

Brief Ecology Assessment

for proposed works on:

land at
Grove Street,
Worsbrough,
Barnsley,
S70 4SN

Site Location

The site is located approximately five miles south of Barnsley town centre and three miles east of the M1 Motorway in a wholly residential area.

The site is within the limits of the Dearne Valley Nature Improvement Area.

Site Description

The site is a vacant parcel of grassland between established terraced housing to the south-east and south-west with semi-detached and detached houses to the north-east and north-west.

The adopted highway (Grove Street) forms the north-eastern boundary consisting of a macadam footway and carriageway. There is a surfaced public footpath along the north-west boundary and a common access along the south-west boundary separated from the site by a low rise brick retaining wall.

The land contains natural slopes falling from the north-west to the south-east by approximately 1.50m (along the Grove Street frontage) and more severe slopes falling from the north-east to the south-west by approximately 2.75m av.

The land is covered in grass with no tree or shrub planting and no structures, conduits or ducts which are likely to provide shelter for local wildlife.

There is a history of the site having been used for housing with pre-twentieth century developments and mid to late twentieth century developments signs of which above ground have disappeared. However, past demolition works relating to these developments will inevitably have had an effect upon the ground make-up down to depths of 600mm.

Methods and Results

1. A data search using www.natureonthemap.org.uk was carried out which revealed no records of species at Grove Street or in the postcode locality.
2. A walk-over of the site did not highlight evidence of unusual wildlife species living on or near to the site.
3. The South Yorkshire Bat Group was not consulted as there is no local evidence of bat roosting and little tree cover to support this.
4. The South Yorkshire Badger Group was not consulted as there is no evidence of occupation by badgers locally and little in the way of suitable terrain to support badgers.

Evaluation

The site contains open, untended grassland bounded on all sides by hard surfacing. The top layers of the ground are made up of deposits from past development and loose rock with a thin layer of topsoil, particularly along the Grove Street boundary.

The quality of the grasses is poor and there are no trees or shrubs on the land. No legally protected plant species were noted as being present.

There is no potential for nesting, common garden birds on the land.

Mitigation and Enhancement Measures

The National Planning Policy Framework states that planning decisions should aim to "maintain and enhance biodiversity. The following measures are aimed at reducing impacts upon bio-diversity and ensuring long term ecological enhancements as a result of this development:

1. Create a landscaping plan for the site which includes planting of small shrubs and trees which will create new nesting and foraging habitat for a variety of bird and small mammals species.
2. Tree planting includes a mixture of Flowering Cherry and Flowering Crab Apple.
3. Shrub planting includes a mixture of Hawthorn Hedge, Pyracantha Red Berries, Berberis Darwinii, Blackthorn Hedge and Cotoneasta Lacteus Hedge.

Conclusion

The site is located in an area which is lacking in features which will encourage wildlife to thrive. The proposed development includes a number of soft landscaping measures which, when combined, will provide suitable habitats for birds and insects and will encourage nesting of small birds.

Overall, the proposal will make a positive contribution to the conservation of garden birds and insects by providing them with suitable places to live and nest in the area.