

6. FULL APPLICATION – DEVELOPMENT OF PERMISSIVE PATHS AND A FAMILY MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL AT LANGSETT RESERVOIR PLUS PACKAGE OF MITIGATION AT LAND TO THE SOUTH OF LANGSETT RESERVOIR (NP/S/0718/0606 JF)

APPLICANT: YORKSHIRE WATER SERVICES LTD

Site and Surroundings

1. The application site comprises land around Langsett Reservoir. This is a large reservoir located close to the villages of Langsett and Upper Midhope, on the edge of the Peak District National Park. The reservoir is managed by Yorkshire Water.
2. The reservoir is largely surrounded by open countryside and woodland. The surrounding areas are identified as arable land, bracken, broad-leaved plantation woodland, broad-leaved semi-natural woodland, coniferous plantation woodland, dry dwarf shrub heath, inundation vegetation, regenerating birch, standing water, wet dwarf shrub heath, and scattered broad-leaved trees.
3. A series of footpaths surround the northern side and part of the south-east side of the reservoir. The south-west side is largely inaccessible, with a series of paths situated high above this area of the reservoir. A dam wall is situated at the eastern end of the reservoir just below Langsett Village. The dam wall also carries Midhope Cliff Lane, the road into Langsett from The Strines. A stone wall runs along a substantial part of the southern side of the reservoir.
4. The main A616 road runs through Langsett north of the reservoir and Upper Midhope village is situated south east of the site. Main public access to the paths around the reservoir is from Langsett car park off the A616 but there are other access points to the north west and south east of the reservoir.
5. The site is identified as being of ecological importance, A Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are situated in close proximity to the proposed area for development.
6. A small section of the site is situated within a conservation area.

Proposal

7. A full application has been made for the development of permissive paths and a family mountain bike trail at Langsett Reservoir including a package of mitigation measures.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions or modifications:

1. **Standard time limit**
2. **The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the amended plans; Application Form, Planning and Design and Access Statement, Report to inform a Habitats Regulations Assessment – Stage 1 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects, Common Sandpiper Assessment, Current Tree Species Map, Felling and Thinning Map Langsett, Bird Assessment Report, Long-eared owl records, Woodland Management Plan, Long Term Forest Plan, Woodland Area Plan, Ecological Appraisal, Landscape and Visual Appraisal, Historic Woodland Assessment, RD1**

rev E, RD2 rev E, RD3 rev E, RD4 rev E, RD5 rev E, RD6.1 rev B, RD6.2 rev B, RD6.3 rev B, RD7.1, RD7.2, RD7.3, RD7.4, RD8.1, RD8.2, RD8.3, RD02 rev E, LA03-2, LA03-5, LA02, SA04, LA05, LA01, SA02, SA03, LA03-4, LA03-3, LA03-1, LA03-6,

3. No development shall take place until a written method statement for preservation in situ of the heritage assets identified with the Historic Woodland Assessment produced for Yorkshire Water by John Buglass, dated March 2017, has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the National Park Authority. No development work shall then proceed other than in accordance with the approved method statement so as to ensure that relevant remains are safeguard and preserved in situ.
4. a) No development shall take place until a Written Scheme of Investigation for a scheme of archaeological works has been submitted to and approved by the National Park Authority in writing, and until any pre-start element of the approved scheme has been completed to the written satisfaction of the National Park Authority. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and
 1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording;
 2. The programme for post investigation assessment;
 3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording;
 4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation;
 5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation;
 6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organization undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.
- b) No development shall take place other than in accordance with the archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (a).
- c) Within a period of 12 weeks from completion of the development the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (a) and the provision to be made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.
5. No works or development shall take place until full details of landscape scheme proposals have been submitted to and approved by PDNPA. These details shall include, as appropriate:
 - Planting plans (location of planting) & specifications (including operations associated with tree establishment).
 - Planting schedules, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers / densities where appropriate.
 - Locations and specifications of flow control measures ('leaky dams' etc).
6. Prior to the start of construction, a Construction Environmental Management Plan shall submitted to the National Park authority for approval in writing to avoid damage to sensitive habitats on and adjacent to the site. This shall set out:
 - Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
 - Identification of any biodiversity protection zones
 - Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction.

