

EN2: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

North and South Pennine Moors

A. Any development that would be likely to have a significant effect on a European Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects will be subject to assessment under the Habitat Regulations at project application stage. Subject to the derogation tests of Article 6(4) Habitats Directive, if it cannot be ascertained that there will be no adverse effect on site integrity then the project will have to be refused. Proposed mitigation measures shall be taken into account both when assessing whether a project is likely to have a significant effect and, if so, when assessing its "adverse effect on site integrity".

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Locally Designated Sites

B. Development likely to have an adverse effect on a site of ecological/ geological importance (SEGIs and RIGS) or a site of local nature conservation value (Bradford Wildlife Areas) will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there are reasons for the proposal which outweigh the need to safeguard the substantive nature conservation value of the site. When assessing whether proposals are likely to have an adverse impact on such sites the following criteria will be relevant:

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1. Whether works are necessary for management of the site in the interests of conservation.

2. Whether adequate buffer strips and / or other mitigation have been incorporated into the development proposal, or as part of measures related to the proposal, to protect species and habitats for which the Locally Designated Site has been designated.

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3. Whether the development would be expected to result in no overall loss of habitat; or whether compensatory habitats or measures are proposed adjacent to or within the vicinity of any predicted losses. Existing habitats and proposed mitigation should be quantified.

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Habitats and Species outside Designated Sites

C. Proposals that may have an adverse impact on important habitats and species outside designated sites need to be assessed according to the following criteria:-

1. The potential for adverse impact on important/priority habitats that occur outside designated sites

2. The potential for adverse impact on species of international, national and local importance

3. The extent to which appropriate measures to mitigate and / or compensate against any potentially harmful impacts can be identified and carried out

The assessment needs to take account of:

West Yorkshire Local Site Selection Criteria and

Where relevant developers will be expected to submit (European) Protected Species surveys and other ecological assessment related information with their application.

Development which, notwithstanding any proposed mitigation and / or compensation measures, would still cause serious fragmentation of habitats, wildlife corridors or have a significantly adverse impact on biodiversity networks or connectivity will be resisted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there are reasons for the proposal which outweigh the need to safeguard the substantive nature conservation value of the features of interest.

Enhancement

D. Plans, policies and proposals should contribute positively towards the overall enhancement of the District's biodiversity resource.

They should seek to protect and enhance species of local, national and international importance and to reverse the decline in these species.

The Council will seek to promote the creation, expansion and improved management of important habitats within the district and more ecologically connected patchworks of grasslands, woodlands and wetlands. Opportunities for specific habitat creation within development proposals will be sought, including provision for future management.

Habitats of the moorland will be enhanced and landowners or occupiers of such moorland habitats will be actively encouraged to manage important areas within the moorland habitats for bird foraging to ensure continued provision of suitable habitat.

As set out in Policy SC8, the Council will also take account of, those sites outside the North Pennine Moors SPA and the South Pennine Moors SPA which are demonstrated to provide significant foraging habitat for qualifying bird features of the North Pennine Moors SPA or the South Pennine Moors SPA as a material consideration in the preparation of development plans and in the determination of planning applications. Where appropriate such a site will be considered for designation as a Locally Designated Site.

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