Hopestone Farm SWT Comments

Date: 07.07.2025
Application Reference: SMD/2025/0166
Location: Hopestone Farm , Park Lane , Ipstones , Staffordshire , ST10 2NE
Proposed Development: Machinery Shed

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:

- 2502 Hopestone Farm Biodiversity Gain Statement- DBD Archetectural Consultancy, March 2025.
- 2502 Hopestone Farm DA Statement REV A- DBD Archetectural Consultancy, June 2025.
- 2502 Hopestone Farm PL01F Site Plan A1 1-1250- DBD Archetectural Consultancy, January 2025.
- 2502 Hopstone Farm PL02C Plans and Proposed A3 1-100- DBD Archetectural Consultancy, January 2025.
- 2502 Hopestone Farm PL03 Biodiversity gain plan A3 1-200- DBD Archetectural Consultancy, April 2025.
- 2502 Hopstone Farm Small Sites Metric Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool 03.25

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

- Amendments to the metric to be made
- Clarity has been given to bats

Further detail

- The survey was done by a competent person; the name and job title of the person has not been given in the desktop assessment page of the metric.
- Photos should be given of all the habitats on site, including the hard standing and the building to be removed, in the supporting information tab of the metric.
- The created building and hard standing have not been added to the habitats to be created
- The areas of the created habitats do not match the area of habitat lost; this is likely due to the building and hardstanding track not being included in the created habitats.

- Using the net gain staffs website, it can be seen that the site is in a strategic and semi-strategic area for woodland and grassland. This needs reflecting on the metric.
- It would be helpful to have habitat maps that show the baseline and proposed habitats on site.

BNG

BNG is a material consideration, and we have insufficient information to consider whether the Biodiversity Gain Condition is capable of being discharged. To enable us to do this for this application, we require the following information:

Significant On-site Habitats

- Soil test showing conditions are suitable for creation of grassland (this is required after conditions have been created). This is particularly important as the modified grassland is to be enhanced to good condition other neutral grassland.
- Detail in the LEMP of the creation of suitable ground conditions for the habitats you are creating
- Draft HMMP detailing management to create desired habitat, timings of when you would expect to see certain conditions and remedial measures for if things do not go to plan
- You may wish to submit a draft Biodiversity Gain Plan to provide evidence that the trading rules / net gain hierarchy etc have been met
- Draft post development BNG metric and habitat plan

Conditions

Due to the possibility of there being suitable bird breeding habitat within the site, all building works should be undertaken outside of the bird breeding season (March to August inclusive). If vegetation and/or structures are required to be removed during the bird breeding season, then a further inspection by a suitably qualified ecologist is required no more than twenty-four hours before these are to be removed. If an active nest is found, a suitable exclusion zone around the nest will be necessary, where no vegetation removal can take place, to preserve the nest until the chicks have fledged.