- Measures to prevent pollutants and sediment entering the watercourses located on the site and Langsett Reservoir itself
 - Details of materials/chemical storage to ensure that materials are stored in a suitable manner as to avoid potential impacts on vegetation, watercourses and waterbodies on site and adjacent to the site, including Langsett Reservoir itself.
 - The times during construction when specialist ecological supervision (Ecological clerk of Works) needs to be present on site to oversee works (bird nesting season, fingertip search for reptiles etc.).
 - The responsibilities of the Ecological Clerk of Works during pre-clearance and construction (including checks for protected and notable species).
 - The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
 - The use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.
- The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the PDNPA.
7. Construction works shall be in daylight hours only and no lighting shall be erected in the woodland.
 8. Vegetation clearance shall be completed outside the main breeding bird season (spanning from March to September inclusive). Any construction works during this period shall be checked for nesting birds by a suitably qualified ecologist. If nesting birds are found to be present, these areas shall be left undisturbed until the young have fledged.
 9. Prior to removal, trees to be removed shall be assessed for their significance, and any bird and bat potential and details submitted to the National Park Authority for approval in writing.
 10. Prior to the start of the construction works, the location of fencing, tree planting and wetland areas shall be agreed on site with the National Park Authority.
 11. During construction works on the ground, the route shall avoid heathland habitats. Where loss cannot be avoided during path construction work, extra heathland habitat shall be created by the clearance of areas of regenerating birch to the west of the track, where limited areas of dry dwarf shrub heath and wet dwarf shrub heath have already developed since the removal of previous forestry plantation.
 12. Prior to the track being brought into use, a summary document of the positive woodland management that is planned for YW woodlands in the wider Don Valley shall be submitted to the National Park Authority along with any management plans that support this for approval in writing. The implementation of the measures are likely to contribute to positive management of nightjar and other key woodland bird species, which will provide compensation and enhancement measures relating to the application. The measures set out shall be implemented unless otherwise agreed in writing with the PDNPA.
 13. Prior to the track being brought into use, details relating to the monitoring of the common sandpiper population along the southern shores of the reservoir shall be agreed with the National Park Authority in writing. Details shall include a methodology, timing, duration, and timescale. If the results of monitoring indicate that there has been displacement or loss of territories, then additional mitigation measures shall be implemented to safeguard this species. Additional mitigation measures shall be agreed in writing with the National Park Authority.

- 14. The path shall be designated for daylight hours use only and no lighting shall be erected along the route.**
- 15. Signage for dogs to be kept on a lead at all times shall be erected at key locations along the footpath, as shown on the approved plans, with enforcement during the bird breeding period.**
- 16. Prior to the development being brought into use, the 5ha area of habitat creation for nightjars, other ground nesting birds and heathland creation shown on Figure 15 B shall be created as indicated in the approved plans.**
- 17. Prior to the surfacing material of the tracks being laid, material samples of the surfacing materials shall be submitted to the National Park Authority for approval in writing. Development shall take place in accordance with these approved details.**
- 18. Prior to being brought into use, details of the proposed fencing and signage shall be submitted to the National Park Authority for approval in writing. Development shall take place in accordance with these approved details.**
- 19. Prior to construction of the proposed bike trails, where they pass close to existing public footpaths, details shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the National Park Authority of measures to be implemented ensuring no miss-use of existing public footpaths by cyclists. The above-mentioned approved measures shall be implemented in tandem with construction of the bike trails.**

Key Issues

8. The key issues are whether the development is acceptable in principle, whether it would conserve the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area, and whether it is acceptable in terms of the landscape, archaeological and ecological impact.

History

9. A pre-application enquiry was made in 2018 regarding the development of permissive paths and mountain bike routes under PE\2018\ENQ\32755. It supported the principle and advised that there may be scope for the proposed development.

Consultations

PDNPA Archaeology – No objections subject to the provision of a method statement to ensure that heritage assets are safeguarded, and a condition to ensure appropriate archaeological recording and investigation can take place where the heritage assets cannot be safeguarded.

PDNPA Landscape – No objections to the amended plans subject to full details of a landscaping scheme.

County Flood Team – No response received to date.

