
From: Preece, Mark
Sent: 22 August 2017 12:32
To: Haywood, Ben
Cc: Planning Comments (SMDC)
Subject: FW: SMD/2017/0387 - Wain Homes, Leekbrook

From: Preece, Mark
Sent: 22 August 2017 12:25
To: Simpkin, Rachael
Subject: RE: SMD/2017/0387 - Wain Homes, Leekbrook

Rachael,

Sorry for the delay in responding to this report. The habitats on the site have potential to be of Local Wildlife Site (LWS) value, and should be assessed in more detail against the current designation criteria, available here:

http://www.staffs-ecology.org.uk/html2015/index.php?title=SBI_Guidelines

The species poor modified grassland as detailed in the report contains 53 species. Scoring the modified - species poor grassland against the Guidelines for the Selection of Sites of County Biological Importance in Staffordshire, from the report target note list produces a score of 20. Sites scoring 20 or more according to the guidelines are considered local Wildlife Site(LWS) quality.

It is important that any areas meeting the LWS are identified, as they are a material consideration in the planning process.

Given the diversity of the grassland it would be appropriate to assess its value in relation to invertebrates.

There is no assessment of the value of habitats for invertebrates within the report. The mix of bare ground, flower rich grassland, scrub, and associated adjacent woodland may have value for invertebrates. An assessment should be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist.

The site may classify as an 'open mosaic on previously developed land'. Open mosaics on brownfield sites can be of importance to invertebrates. Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land' are a UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) habitat and a Priority habitat listed on Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act). Further surveys are suggested to assess the potential of the site to support invertebrates according to best practice guidelines.

For more information see:

<https://www.buglife.org.uk/sites/default/files/Identifying%20open%20mosaic%20habitat.pdf>

The survey report indicates that there are no badgers on site . However, the survey should include adjacent land, in particular woodland to the north east of the site to ensure that there are no badger setts adjacent to the site that could be affected by the development. For example the foraging area of nearby badgers could include the site if there are setts located on nearby land. The boundary of the survey as defined in the report does not include adjacent land.

Therefore I object to the application on the grounds that more detailed survey is required in respect of badgers and the potential of the site to support invertebrates. The development may also result in the loss of grassland that meets Local Wildlife Site criteria. The survey analysis must consider this and how impacts will be mitigated and compensated.

Regards

Mark

Mark Preece

Client Officer (Country Parks/ Ecology Advice)

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From: Simpkin, Rachael
Sent: 18 July 2017 10:23
To: Preece, Mark
Subject: FW: SMD/2017/0387 - Wain Homes, Leekbrook

Hi Mark,

Pls see attached updated survey in relation to the above site.

Kind regards,

Rachael

Rachael Simpkin
Senior Planning Officer (Majors)
Development Services

Highpeak Borough Council and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

T: 01538 395 400 x4122

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Working Days: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday am

From: Caroline Payne [mailto:CPayne@emeryplanning.com]
Sent: 13 July 2017 11:41
To: Simpkin, Rachael

Cc: Stephen Harris; 'Iain Fowler (Wainhomes (North West) Ltd)' (iain.fowler@wainhomes.net)

Subject: FW: SMD/2017/0387 - Wain Homes, Leekbrook

Dear Rachael,

Thank you for forwarding the countryside comments to Stephen. Please would you also keep me copied in on correspondence relating to this site as I am working alongside Stephen on this project.

Please find attached an updated Ecological Assessment undertaken by TEP and dated July 2017. A further water vole survey is scheduled to take place later in the summer.

The updated Ecological Assessment should address some of the issues raised in the response from Mr Preece although I note he makes some comments on the layout. Could we arrange a meeting to discuss consultation responses and detailed matters such as this? I note that the public consultation period is scheduled to expire on 22 August 2017. Would it be possible to schedule a meeting for Monday 21st, Wednesday 23rd or Thursday 24th August?

Kind regards

Caroline Payne
Associate Director

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info@epp-planning.com

From: "Simpkin, Rachael" <Rachael.Simpkin@staffs Moorlands.gov.uk>
Date: 11 July 2017 at 15:29:12 BST
To: "Stephen Harris (SHarris@emeryplanning.com)" <SHarris@emeryplanning.com>
Subject: SMD/2017/0387 - Wain Homes, Leekbrook

Hi Stephen,

Please find the countryside officer's response set out below raising objections, particularly in relation to insufficient information.

I look forward to your response within the next 10 working days.

