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 Alfia Cox

Your Ref: AVA/2026/0187
Our ref: DWTAVA2360

4th June 2026

Dear Alfia,

Proposal: Demolition of former care home (may affect the setting of the conservation area)

Location: Former Ada Belfield House Field Lane Belper Derbyshire DE56 1DE

Application Ref No.: AVA/2026/0187

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 considered the following documents in relation to the application:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (Elton Ecology, October 2022)
- Daytime Bat Walkover (Morph Ecological Consultants, October 2025)

We acknowledge that previous ecological survey work was carried out in 2022, pertaining to a Preliminary Roost Assessment and bat emergence surveys. The survey works were associated with an outline planning application for the demolition of the care home building and erection of seven dwellings (AVA/2020/0089).

An updated daytime bat walkover survey was undertaken by Morph Ecological Consultants on 26th September 2026 to reassess the suitability of the building for roosting bats and nesting birds, given the time elapsed since the previous surveys. We support the conclusion that the main building is largely unsuitable for roosting bats, with only a limited number of potential roosting features identified. Taking into account the absence of roosting bats during the 2022 surveys, the limited features recorded during the 2025 daytime walkover, and the subsequent installation of security boarding to the building, we consider that further bat survey effort would be disproportionate in this case. Demolition works should adhere to a Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWS), secured as condition of planning.

Conditions

Bats – Precautionary Working Method Statement

No demolition works shall commence until a Precautionary Method Statement (PWS) for bats is produced and submitted to the LPA for approval. This shall include reasonable avoidance measures such as seasonal timings and strategic removal of identified features under a watching brief. If evidence of roosting bats is found, no works shall commence until a suitable mitigation strategy has been produced (including licensing where necessary) and been submitted to the LPA for approval. A short statement of compliance shall be submitted to the LPA upon completion of the demolition works.

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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