

Technical Advice Note

Rugby Borough Council Ecological Constraints Assessment Additional Information for Site 50

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Subject	Site 50: Prologis Park Ryton West, Ryton on Dunsmore
Code	LC-1278_Rugby Ecological Constraints Assessment
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Summary

This Technical Advice Note (TAN) provides a desk-based ecological constraints assessment for employment development proposals at Site 50: Prologis Park Ryton West, Ryton on Dunsmore, Rugby. The findings of this TAN have been informed by an outline site masterplan provided by Rugby Borough Council (RBC, **Figure 1**) and are intended to supplement information provided in the RBC Ecological Constraints Assessment (Lepus, 2024).

Summary of ecological constraints at Site 50

National Designations

1. Site 50 is located within the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) associated with of Ryton Woods SSSI and Brandon Marsh SSSI.
2. Ryton Woods SSSI is designated for the presence of lowland Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) woodland which is ancient woodland. Breeding birds include six species of warblers, and Nightingales (*Luscinia megarhynchos*) have been recorded to have bred regularly at the SSSI.
3. Brandon Marsh SSSI is a complex of flooded gravel pits, fen and scrub lying adjacent to the River Avon. This SSSI supports breeding and wintering birds and an invertebrate assemblage.
4. Ryton and Brandon Gravel Pits SSSI is a geological SSSI. Site 50 is not located within an IRZ associated with this SSSI.

Local designations / site features

5. The River Avon and Tributaries Local Wildlife Site (LWS) is located adjacent to and coincident with Site 50. This LWS provides an arterial network of waterways and wildlife corridors throughout Warwickshire linking wetland and other wildlife habitats such as Abbots Salford and Cleve Bank Woodland in the southwest of the reach all the way up to Brandon Marsh SSSI and beyond. The minor tributaries of the River Avon also form part of the LWS as they are an intrinsic feature of the River Avon.
6. The Siskin Drive Bird Sanctuary LWS is located adjacent to Site 50. This LWS comprises a large block of varied but neglected habitats situated on the western side of the Avon Valley on the south-eastern verge of Coventry. Whilst historically this LWS was one of the best sites for birds in the country, the LWS has since dried out following closure of the old Coventry Sewage Farm. Although it has been largely neglected in recent times, this LWS still has huge potential for nature conservation.
7. Featherstone Farm Fields pLWS is located adjacent to Site 50. There is no citation available for this pLWS.
8. Habitats of medium to high distinctiveness which are located within the footprint of the buildings (as shown on the masterplan – **Figure 1**) include an area of running water only.

Limitations

9. It should be noted that the desk-based evaluation provided in this TAN is restricted to the parameters set by the original Ecological Constraints Assessment brief i.e. SSSIs, SSSI IRZs, LNRs, LWSs and habitats of medium to high distinctiveness.

Recommendations made in the Lepus ecological constraints report (issued Dec 2024)

10. Where alternatives site locations are not feasible, it is recommended that sensitive design and site layout avoid and ensure the protection of ecologically sensitive features associated with Ryton Wood SSSI, Brandon Marsh SSSI, River Avon and Tributaries LWS, Siskin Drive Bird Sanctuary LWS and Featherstone Farm Fields pLWS. Sensitive site design should be undertaken in consultation with Natural England. It is necessary to demonstrate that there will be no adverse impacts on Ryton Wood SSSI or Brandon Marsh SSSI from any development at Site 50 to ensure compliance with national legislation and policy. This must be demonstrated through an assessment, careful consideration of mitigation measures and consultation and approval from Natural England. Should the nature of development lead to any impacts on any SSSI, this would be subject to appropriate mitigation to ensure no adverse effects as set out in Chapter 58 of the Lepus Ecological Constraints Report (Dec 2024).

