



Derbyshire
Wildlife Trust

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

For the attention of Stuart Talbot

Your Ref: HPK/2023/0218

Our ref: DWTHPK794

9th July 2025

Dear Stuart,

Proposal: Installation of Ground Mounted Solar Panels utilising Renusol Buckets placed onto the ground weighted down but not fixed structures. The installation consists of 3 rows of solar panels which are each 1m wide x 10m long x 0.4m height. The installation is in excess of 5m from the boundary, not visible from the road

Location: The Old Golf House 33 Stoneheads Whaley Bridge

Application Ref No: HPK/2023/0218

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

Habitats and Species

No ecological information has been submitted with this application. The application form states that the application area is covered in brambles, weeds and some bilberries. We have checked the application area, and specifically the footprint of works, on aerial mapping and our Biological Records Database. We can confirm that we are not aware of any conservation designations, records of protected species or notable habitats within or adjacent to the application area.

As per the application form, the area appears to support scrub and trees, interspersed with grassland. Given the geographical location and the report of bilberries, it is likely that acid grassland and heathland are present. These could comprise the Priority Habitats 'Lowland Dry Acid Grassland' and 'Lowland Heathland'. The LPA has a responsibility to consider Priority Habitats as part of the planning process, with a view to protecting and enhancing these. Common reptiles, amphibians and nesting birds may be present in the locality.

The footprint of the arrays is relatively small and temporary in nature, however given the potential for Priority Habitats on site, we advise that an ecologist should advise on the best location for the arrays, to avoid and minimise impacts, in line with the mitigation hierarchy. It is likely that local wildlife could be safeguarded through best practice working measures.

BNG

The application is currently claimed as householder, which would result in an exemption from mandatory 10% gain. The LPA should be satisfied that it qualifies under this development type.

If the LPA considers that it does not qualify for any BNG exemption, then a metric should be submitted prior to determination, demonstrating how 10% gains could be achieved, along with baseline and post-development habitat plans. Given the mosaic of habitats present and the potential for Priority Habitats, we consider that the involvement of an ecologist in any BNG assessment would be advisable.

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,

Libby Duggan-Jones MBiolSci MCIEEM
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.