Bradfield Parish Council raised no objections providing that all planning rules are followed. The Parish Council would suggest that additional car parking could be created on Thickwoods Lane as there is a general lack of safe parking in the area. The Parish Council would also request PDNPA to stipulate the materials to be used.

County Highways – No objections subject to details ensuring a no misuse of existing public

footpaths by cyclists.

PDNPA Rangers – No response received to date.

Natural England – Reply awaiting

Environment Agency – No objections.

PDNPA Forestry – No response received to date.

PDNPA Ecology – No objections subject to construction environmental management plan, construction works in daylight hours, no lighting in the woodland, vegetation clearance outside main breeding bird season, checks for nesting birds during construction, mature trees retained where possible and checked for bird and bat potential, location of fencing, tree planting and wetland areas agreed on site, route to avoid heathland habitats and heathland habitat to be created where not possible, summary of woodland management and management plan for YW woodlands in the wider Don Valley to be submitted and implemented, monitoring details of the common sandpiper population and any mitigation to be agreed, path designated for daylight hours with no lighting, signage for dogs to be kept on a lead to be erected.

Sheffield City Council – No response received to date.

PDNPA Rights of Way – No objections.

PDNPA Tree Officer – No response received to date.

10. Representations

11. A large number of representations have been received in relation to the original application. No representations have been received in relation to the amended plans so far. The representations are summarised as follows:

12. Support

- More accessible trails and circular, challenging and picturesque routes. At the moment few options exist.
- Families who usually walk there can now get to ride there too.
- The routes take riders off the road once you get past the dam, making it safer especially for vulnerable riders.
- Having a weatherproof track meaning you avoid the more sensitive areas which means less erosion (this mountain bikers support all over the Peak District).
- There would be better shared user trails (wider, better sight lines) and a reduction in numbers on each trail which reduce potential conflict between different user groups.
- Excellent opportunity to encourage young people who have mobility problems to enjoy the countryside.
- Wheelchair accessible routes and have to travel a good distance for these.

13. Concerns/General comments

- Disturbance to the breeding/nesting sites of sensitive species such as nightjar and waders.
- As a resident of Upper Midhope, I am concerned that there is not enough dedicated parking, which will only increase with these proposed plans.
- Currently Yorkshire Water have built a depot opposite Joseph Lane entrance off Midhope Cliffe Lane and they have put some form of hardcore down for the heavy

machinery. They will be on site for 12 months and have removed dry stone walls etc. They have reduced the speed limit on the road. This would be an ideal new car parking area to relieve the traffic issues. It is opposite some of the new cycle paths and would also remove some of the traffic congestion from the Flouch End car park and the Langsett Barn car park.

- There are numerous horse riders in the area and it would be great if these new foot paths could also be used by equestrians so that everyone can benefit. There needs to be a route made to make a 'lap' of the reservoir so that riders can enjoy the whole experience, like walkers and MTB cyclists.
- Approving the application should be conditional on (i) providing more and better information about existing travel options to the site and (ii) consideration by PDNP Management Plan partners, led by the PDNPA, of potential options to increase access by alternatives other than the car.
- Langsett should be a showcase for sustainable travel to a Peak District National Park recreation hub.
- Need additional parking to accommodate an increase in visitors to the trails.
- A good quality permissive trail, following the route in yellow nearest the reservoir edge, of sufficient width and surface standard, would benefit all classes of user, including horse riders. Such a route would not greatly impinge on local flora and fauna and would be totally inclusive of all user groups. Cyclists can use the existing Langsett area bridleways, so why not share the yellow trail with horse riders?

