

2023/0836

Wildscapes CIC

Creation of wildlife pond

Land adjacent to Moorend Lane, Silkstone Common, Barnsley

Background

No Planning History

Description

The site is an agricultural field which provides a range of habitat options for wildlife. The broader area around the site is predominantly agricultural with woodland to the west. A public right of way runs through the field to the east. The site is accessed via House Carr Lane and residential properties known as Moorend Cottages are set to the east.



Proposed Development

The proposal involves the development of a wildlife pond at Land adjacent to Moorend Lane, Silkstone Common, Barnsley.

The pond will be created using natural clay as lining. The spoil from excavation will be used to create a bunding no higher than 1m and a south facing basking bank. A hibernacula will be sited adjacent to the pond within the 3m buffer zone around the pond. This will be constructed of locally sourced materials including stone, felled wood and brash.

Following discussions with the landowners at Stable Cottage, Wildscapes CIC have identified as suitable and agreed a site to hold one of the ponds that we have been commissioned to build under the District Level Licensing scheme. The site has been identified as being within a Strategic Opportunity Area for this scheme and close enough to existing populations of great crested newts that the creation of appropriate ponds will offer them a significant opportunity for colonisation and a high probability of population increase.'

[illegible]

13 – Protecting Green Belt Land

Para 150 - Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:

- a) mineral extraction;
- b) engineering operations;
- c) local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
- d) the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;
- e) material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and
- f) development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Para 174, section d - minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures

Para 179, section b - promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity. In both of these elements, this application meets those requirements by creating carefully constructed and appropriate habitat for an “at risk” species as well as potential habitat for other species.

Consultations

Drainage – No objections
Highways – No objections
Natural England – No objections
Thurgoland Parish Council – No comment
Biodiversity – No objections
PROW Officer – No objection subject to informative

Representations

2 comments of support have been received.

Assessment

Principle of development

The proposal relates to the construction of a wildlife pond. The proposed construction of the pond would be considered as an engineering operation, therefore planning permission would be required.

The site is set within the Green Belt as allocated within the Barnsley Local Plan. Policy GB1 of the Local Plan is therefore of relevance and the Green Belt principles within the NPPF. The National Planning Policy Framework states that ‘certain other forms of development are also

not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:b) engineering operations.'

The proposed creation of a wildlife pond on this site will enhance the local wildlife and biodiversity. As a local feature this is in keeping with the existing landscape as well as offering a significant opportunity for enhancement. The proposal would therefore be acceptable in principle, subject to the development and the impact upon openness/visual amenity and other considerations such as biodiversity and highway safety.

Visual Amenity

Ponds are a feature which can be seen within the countryside/agricultural land. The creation of a pond would not harm the openness of the Green Belt and would enhance visual amenity, with the addition of landscaping once constructed. The proposal is therefore acceptable in terms of visual amenity in accordance with policy GB1 and the NPPF.

Highway Safety

The proposed wildlife pond is to be created within the corner of a field used for farming purposes. The pond is not intended for use by the general public and would therefore not generate additional vehicle movements after the initial construction period. Large farm vehicles currently access the field, vehicles used for the creation of the pond would presumably use the same means of access and therefore no problems are foreseen in this regard.

It is considered that the proposals do not adversely impact upon the highway and are therefore acceptable from a highways perspective and no specific highways related conditions are deemed necessary. There is a public right of way through the field, however it is a significant distance away from the pond and should not be impacted during the construction.

The proposals do not adversely impact upon the highway or the Public Right of Way and are therefore acceptable from a highways perspective in accordance with policy T4 of the Local Plan.

Ecology

The proposed pond will increase the biodiversity value of the site and provide habitat for a variety of species. The Ecology Officer and Natural England therefore have no objection to the proposal to create a wildlife pond.

The development shall be completed in line with the species protection plan, the initial desktop report and the conditions of the planning permission. All the recommendations shall be implemented in full according to the timescales laid out and thereafter permanently maintained for the stated purposes of biodiversity conservation, which should be secured by way of a condition. The proposal is acceptable when measured against policy BIO1 of the Local Plan.

Recommendation

Grant subject to conditions