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/2025/0843
Our ref: DWTAVA2359

9th June 2026

Dear Laura,

Proposal: Proposed stable conversion to form 2 no holiday flats

Location: The Granary Newlands Farm Newlands Road Riddings Alfreton Derbyshire DE55 4ER

Application Ref No.: AVA/2025/0843

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 relevant documents submitted as part of the planning application with particular reference to the following:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment (Arbtech, September 2024)
- Bat Emergence Survey Report (Morph Ecological Consultants, August 2025)

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- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (Morph Ecological Consultants, April 2026)

It is understood that the application pertains to the conversion of a stable building to form two holiday lets. The site comprises a single stable building (B1) and other neutral grassland with bare ground. A single native hedgerow denotes the north-western boundary.

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment were conducted on 12th September 2024, in order to determine habitats present and their suitability to support protected species.

Building B1 was assessed to hold 'low' bat roosting potential due to the presence of suitable roosting features that individual crevice-dwelling bats could utilise. Three disused birds' nests were recorded inside of B1, likely attributed to barn swallow, due to the size and material of the nests. Kestrel pellets and feathers were also recorded in B1.

In line with best practice guidance, a single nocturnal bat survey was conducted on B1 on 30th July 2025 in order to determine the presence / likely absence of roosting bats. No bats were recorded to emerge from B1, however species such as common pipistrelle were recorded forging and commuting close to site. Additionally, swallows and a wren were observed in the building as well as a kestrel entering twice, using the perch.

No further survey works or licencing is required for works to commence. However, compensatory nesting provision will be required for swallow, as well as suitable perch habitat for kestrel.

Furthermore, to avoid disturbance to bats and other nocturnal wildlife, a sensitive lighting scheme should be secured via condition.

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Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

We have reviewed the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment prepared by Morph Ecological Consultants (April 2026). It is understood that a portion of other neutral grassland will be lost in order to facilitate the proposals. On-site gains pertain to modified grassland and individual trees.

The report confirms that the above habitat enhancements will result in a net gain of +0.02 units (+15.27%) and +0.01 hedgerow units (+12.37%).

The completed excel metric tool showing the post development biodiversity value should be submitted with the application for review, prior to determination of the application.

Conditions

Notwithstanding the need to submit the excel metric, the following conditions are anticipated.

Nesting 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.

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. The Strategy should refer to Guidance Note 08/23 - Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night (BCT and ILP, 2023) and explain how proposals have been designed in compliance with this document. Such approved measures will be implemented in full.

Bat and Bird Box Plan

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 and kestrel mitigation to compensate for the loss of nesting and perching provision. The swallow cups should be fitted internally within an open-fronted structure, such as a stable, carport, wood store etc. and not to external walls Such approved measures shall be implemented in full and maintained thereafter.

Landscape Plan and Management Schedule

Given the limited extent of the proposed onsite habitats, it may be that the onsite gains are not considered significant and therefore a HMMP for these is not strictly required. A good quality landscape plan and management schedule may be sufficient to secure the gains.

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

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