

## **Policy EN2: Biodiversity and Geodiversity**

### **The North and South Pennine Moors SPA and SAC**

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. If it cannot be ascertained that there will be no adverse effects on site integrity then the project will have to be refused **unless the derogation tests of Article 6(4) Habitats Directive can be met.**

### **Sites of Special Scientific Interest**

**Proposed development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest likely to have an adverse effect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest (either individually or in combination with other developments) should not normally be permitted. Where an adverse effect on the site's notified special interest features is likely, an exception should only be made where the benefits of the development, at this site, clearly outweigh both the impacts that it is likely to have on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest.**

### **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. Proposals that are likely to have an impact on such sites will be assessed according to the following criteria;

1. Whether works are necessary for management of the site in the interests of conservation.
2. Whether adequate buffer strips and other mitigation has been incorporated into the proposals to protect species and habitats for which the Local Site has been designated.
3. The development would be expected to result in no overall loss of habitat and mitigation could be expected to include compensatory habitats adjacent to or within the vicinity of any losses proposed. Existing habitats and proposed mitigation should be quantified.

### **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 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 would cause serious fragmentation of habitats, wildlife corridors or have a significantly adverse impact on biodiversity networks or connectivity will be resisted.

### **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 will be actively encouraged to manage important areas for bird foraging to ensure continued provision of suitable habitat.

The Council will recognise the importance of foraging/ commuting areas for protected and SPA species outside the statutory designated area as a material consideration in the preparation of development plans and in the determination of planning applications. Where **supported by evidence**, foraging sites, currently outside the SPA/SAC will be considered for designation.