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/2025/0743
Our ref: DWTAVA2174a

23rd July 2026

Dear Laura,

Proposal: Outline application for the erection of two dwellings with all matters reserved except access, layout and scale

Location: Land To Rear Of Sledgegate Farmhouse Holt Lane Lea Matlock Derbyshire

Application Ref No.: AVA/2025/0743

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

Further to our letter response dated 12th December 2025, we have been made aware of an updated Biodiversity Net Gain Report and metric prepared by Elite Ecology (May 2026).

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Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

We acknowledge that an updated BNG report and metric has been prepared as a result of alterations to the proposed plans.

The plans do not appear to have altered significantly; however, the area of developed land has decreased and the layout has been amended so that the rear gardens no longer lie immediately adjacent to the northern boundary. The turning area and parking spaces have been relocated to the south of the new dwellings.

The plans involve the retention of the majority of individual trees. A single individual tree proposed for retention does appear to lie within the domestic curtilage of the eastern plot. The retention of this tree should be reconsidered in the metric and the current user guidelines should be adhered to.

The post-development habitats comprise vegetated garden, mixed scrub, and individual trees. While most of the habitat creation is planned for the north, east and south of the site, it remains uncertain whether this area will fall within domestic curtilage or be publicly accessible and managed externally. A clear access point for future management and maintenance should be established. The council should be satisfied that this approach with regards to securing on-site gains is suitable. The ownership status of the open space should be confirmed to establish whether biodiversity gains can be secured. The long-term management feasibility, especially regarding tree planting and large area of mixed scrub creation should be carefully considered by the applicant.

Conditions

Notwithstanding to address the minor concerns regarding the BNG assessment, the following conditions are anticipated:

Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP: Biodiversity)

No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance and movement of plant, machinery and materials) until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall be produced by an ecologist and shall include the following.

a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones".
c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction.
d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

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.

Dependent on the scale of proposed lighting, a lux contour plan may be required to demonstrate acceptable levels of lightspill to any sensitive ecological zones/features. 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.

Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

A Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) shall be submitted to, and be approved in writing by, the LPA prior to the commencement of the development. If the standard HMMP template is not used, the HMMP checklist shall be consulted to ensure all appropriate information is included. The HMMP shall identify the habitats to be retained, created and / or enhanced on the site and specify the appropriate management prescriptions to secure the predicted condition targets, as per the approved biodiversity metric for the application. The HMMP shall also set out a monitoring schedule to ensure targets are met and remedial actions to take if not. Guidance on producing a HMMP can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/creating-a-habitat-management-and-monitoring-plan-for-biodiversity-net-gain

Species Enhancement Plan

Prior to building works commencing above foundation level, a Species 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:

• integrated universal nest boxes / swift bricks at ratio of 1:1, in line with British Standard 42021:2022 at eaves level, avoiding southern elevations.

• integrated bat boxes in new dwellings at eaves level, favouring southern elevations.
• insect bricks in new dwellings
• herptile hibernaculum.
• fencing gaps 130 mm x 130 mm to maintain connectivity for hedgehogs in all gardens.

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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