Consultation Response from KC, Ecology Unit
2023/91052 The Pickled Pheasant, Woodhead Road, Holmbridge, Holmfirth, HD9 2NQ
Erection of 6 holiday cabins and hot food kiosk with associated regrading of land and landscape work
Date Responded: 23/05/2023 Responding Officer: Gareth Hey Responding Ref:

Assessment

No ecological information has been submitted with the application; therefore, the proposals cannot be assessed against local and national policy. The site is located within the bat alert layer. At this stage, it is unclear whether the trees (particularly those to be lost to the proposed development) present within the site offer suitable roosting opportunities for bats.

In addition to bats, the trees on site that are scheduled to be removed are likely to provide suitable habitat for nesting birds.

The government circular on Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (ODPM, 2005) and recent explanatory note from Natural England (Natural England, 2020) indicates that information on protected species, and in particular European protected species (including bats), should be made available prior to determination.

In addition to the above, the proposals have not demonstrated a biodiversity net gain in accordance with LP30 (ii) which requires development to "*minimise impact on biodiversity and provide net biodiversity gains through good design"*. Guidance released June 2021 by Kirklees Council within the Biodiversity Net Gain Technical Advice Note indicates that a 10% net gain should be achieved.

Advice to planning officer

The applicant should engage a suitably qualified ecologist to undertake **a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal** (PEA) in accordance with national guidelines. This work should identify any important ecological features present (species or habitats), or make recommendations for further survey where this is necessary to determine presence/absence of a feature or to what extent a feature is important.

The applicant should also demonstrate how a biodiversity net gain is to be achieved post-development. This is fundamental in order to determine if the proposals can be brought forward in line within Local Plan Policy LP30.

The application should not be determined until the necessary assessments have been received and a Biodiversity Net Gain demonstrated.