ARDEA ECOLOGY

Jonathan Ayres, 141 Lawton Road, Alsager, Cheshire, ST7 2DD | 07766587224 | info@ardeaecology.co.uk

February 28, 2019

SMDC Planning Department
Moorlands House
Stockwell Street
Leek
Staffordshire Moorlands
ST13 6HQ

Dear Sirs,

RE: Discharge of Condition 11 Planning Ref SMD/2018/0224 – Gorsty Hill Cattery

Planning permission for a change of use from a steel portal framed building to a proposed cattery was granted subject to conditions by SMDC on the 10/07/2018.

The following condition specifically relating to ecological matters are included within the decision notice.

Pre-works check for nesting birds

11. Prior to the commencement of development, a survey shall be carried out for breeding birds by an appropriately experienced ecologist. Survey details shall be submitted in writing to the local planning authority (LPA). If barn owls or evidence of breeding barn owls are located a method statement to avoid impacts must be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and compensation by creation of a barn owl nesting site within the development curtilage shall be provided in accordance with the agreed details before the proposed development is brought into use. Demolition and site clearance must not be carried out between 1st March to 31st August inclusive unless a check for breeding birds has been carried out by an ecologist. In the event that breeding birds are present no work should be carried out until the birds have finished breeding, and all dependent young have left the site.

Reason: - All breeding birds, nests, eggs and young are protected from harm under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended. Barn owl is a priority species for conservation action under the UK and Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan.

A site visit was made to inspect the building for any evidence of nesting birds including barn owls, this survey was undertaken by Jonathan Ayres an experienced ecologist and licensed to survey for barn owls (NE Ref CL29/00085) on the 22/02/2018.

The steel portal building contains four corner posts and a pitched roof all of steel construction, the sides at this moment in time are not cladded. The building is considered to be unsuitable for barn owls as it lacks a suitable platform or internal structure to support a nesting area and barn owls are therefore not considered to be using the building; further to this no historic evidence of the use of the building by barn owls or other nesting birds was recorded when carrying out the detailed inspection of the building and therefore no further surveys are considered necessary in order for the applicant to proceed with the works as planned.

Outside of the building on the site boundary are a number of mature trees and hedges which contain numerous suitable breeding bird habitats and although February is generally prior to the main nesting season numerous bird species that may utilize these habitats were observed including chaffinch, robin, blue tit and long tailed tit. None of these habitats will be impacted by the proposed works or any proposed lighting for the site given the design, layout and intended use.






I trust this information sufficient to satisfy the condition outlined above.

Yours Sincerely,

Jonathan Ayres BSc (Hons)CEnv MCIEEM FLS
www.ardeaecology.co.uk