

Yorkshire & North East

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Area Director

Crispin Thorn

By email only

Date: 21st January 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ref: 2024/93359 - Demolition of existing dwelling and garage and erection of detached dwelling with detached garage - Brayside, 71, Coach Road, Cowcliffe, Huddersfield, HD2 2NW

Thank you for seeking the Forestry Commission's advice about the impacts that this application may have on the woodland identified in this proposed application. As a Non-Ministerial Government Department, we provide no opinion supporting or objecting to an application. Rather, we are providing information on the potential impact that the proposed development could have on woodland. The Forestry Commission is pleased to provide you with the following information that may be helpful when you consider the application:

- Details of Government policy relating to ancient woodland
- Information on the importance and designation of ancient woodland
- Details of Government policy relating to non-ancient woodland

Ancient woodlands are irreplaceable. They have great value because they have a long history of woodland cover, with many features remaining undisturbed, including immensely complex ecological processes and relationships, above and below the ground. This applies equally to Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) and Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS).

It is Government policy to refuse development that will result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland, unless "there are wholly exceptional reasons

and a suitable compensation strategy exists” (National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 186c). It is not possible to fully compensate for the loss of an irreplaceable habitat.

For more information on the impacts of development on ancient woodland and how to assess these, please see the joint Forestry Commission /Natural England [Standing Advice on Ancient Woodland](#) – “Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions”, the supporting [guidance](#) included within it, and [Keepers of Time](#) – A Statement of Policy for England’s Ancient and Native Woodland (published June 2005).

The standing advice also provides information on mitigation, including the use of buffers. Proposals in proximity to ancient woodland should have a buffer zone of at least 15m from the boundary of the woodland to avoid root damage. Where assessment shows other impacts are likely to extend beyond this distance, for example the effects of air pollution from increased traffic and/or industrial processes, the proposal is likely to require a larger buffer zone. We would be keen to engage further with the developer in relation to any mitigation and compensation strategies.

In relation to non-ancient woodland, we would like to draw your attention to paragraph 131 of the NPPF which states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that existing trees are retained wherever possible.

What is most important to the Forestry Commission in this case is that there will be no loss or detrimental impact as a result of this proposed development on ancient woodland as mentioned above. We hope these comments are helpful to you. We look forward to hearing from you with regards to any future planning applications for this site. If you have any further queries or would like a follow up meeting to discuss this planning application, please do not hesitate to contact the Forestry Commission on the email address provided above.

Yours faithfully

Dan Brown, Local Partnership Advisor
Yorkshire and North East Team