14. Objections

- Numerous concerns about the impact this proposed scheme will have upon breeding and roosting birds inhabiting both the reservoir and the Special Protection Area (SPA). Numerous schedule 1 species breed around the reservoir and the moorland edge and the impacts upon these species resulting from the proposed trail is likely to be at a county level.
- Being an Ecologist and long time recorder around Langsett I am very concerned that more paths/cycle routes are to be developed in this area. Looking over the proposed routes map my main area of concern is the western side of Langsett Reservoir. I think that the whole of this area should be left as it is as a conservation zone where currently Nightjar, Tree pipit, Redstart, Spotted Flycatcher and Lesser Redpoll breed. There are a number of routes on the north and south sides of the reservoir and I have no particular objection to these being improved as many people already use the routes. YW provides for recreation but surely it has a duty of conservation and particularly on already prime habitats. I would welcome some discussion at some point on this.
- There is already a trail around Langsett Reservoir which is well used and sufficient. This proposal is totally inappropriate for a site adjacent to the Special Area of Conservation(SAC), SPA and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- Given the likelihood of the proposed scheme resulting an increase in visitor numbers to an area that already suffers from visitor pressure. One would expect that an appropriate assessment of the impacts upon the SAC, SPA, SSSI be undertaken.
- Irresponsible dog owners allowing dogs to interfere on bird nesting sites.
- Additional visitor numbers arriving by car, and increasing the pressure in Langsett of parking
- The proposed area for these paths (cycle tracks in particular) will lead to the fragmentation of habitat which holds breeding birds including; nightjar (amber listed), woodcock (red listed), common sandpiper and two species of owl. The increased pressure from public use will almost certainly affect these species amongst others.
- The application does not consider sufficiently the impact on biodiversity – particularly for breeding, foraging or roosting birds – of the disturbance in the areas

- around the footpaths and mountain bike tracks caused by the increased presence of people using them.
- The increased numbers on the footpaths and mountain-bike tracks is likely to have an adverse impact on a number of species of biodiversity importance including several identified under the NERC Act schedule 41 as well as in the BOCC lists of conservation concern. I would have expected that reasonable measures would be set out in the proposals to avoid the loss of these special birds.
15. The representations raising concerns or objecting to this application highlight issues concerning ecology, parking, access to the site, equestrian use, unnecessary cycle routes, impact on the adjacent SAC, SPA and SSSI, and dogs interfering with bird nesting sites.
 16. In response to the representations it is accepted that the original plans would have resulted in an unacceptable impact in terms of ecology. The plans have been amended to ensure that the location of the proposed tracks and the level of development would result in any impact on ecology being kept to a minimum. In addition, various mitigation measures are proposed to compensate for any adverse impact. The PDNPA Ecologist has raised no objections to the amended plans subject to the imposition of conditions, and they are therefore considered to be acceptable in ecological terms.
 17. It is accepted that the plans may result in parking for visitors becoming more problematic. However, there are already car parks to serve the site and there have been no objections from Highways to these plans. In terms of any additional car parking, this would fall outside of the red line boundary for this application. It is not considered that a Grampian condition is appropriate in this instance, as any plans for additional parking would need to be considered in detail and would therefore require a separate application.
 18. It is accepted that access to the site by means other than a car is difficult. However, it is worth highlighting that this is not a major application so a Travel plan would not be required. It is also possible to access the site by bus from the A616, and it is expected that many visitors may arrive on foot or by bicycle. It is not therefore considered that the proposed plans are unacceptable in terms of access.
 19. It is accepted that equestrian use of the site would benefit horse riders, however this would place further strain on ecology and would result in further landscape impact. It is not considered that that this would be acceptable, and equestrian use of the tracks proposed would result in conflict between users.
 20. It is not considered that the amended plans would have an unacceptable impact on the adjacent SAC, SPA and SSSI. Ecology and Landscape Officers have been consulted on these amended plans and have raised no objections in relation to the impact on these protected areas.
 21. It is accepted that dogs interfering with bird nesting sites may be a potential concern. As such, a condition shall be imposed requiring signage for dogs to be kept on a lead at all times in key locations and for enforcement during the bird breeding period.

Main Policies

22. Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP3, GSP4, L1, L2, L3, RT1, T6
23. Relevant Local Plan policies: LC4, LC5, LC15, LC16, LC17, LC18, LT18, LC20, LT20

24. National Park designation is the highest level of landscape designation in the UK. The Environment Act 1995 sets out two statutory purposes for national parks in England and Wales:
- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage
 - Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public
25. When national parks carry out these purposes they also have the duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the national parks.
26. National Planning Policy Framework
27. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2018 and replaced the 2012 NPPF with immediate effect. The Government's intention is that the document should be considered as a material consideration and carry particular weight where a development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date. In the National Park the development plan comprises the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and saved policies in the Peak District National Park Local Plan 2001. Policies in the Development Plan provide a clear starting point consistent with the National Park's statutory purposes for the determination of this application. It is considered that in this case there is no significant conflict between prevailing policies in the Development Plan and more recent Government guidance in the NPPF.
28. Paragraph 172 of the NPPF states that 'great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.'

