



Gladman Developments Ltd has won a planning appeal inquiry for a residential development at Coalville, Leicestershire. The development of 180 new homes was initially refused by North West Leicestershire District Council in November 2014 and was subsequently examined at a public inquiry a year later. Baker Consultants provided Gladman with ecological advice throughout the planning process, carrying out comprehensive surveys, negotiating with the Local Planning Authority and giving evidence to the public inquiry.

The project

The Coalville development is a mix of residential properties and a retail unit, together with associated infrastructure. The site sits adjacent to existing housing developments.

Baker Consultants was contracted by Gladman in July 2013 following previous successful contracts and provided comprehensive ecological advice throughout the project. At the start of the project, the full range of baseline ecological surveys (breeding birds, badgers, bat, reptiles and amphibians) were carried out. This stage was critical in providing the sound data upon which the evidence to the inquiry was based.

Challenges

As part of the preliminary ecological assessment, desk research revealed that the proposed development site is within 100m of a Site of Special Scientific Interest SSSI, designated for its species-rich neutral grassland. Six Local Wildlife Site (LWSs) designations are also present within 100m of the site.

The team was able to successfully negotiate with the Local Planning Authority to a point where it was agreed with the local authority ecologist that any ecological impacts could be fully mitigated, and that there were no objections on ecological grounds. Although ecology issues were not therefore cited as a reason for the initial planning refusal, a third party raised ecological objections at the public inquiry.



These ecological objections were swiftly and successfully dealt with during Andrew Baker's evidence in chief. Referring to the ecological objection by the third party, the inspector in his report stated that: "these matters were addressed comprehensively in the evidence of the Appellant [Gladman]". The planning appeal was subsequently allowed and planning permission granted.

Andrew Baker said: "We are very pleased to be part of Gladman's inquiry team and contribute to the successful outcome of this project."

Gladman said: "We are happy with the outcome and with the diligent manner that Baker Consultants worked with Gladman to achieve this result."

Conclusion

The wide range of capabilities provided by Baker Consultants ensured the success of this project, from an initial comprehensive preliminary ecological assessment, to a full suite of protected species surveys, successful liaison with the local authority ecologist and effective representation at public inquiry. Our robust survey methods and public inquiry expertise therefore contributed to planning permission being granted.

For more from this company visit their website www.bakerconsultants.co.uk