Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

Sarah Brooks
Head of Planning
Amber Valley Borough Council
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Ripley, Derbyshire
DE5 3SZ

For the attention of Rebecca Godson

Your Ref: AVA/2026/0316
Our ref: DWTAVA2363

1st July 2026

Dear Rebecca,

Proposal: Demolition of a shed and the erection of a new build dwelling

Location: Land Adj 25 Lower Gladstone Street Lower Gladstone Street Heanor Derbyshire

Application Ref No.: AVA/2026/0316

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 & Preliminary Roost Assessment (Arbtech, February 2026)
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (Arbtech, March 2026)

- The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Arbtech, March 2026)

It is understood that the application pertains to the development of a single dwelling. The ecological appraisal presents the results of a UK Habitat Classification survey and protected species assessment (inclusive of a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment). It should be noted that February is outside the optimum survey period for undertaking UK Habitat Classification Surveys; however, given the habitats present on site this is not considered to be a significant constraint to the assessment.

The site comprises vegetated garden with four individual scattered trees attributed to Lawson cypress (T1 and T2), elder (T3) and apricot (T4). A single shed building (B1) is present to the north-east of the site. It is understood that the shed, all trees and a portion of the vegetated garden will be lost to facilitate the proposals. The vegetated garden to the south of the site will be partially retained and will fall within the curtilage of the new dwelling.

A Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA), undertaken as part of the ecological appraisal, found no potential roost features in any on-site trees. No potential roosting features were recorded internally or externally within B1. As the proposed dwelling will adjoin the western elevation of the off-site building (B2), its external features were also assessed for suitability for roosting bats and potential access points to the roof void. No features or access points were identified. No further survey work is required; however, we support the recommendation that works proceed with caution in case bats are unexpectedly encountered.

No evidence of nesting birds was recorded during the assessment, although it is noted that the survey took place outside the breeding season. Anecdotal reports indicate that tawny owl has historically nested within the site. We therefore advise that works are undertaken outside the nesting season (1st March to 31st August

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inclusive), unless a suitably qualified ecologist completes a nesting bird check prior to works commencing.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

We have reviewed the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and metric (Arbtech, March 2026). Proposals will result in the loss of vegetated garden and a single medium individual tree resulting in a loss of -0.21 habitat units (-94.86%).

It is our understanding that the application does not qualify under any exemption, so a minimum of 10% net gain is required, in line with the Environment Act 2021. These losses cannot be offset within the site boundary and therefore an offsite option will be required.

Offsite options could comprise either the purchase of units from a local habitat bank or habitat creation / enhancement on offsite land owned by the applicant or a third party. Whilst full details of the chosen approach can be provided in a post-determination Gain Plan, if offsite land requires securing, a legal agreement is likely to be required at this stage. Alternatively, if a habitat bank purchase is likely, we typically advise the LPA to seek confirmation that the type and number of units can be delivered by the provider, to avoid delays later down the line when discharging the Gain Plan condition, however this is not mandatory.

Conditions

Nesting Birds

No tree, scrub or hedgerow clearance 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.

Badger & Hedgehog

All excavations shall be covered overnight or else have an escape ramp installed to prevent entrapment of badgers, hedgehogs and other wildlife. All pipework greater than 150 mm shall be blanked off at the end of the day and chemicals shall be stored securely. Topsoil mounds shall be checked for badger activity prior to removal or re-use. An ecologist shall be contacted if any evidence of badger activity is found within the application area during development.

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.

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 integral universal nest box / swift brick erected at eaves level, avoiding southern elevations
• 1 x integral bat box / brick erected at eaves level, favouring southern elevations
• 1 x bee brick
• fencing gaps 130 mm x 130 mm to maintain connectivity for hedgehogs

Prior to occupation, 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 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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