

Biodiversity and the environment and why they are important when considering the site allocation plans.

Bramhope and Carlton Parish Council published their Biodiversity Plan in January 2024

<https://bramhopecarlton-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/2024-Biodiversity-Policy-V1-24-01-24.pdf>

And includes the following statement:

The Council, when commenting on planning applications, will support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats. It will support protection of sensitive habitats from development and will consider whether the development would mean loss of important habitats for wildlife in respect of all applications.

As part of the site allocation sites assessment there has been a two-step process.

Stage 1 Gateway tests include

- 2. Designated biodiversity sites
- 5. Ancient woodland

Stage 2 Site scores include

- 12. Biodiversity
- 13. Woodland and trees
- 16. Landscape characteristics

The impact of building near woodlands.

Development near woodland can have significant negative impacts on the woodland ecosystem, including habitat loss and fragmentation, disturbance to wildlife, and potential for pollution from runoff etc. Development can create conditions that favour the spread of non-native species and alter the character of the landscape and visual appeal of the area.

This can be mitigated by creating opportunities for habitat restoration and increased access to green spaces, helping both wildlife and people. Buffer zones help protect the woodland edge and reduce disturbance.

Ancient replanted woodland.

Ancient woodland is defined as woodland that has existed continuously since at least 1600 AD. It often features undisturbed soil, ground flora and fungi, which are remnants of the original woodland. They are ecologically valuable, supporting a wide range of native species.

Ancient woodland that has been cleared and replanted is termed Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS). Restoring these sites to their original state, or at least enhancing their biodiversity, is a growing area of interest.

Spring Wood is an area of replanted ancient woodland.

Site allocation 731 – the northern boundary is alongside Spring Wood.

Site allocation 170 – the site is adjacent to the full length of the eastern boundary of Spring Wood

Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).

TPOs are legal documents issued by local authorities to protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodland from being felled, uprooted, lopped or topped, or otherwise damaged without permission. These orders are crucial for preserving the character and beauty of an area and ensuring the conservation of important trees.

Site allocation 495 – the whole area including the adjacent Bramhope Nurseries woodland is covered by a TPO.

Site allocation 120 – the southern boundary is adjacent to a woodland with a TPO.

Site allocation 735 – the eastern part of the site contains woodland with a TPO, and the southern boundary is also adjacent to woodland with a TPO.

Site 433 – there is a TPO on the eastern part of the site.

Bird population – changes since the 1970's.

The British Trust of Ornithology conducts regular surveys, and Bramhope lies in the 10-km square SE24. Since 1970, 11 breeding species have been lost from the Bramhope area. A further 38 species have declined in abundance since at least 1990. The area has experienced some of the highest levels of species decline, being in the top 6% of 10-km squares ranked by species decline.

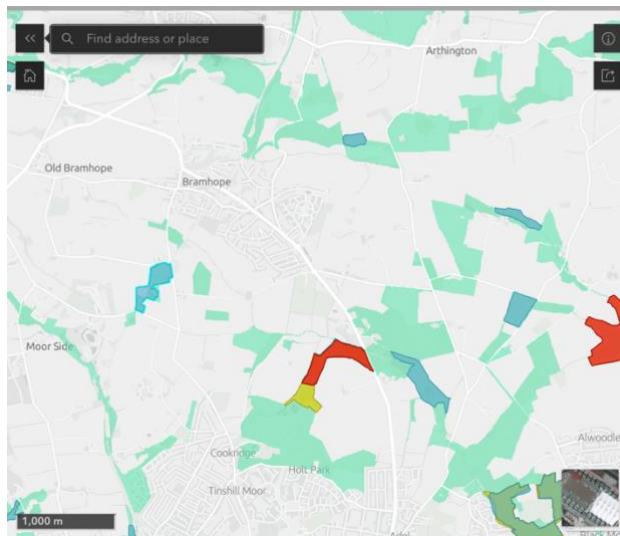
For more information see:

<https://data.bto.org/doorstep-birds/>

Leeds Habitat Network

Leeds City Council Natural Environment map is made up of a hierarchy of district levels, including designated areas, but also other habitats of local importance which are often physically linked to form a coherent ecological network. This layer is important in the implementation of Policy G9 of LCC Core Strategy. These local habitat features will form a basis for the emerging West Yorkshire Local Nature Recovery and help guide investment in nature through Biodiversity Net Gain.

