



Summary Proof of Evidence - Ecology

Shepley Road, Stocksmoor

Planning Application Reference: 2024/62/91242/E
Appeal Reference: APP/Z4718/W/25/3375000

Newett Homes Limited

Thorp Arch Grange
Walton Road
Thorp Arch
Wetherby
West Yorkshire
LS23 7BA

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SLR Project No.: 424.065717.00001

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Summary

This evidence is prepared by Mr Robert Edmonds BSc (Hons) MCIEEM CEnv, a professional ecologist with over 25 years of experience and concerns ecology and biodiversity matters relating to Shepley Road, Stocksmoor, the Appealed Scheme (Ref: APP/Z4718/W/25/3375000).

A full planning application was submitted on the 30th April 2024 and validated by the Local Authority, Kirklees Council, on the 10th May 2024. The application was for the erection of residential development (50 dwellings) with associated access, parking, public open space, landscaping and infrastructure.

The application was accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain assessment prepared by SLR. Prior to SLR's ecological assessment, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken by FPCR in December 2022, as detailed within the EclA report.

The application was determined on the 24th April 2025 with a Decision Notice, outlining two reasons for refusal, which were not related to ecology and biodiversity. The Council's Delegation Report (CD 3.1, page 34) outlines that the EclA "*provides a comprehensive ecological assessment of the site... the proposed development is predicted to have no significant impacts on ecological receptors, subject to suitable mitigation measures, which can be delivered through appropriately-worded planning conditions... The proposal would not result in the loss or deterioration of the adjacent Ancient Woodland, subject to the given conditions. Furthermore, there would be no harmful impact on local species and, through the provision of a 10% net gain (via condition), most of which is expected to be delivered on site, the habitat would be enhanced. This ensures that the Ancient Woodland's function as a Local Wildlife Site and wildlife Habitat Network would be maintained and/or enhanced. As such the proposal is considered to comply with the objectives of LP30 of the Kirklees Local Plan.*"

However, ecology and biodiversity matters were raised by the Rule 6 party, in relation to hydrology and potential 'deterioration' of 'irreplaceable habitat' (comprising two areas of Ancient Woodland, Shepley Mill Wood and Hartley Bank Wood). My evidence covers these matters, in concert with evidence provided by colleagues, Mr Philip Owen on Transport, Mr Gavin Shepherd on Hydrology and Mrs Helen Kirk on Arboriculture.

There will be no direct loss of Ancient Woodland or ancient and veteran trees and as such no habitat fragmentation will occur; in accordance with NPPF §193 (c), and Kirklees Local Policy LP30 (CD 6.1). A buffer zone of minimum 15 m is provided from the nearest part of



the ancient woodland sites identified and the Root Protection Areas of all trees within the identified ancient woodlands would be protected, in accordance with government standing advice on the protection of ancient woodlands¹. The Appellant has proposed permanent infrastructure and residential areas further from the 15 m buffer zone where possible; the nearest building being approximately 34.5m from the ancient woodland boundary.

The proposed highways improvements will not result in any direct impacts on Ancient Woodland and the small-scale nature of the Appeal Scheme will not result in increased traffic effects during construction or operation that may affect Ancient Woodland. There is no pathway for impacts to Hartley Bank Wood resulting from the discharge of treated foul water from the Appeal Scheme via the public sewer system, which discharges at Thunderbridge No. 2 CSO.

