

To: Operations: Ecology Team

INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS in relation to planning applications. The application, plans and other submitted documents are available via Public Access. Please contact the planning officer Jane Fox (jane.fox@broads-authority.gov.uk) to discuss the proposal or your response.

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| Response Date | Response to be received in Planning by: 10 December 2025 |
| Application Number | BA/2025/0317/FUL |
| Site Address | Whitlingham Great Broad Whitlingham Country Park Whitlingham Lane Trowse Norfolk NR14 8TR |
| Proposal | Proposed construction of wetland habitat scrapes for ecological benefit, and construction of boardwalk through Rough Marsh Plantation, together with associated works. |
| Application Documents | See Public Access - http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/planning/application-search |
| Comments | <p>Ecology summary</p> <p>The proposed development lies approximately 5.3 kilometres downstream from a National Nature Reserve (NNR), the Mid-Yare, which is part of the wider designated Broadland Special Protection Area (SPA), Broads Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Yare Broads & Marshes (SSSI).</p> <p>A small area of neutral grassland will be replaced by seasonally wet ponds/scrapes. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment submitted by Norfolk Rivers Trust (Sept 2025) indicates that the meadow most closely matches the NVC community MG1 - <i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i> grassland and is nutrient-enriched in places with nettles. Whilst this habitat provides food and shelter for small mammals and invertebrates, the creation of ponds/muddy scrapes should improve biodiversity by providing opportunities for a wider range of species. Grassland will be retained to the south.</p> |

The work in the wet woodland (Rough Marsh Plantation) involves winching down up to 7 hazardous mature white willow (*Salix alba*) to mimic storm damage. These will be left in-situ to provide dead wood habitat and create clearings. The BNG surveyors assess this woodland as “moderate” with the works enhancing the condition to “good.”

Ref the woodland, the PEA concludes:

- **bats**, including Barbastelle, may use the woodland for roosting, plus **breeding birds**.
- the habitat may be suitable for foraging otter and water vole but the works should only cause temporary disturbance
- no signs of badger

Habitat and species surveys required/recommended

Bats - before disturbance to the woodland commences, a Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) should be undertaken to identify potential roosting sites (hibernation and maternity) for bats. The whole roosting resource should be considered, not just individual trees planned for removal (ie, ensure any trees removed do not negatively impact any roost features on adjacent trees or the installed bat boxes.) Further surveys may be required following the GLTA.

Birds – the Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) submitted indicates the works will take place in the winter. If timescales change, however, and the works take place during March-Sept, a breeding bird check will need to be undertaken in all suitable habitats prior to works commencing.

Biodiversity Mitigation

To minimise potential pollution to nearby watercourses and impacts on protected species/habitats, all mitigation measures in the CEMP must be implemented.

A plan to show how the newly created areas will be managed following the works must be submitted (may form part of the BNG requirements.)

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| | <p>Biodiversity Enhancements The BNG measures should provide suitable enhancements, provided the long-term management plan is followed.</p> <p>Conclusion No objections, provided due consideration is given to protected species before works commence, particularly bats in the wet woodland.</p> |
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