Development Plan Policies.

29. Policy GSP1 sets out the broad strategy for achieving the National Park's objectives having regard to the Sandford Principle, (that is, where there are conflicting desired outcomes in achieving national park purposes, greater priority must be given to the conservation of the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area, even at the cost of socio-economic benefits). GPS1 also sets out the need for sustainable development and to avoid major development unless it is essential, and the need to mitigate localised harm where essential major development is allowed.
30. Policy GSP3 sets out development management principles and states that all development must respect, conserve and enhance all valued characteristics of the site and buildings, paying particular attention to, amongst other elements, impact on the character and setting of buildings, scale of the development appropriate to the character and appearance of the National Park, design in accordance with the National Park Authority Design Guide and impact on living conditions of communities.
31. Policy GSP4 states that the National Park Authority will consider the contribution that a development can make directly and/or to its setting, including, where consistent with government guidance, using planning conditions and planning obligations.
32. Policy L1 identifies that development must conserve and enhance valued landscape character and valued characteristics, and other than in exceptional circumstances, proposals in the Natural Zone will not be permitted.

33. Policy L2 states that development must conserve and enhance any sites, features or species of biodiversity importance and where appropriate their setting.
34. Policy L3 states that development must conserve and enhance any asset of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic significance or its setting that has statutory designation or registration or is of other international, national, regional or local significance
35. Policy RT1 states that the National Park Authority will support facilities which enable recreation, environmental education and interpretation, which encourage understanding and enjoyment of the National Park, and are appropriate to the National Park's valued characteristics. Opportunities for access by sustainable means will be encouraged.
36. Policy T6 states that the rights of way network will be safeguarded from development, and wherever appropriate enhanced to improve connectivity, accessibility and access to transport interchanges. This may include facilitating attractive safe pedestrian and cycle routes between new residential or industrial developments and the centre of settlements. Where a development proposal affects a right of way, every effort will be made to accommodate the definitive route or provide an equally good or better alternative.
37. Policy LC4 states that where development is acceptable in principle, it will be permitted provided that its detailed treatment is of a high standard that respects, conserves and where possible it enhances the landscape, built environment and other valued characteristics of the area.
38. Policy LC5 states that applications for development in a conservation area, or for development that affects its setting or important views into or out of the area, should assess and clearly demonstrate how the existing character and appearance of the conservation area will be preserved and, where possible, enhanced.
39. Policy LC16 states that when considering development proposals that could affect archaeological sites or features, their national and local significance by reference to the Schedule of Ancient Monuments and to the County Sites and Monuments Records and other relevant information; the protection, enhancement and preservation of the sites or features and their settings; and the need for the development to be on the site in question; and the need for an appropriate archaeological assessment of the nature and importance of the remains will be considered.
40. Policy LC17 states that for statutorily designated sites, features or species of international, national or regional importance; development applications in the vicinity of designated sites will be carefully considered to assess the likelihood of adverse effects.
41. Policy LC18 states that where development which could affect a site, feature, or species of nature conservation importance or its setting is acceptable, appropriate safeguards and enhancement will be required to minimise adverse impacts. These should ensure conservation of the features of importance in their original location. Provision must be made for the beneficial future management of the nature conservation interests and a satisfactory record must be provided of any features which could be lost or concealed. If the likely success of these measures is uncertain, development will not be permitted.
42. Policy LT18 requires safe access provision and adequate parking arrangements.
43. Policy LC20 states that planning applications should provide sufficient information to enable their impact on trees, woodlands and other landscape features to be properly

considered.

44. Policy LT20 states that where a development proposal affects a public right of way, either the definitive line of the public right of way should be retained, or, in exceptional circumstances, where retention of the definitive line is not possible, the developer will be required to provide an alternative route that is of equal or better quality than the original.

