

Date: 22 July 2024
Our ref: 480896
Your ref: 2022/0115



James Hyde
Barnsley Council
PO BOC 634
Barnsley
S70 9GG

Customer Services
Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Mr James Hyde,

Planning consultation: Residential development of up to 215 dwellings with associated car parking/garages, landscaping, public open space including both equipped and non-equipped areas of play, SUDS and drainage, with details of a new vehicular access onto Shaw Lane (Outline with all matters reserved apart from means of access)

Location: Land north of Shaw Lane, Carlton, Barnsley, S71 3HH

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 02 July 2024, which was received by Natural England on the same date.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

SUMMARY OF NATURAL ENGLAND'S ADVICE

FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IMPACTS ON DESIGNATED SITE

As submitted, the application could have potential significant effects on Dearne Valley Wetlands Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Natural England requires further information in order to determine the significance of these impacts and the scope for mitigation.

The following information is required:

- Further assessment of potential water quality impacts.

Without this information, Natural England may need to object to the proposal.

Please re-consult Natural England once this information has been obtained.

Natural England's further advice on designated sites/landscapes and advice on other issues is set out below.

WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 (AS AMENDED)

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – Dearne Valley Wetlands

Natural England notes that the application site is located in close proximity to the Dearne Valley Wetlands Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development could have potential significant effects on the interest features for which the Dearne Valley Wetlands SSSI has been notified. Natural England requires further information in order to determine the significance of these impacts.

Please note that if your authority is minded to grant planning permission contrary to the advice in this letter, you are required under Section 281 (6) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to notify Natural England of the permission, the terms on which it is proposed to grant it and how, if at all, your authority has taken account of Natural England's advice. You must also allow a further period of 21 days before the operation can commence.

Additional information required

Natural England welcomes that a *SSSI Impact Assessment* (June 2024) has been provided by the applicant. We advise that further assessment of the potential impacts identified below is required in order to determine whether the proposal could damage or destroy the interest features for which the SSSI is notified.

Water quality

Natural England notes that the application proposes to discharge surface water to a sustainable drainage system. However, the details of the proposed drainage strategy are currently unclear, including whether surface water is likely to discharge to a watercourse which will run through Dearne Valley Wetlands SSSI. We advise that this information is provided and further assessed in relation to potential impacts to the Dearne Valley SSSI.

Additionally, we advise that further assessment of potential construction phase water quality impacts should be provided.

Other advice

In addition, Natural England would advise on the following issues.

Habitat enhancements for the assemblage feature of the Dearne Valley Wetlands SSSI

The [Dearne Valley Wetlands SSSI](#) supports a nationally important assemblage of breeding birds. Some of these interest features may also rely on areas outside of the site boundary. These supporting habitats may be used by SSSI bird populations or some individuals of the population for some or all of the time. These supporting habitats can play an essential role in maintaining SSSI species populations, and proposals affecting them may therefore have the potential to affect the SSSI.

The application site is within or in close proximity to an area known to support willow tit, which are part of the breeding bird assemblage feature of the SSSI. Willow tit populations declined by 94% between 1970 and 2012, with habitat fragmentation a key contributor to their decline. To ensure that habitat networks for willow tits and other breeding birds of the SSSI assemblage feature are preserved around the Dearne Valley Wetlands SSSI, Natural England advise that any habitat enhancements should emphasise scrub creation and/or maintenance. Both the [Willow Tit Conservation Handbook](#) and [Willow Tit Habitat Guide](#) produced from the [Back from the Brink](#) programme contain useful guidance about willow tits and their habitat preferences, and can be used to inform habitat management and enhancements undertaken on-site.

Natural England welcomes the provision of a *Willow Tit Survey* (February 2023), and notes that it concludes that the habitats on site are considered to offer '*potential connective habitats*' for Willow Tit, with it '*important that dense scrub and wet scrub is retained and/or created*', whilst also noting that willow tit were not recorded on site. Natural England concurs with the recommendation that scrub habitat on-site is retained. We also agree that "*As Willow Tit has been recorded within the locality, it is recommended that no bird boxes are included within the scheme as they encourage Blue Tits and Great Tits which out compete Willow Tits which could result in a decline in this species*".

Recreational Disturbance

Natural England note and welcome that the applicant is proposing to provide financial contributions to the Council to aid with improvements at Dearne Valley Wetlands SSSI.

Further general advice on the protected species and other natural environment issues is provided at Annex A.

If you have any queries relating to the advice in this letter please contact me at elen.squires@naturalengland.org.uk.

Should the applicant wish to discuss the further information required and scope for mitigation with Natural England, we would be happy to provide advice through our [Discretionary Advice Service](#).

Please consult us again once the information requested above, has been provided.

Yours sincerely

Elen Squires
Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire Area Team
Natural England