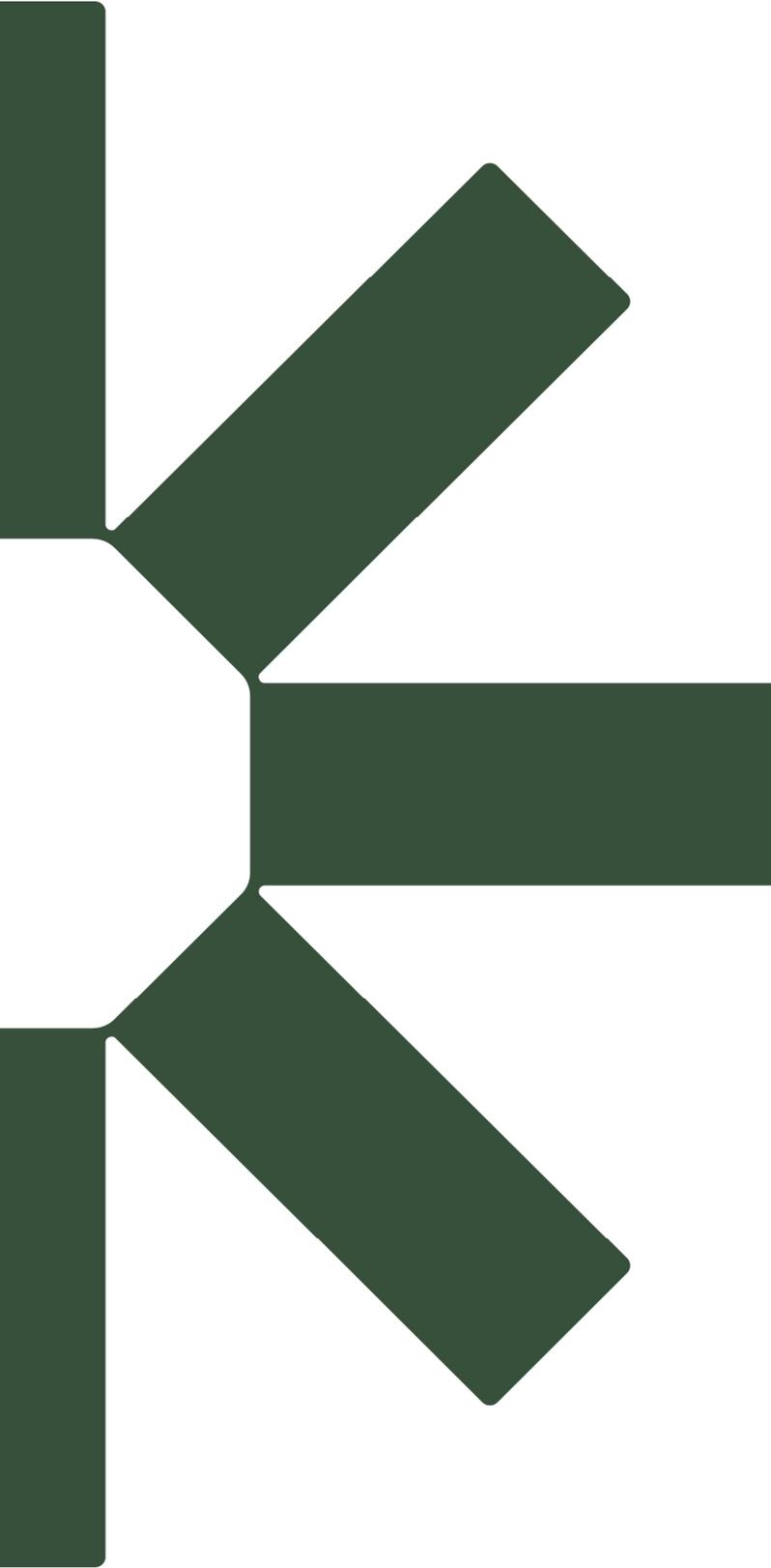
Mitigation measures are proposed to manage the potential effects on the Ancient Woodland during both construction and operation, including construction noise and vibration, Invasive Non-Native Species, pets and recreational pressures, operational lighting, changes to ground-water and surface water flows. Mitigation measures can be secured by appropriately worded planning conditions to ensure no loss or deterioration of the Ancient Woodland. The Appellant has committed to a 10% biodiversity gain, using a mix of both on-site and off-site biodiversity enhancements.

The Appellant has set out the Heads of Terms for a draft Section 106 agreement and also drafted planning conditions, which have been shared with relevant parties. Subject to these obligations being agreed, there are no outstanding matters in relation to biodiversity that form a reason for refusal.

At the time of preparation, no other matters relating directly to biodiversity have been raised by the Local Authority or other interested parties.

¹ [Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK](#) [last accessed 27.01.2026]





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