

Land Adjacent to Coppice Barn, Hollow Lane, Cheddleton - SWT Comments

Date: 09/07/25

Application Reference: SMD/2025/0145

Location: Land Adjacent to Coppice Barn, Hollow Lane, Cheddleton, Staffordshire

Proposed Development: Proposed self build dwelling with associated means of access and hard and soft landscaping 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.

Documents Viewed:

- Application form
- Ecological Impact Assessment
- 2024-2914-04 PLANNING PROPOSAL - LOCATION AND BLOCK PLAN.
- 2024-2914-01A EXISTING CONDITIONS - SITE PLAN
- 2024-2914-02D PLANNING PROPOSAL - SITE PLAN

Summary: We have no **holding objections** with regard to this planning application. We do however list a number of conditions to be attached to the planning application as detailed below.

Conditions

- Reasonable Avoidance Measures for herptiles as recommended by the EIA, to be communicated to and signed off by all site workers through a toolbox talk prior to any works.
 - Onsite grassland should be maintained to a short sward (less than 100mm) prior to the commencement of works. This is to discourage reptiles and amphibians from using the site.
 - Before any works commence, all site contractors/stakeholders will be briefed on the Reasonable Avoidance Measures during a 'Tool-box' talk of the potential for protected species to occur on site, what to look out for and what to do in the event that animals are found.
 - During construction works, materials that require piling will be stored within areas of bare ground above ground level, using pallets to prevent reptiles or amphibians from seeking shelter below.

- Excavations/trenches should not be left open overnight to prevent reptiles and amphibians falling into them and becoming trapped. If trenches cannot be filled in after the working day for whatever reason, an escape mechanism such as wooden planks of 50mm wide as a minimum should be placed in them at a 45-degree diagonal angle.
- Open excavations should be checked in the morning on a daily basis for the presence of any animals that may have fallen in during the night.
- If a reptile or amphibian is found work must stop immediately, and contact should be made with a suitably experienced ecologist. At no point should any person handle a herptile without express consent from the ecologist. Any reptiles found should be left to leave the site of their own accord. Where this is not possible, they should be placed into a ventilated box using gloved hands and released into suitable nearby vegetation, away from the working area.
- If a suspected great crested newt is found at any point during construction, works must stop immediately and a suitably qualified ecologist should be contacted.
- Reasonable Avoidance Measures for mammals as recommended by the EIA, to be communicated to and signed off by all site workers through a toolbox talk prior to any works.
 - During construction, it is recommended that deep, steep sided excavations are not left overnight without an escape route, either a ramp or sloping bank. Similarly, it is advised that any pipes stored on site are capped.
 - Open excavations should be checked in the morning on a daily basis for the presence of any animals that may have fallen in during the night.
 - If a hedgehog is found onsite, it should be picked up with gloved hands, placed in a ventilated box and released into suitable nearby vegetation that will be unaffected by the proposed works.
 - It is important that any new fencing or walls installed as part of the development do not create a barrier to dispersal for wildlife. It is recommended that suitable holes are incorporated at the base of boundary structures to allow wildlife to commute through the site, such as specific “hedgehog holes” which are 13 x 13cm in size.
- The felling of T2 and T3 if required will be undertaken in line with the following working methods, as recommended by the EIA with regard to roosting bats:
 - Timing of the works should be considered in relation to the identified features. Potential Roosting Features identified on T2/3 were not considered suitable for bat hibernation. The works are recommended to

be carried out during the winter - between November and March (inclusive) under supervision of a bat licenced ecologist.

- A temporary roost feature must be provided on site prior to the start of the works. A bat box suitable for crevice dwelling species is recommended to be installed upon a mature tree or structure within close proximity to T2/3, whilst also being suitably away from works which may cause disturbance. The location of the bat box will be determined by the supervising ecologist.
- PRFs will be removed as a whole including a buffer either side, where possible, and lowered to the ground in a slow and controlled manner. Where features cannot be removed as whole, they will be removed progressively, with each section re-inspected at the supervising bat licenced ecologist's discretion.
- Once removed, the features or sections will be carefully lowered and placed on the ground and left overnight to allow any bats that may be present but have not been found to disperse.
- Should any bats or field signs of bats be recorded during works, the works will cease immediately, and the project ecologist contacted for advice on how to proceed. If a bat roost is confirmed by the ecologist, the works will be required to cease in that area until further survey is completed to properly assess the roost.
- All tree felling should also take into account nesting birds, with any felling between the core nesting season of March to September only taking place once a suitably qualified ecologist has confirmed the absence of active nests.
- As recommended by the EIA with regard to foraging and commuting bats, *"Any lighting scheme should be designed to avoid illuminating habitats used by bats, such as scattered trees, in accordance with guidance set out in Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night (ILP, 2023). Consideration should also be given to the times automatic lighting will be on, to maximise the amount of time the area is in darkness throughout construction works and once construction is complete. Low intensity bulbs (sodium lamps) should be used, with lamps fitted with spill accessories to avoid upward spill."* A sensitive nocturnal lighting plan for construction and operation of the site is required as a pre-commencement condition. This will need a further condition to ensure that the lighting has been installed as per the sensitive lighting plan.
- As recommended by the EIA with regard to breeding birds, no removal of hedgerows, trees or shrubs shall take place between 1st March and 31st September inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check of vegetation for active birds' nests immediately before the

vegetation is cleared and provided written confirmation that no birds will be harmed and/or that there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting bird interest on site. Any such written confirmation should be submitted to the LPA.

- A pre-commencement condition for a management plan for the removal of Schedule 9 invasive species i.e. Rhododendron.
- The EIA provides recommendations to provide net gain in line with NPPF and local plan policy. A pre-commencement condition for details of all ecological enhancements to be approved, this includes number, type and location of all bat and bird boxes, insect refugia and a LEMP and planting plan showing correct ground conditions etc. for planned habitats.