

ECOLOGY TECHNICAL NOTE



THE
ENVIRONMENT
PARTNERSHIP

Reference:	7367.040_V4
Date:	03.11.2023
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- 1.1 This technical note has been written in response to the comments received from Merseyside Environmental Advisory Unit (MEAS) on the application for approval of reserved matters (ref: 23/01949/REM). Each consultee comment is summarised below in *italic*, with TEP's responses in **bold** after each point.

Condition 42 – Arboricultural Impact Assessment - Paragraph 7

- 1.2 *The tree retention plan also illustrates additional losses within G7 and G8 to accommodate the Country Park pedestrian connections. It is not clear if these additional trees to be lost have been assessed for their potential to provide habitat for roosting bats and clarification is required. This is addressed further under condition 48 below.*
- 1.3 **All trees within the site were subject to a ground-level tree assessment for their suitability to support bat roosts in 2020. The Final Bat Survey Technical Report (TEP Ref: 7367.011) provides details of this survey. Several trees in G7 and the northern extent of G8 were identified as having the potential to support roosting bats (T20 – T29 – TEP Drawing Ref: G7367.036), although none of these have been identified as requiring removal with respect to Country Park pedestrian connections (see revised Arboricultural Method Statement rev C).**

Condition 47 – Ancient Woodland Buffer – Paragraph 10

- 1.4 *To enable the discharge of Condition 47 the Master Plan should be amended to demonstrate that the 15-metre buffer is also applied to the potential Ancient Woodland (G11).*
- 1.5 **With respect to G11, this area is not designated Ancient Woodland, and as such, it is not necessary to include a 15m buffer in this instance, however in recognition of the “potential” ancient woodland status of G11 the scheme has been revised to retain those trees. Discussion of the status of this woodland was included in TSL Merseyside: Reserved Matters Wood Area technical note (TEP Ref: 7367.032 V3) and included the proposed mitigation approach to ensure the Root Protection Area (RPA) was protected and taken into account during the redesign of the earthworks.**
- 1.6 **Furthermore, in accordance with the Council's adopted Local Plan Policy SUE2C, the adopted Halsnead Garden Village SPD and Condition 46 of the hybrid planning permission (20/00494/HYB), it is necessary to show a highways connection to the neighbouring development land. In order to ensure the future delivery of this highways connection, along with the necessary works associated with delivering the proposed industrial unit and any future highways link, it is not possible to include a**

15m buffer, however Tritax Symmetry as the applicant and developer is committed to ensuring those trees are protected and retained and this is secured through the submitted Tree Protection Plan submitted with the Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

- 1.7 The initial reserved matters application (22/00162/REM) which has been approved includes the retention of G11 and the root protection areas. The earthworks activity approved by the reserved matters approval includes work up to the boundary of the RPA's, and this approach is also required for this current application to facilitate the delivery of the proposed unit and future highways link.

- 1.8 As approved under the initial reserved matters application (22/00162/REM), the proposal to protect the root protection area of G11 is considered to be appropriate.

Condition 48 – Ecological Mitigation Strategy – Paragraph 11

- 1.9 *The principles of biodiversity mitigation detailed within the report are accepted. However, the tree retention plan indicates that additional trees are to be removed within G7 and G8. It is not clear if these additional trees have been subject to an updated assessment for their potential to provide habitat for roosting bats. The updated bat roost assessment is required **prior to the discharge of Condition 48** to ensure the proposed bat mitigation remains acceptable.*

- 1.10 No trees are identified for removal from G7 (see revised Arboricultural Method Statement rev C).

- 1.11 The removal of additional trees within G8 is necessary to accommodate cut and fill works associated with the Country Park scheme. These trees were identified in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment as young to early mature, 20 year old plantation dominated by willow, alder and birch. During the initial ground-level tree assessment in 2020, these trees were identified as having negligible suitability for roosting bats due to their young age and lack of potential roost features (PRFs). Prior to their removal a walkover survey confirmed that these trees were still of negligible potential, still being young to early mature and lacking suitable PRFs.

Matters relating to the Reserved Matters application Unit 2, Protected Species, Bats – Paragraph 12

- 1.12 *The tree retention plan illustrates additional losses within G7 and G8 to accommodate the Country Park pedestrian connections. It is not clear if these additional trees to be lost have been subject to an updated assessment for their potential to provide habitat for roosting bats. An updated assessment of these additional trees, for their potential to provide habitat for roosting bats is required **prior to determination**.*

- 1.13 Please see earlier responses in paragraphs 1.3 and 1.10 – 1.11.