Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

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Derbyshire Wildlife Trust is registered in England and Wales, company number 715675
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Derek Stafford
Assistant Director of Planning & Regeneration
Amber Valley Borough Council
PO Box 18
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DE5 3SZ

For the attention of Alfia Cox

Your Ref: AVA/2022/0490
Our ref: DWTAVA1679a

13th February 2024

Dear Alfia,

Proposal: Erection of one dwelling (may affect the setting of a listed building)

Location: The Cottage 8 Matlock Road Ambergate Belper Derbyshire DE56 2EL

Application Ref No.: AVA/2022/0490

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

Following on from our previous response (letter dated 4th August 2022), we have received and reviewed the Reptile Presence/Absence Survey Report (CBE Consulting, 2022). Artificial refugia



was placed in appropriate locations on 22nd August 2022 and five surveys were completed from the period of 5th September to 21st September 2022. No reptile activity was identified and none of the refugia were used by reptiles throughout the survey period. However, 4 refugia were used by voles and 2 refugia were used by mice. No amphibians were found during the survey. It was considered that no evidence of a significant reptile population is present on site and therefore, is not likely to become a constraint to the development.

Biodiversity net gain

In our response dated 4th August 2022 we raised concerns about the loss of the woodland and the fact that trees and shrubs were cleared prior to the ecological survey being undertaken. We asked for more information to quantify this loss and a clear plan for how the loss of the woodland habitat was going to be mitigated and compensated. This information is still outstanding and therefore we consider that the proposed development as it stands results in a net loss for biodiversity and does not meet the requirements of the NPPF.

Furthermore, the proximity of the development to the river needs to be at least 8 metres or more to avoid impacts on otter and water vole, both of which have been recorded using the river. No part of the riverbank should be included within the development footprint.

If the Council are minded to approve the application at this time, please contact us for full details for suitable conditions. We advise that conditions for precautionary working methods for reptiles and other protected species, lighting and biodiversity enhancements would be required.

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,

Avreen Roque BSc (Hons)
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Reviewed by Kieron Huston 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.