

**From:** Chidswell Actiongroup

**Sent:** 04 June 2022 14:45

**To:** Victor Grayson

**Subject:** Evidence of Schedule 1 and protected species not included in surveys at Chidswell & Heybeck

Dear Victor,

**Ref: Land east of Leeds Rd, Chidswell, Shaw Cross, Dewsbury / Land south of Heybeck Lane, Chidswell, Shawcross, Dewsbury 2020/60/92331/E / 2020/60/92350/E**

Dear Victor,

We have been conducting wildlife surveys at Chidswell & Heybeck for the last 15 months. We were compelled to do this as the last surveys are considerably out of date the reports seemingly showed bias to downplay biodiversity.

We have extensive evidence of Schedule 1 Kingfisher on the interconnected waterways on Hey Beck / Bushy Beck.

Also, 1000s of recordings of bat calls from Dogloitch & Dum Wood and over the hedgerows and waterways on the site. Brooks Ecology assess bat activity as not significant but there are flaws in their methodology which have been identified by Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and an independent expert.

Our evidence has been recorded with West Yorkshire Ecology Records, BTO Acoustic Pipeline and iNaturalist. The evidence is in the form of numerous videos, GPS logged photographs and recordings from a static bat detector.

We've also had numerous sightings of a Barn Owl and their distinctive calls have been heard in Heybeck and the surrounding fields. We have some distant videos of a white bird flying slowly over fields adjacent to the proposed site, quartering the field in the typical flight pattern for this species.

The Barn Owl is assessed as likely absent by Brooks Ecological. However, there are 2 concerns with this conclusion:

- The Ornithologist recorded a sighting of a Barn Owl, on site, during his survey. Yet presence of Barn Owls is assessed as 'likely absent' and the Barn Owl was dismissed as likely passing over.
- The likely absence of Barn Owls was verified in the report with anecdotal evidence from a barn owner. The barn owner who made this statement is the tenant farmer of the Church Commissioners and we would question if his position is unbiased. Were any other barn owners near the site asked the same question?

The Ecological Surveys are some years out of date now and, in accordance with CIEMM 2016 standards, all surveys need to be updated prior to determination of the development. This would allow the new evidence we have submitted to be incorporated.

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust have identified flaws in the BNG metrics produced by Brooks Ecology. YWT have applied amendments to the metric to correct the errors and calculate an overall biodiversity net loss of 14.29%.

The omission of Schedule 1 species from the EIAs also impacts other considerations. For example, the inevitable pollution of the waterways is considered acceptable as there are no protected species

to consider. Our new evidence of Schedule 1 species means all elements of the EIA need reviewing and updating.

Please could you advise if the Ecological Surveys will be updated prior to determination of this application.

Please could you also advise if the Regional Level permanent displacement of Red Listed Yellow Hammer and Skylark will be given any further consideration in the planning process. We note they were excluded from the latest Ecological Design Strategy.

Kind regards,

Chidswell Action Group