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Your Ref:
Our Ref: gb_00519

27th March 2013

Dear Julie

**13/00519/FUL | Seasonal change of use from Agricultural to laying stock pheasants, from 1st September until 31st December | Newcastle Court Newcastle Shropshire SY7 8QL
Section 13 of the application does not effectively address Biodiversity**

The AONB Partnership objects to this planning proposal. Paragraph 115 of the 2012 National Planning Policy Framework states that; "Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in.....Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The **conservation of wildlife** and cultural heritage are important considerations in all **these areas should be given great weight....."**

I have recently visited this site in response to concern expressed to the AONB Partnership about the planning proposal by local residents . The site lies centred at 324021,283394 on the west bank of the Folly Brook and comprises a c. 9.4ha parcel of old pasture land sloping west to east, towards the Folly Brook with a fall from 250m to 230m. The rearing site is fenced with high perimeter netted fencing and planted with pheasant cover feeding strips. Two substantial piles of tyres (clamps) lie alongside and parallel to the road which runs along the valley from Newcastle in the south. These are believed to be the remains of a worm farming programme (local informant). The presence of these tyres should be included within the consideration of the proposal. Local residents complain of a recent increase in vermin which they believe are associated with the pheasant programme and the tyres.

The proximity of the site to the Folly Brook raises concern in respect t to waste from some 40,000 birds potentially being deposited on the land surface. The AONB is currently engaged in a project to improve the pearl mussel habitat in the Clun Catchment and the Folly Brook is a part of that catchment system. In respect to this I have consulted with colleagues who have expertise in river biodiversity and the AONB Partnership makes the following points:

1. The application does not consider protected and priority species - this is one of the few white-clawed crayfish streams in the Shropshire Hills, it is also important for its salmonids (pearl mussel hosts) - species preferring high quality waters - there are potential issues of poultry waste contaminating the stream either through overland runoff or via sub-surface drains. There is no information on the number of birds to be reared given in the supporting documentation, though figures from a local informant suggest between 10,000 and 40,000 birds. If this was an application for a building it would have to demonstrate no net increase on P loading to the Clun.
2. Neither does it consider impact on BAP habitats (Rivers and Streams - BAP Priority Habitat) and Wet woodland (Nationally Rare BAP habitat). Potential issues of nutrients and sediment altering the character of these habitats. The Folly Brook already has unacceptably high sediment load.

3. This site that has been highlighted in the Clun Restoration Plan as a problem area with regard to its cropping practices - It is a steep site draining to the Folly Brook. The application proposes maize as a cover crop, this a one of the most damaging crops next to rivers - having issues relating to excessive N leaching and increased sediment release.

The AONB Partnership accepts the need for farm diversification but in view of the above concerns believes that insufficient consideration is contained within the application documentation to fully assess potential negative impact on the biodiversity of the Folly Brook. The AONB Partnership therefore objects to this application.

Yours sincerely

G Barratt
Landscape and Planning Officer
Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership.