

Apesford Farm SWT Comments

Application Reference: SMD/2024/0529

Location: Apesford Farm

Proposed Development: Erection of replacement dwelling

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust has been asked to review the above application as part of a service level agreement with Staffordshire Moorlands District Council to provide ecology advice regarding planning and development management functions.

Documents Viewed:

- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Report- Hewitt Carr Services – February 2025
- Small Sites Metric (The Statutory Biodiversity Metric) - Hewitt Carr Services – February 2025

Summary: We recommend a **holding objection** until the following information is supplied and our comments are resolved:

- There are several errors and clarifications required within the BNG report and metric that need resolving.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Report

- The report is dated as 6th February 2025 but the map on page 4 is dated as 3rd March 2025. Please correct the report date.
- The report lacks any detail regarding the survey method employed to the report. Please clarify what methodology was used.
- The grassland survey is dated as being undertaken on 6th February 2025. February is outside the optimal survey window for grasslands so we would require the survey is redone in the appropriate window.
- The report refers to a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) being with the vicinity of the application site, but no details are given regarding the site's proximity to the SSSI or any other sites that are of nature conservation importance. Please clarify the proximity of the SSSI.
- The report lacks any details regarding the ongoing management and monitoring of the habitats. Please provide more detail on the management and monitoring to cover the 30-year period.
- Please remove the reference to the Cornwall Biodiversity Action Plan as it is not relevant to the current application.

Small Sites Metric (SSM)

- The SSM requires some clarification regarding the number of habitats to be retained or enhanced. Currently, the fields within the metric for these criteria are blank.

Regards

Dated 25.03.2025