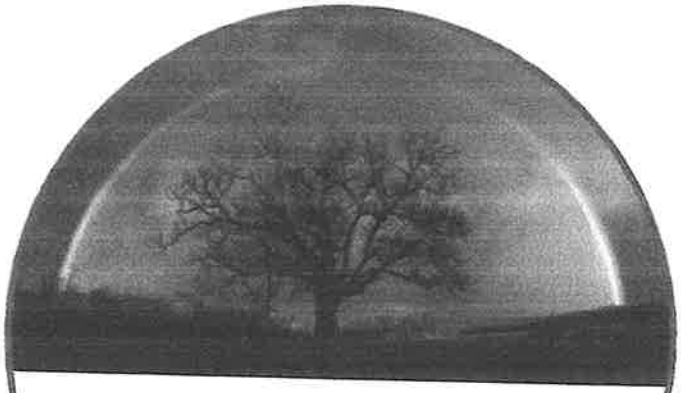


Arc Ecology

LAND AT THE FISHERMAN'S REST, BROADHOLME LANE, BELPER - ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

JULY 2024

REPORT PREPARED BY:

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SAFEGUARDING BIODIVERSITY

As a whole, the biodiversity value of the site is assessed to be very low. The vegetation present has low naturalness, low structural heterogeneity and lack of connectivity to areas of higher value for nature conservation.

The site is currently assessed to be exempt from the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) regulations due to the '*de minimis*' exemption which states

'Development that does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than 25 square metres (e.g. 5m by 5m) of onsite habitat, or 5 metres of linear habitats such as hedgerows' (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain).

Potential for ecological enhancement within the site is very limited. It is understood that the current proposals will require removal of two of the trees, which are assumed to be the two Leyland cypress trees within the cut-out on the southern boundary of the site, but the plans include planting of six new trees post-development.

Leyland cypress are known to have very low ecological value so new tree planting should use species with a higher recognised ecological value and of an appropriate mature size for the size of the site. In this instance, trees that grow very large when mature such as oak (*Quercus robur*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and sycamore may not be suitable but smaller species such as field maple (*Acer camestre*), mountain ash (*Sorbus aucuparia*), cherry (*Prunus sp.*) and goat willow (*Salix caprea*) along with fruiting species including crab apple (*Malus sp.*), domestic apple (*Malus sp.*) and pear (*Pyrus sp.*) make good alternatives

Further potential for enhancement could be achieved by removal of the eleven small Leyland cypress on the north-western boundary, which are all in relatively poor condition due to competition, and replacing them with a native species hedgerow which could include species such as field maple, beech, hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), elder (*Sambuchus niger*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*). The same principal could be applied if the plans require replacement of the fences on the eastern and south-eastern boundaries of the site, although as the site is exempt from BNG regulations, both of these are considered to be suggestion only and at the site owners discretion.