Assessment

45. The application relates to the development of permissive paths and a family mountain bike trail at Langsett Reservoir plus a package of mitigation. The application would result in a circular route close to the perimeter of the reservoir being created.
46. The plans have been amended to address impacts of the development including the impact on the landscape and ecological interests.
47. The amended application is for the development of paths and trails, predominantly to the southern side of the reservoir. These are proposed to comprise a permissive path, a cycle route and a combined route. The south-west side part is proposed to largely comprise a combined route, with small sections where the permissive path and cycle route would be segregated. The south-east side of the reservoir is proposed to largely comprise a permissive path only, with a small area of development where a cycle path would link with existing tracks. Small areas of development are also proposed to the other banks of the reservoir, where short cycle path and permissive path sections are proposed to link with existing tracks to create the circular route.
48. Both the permissive path and cycle routes are proposed to be two metres wide, comprising a woven geotextile membrane laid on the graded and compacted sub-grade. Existing gravel stockpiled on site is proposed to be used to form a 2.5m wide sub-base layer of 140mm depth. The surface finish would comprise a 50mm layer of self-binding gritstone graded from 15mm to dust, compacted with a cross fall of 2.5% to drain runoff.
49. The combined route is proposed to be 3.5m wide and be formed in the same way as the cycle and pedestrian routes.

The application also proposes a package of mitigation. This would comprise the creation of 5ha compensatory habitat in an area of woodland to the North-West of the site suitable as a breeding habitat for nightjars, woodcock and other ground-nesting bird species. It is also proposed to provide signage in 7 locations around the reservoir, indicating that dogs should be kept on a lead. It is also proposed to fence off areas to the south-west side of the reservoir, along with the provision of nest boxes and nesting sites for song thrush, spotted flycatcher, redstart and tawny owl on suitable retained trees, as well as the provision of bat boxes on suitable retained trees.

Principle

50. We consider that the proposed amended plans are acceptable in principle. Policy RT1 of the Core Strategy states that the National Park Authority will support facilities which enable recreation, environmental education and interpretation, which encourage understanding and enjoyment of the National Park, and are appropriate to the National Park's valued characteristics. This policy also states that new provision must justify its location in relation to environmental capacity, scale and intensity of use or activity, and must not disadvantage peoples' enjoyment of other existing and appropriate recreation, environmental education or interpretation activities. The proposed plans would clearly

promote recreational activities within the National Park, and the location for development would provide a logical circular route around an existing reservoir. It is considered that the proposed plans would provide a valuable community and visitor facility, while having minimal impact in terms of landscape and ecological matters. It is not considered that existing users of the area would be adversely affected by the proposed scheme.

Character/Landscape

51. The plans (as amended) would not result in any adverse impact on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area. The routes would be surfaced in gritstone which is geologically suitable for the area. They would generally be sited within woodland and scrub landscapes and thus not be open to wider public views. The level of development has been reduced significantly during the application process, and the amended plans show a minimal number of new tracks across the site. It is considered that material samples would be required in the event of an approval, in order to ensure appropriate materials are used so that the new tracks would blend into the surrounding landscape. Fencing and signage are proposed, and it is considered that details of these would also be required in order to demonstrate that these additions would be of an appropriate style and height so as not to have any adverse impact on the surrounding landscape. Subject to conditions securing agreement over material samples and details, we consider that these amended plans would not result in any adverse impact on the character of the site and the surrounding landscape. As such, the development would conform with policies GSP1, GSP3, L1, L3, LC4, LC5 and the NPPF.
52. The Authority's Landscape Officer was consulted on this application and raised no objections to the amended plans. The Officer further stated that "the latest plans satisfactorily address the concerns I raised regarding the previous iteration – I am now supportive of the application". The officer went on to suggest the following condition would be required....'No works or development shall take place until full details of landscape scheme proposals have been submitted to and approved by the PDNPA. These details shall include, as appropriate: Planting plans (location of planting) & specifications (including operations associated with tree establishment), Planting schedules, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers / densities where appropriate, Locations and specifications of flow control measures ('leaky dams' etc)'
53. The comments from the Landscape Officer are accepted. It is considered that the suggested condition is required to ensure the protection of landscape character by appropriate landscape design.

Amenity

54. It is not considered that the proposed plans would result in any significant issues in terms of amenity. There are no residential properties located in close proximity to the proposed area for development, so it is not considered that there would be any additional impact for neighbours. As such, the development would conform with policies GSP3, LC4 and the NPPF.

