shall include specific measures to ensure the green links across the site are retained. The habitat enhancement scheme shall thereafter be implemented and adhered to in accordance with the agreed programme.

No dwelling within an approved phase shall be occupied until the approved habitat enhancement measures for that phase have been implemented in full and a closing out letter from a suitably qualified ecologist confirming that measures have been implemented has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In order to avoid harm to habitats and species whilst securing biodiversity enhancement in the long term. This accords with Paragraph 175 of the NPPF (2019), Policy EN12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

The applicant has submitted an Ecology Walkover letter (Azure/The Ecology Co-op) which states that “One Swift Brick, three Sparrow Terraces and one Bat Tube have been integrated into existing buildings”. However, the letter fails to specify which new houses contain these features, making it impossible to verify their correct placement or compliance with the Habitat Enhancement Plan referred to in the walkover letter.

Additionally, I am unclear as to why this letter has been submitted at this stage, given that the condition states: *“No dwelling within an approved phase shall be occupied until the approved habitat enhancement measures for that phase have been implemented in full, and a closing-out letter from a suitably qualified ecologist confirming that these measures have been implemented has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.”*

As the enhancement measures for this phase have not been fully implemented, it is unlikely that the condition can be discharged at this time.