

Land off Park Drive SWT Comments

Application Reference: SMD/2024/0291

Location: LAND OFF , Park Drive , Cheadle , Staffordshire ,

Proposed Development:

Demolition of existing out buildings and creation of new dwelling and garage off existing access and associated works

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. Staffordshire Wildlife Trust previously responded on 9th September 2024.

Documents Viewed:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal- Eyebright Ecology, March 2025

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

- A grassland survey is required at a suitable time of year.

Further detail

The survey was carried out on 9th December, this is an inappropriate time of year to carry out a grassland survey, with the optimum time between April and mid - October, providing that the grass hasn't been cut, and ideally in June through to August.

Once a survey has been carried out at a suitable time of year, the grassland habitat may be assigned another habitat, which may be other neutral grassland, based off the species list and pictures given.

Conditions

Mitigation measures detailed in the preliminary ecological appraisal should be followed:

- Bats: An integrated bat box is proposed in the new dwelling as an enhancement for the site. These are self-contained boxes in the external wall which require no cleaning or maintenance. The bat box will be built into a south or west facing gable at the time of construction and would be a Vivara Pro Build In box, Habibat, Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box or a similar integrated bat box. Ideally the box will be close to the top of the gable and should not be sited directly above windows.

- Hedgehog: During construction, any excavations must be covered at night or have mammal escape ramps included. As an enhancement, install a hedgehog house in a corner of the garden or under a dense shrub. This can be cheaply built using bricks and paving slabs, or by purchasing a commercially available woodstone hedgehog house. (see Section 7 for hedgehog info) (N.B. avoid use of igloo-style wicker hedgehog houses which can be dangerous for hedgehogs)
- Birds: Avoid removing vegetation between March to August inclusive. If work cannot avoid the main nesting period of March to August, check for active nests prior to work commencing. Any areas with active nests will need to be avoided until fledglings have left the nest. To enhance the site for nesting birds, two integrated swift bricks will be installed on the west (or east) facing gable of the garage, at least 1m apart from each other. Swift bricks are also readily used by house sparrows and other cavity nesting species. In addition, 2 tree bird boxes will be installed on mature trees in the garden. These will be 32mm hole woodstone boxes such as Vivara Pro Seville.
- Invertebrates: As an enhancement, two solitary bee bricks are proposed in the south-facing wall of the garage. These bricks replace a normal brick so are permanent features. These will be sited to receive sun for most of the day, and around 1 – 1.5m high. To encourage uptake, plant nectar producing flowers in pots or borders nearby.
- Biodiversity enhancement: Hedges are encouraged to be planted rather than (or as well as) using fences, as hedges provide habitat for many species and are an easy way to boost biodiversity, especially if a native hedge is planted. Native hedges should include a mixture of at least five native hedgerow species, for example: hawthorn, hazel, dog rose, elder, holly, dogwood, field maple, oak and guelder rose. Consideration may be given for planting a native hedge along the existing fence line of the eastern boundary of the garden.

Regards

31.03.025