Ecology

55. The Authority's Ecologist was consulted and made the following comments –"The revised scheme is a lot more acceptable than the previous scheme, however, mitigation and compensation measures are still required. The additional bird survey submitted shows that the main species to be impacted upon by the development would be common sandpiper and night jar. The path has been pulled away from the shoreline

to reduce the impact on common sandpiper. An assessment on the potential impacts has been completed. Four of the eleven territories recorded sit within a distance where there is still potential for disturbance. The line of sight is broken up by trees and vegetation in the majority of cases, however, territory CS1, which is the closest to the development is within the line of site. The assessment indicates that there is suitable, unoccupied habitat further along the shoreline for this territory should there be issues with disturbance and further planting is suggested between the footpath and the wall to provide additional mitigation. During a meeting with Yorkshire Water (YW) on 11th March, we also asked for fencing, tree planting and wetlands to be located in key locations along the route. These were agreed in principle. The report recommends the monitoring of this territory to assess impacts. We would recommend the monitoring of all territories to assess impacts during busy periods of use (this is something that Barnsley Bird Study Group may wish to be involved in). If the results of monitoring indicate that there has been displacement or loss of territories, then additional mitigation measures should be implemented.

56. It is likely that nightjar will be impacted upon as a result of the development. The use of compensatory habitat has been recommended in the October 2018 bird report, referring to one particular woodland compartment. However, this area will be replanted and will only remain suitable for a short period of time. As a long term measure, YW have demonstrated that there will be clear fell compartments as part of the overall woodland management for the site. In addition, as additional compensation and enhancement, positive woodland management is proposed in the wider Don Valley. The positive management was discussed at the meeting with YW and the Lakeland Partnership on 11th March. A key point from the meeting was that Sheffield Lakeland Landscape Partnership are involved in the management of the woodlands and also part funding the track. They were to provide further clarification relating to how this fits in with their objectives and vision and their input in monitoring and managing. This information has not yet been received, and therefore needs to form part of a condition”.
57. The Ecologist concluded that conditions should be imposed requiring a construction environmental management plan, construction works in daylight hours, no lighting in the woodland, vegetation clearance outside main breeding bird season, checks for nesting birds during construction, mature trees retained where possible and checked for bird and bat potential, location of fencing, tree planting and wetland areas agreed on site, route to avoid heathland habitats and heathland habitat to be created where not possible, summary of woodland management and management plan for YW woodlands in the wider Don Valley to be submitted and implemented, monitoring details of the common sandpiper population and any mitigation to be agreed, path designated for daylight hours with no lighting, signage for dogs to be kept on a lead to be erected.
58. The Ecologist’s comments and recommended conditions are accepted . We consider that the amended plans are acceptable in terms of ecological matters and that the suggested conditions, along with a condition to provide the proposed area for mitigation, are required. As such, this application is in conformity with policies L2, LC17, LC18 and the NPPF subject to the suggested conditions.

Highways

59. Sheffield City Council are the highway authority and raised no objections. The following comments were made in relation to the original plans – ‘The only concern I have would be if cyclists started using existing public footpaths. However, for the most part, the bike trails are well away from public footpaths. The only instance where this doesn’t seem to be the case is where a proposed bike trail passes close to an existing public footpath running from Upper Midhope towards Midhope Cliffe Lane. Accordingly, I’d recommend

the following condition: Prior to construction of the proposed bike trails, where they pass close to existing public footpaths, details shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority of measures to be implemented ensuring no mis-use of existing public footpaths by cyclists. The above-mentioned approved measures are to be implemented in tandem with construction of the bike trails. Reason: In the interests of ensuring pedestrian safety. You might also want to consider the comments of Bradfield Parish Council, and condition that details are car parking provision/accommodation off Thickwoods Lane be submitted to the Planning Authority for approval prior to construction of the bike trail, and constructed in tandem with construction of the bike trail. Reason: To ensure sufficient car parking accommodation an in the interests of maintaining/ensuring road safety’.

60. The comments from Highways are largely accepted. The proposed plans are considered to be satisfactory in terms of highways matters, and the suggested condition in relation to the no mis-use of existing public footpaths by cyclists is considered to be necessary. As such, this application is in accordance with policies T6, LT18, LT20 and the NPPF. In terms of additional car parking, the suggested location would fall outside of the red line boundary for this application. It is not considered that a Grampian condition is appropriate in this instance, as any plans for additional parking would need to be considered in detail and would therefore require a separate application.

