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/2026/0099
Our ref: DWTAVA2339b

6th October 2026

Dear Laura,

Proposal: Change of use from Hotel to School involving fencing, bin and cycle store and removal of 2 small water features externally. Construction of an upper level to a store room to provide a staircase enclosure. Two windows to be altered to insert doorways. (may affect the setting of a listed building)

Location: Alfreton Hall Church Street Alfreton Derbyshire DE55 7AH

Application Ref No.: AVA/2026/0099

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 20th July 2026, we have been made aware of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Small Sites Statutory Biodiversity Metric prepared by ML-Ecology (September 2026). Please find our updated comments below:

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

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The PEA presents the results of an extended Phase 1 habitat survey undertaken on 5th September 2026. A full desk study has not been undertaken to support the assumptions made in the report, however, given the small scale of the proposals, it is not considered to be a major constraint.

The site comprises mostly buildings and hardstanding. Modified grassland introduced shrub and individual trees make up the soft landscaped areas of the site. A single ornamental hedgerow lies along a portion of the southern boundary, bounding the modified grassland lawn area. The habitats are considered to be of low ecological importance.

Furthermore, with regards to impacts on protected species, specifically roosting bats. The proposals involve minimal alterations externally. It is noted that the structure along the eastern elevation (storeroom) to be impacted, presents little opportunities for roosting bats. It is understood that no works to the roof coverings or void are proposed. It is considered that based on the proposals and the information submitted, we advise that the application is considered low impact and unlikely to have a substantive adverse effect on biodiversity.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

We have reviewed the Small Sites metric prepared by ML-Ecology (September 2026). The proposals result in a loss of 3 small individual trees. To compensate for the loss, it is understood that 25 trees will be planted 'off-site' in the schools' ownership to the south of Alfreton Hall.

The delivery of 25 trees results in a +0.20 habitat unit gain (+10.35%) with trading rules satisfied for area habitat units.

It should be noted that off-site gains must be secured via a legal agreement such as a S106 or conservation covenant and the site will need to be registered on the

gain sites register. The full metric will need to be submitted with the off-site tabs completed, demonstrating that +10% net gain can be achieved prior to determination of the application.

Alternatively, the trees could be planted within the redline boundary, or the redline boundary could be amended to include the proposed planting, making the gains 'on-site'.

Additionally, the development will need to deliver a +10% net gain in hedgerow units.

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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