

## Nicola Gunn

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**From:** Lyndsey Hayes  
**Sent:** 05 August 2026 07:30  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** FW: 3/2026/0356 Hammond Ground, Read  
  
**Importance:** High

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**From:** Derek Richardson <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** 04 August 2026 10:20  
**To:** Lyndsey Hayes <Lyndsey.Hayes@ribblevalley.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: 3/2026/0356 Hammond Ground, Read  
**Importance:** High

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Hi Lyndsey

Thank you for consulting the Ecology Unit on the above planning application.

In brief –

Currently I would consider that there is insufficient ecological information available to determine this application.

The Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) provided to inform the proposals has correctly identified the habitat within and adjacent to the application site as the Priority Habitat (Habitat of Principal Importance) Wood Pasture and Parkland. The NPPF requires planning decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural environment by protecting and enhancing Habitats of Principal Importance. If the Parkland has been in place for a long period of time and there are veteran trees and other features present, the habitat may be considered to be irreplaceable because it would take an unreasonable amount of time to recreate. Irreplaceable habitats carry a very high level of protection and any losses should be avoided.

Wood Pasture and Parkland is characterised by its important plant and animal communities closely associated with old-growth grassland and veteran and mature trees, including bats, birds, invertebrates, lichens and fungi. There do not appear to have been any surveys carried out for these species groups. The overall assessment of the site (and particularly the veteran and mature trees) has identified that the area has *likely* high importance for bats (including roosting bats), invertebrates, birds and other species but there is no primary survey evidence available to confirm this. It's therefore difficult to assess the overall ecological value of the site. The PEA describes the Priority Habitat as in a '*degraded condition*', but this description is based on limited survey evidence.

Further, the two site visits undertaken to ecologically appraise the site appear to have both been undertaken in February, an inappropriate time of year to carry out most ecological surveys. I cannot see how it is possible to accurately assess the condition of habitats present using surveys undertaken in February, when many species will not be in evidence.

I would advise that further surveys are required for –

- Bats
- Birds
- Fungi
- Invertebrates
- Grasslands

Surveys should be undertaken by suitably qualified ecologists and at appropriate times of year.

The application relies on proposals for enhancing the ecological value of the parkland areas which will remain undeveloped, but the lack of survey information makes it very difficult to accurately assess the harm which the development may cause and therefore difficult to assess the overall value of planned enhancements.

Yours

Derek Richardson

**Derek Richardson**  
**Principal Ecologist**  
Planning and Transportation  
Strategic Growth

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