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/2025/0846
Our ref: DWTAVA2199a

9th March 2026

Dear Laura,

Proposal: Part convert outbuildings to form holiday lets & ancillary accommodation (May affect the setting of a listed building)

Location: Ridgeway House Ridgeway Lane Ridgeway Belper Derbyshire DE56 2JT

Application Ref No.: AVA/2025/0846

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 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PBRA) Report produced by Elton Ecology (February 2026). The report details that the PBRA was undertaken on 5th February 2026 under suitable weather conditions.

The outbuildings to be developed were externally and internally inspected in order to determine the suitability of the structures for roosting bats.

Sandy Hill, Main Street, Middleton, Matlock, DE4 4LR
01773 881188 · enquiries@derbyshirewt.co.uk

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Building B1a (two storey garage) and B1b (connected two-storey extension) were assessed as having low bat roosting suitability. B1a was recorded to have potential access points attributed to lifted tiles leading to potential roosting locations such as the panels of insulation and the lining within the loft void. B1b has access points such as lifted tiles within the eaves and lead flashing leading to potential roosting features at beam intersection points and within gaps of internal stonework. Gaps within the internal wall of the ridge were also recorded.

We support the recommendation for a single nocturnal bat survey, in line with best practice guidance and based on the level of bat roost potential identified.

Paragraph 99 of Circular 06/2005 states "*it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before planning permission is granted, otherwise all material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision. The need to ensure ecological surveys are carried out should therefore only be left to coverage under planning conditions in exceptional circumstances*".

Surveys should be undertaken at the correct time of year by suitable qualified and experienced ecologists. The results should be submitted to the LPA, including a mitigation strategy as necessary

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.

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Yours sincerely,

Holly Fowler

Holly Fowler BSc (Hons)
Biodiversity Planning Lead (South)
planning@derbyshirewt.co.uk

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