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/2026/0216
Our ref: DWTAVA2344b

24th July 2026

Dear Laura,

Proposal: Demolition of existing agricultural buildings and erection of new dwelling

Location: Yew Tree Farm Gunhills Lane Windley Belper Derbyshire DE56 2LR

Application Ref No.: AVA/2026/0216

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 response dated 3rd June 2026, we have been made aware of revised plans for the scheme and an updated Biodiversity Net Gain Report and metric (C&G Ecology Consultants, June 2026).

The revised plans show a boundary between the garden and the surrounding agricultural land. A gated access to the agricultural land, which will be used to deliver the proposed gains, will be installed south of the new dwelling, adjacent to the access road. As this area remains within the redline boundary, the council should be satisfied that this approach is suitable for the purposes of delivering on-site gains.

We acknowledge that the pond has been removed from the metric. Furthermore, the tree planting will be focused along the western and northern boundaries of the site.

The statutory framework for biodiversity net gain requires a Biodiversity Gain Plan to be submitted and approved by the planning authority to discharge the mandatory biodiversity gain condition prior to the commencement of development.

Guidance for LPAs regarding Gain Plans can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain#para25 and the Gain Plan template is here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-gain-plan

Conditions

Best practice measures

All works should be undertaken in a manner by which to safeguard bats, common reptiles, amphibians and nesting birds. Immediately prior to commencement, the footprint of works should be checked for any wildlife. If any active bird nest is discovered, works must be delayed until chicks have fledged. Active nests are protected by law.

Any scrub or shrubs requiring removal should be cut by hand to ground level and removed from the footprint of works so as not to create habitat piles. If common amphibians or reptiles are discovered, they should be allowed to move away freely or can be carefully collected with gloved hand and clean container and moved to an area of safety.

Demolition works should proceed with caution and vigilance for unexpected bat presence. If bats are subsequently discovered, work should cease, and further advice be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist or organisation without delay.

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.

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:

- 1 x universal integrated nest brick / swift brick in new dwelling erected at least 5m from ground level, avoiding southern elevations.
- 1 x integral bat box in new dwelling, erected at eaves level, favouring southern elevations.
- 1 x bee brick in new dwelling
- fencing gaps 130 mm x 130 mm to maintain connectivity for hedgehogs

A statement of good practice including photographs should be submitted to the local planning authority to fully discharge this condition. This shall clearly demonstrate that the enhancements have been selected and installed in accordance with the approved plan.

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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