Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

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Derek Stafford
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**For the attention of Heather Wynne**

Your Ref: AVA/2023/0546
Our ref: DWTAVA1810a

3rd November 2023

Dear Heather,

**Proposal: Outline application for two dwellings. Original application granted 5th August 2014. Office code AVA/2014/0734**

**Location: Bonnie View Nurseries, School House Hill, Heage Belper DE56 2B**

**Application Ref No.: AVA/2023/0546**

**With reference to the above application**, I am responding as the Biodiversity Planning Officer responsible for work relating to the Service Level Agreement, which the Amber Valley Borough Council and the Trust have signed. The following comments are aimed at providing accurate and up to date information on the nature conservation issues associated with the proposed development.

**Response**

We have reviewed the proposed development and the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (ML-Ecology, 2023). The Phase 1 visit was undertaken in September 2023. The building onsite offered “negligible” suitability for roosting and/or hibernating bats, whilst the site offered “low”



value for foraging and commuting bats. Wood pigeon was observed on site, but this is a species is under the RPSB Green List and is of Low Conservation Concern. However, the hedge on site provides potential nesting sites for birds. No evidence of other protected species was found during the survey and the site was dominated by improved grassland with low diversity. Overall, we advise that the proposed works are not likely to have a substantive impact on wildlife and no further surveys are required at this time.

Swifts – Integrated Nest Boxes Information/Advice

The newly published British Standard (BS 42021:2022 Integral nest boxes – Selection and installation for new developments) provides specifications on the number and type of integral boxes that should be sought within new developments. For example:

1. To provide new and enhanced opportunities for nesting, the number of integral nest boxes on new residential developments shall at least equal the number of dwellings, i.e., the ratio of integral nest boxes to dwellings is 1:1.
2. External nest boxes are additional to the installation of integral nest boxes on new developments and should not be included as part of the 1:1 ratio.

This is also supported by the National House Building Council Foundation, the standard-setting body for new homes: “Section 8.1 Nest sites for birds (page 42): "Provision of integral nest sites for swifts is through hollow chambers fitted into the fabric of a building while in construction. Although targeting swifts they will also be used by house sparrows, tits and starlings so are considered a ‘universal brick”.

The following conditions are advised:

**Breeding birds**

No stripping, demolition works or vegetation clearance shall take place between 1st March and 31st August inclusive, unless preceded by a nesting bird survey undertaken by a competent ecologist no more than 48 hours prior to clearance. If nesting birds are present, an appropriate exclusion zone will be implemented and monitored until the chicks have fledged. No works shall be undertaken within exclusion zones whilst nesting birds are present.

**Biodiversity Enhancement Plan**

The following condition is advised to secure mitigation and biodiversity enhancement:

Prior to construction works, a Bat and Bird Box Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall include, as a minimum, the installation of:

- 2x integral universal nest brick, close to eaves level and avoiding south facing elevations.
- 2x integral bat brick, at eaves level and favouring south facing elevations.

The plan shall detail the proposed bat and bird box locations along with the models of the boxes that will be obtained.

- Use of native trees and shrubs and/or flowering lawns as part of the landscaping scheme.

Such approved measures shall be implemented in full and maintained thereafter. Photographs of these features in situ shall be submitted to the LPA to discharge this condition and the features shall be maintained in perpetuity.

It is hoped that the information provided is helpful to the Council. If you require any further information or wish to discuss any of the comments made, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

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Reviewed by Kieron Huston BSc MSc MCIEEM - Biodiversity Planning and Policy Manager

**Endnote:**

Please see our planning pages https://www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/planning for ecological advice on submitting a planning application, finding an ecological consultant and information on mitigation and enhancement.