Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

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Sarah Brooks
Assistant Director of Planning & Regeneration
Amber Valley Borough Council
PO Box 18
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For the attention of Laura Anthony

Your Ref: AVA/2023/0515
Our ref: DWTAVA1837b

05/02/2024

Dear Laura

Proposal: Change of use of agricultural building to form a dwellinghouse

Location: Buildings And Land Adjacent Lammas Farm Lambhouse Lane Shottle Belper Derbyshire

Application Ref No: AVA/2023/0515

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 information provided including the original Bat & Bird Presence/Absence Survey Report (Evolution Ecology (January 2023) and the update letter (Evolution Ecology, November 2023) confirming that a visual inspection of potential roost features has been checked for evidence of bats. Although no evidence of bats was found during this inspection or the previous surveys we would recommend precautionary working methods given that the potential for use by bats remains.

The report also confirms the presence of bird nests in barn 1 including swallows. As such we have the following recommendations to make.

Precautionary Informative (Bats)

Building works should proceed with caution and vigilance for any unexpected bat presence. As a precautionary measure, we advise employing a sensitive strip of the roof tiles. If any roosting bats are discovered, works should cease immediately and a suitably qualified ecologist should be contacted for advice.

Lighting

Prior to the installation of lighting fixtures, a detailed lighting strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA to safeguard bats and other nocturnal wildlife. This should provide details of the chosen luminaires, their locations and any mitigating features such as dimmers, PIR sensors and timers. Dependent on the scale of proposed lighting, a lux contour plan may be required to demonstrate acceptable levels of light spill to any sensitive ecological zones/features. Guidelines can be found in Guidance Note 08/23 - Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night (BCT and ILP, 2023). Such approved measures will be implemented in full.

Breeding birds

No building works 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.

Bat and Bird Box Plan (Incl. Swallows)

Prior to building works commencing above foundation level, a bat and bird box plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA to compensate for the impacts of the development. This shall include details of appropriate swallow mitigation to compensate for the loss of nesting provision. Such approved measures shall be implemented in full and maintained thereafter.



Please note: swallow cups are designed to be fitted internally within an open-fronted structure, such as a stable, car-port, wood store etc. and not to external walls.

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]

Jenny Wheeldon BSc MSc MCIEEM
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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.