The following image gives a general overview of the Leeds Habitat Network in relation to Bramhope.



More detail is available on the Natural Environment Map:

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/2309ea34f6ba476e8a3d2b642db4e119>

On the map chose the layer 'Natural habitat'

The Leeds City Council Core Strategy can be seen here:

<https://www.leeds.gov.uk/sites/default/files/local%20plans/adopted%20core%20strategy/consolidated%20core%20strategy%20with%20cssr%20policies%20sept%202019.pdf>

In Bramhope, the Bramhope Nurseries woodland (broad-leaved trees) off Moor Road is part of the Leeds Habitat Network.

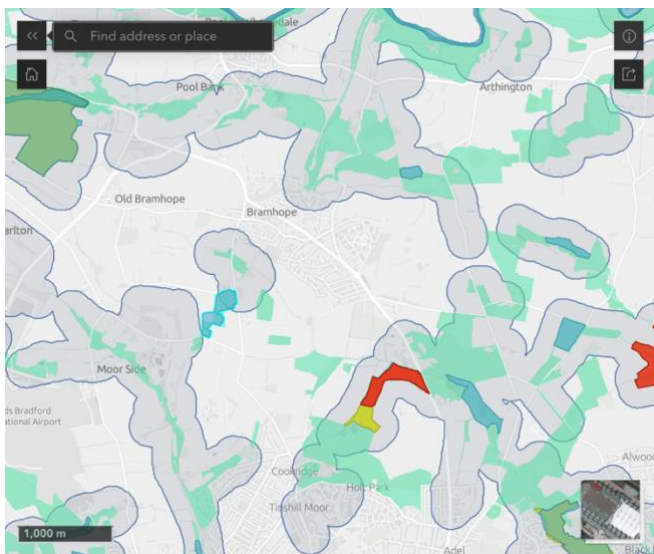
Site allocations 495, 120 and 735 are adjacent to this woodland.

Site allocation 170 is adjacent to two areas within the network. On the eastern boundary/ to the south of Kings Road there is an area of quarry, scrub/trees, and along the A660 there is an area of broad-leaved trees/scrub and rough grassland.

Bats as Indicators of Biodiversity.

Bats account for almost a third of all mammal species in the UK and occupy a wide range of habitats such as woodlands, wetlands and urban areas. They are top predators for nocturnal insects and are sensitive to changes in the environment such as housing development and habitat fragmentation. They are an important indicator of the health of our wildlife.

In Leeds, **bat alert zones** are areas within 200 metres of significant woodland or watercourses/waterbodies where there is a higher likelihood of bats roosting and foraging. These zones are used in planning applications to assess the potential impact of development on bat populations.



For greater detail the map of bat alert zones can be found here:

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/2309ea34f6ba476e8a3d2b642db4e119>

On the map chose the layer 'Bat alert zone'.

In Bramhope the most significant bat alert zone is Bramhope Nurseries woodland off Moor Road.

Site allocations 495, 120 and 735 all fall within this zone.

Site allocation 259 at Hilton Grange abuts a bat alert zone on its northern boundary, along the Ebor Way.

Site allocation 170 is within a bat alert zone on its southern and eastern boundaries.

Other protected species.

Site 170 is a Great Crested Newt Strategic Opportunity Area.

Special Landscape Areas.

A Special Landscape Area (SLA) is a designation given by local authorities to protect and enhance landscapes of local importance within their administrative boundaries. SLAs are landscapes that are valued for their unique qualities and characteristics. These areas are considered to be of high landscape value, comparable to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and are protected through planning policies. Development proposals within these areas are carefully assessed to ensure that they do not have a negative impact on the landscape.

