



PLANNING CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Application No	2026/0420
Proposal	Erection of 10no. 2 and 3 storey detached dwellings
Address	Land west of Sheffield Road, Birdwell, Barnsley
Date of Consultation Reply	05/08/2026
Consultee	Katie Lawrence, Planning Ecologist

Consultation Assessment and Justification

Thank you for consulting me regarding the above application. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and statutory biodiversity metric, along with associated condition assessment sheets have been submitted in support of the application. My comments in relation to biodiversity are as follows:

- The PEA sets out the findings of an ecological walkover survey, including an assessment of the habitats on site and their potential to support protected and priority species. The PEA also considers the potential impact of the proposed development upon designated nature conservation sites within the surrounding area, of which no impact is anticipated.
- Habitats on site largely comprise unintensively managed grassland and scrub, with occasional broadleaf trees. When referring to the governments MAGIC website, the site is mapped as Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land (OMH), a habitat of principal importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Historical maps dated between 1951-1975 show the site previously formed part of a railway line indicating why the site has been mapped as OMH. Planning policy BIO1 of the Local Plan states that "Development will be expected to conserve and enhance the biodiversity and geological features of the borough by: Protecting and improving habitats, species, sites of ecological value and sites of geological value with particular regard to habitats of principal importance identified via Section 41 of the Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006..." The applicant's ecologist should assess the habitats on site against the JNCC definition and criteria of OMH (<https://data.jncc.gov.uk/data/a81bf2a7-b637-4497-a8be-03bd50d4290d/UKBAP-BAPHabitats-40-OMH-2010.pdf>). As the initial walkover survey was carried out during sub-optimal timings, an updated botanical survey of the site should be undertaken to robustly assess the habitats present.
- The PEA has assessed that the site has potential to support nesting birds, foraging and commuting badgers, hedgehog and foraging and commuting bats, with a single elder also assessed as having potential to support individual roosting bats. Appropriate precautionary works and measures have been recommended, and these can be secured by a planning condition.
- Recommendations have been made for the installation of bat, bird and bee boxes on the proposed dwellings and hedgehog access points within proposed fencing. These measures are welcomed and again can be secured by a condition.
- The PEA sets out that off-site habitat enhancement could take place in land adjacent to the south-west of the development site within the blue line boundary. If the developer chooses to address their shortfall by off-site habitat enhancement/creation on their own land, these off-site habitats will need to be secured by a section 106 prior to planning permission being granted. Once the habitats are legally secured, the applicant can apply to record the allocation of biodiversity units to the development on the biodiversity gain sites register; this can be done at the same time as applying to register the off-site land on the biodiversity gain sites register. The allocation of any off-site biodiversity gains to the development will need to be recorded before the LPA can approve the biodiversity gain plan, which will be submitted to discharge the biodiversity gain condition. Off-site units have to be maintained to deliver 10% BNG for at least 30 years after the completion of habitat enhancement works, as defined in the legal agreement. The habitat proposals will therefore be subject to management as set out within a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP). We would seek a monitoring fee for review of monitoring reports submitted over the 30-year



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period. Due to the small size of the potential off-site area, the monitoring fee would be £5000. The fee would be secured as part of a Section 106 agreement. The applicant should confirm if this is how they wish to address their BNG requirement during the application stage to allow for a Section 106 agreement to be produced, if necessary. Refer to government guidance for further information regarding off-site gains:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/make-off-site-biodiversity-gains-as-a-developer>
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-a-biodiversity-gain-site>

- To avoid the requirement of having to secure any proposed habitat enhancements within the blue line boundary by Section 106 and register units on the biodiversity gain sites register the applicant could consider including these proposals within the red line boundary. If significant habitat enhancements are proposed a HMMP and monitoring fee would still be required.
- It is noted that the metric and baseline habitat map within the PEA accounts for habitats within the red line and blue line boundary. The metric should be amended so that areas within the proposed development site are dealt with within on-site tabs of the metric and areas within the blue line are included within off-site tabs, if off-site habitat enhancement/creation is proposed. Reference should be made to the site plan submitted as part of the application (drawing ref: 24-057, 01, D) to ensure the red line and blue line boundaries match.

~~NO OBJECTION*~~

**Defer for amends/further
information***

~~OBJECT*~~