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/2026/0657
Our ref: DWTAVA2430

5th November 2026

Dear Laura,

Proposal: Conversion of existing Public House & Construction of 3no. detached dwellings along with associated works.

Location: Butchers Arms Four Lane Ends Oakerthorpe Alfreton Derbyshire DE55 7LN

Application Ref No.: AVA/2026/0657

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 reviewed the submitted information and understand that the application pertains to the conversion of an existing public house and the construction of three detached dwellings.

We provided comments on two previous applications at the same site:

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

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- AVA/2024/0761 - *Conversion of the existing Butchers Arms Public House (Sui Generis) to provide one four-bedroom dwelling (Use Class C3) and Erection of one three-bed bungalow (Use Class C3), utilising an existing access off Chesterfield Road, with associated parking and landscaping*
- AVA/2024/0008 - *Retention of existing Public House (Sui Generis) and erection of two three-bedroom dwellings to the rear of the Public House, utilising existing access from Chesterfield Road, with associated landscaping and parking spaces*

We previously reviewed the Ecology Scoping and Biodiversity Net Gain Summary Report (Kingdom Ecology, October 2024). A preliminary bat roost assessment (PBRA) was undertaken on 2nd September 2024 to determine the suitability of the pub building for roosting bats and nesting birds. The assessment highlighted that the building supports a number of potential roost features attributed to slipped tiles and gaps beneath tiles. An internal inspection was not conducted on the building. All onsite trees were assessed to hold 'Negligible' bat roosting potential. No evidence of nesting birds was recorded within the building or along any external elevations, however the scrub, trees and introduced shrub provide suitable nesting habitat.

The proposed conversion and extension of the public house could result in the loss of the previously identified roost features. The absence of a comprehensive internal assessment also leaves a residual risk.

The ecological survey data is now considered to be out of date. We advise that as a minimum, an update PBRA should be undertaken at the site.

Paragraph 99 of Circular 06/2005 states "*it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before planning permission is granted, otherwise all material considerations may not have been addressed in making the*

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decision. The need to ensure ecological surveys are carried out should therefore only be left to coverage under planning conditions in exceptional circumstances".

The results of the assessment should be presented in accordance with current guidelines, such as Ecological Report Writing (CIEEM, 2019) and Bat Conservation Guidelines (Collins, 2023). The report should make clear the requirement for any further survey work and it should be noted that if further survey is required, this should be undertaken prior to determination of the planning application. These surveys will need to be undertaken at the appropriate time of year, in line with the good practice guidelines (Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 4th Edition. Bat Conservation Trust). The report should include any requirement for licensing and details of mitigation and enhancement measures appropriate to the site.

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

Holly Fowler BSc (Hons)
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planning@derbyshirewt.co.uk

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Wilder by nature