Archaeology

61. The Authoritys Archaeologist raised no objections subject to the imposition of conditions. The following comments were made – ”I have reviewed the information submitted in support of this application and the information available in PDNPA’s Historic Buildings, Sites and Monuments Record (HBSMR), and the proposed development appears to affect a number of heritage assets.
62. I welcome the submission of the Historic Woodland Assessment, as this is a great enhancement on the information otherwise available within the HBSMR. This demonstrates that heritage assets of historical and archaeological interest survive within the woodland and within the area of the proposed development. It also indicates that these remains are primarily of local, but in some cases of regional interest.
63. However, there appears to be a conflict here between the developments approach to the heritage assets identified in the Historic Woodland Assessment and what the plans for the proposed development indicate..... It could be that the intension is to avoid the above listed heritage asset and safeguard them from any harm during the proposed development, and this approach would be supported. However, the plans and information submitted do not demonstrate this approach; they suggest that the features on the route will be directly impacted upon, and those in close proximity could be harmed during the construction of the paths/routes.....
64. A method statement for the preservation in situ of archaeological remains is required in order to fully understand how archaeological impacts will be minimised and preservation in situ and safeguarding of the identified heritage assets identified in the Historical Woodland Assessment will be achieved, when the supplied drawings depict the new routes directly over and in close proximity to the identified heritage assets.
65. Where heritage assets are not to be safeguard, but will be harmed by the proposed development, a scheme of archaeological works is required to allow the archaeological interest of the heritage assets to be investigated and recorded prior to this harm/loss. The scheme of archaeological work will need to include elements of measured survey, photographic recording and archaeological monitoring of groundworks”.

66. The comments from the Archaeologist are accepted and we consider that the suggested conditions are required in the interests of the archaeology of the site. The revised application is acceptable in terms of archaeological matters, and is therefore in accordance with policies L3, LC16 and the NPPF.

67. Rights of Way

68. The Rights of Way team raised no objections to the amended plans and made the following comments – ‘We support the revised proposals as they will enhance the network of public access in the area and improve accessibility for enjoyment by all. The specification provided seems generally satisfactory, although the use of geotextile on MTB trails is dubious. I’m also disappointed that the earlier proposed segregation of bikes and pedestrians has been reduced/minimised as a compromise to the landscape impact concerns, but feel that by doing so, the merit of the overall proposal is reduced – which is a shame’.

69. The comments from Rights of Way are largely accepted. It is considered that the amended layout is acceptable for potential users. While the minimised segregation between tracks is detrimental from a rights of way perspective, the original plans would have resulted in an unacceptable landscape and ecological impact. On balance, we consider that the minimised segregation between tracks is the most appropriate approach. The amended plans are acceptable in terms of rights of way, and are therefore in accordance with policies T6, LT20 and the NPPF.

Trees

70. The application indicates that trees shall be retained where possible. It is expected that there will be some trees that need to be felled in order to cater for the development proposed. The Tree Officer has not provided any response to this application, however it is considered that a condition should be imposed detailing any trees to be removed. This is in order to assess their significance, and to consider any bird and bat potential. The amended plans are acceptable in terms of the impact on trees, subject to the imposition of this condition. As such, this application is in accordance with policies T6 and LT20.

Conclusion

71. The proposed amended plans are appropriate in terms of principle, subject to conditions. They would conserve the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area, and are acceptable in terms of the impact on landscape, archaeology, ecology and trees. The plans would provide facilities which enable recreation, environmental education and interpretation, which encourage understanding and enjoyment of the National Park, and are appropriate to the National Park’s valued characteristics. The Rights of Way network would be improved as a result of these plans, and any impact in terms of landscape, archaeology, ecology and trees will be appropriately mitigated. The surrounding Conservation Area would be largely unaffected by these plans, and there would be no adverse impact for neighbours. As such, this application is in accordance with policies GSP1, GSP3, GSP4, L1, L2, L3, RT1, T6, LC4, LC5, LC15, LC16, LC17, LC18, LT18, LC20, LT20 and the NPPF.

Human Rights

72. Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

Nil

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