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RE: SUPPLEMENTARY ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT FOR LAND OFF LONG LANE, CHAPEL-EN-LE-FRITH, DERBYSHIRE – RE-ALIGNMENT OF WATERCOURSE

Background

The site at Long Lane, Chapel-en-le-Frith has been the subject of various ecological surveys, undertaken for a planning submission earlier in 2015 for up to 210 dwellings, with associated access, parking, gardens and greenspace. This supplementary ecological assessment details the new proposals to re-align the watercourse on the site, in order to give a small part of the site over to Chapel-en-le-Frith High School, in order for the school to expand. This document will be part of a re-submission for planning permission and should be read in conjunction with the other ecological reports. Ecological reports undertaken for the site include:

- Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey 2014
- Ecological Tree Assessment 2015
- Farmland Wader Survey 2015

No protected species constraints on the site were recognised during the above surveys.

Watercourse

The existing watercourse was surveyed and assessed during the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey in 2014. The survey concluded that the stream is extremely narrow and shallow, with limited aquatic vegetation. It is considered to be sub-optimal habitat for Water Vole due to the depth of water and shallow banks. Records for Water Vole were returned as part of a data search. These records were from Black Brook, approximately 1.5km from the site. No protected species constraints were identified from the stream.

The watercourse is proposed for re-alignment (see Figure 1). The watercourse will be diverted at the southern tip of the school playing fields and will head due west, then north-west before re-joining the existing channel.



Figure 1 showing the existing and proposed watercourse

The new watercourse will be constructed with an open channel, to mimic the existing watercourse. The banks of the new watercourse will be planted with species-rich marginal vegetation, including the following species:

Yellow Flag *Iris pseudacorus*
Hemp-agrimony *Eupatorium cannabinum*
Water Mint *Mentha aquatica*
Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*
Brooklime *Veronica beccabunga*
Water Forget-me-not *Myosotis scorpioides*

The new watercourse, along with the existing watercourse, will be managed as part of the development proposals. The water channel will be retained as open and unshaded, with any scrub saplings removed when young. Litter will be promptly removed. If the water channel appears to be silting up, the substrate will be dredged to retain a flow of water.

Summary

The new alignment of the watercourse will not affect any protected species or important habitats. The new stream will be dug through species-poor grassland (see Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey 2014). The planting and management of the new watercourse will bring biodiversity gain to the site, as it will increase the species diversity on the site and will be an improvement to the habitats, compared to what is currently present.

In addition, the re-alignment will positively enhance the wildlife corridor provided by the watercourse, by enhancing seed dispersal along the entire length of the stream.

No further protected species surveys are considered to be required on this site. The conclusions within the individual ecology reports remain valid.