Kind regards,

Rachael

Rachael Simpkin
Senior Planning Officer (Majors)
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Highpeak Borough Council and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

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Working Days: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday am

From: Preece, Mark
Sent: 11 July 2017 15:18
To: Simpkin, Rachael
Subject: SMD/2017/0387

Rachael,

Application SMD/2017/0387: Land Off, WARDLE GARDENS, LEEKBROOK, LEEK, STAFFORDSHIRE. Proposed erection of 41 dwellings

To object to the application due to a lack of up to date relevant ecological information to determine fully impacts on biodiversity

A phase I survey was carried out in November 2013. The site is considered to consist of mostly areas of bare ground , There are areas of tall ruderal and patches of Japanese knotweed and Himalayan Balsom on site. A further amphibian and otter survey found no evidence of the presence of these protected species.

The Ecological assessment cites the purpose of the report is to provide details of measures to ensure that there is no loss of biodiversity. It is critical that a net gain for biodiversity is appropriate to the scale and nature of the development. The Ecological assessment was carried out in 2013, given that most of the site was classed as bare ground at this point . It would be appropriate to carry out an updated survey to assess any new habitats. Early successional habitats can be especially valuable for wildlife.

The site should be assessed against the Guidelines for the selection of Sites of County Importance in Staffordshire. The habitats on the site may have potential to be of Local Wildlife Site (LWS) value, and should be assessed in more detail against the current designation criteria, available here:

http://www.staffs-ecology.org.uk/html2015/index.php?title=SBI_Guidelines

It is important that any areas meeting the LWS are identified, as they are a material consideration in the planning process. In particular do habitats meet LWS criteria for open mosaics on previously developed land.

The creation of a biodiversity constraints and opportunities map would be appropriate best practice given the size and scale of the development. See Biodiversity Code of practice for planning and development BS 42020:2013.

The survey does not indicate if the surrounding land had been surveyed for the presence of badgers. A badger survey is advocated before the impacts on biodiversity are assessed. It is noted that there are records of badger within 650m of the site. Suitable woodland habitat that could provide habitat to support a badger sett exist surrounding the site. The presence of badgers may have a material implication on the layout of the development and so is required to be submitted with the planning application and cannot be conditioned.

The development has a hard edge to the woodland along the north west boundary of the development. Houses are aligned directly against the woodland boundary. A greenspace buffer , and a different configuration with gardens backing on this edge would be a better design. Maintaining and enhancing woodland is a key policy in the Churney Valley Master Plan (March 2014) within which the proposed development is located. Linking woodland and the Soils Wood SBI on the western side of the site within the block of woodland on the north east side of the site via corridors created within the development should be a priority. The site appears to be overdeveloped with little space to link, buffer or create biodiversity habitat enhancements.

Further conditions to be applied when all ecological information is received:

No development shall take place until an Ecological design strategy (EDS) has addressing mitigation and enhancement

has been submitted to an approved in writing by the local planning authority:

The EDS should include:

- a) Purpose and conservation of objectives of the proposed enhancements.
- b) Detailed designs and or working methods to achieve stated objectives.
- c) Extent and location of proposed works on appropriate plans and scale maps
- d) Type and source of material used where appropriate e.g. native species of local provenance.
- e) Creation and enhancements of semi natural habitats linked to Staffordshire and UK Biodiversity Action Plan priorities in particular broadleaved native woodland
- f) Provision for linear wildlife corridors linked into the surrounding landscape promoting habitat connectivity.
- g) Timetable for the implementation of works demonstrating that works are aligned with the proposed phases of the development.
- h) Creation of bird nesting features for bats, swift, house martin and house sparrow within new buildings.
- i) A lighting design plan and technical specifications to minimise light spill into surrounding hedgerows and the adjacent countryside. Lighting must demonstrate minimal impacts on foraging or commuting bats that may use adjacent woodland and allow birds species to exhibit undisturbed behaviour patterns.
- j) Timing and phasing of any proposed vegetation removal to minimise impacts on breeding birds.
- k) Persons responsible for implementing the proposed works.
- l) Details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance.
- m) Details of monitoring and remedial measures.
- n) Details of disposal of any wastes arising from works.

The EDS shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and all features shall be retained in that manor thereafter.

Birds

No removal of trees, shrubs, tall ruderal or brambles between 31st March and 31st August inclusive unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful detailed check of vegetation for active birds nests, immediately before vegetation removal, and provided written confirmation that no birds will be harmed and, or appropriate methods are in place to protect nesting bird interest on sites. Any such written confirmation should be submitted to the local planning authority

Invasive species

A method statement as part of the ecological design strategy must be produced detailing how Himalayan balsom and Japanese knotweed will be eradicated. Any waste containing Japanese knotweed is defined as controlled waste and must be disposed of according to the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010.

Regards

Mark

Mark Preece

Client Officer (Country Parks/ Ecology Advice)
Operational Services

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