Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

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26 July 2023

Mark Simmonds
Case Officer
Priory Rd
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Dear Mark Simmonds,

H16-0521-23: Erection of buildings to comprise up to 70,000 square metres (Gross Internal Area) of Class B8 (storage or distribution) floorspace to include ancillary Class E(g) (office) floorspace and provision of associated infrastructure including utilising existing vehicular access from B1173. Outline with means of access to be considered at Land North of B1173 Barrier Bank and West of A16 Spalding (Lincs Gateway)

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust (LWT) acknowledge the receipt of both the Ecological Appraisal, including an updated field survey using the UK Habitat Classification system, and the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment. The submission of these documents addresses the related concerns raised by LWT in our initial response to this application.

Section 6.2 of the Ecological Appraisal outlines how the retained woodland and trees will be protected, and section 7.2 states that new tree planting will take place. We cannot find any reference in the uploaded material that addresses our original concern around the fact that unestablished saplings do not provide the same biodiversity value as mature trees and do not all survive to maturity. LWT advise at this stage that conditions surrounding the number of saplings, and any additional planting that is to take place, are implemented and that this number is calculated with the above concerns taken into account.

LWT are satisfied that the negative impacts on the nearby Local Wildlife Sites have been considered and ask that the mitigation measures outlined in section 6 of the Ecological Appraisal are conditioned. The issue of connectivity to the wider landscape, especially given the proximity to six local wildlife sites, remains a concern. The design of the development should increase connectivity; joining up new and existing areas of green space around and within the development. This would ensure that no areas become isolated by the built environment and would allow for the movement of wildlife around the site and into the wider countryside. Given that all six of the nearby Local Wildlife Sites are designated for their water features, it would be sensible to provide connectivity in the form of this habitat. The planned removal of the onsite wet ditches D2 and D3 is therefore considered a concern, specifically given the considerable length of these ditches. In section 4.5.7 of the Ecological Appraisal it is noted that 'given that the ditches connect with a network of ditches and waterbodies within the wider area, they are considered to represent important ecological features within this context.' However, the mitigation measures detailed in section 6.3 of the

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Ecological Appraisal focuses on the protection of the retained ditches, and it is not clear from this document how the removal of D2 and D3 will be mitigated for. LWT recognise that full retention of both of these ditches may not be practical as they span the majority of the proposed development site, however we do advise that these ditches be retained in part where possible and that adequate mitigation is conditional to the approval of this application.

Section 3.8.5 of the Biodiversity Net Gain report makes reference to the 30-year management and monitoring plan that is associated with BNG, however we can find no further reference to such a plan in any of the uploaded documents on the planning portal. LWT advise that a management and monitoring plan for a minimum period of 30 years is secured from the applicant via a condition.

LWT also ask that the ecological enhancement measures outlined in section 7 of the Ecological Appraisal are conditioned by the LPA.

If you have any queries regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Beth Fox

Conservation Officer