

**Consultation Response from KC,  
Ecology Unit**

**2023/93237 Brayside, 71, Coach Road, Cowcliffe, Huddersfield, HD2 2NW**

**Demolition of existing dwelling and garage and erection of detached dwelling with detached garage**

**Date Responded: 30/01/2024**

**Responding Officer: Gareth Hey**

**Responding Ref:**

A bat survey report has been submitted with the application, which is welcomed. The report details that the buildings at the site provide negligible suitability for roosting bats and as such, the proposed development will have minimal impacts on roosting bats.

Although the submitted information details that there will be no impacts to roosting bats as a result of the proposed demolition of the structures within the site, the site is located directly adjacent to Grimescar Wood Local Wildlife Site (LWS), which is also designated as ancient woodland.

### [Relation to local and national policies and guidance](#)

Natural England and Forestry Commission have identified impacts of development on ancient woodland or ancient and veteran trees within their [standing advice](#). This guidance should be considered the Government's position with regards to development impacting ancient woodland. The above-mentioned guidance details that ancient woodlands should have a buffer zone of at least 15 metres from the boundary of the woodland to avoid root damage (known as the root protection area).

The National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 180, states: "When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons(63), and a suitable compensation strategy exists;"

Footnote 63, defines exceptional reasons as follows: "For example, infrastructure projects (including nationally significant infrastructure projects, orders under the Transport and Works Act and hybrid bills), where the public benefit would clearly outweigh the loss or deterioration of habitat."

There is no wholly exceptional reason for the development in this location and as such this development should be refused on the grounds it does not comply with national planning policy.

Regard should also be given for Policy LP30 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) and LP33 (Trees) of the Kirklees Local Plan, with respect to the protection of ancient woodland and the natural environment.

When land use is intensified such as in this situation, woodland plant and animal populations are exposed to environmental impacts from the outside of a woodland. In particular, the habitats become more vulnerable to the outside influences, or edge effects, that result from the adjacent land's change of use. These can impact cumulatively on ancient woodland - this is much more damaging than individual effects.

Given the above, the proposals should look to relocate the proposed garage at the site, as at this stage, it seems as though the proposals lie within 15m of the boundary of the woodland.