11. The River Avon floodplain extends into Site 50. Development should avoid and protect this area of the site through careful site layout and design. Mitigation as set out in Chapter 58 of the Lepus Ecological Constraints Report (Dec 2024) may include the incorporation of a wildlife corridor along the River Avon and buffer zones. Opportunities to include these areas into innovative sustainable nature- based drainage solutions should be sought which may also assist with flood mitigation.
12. Appropriate mitigation set out in chapter 58 for this site includes:
 - Incorporate a buffer zone into site design to protect ecologically sensitive habitats and features (and also water quality and quantity).
 - Retain quiet areas with limited public access – created a nature reserve area and link with other habitats along River Avon corridor.
 - Ensure site layout is designed to prevent light spill, noise and visual disturbance to protect wildlife corridors and migration routes.
 - Use sensitive construction methods and timings and implement a Construction Environmental Management Plan or Operation Management Plan.
 - Opportunities should be sought through careful design to connect habitats at Site 50 with those across the Plan area to provide bigger, better and more joined up habitat and wildlife corridors at the landscape scale. Enhancements should be undertaken in accordance with targets set out in Warwickshire’s Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP).
 - Where feasible, features of poor ecological value on site should be enhanced and all habitats should be monitored and managed throughout the lifetime of a development.
 - Site design / application to be informed by a detailed site survey (to include consideration of protected species).
 - Hedgerows and watercourses on and adjacent to Site 50 should be recorded and maintained as they provide particularly important wildlife corridors across the wider landscape
 - Landscape planting should focus on species of local provenance and drainage features should be integrated into an ecological design.

Review of masterplan detail provided 24/12/24

13. See masterplan below in **Figure 1** and site location in **Figure 2**.



Figure 1: Masterplan for Site 50



Figure 2: Location of Site 50

National designations

14. At its closest point Ryton Wood SSSI is located 425m to the south east of proposed buildings at Site 50. The A445 and a Police Training Centre are located between the SSSI and Site 50 (**Figure 2**).

15. At its closest point Brandon Marsh SSSI is located 1km to the north east of proposed buildings on Site 50. The A423, A45, a warehousing development, woodland and pastoral fields are located between the SSSI and Site 50 (**Figure 2**).
16. The IRZ for Ryton Woods SSSI flags up the following development: 'Any industrial / agricultural development that could cause air pollution, or large infrastructure such as warehousing / industry where total net additional gross internal floorspace following development is 1,000m² or more'.
17. The IRZ for Brandon Marsh SSSI flags up the following development: 'Any industrial / agricultural development that could cause air pollution, or large infrastructure such as warehousing / industry where total net additional gross internal floorspace following development is > 1,000m² or any development needing its own water supply'.
18. Given the distance of both SSSIs from the proposed development at Site 50, the presence of infrastructure (existing development and road infrastructure) between Site 50 and both SSSIs and the nature of proposed development (employment only), it is likely that impacts from proposed employment development will be associated with noise, air quality (traffic and industrial point sources), water (water quality and quantity) and visual (e.g. lighting) impacts.
19. When the uses of the site are known, further assessment would need to be undertaken to quantify these impacts and assess their effect upon both SSSIs. Development would need to demonstrate there would be no adverse impact upon these SSSIs due to air, noise, water and visual impacts. This may be ascertained through technical studies such as a detailed drainage strategy, air quality assessment, noise assessment, lighting strategy etc.
20. Natural England would need to be consulted upon the nature of development and potential impacts and satisfied that there would be no adverse effects.

Local designations

21. The masterplan now shows an area of greenspace (extended county park) retained along the River Avon and Tributaries LWS and to the south of the Siskin Drive Brid Sanctuary LWS to the west of the site with development focused towards the east of the site (see masterplan screenshot in **Figure 1**). It is recommended that public access to this area of greenspace be limited (ideally no public access by foot or bike to retain a quiet area for wildlife) and measures to enhance and monitor this habitat be incorporated into the scheme design. We note members wish to allow public access in this area so perhaps some areas can be retained as 'quiet areas' with access focused in other areas away from the key wildlife corridor.
22. Protection of water quality and water quantity at the River Avon and Tributaries LWS will be an important consideration and will require specialist studies to ensure that water quality and quantity can be protected and enhanced.

23. With this mitigation in place, it is likely that the LWS on and adjacent to the site will be retained and enhanced. Other mitigation set out in Chapter 58 of the Ecological Constraints report (Lepus, Dec 2024), and as outlined above, should be taken forward such as incorporation of locally native species, links to Local Nature Recovery Network (LNRN) etc.

- End of Note -