

Proposed Horticultural Polytunnel Development

Site description

The application site comprises an area of existing managed grassland, currently used for agricultural purposes. The land is of low ecological value and is regularly managed, with no priority habitats, watercourses, trees, or designated ecological features present within the application area.

Proposed development

The proposal is for the erection of a single polytunnel to support horticultural nursery use. The polytunnel will be temporary in nature, lightweight in construction, and will not involve permanent foundations. The development footprint is limited and confined to a small proportion of the wider agricultural field.

Impact on biodiversity

Given the existing low ecological value of the managed grassland and the limited scale of development, the proposal is not expected to result in any significant loss of biodiversity. The use of a polytunnel will not materially alter surrounding habitats, and the land beneath the structure can be reinstated to grassland if required in the future.

Biodiversity Net Gain compliance

The development is considered to fall within a de minimis impact category and therefore does not require a full Biodiversity Metric calculation at this stage. The proposal aligns with the objectives of the Environment Act 2021 and relevant local planning policy by avoiding harm to biodiversity and maintaining the existing ecological baseline.

Enhancement and management

The wider site will remain in agricultural and horticultural use, with opportunities for incidental biodiversity enhancement through continued grassland management and retention of existing boundary features. No protected species or habitats will be affected.

Conclusion

The proposed development will not result in a net loss of biodiversity and is appropriate in scale and nature for the site. As such, the proposal is considered acceptable in Biodiversity Net Gain terms.