Leeds covers an area of 552 square kilometres, and the surrounding countryside accounts for approximately two-thirds of the city council's total area, with the majority being designated as Green Belt. Large areas of countryside are designated as Special Landscape Areas, and these were not changed in the Core Strategy Review in 2019.

To the north of Bramhope is the Wharfe Valley & Southern Slopes SLA.

Site allocations 170 (northern boundary), 259, 376 and 433, are within the Wharfe Valley & Southern Slopes SLA.

Public Footpaths.

Designated footpaths (public rights of way), are legally protected routes that the public can use for walking, cycling or other forms of non-motorised access. When assessing planning applications, it is important to consider the impact on these footpaths, as they are protected by law. Developers must treat designated footpaths with respect, ensuring that development does not unduly restrict public access.

Site allocation 170 – impact on footpaths 10 (northern boundary) and 12, together with the Ebor Way.

Site allocation 259 – impact on footpath 12 (northern boundary) and the Ebor Way.

Site allocation 495 – impact on footpath 6 (northeastern boundary)

Conservation areas.

A Conservation Area (CA) is an area designated as having special architectural or historical interest, and the aim is to preserve or enhance its character. These sites are identified by local planning authorities and can encompass various sites including villages or neighbourhoods. They are not static, and while changes are allowed they should be sympathetic to the area's unique qualities.

The following describes the five distinctive areas of character which are designated as conservation areas in Bramhope. For the purpose of the consultation on site allocations it is the historic core focused on the junction of Eastgate and Church Hill at The Cross and including the Grade 1 listed Puritan Chapel, that is important.

[https://www.leeds.gov.uk/sites/default/files/docs/bramhope%20conservation%20area%20appraisal%20and%20management%20plan%20\(may%202011\).pdf](https://www.leeds.gov.uk/sites/default/files/docs/bramhope%20conservation%20area%20appraisal%20and%20management%20plan%20(may%202011).pdf)

Site allocations 376 and 433 would affect Conservation Area 1 Historic Village, and Conservation Area 2 Historic Farm Buildings (which includes The Grange) and the Grade 1 listed Puritan Chapel.

Parkland.

Areas of parkland are often associated with houses or former sites, often with isolated and separated with fences, walls or ditches. Wildlife including mammals and flora, ponds and areas of woodland contribute to this habitat.

Along the FP 6 from Moor Road there are gate posts which are likely to have been at the entrance of the drive to Bramhope Manor which then went across the field south of Parklands

This probably explains why **site allocation 495** is described as parkland.

Other environmental impacts.

Water drainage.

The fields off Moor Road have a stream running through them which joins Marsh Beck that runs through to Breary Marsh. Development on any of the three sites, 120, 495 and 735, could increase the runoff into the stream, which runs through a culvert under Moor Road and another through the tips of the Bramhope tunnel. The field to the south of Parklands (site 495) becomes flooded in winter and there is a pond for about six months of the year, where ducks often nest and breed.

Sites 170 and 731 also have streams running through them which run through Breary Marsh.

Breary Marsh is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The reserve is the best and most diverse example of a wet valley alder wood and associated floodplain habitat in West Yorkshire. These habitats were once common along streams and river valleys in the county but are now sadly localised and fragmented.

Site	PAWS* TPO**	Habitat Network* Bat alert zone**	SLA* CA**	FP* Water runoff**
120/Moor Road	**	*/**		**
170/Breary Grange Farm	*	*/**/Crested newt	*	FP 10, 12, Ebor Way **
259/Old Lane, Hilton Court		**	*	FP12, Ebor Way
376/Churchgate, Church Hill (N)			*/**	
433/Land at Old Manor House Farm	**		*/**	
495/S of Parklands/Moor Road	**	*/**		FP6 ** Parkland
731/SE Springwood Crescent	*			**
735/Moor Road	**	*/**		**

PAWS – Plantations on ancient woodland sites

SLA - Special landscape area