NET BIODIVERSITY BENEFITS

The application is for outline planning permission and therefore the site plan provided is indicative and not a finalised site layout. The detailed layout will be subject to a reserved matters application. Therefore, the comments below are general statements regarding the site, with the finalised Net Benefit for Biodiversity (NBB) plan to be confirmed as part of the reserved matters application.

The detailed site design will follow the step-wise approach, as outlined in planning policy, and will retain the existing habitats on the site, where possible. Any habitats lost will be offset to ensure that the development does not cause an overall loss in biodiversity on the site.

The development of the site will inevitably cause the loss of areas of modified grassland with the additional loss of a small number of trees. The lost habitats will be reduced where possible and the removal of trees is to be restricted to poor condition trees along the woodland edge, as set out in the arboricultural assessment. Where habitat loss cannot be avoided the losses will be offset through changes in management within the areas of Public Open Space (POS) and woodland.

Any tree loss will be replaced on a 3:1 basis, in line with local policy.

Grassland management changes will aim to create areas of diverse grassland through overseeding and reduced mowing, restricted to a single cut late in the summer each year, throughout the majority of the grassland, with pathways cut regularly to facilitate access. All arisings from the diverse grassland will be left in situ for a period of at least 24 hours before being removed from the site.

The area of woodland will be subject to changes in management to increase the value of the woodland for biodiversity. The management will include measures to reduce the encroachment of scrub species in the understory and to remove areas of dense ivy, where the plant is detrimental to the health of trees.