Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

Sarah Brooks
Head of Planning
Amber Valley Borough Council
PO Box 18
Town Hall
Ripley, Derbyshire
DE5 3SZ

For the attention of Laura Anthony

Your Ref: AVA/2026/0042
Our ref: DWTAVA2214

4th March 2026

Dear Laura,

Proposal: Change of use and conversion of an existing agricultural building to form a dwellinghouse

Location: Rakestones Barn Gorses Kirk Ireton Ashbourne Derbyshire DE6 3JU

Application Ref No.: AVA/2026/0042

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 submitted information associated with the above application. After viewing the photographs of the agricultural building, we consider that the structure provides limited opportunities for roosting bats and a protected species survey would be disproportionate in this instance. Furthermore, the application is exempt from mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain.

Sandy Hill, Main Street, Middleton, Matlock, DE4 4LR
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There is however potential for nesting birds to use the building and therefore we recommend that the below conditions should be secured, if the council was minded approving the application, in order to provide measurable gains for biodiversity in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

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 in the vicinity. This should provide details of the chosen luminaires, their locations and any mitigating features such as dimmers, PIR sensors and timers. 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.

Nesting Birds

No stripping, demolition or conversion 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.

Biodiversity Enhancement Plan

Prior to building works commencing above foundation level, a Biodiversity Enhancement Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local

Planning Authority. Approved measures shall be implemented in full and maintained thereafter. The Plan shall clearly show positions, specifications and numbers of features, which will include (but are not limited to) the following:

• 1 x universal nest box / swift brick on new dwelling, erected at eaves level, avoiding southern elevations.

• 1 x bat box on new dwelling, erected at eaves level, favouring southern elevations.

• 1 x insect brick or tower

A statement of good practice including photographs should be submitted to the local planning authority prior to the discharge of this condition, demonstrating that the enhancements have been selected and installed in accordance with the above.

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,

Holly Fowler

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