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Planning Applications Manager
High Peak Borough Council
Planning Department
Municipal Buildings
Glossop
Derbyshire
SK13 8AF

Your Ref: HPK/2025/0068

Our ref: DWTHPK783

17th April 2025

Dear ,

Proposal: The erection of a new self-build residential dwelling to the rear of 17 Level Lane

Location: 17, Level Lane, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 6TU

Application Ref No: HPK/2025/0068

With reference to the above application, I am responding as the Biodiversity Planning Officer responsible for work relating to the Service Level Agreement, which the High Peak Borough Council and the Trust have signed. The following comments are aimed at providing accurate and up to date information on the nature conservation issues associated with the proposed development.

Response overleaf



We have reviewed the information submitted, inclusive of the Preliminary Ecological Assessment (Helen Hamilton Ecology, March 2025), Habitats Regulations Assessment (Dunelm Ecology, February 2025), Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Peak Tree Consultancy, November 2024), and our Biological Record Centre Database (DBRC) and have the following comments and recommendations to make.

The Ecological Appraisal presents the results of a UKHabs Habitat Survey and protected species assessment undertaken in November 2024. The recommendations within the PEA have been informed by an appropriate desk study which highlights that the River Wye flows along the eastern boundary of the site as well as the presence of Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Sites Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the local area.

Designated Sites

No statutory or non-statutory sites lie within the application site or immediately adjacent to. However, the site is situated between the South Pennine Moors SAC / Peak District Moors SPA and Poole's Cavern and Grin Low Wood SSSI, which triggered the need to undertake a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA), to examine likely impacts of the proposed development on statutory designated European sites. The HRA is considered to be robust, and after assessing the impacts of the proposals, we support the conclusion that there will be no *Likely Significant Effects (LSEs) arising from the proposed scheme on the Conservation Objectives or the qualifying features of the Peak District Dales SAC.*

Habitats

The application site comprises developed land sealed surface, modified grassland / vegetated garden, suburban mosaic of developed and natural surface and individual trees. The habitats within the application site are considered to be of 'site' value in a geographical context.

However, we note that the River Wye flows immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary. Based on the current design proposals, there will be a 10m buffer from the river and development area, comprising vegetated garden and the retained trees along the riparian zone. It is therefore considered that a River Condition Assessment is not required. We support the need to secure appropriate pollution control measures and 10m buffer zone as part of a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan: Biodiversity (CEMP).

Protected Species

The habitats to be directly impacted / cleared to facilitate the development (modified grassland and developed land) are considered to provide limited opportunities for protected species. No protected species records are present within the site or immediately adjacent to. However, foraging hedgehog are likely to be utilising the site on an intermittent basis. The mature trees and off-site River Wye are likely to constitute an important foraging and commuting habitat for local bat populations and other nocturnal wildlife.

We acknowledge that a 10m buffer from the development and River Wye will be implemented and therefore no further surveys pertaining to otter, water vole and white-clawed crayfish are required.

Furthermore, we consider that the above recommended CEMP: Biodiversity should secure appropriate precautionary working measures and pollution control measures. A sensitive lighting scheme should be secured by condition to retain the River Wye and associated riparian zone as a dark corridor (below).

Conditions

Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP: Biodiversity)

No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance and movement of plant, machinery and materials) until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall be produced by an ecologist and shall include the following.

- a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
- b) Identification of “biodiversity protection zones”, inclusive of a 10m buffer zone between the development and the River Wye.
- c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction.
- d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
- e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
- f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
- g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.

- h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Lighting

Prior to the installation of lighting fixtures, a detailed lighting strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA to safeguard bats and other nocturnal wildlife. This should provide details of the chosen luminaires, their locations and any mitigating features such as dimmers, PIR sensors and timers. Dependent on the scale of proposed lighting, a lux contour plan may be required to demonstrate acceptable levels of lightspill to any sensitive ecological zones/features. The Strategy should refer to Guidance Note 08/23 - Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night (BCT and ILP, 2023) and explain how proposals have been designed in compliance with this document. Such approved measures will be implemented in full.

Biodiversity Enhancement Plan

Prior to building works commencing above foundation level, a Biodiversity Enhancement Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Approved measures shall be implemented in full and maintained thereafter. The Plan shall clearly show positions, specifications and numbers of features, which will include (but are not limited to) the following:

- 1 x integrated universal nest box / swift brick in dwelling (avoiding southern elevations)
- integrated bat boxes in dwelling (favouring southern elevations)
- insect bricks in dwelling.
- fencing gaps 130 mm x 130 mm to maintain connectivity for hedgehogs.
- summary of ecologically beneficial landscaping, inclusive of native tree planting (full details to be provided in Landscape Plans).

A statement of good practice including photographs shall be submitted to the local planning authority to fully discharge this condition, demonstrating that the enhancements have been selected and installed in accordance with the approved Plan.

It is hoped that the information provided is helpful to the Council. If you require any further information or wish to discuss any of the comments made, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Biodiversity Planning Officer

Endnote:

Please see our planning pages <https://www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/planning> for ecological advice on submitting a planning application, finding an ecological consultant and information on mitigation and enhancement.