

From: [Kate Dewey](#)
To: [Johnston, Christopher](#); [Planning Comments \(SMDC\)](#)
Cc: [Alex Fitzroy](#)
Subject: SMD/2021/0589 Springfield Farm
Date: 20 December 2021 09:09:51

Ref number SMD/2021/0589

Application Location Springfield Farm, Consall Lane, Wetley Rocks, Staffordshire, ST9 0AA

Application description Change of use of farm buildings to living accommodation

Site size hectares Not specified

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust has been asked to review the above application as part of a service level agreement with Staffordshire Moorlands District Council to provide ecology advice regarding planning and development management functions.

SUMMARY – Holding objection -further information ecology information required.

Required prior to determination:

1. As per the ecology report by Elite Ecology (November 2021), bat activity surveys for buildings B1, B2, and B3 along with updated nesting bird inspection.

Secure via condition should approval be granted:

1. To be included on updated plans as per the ecology report by Elite Ecology (November 2021):
 - a. A variety of bird boxes installed within the landholding.
 - b. Compensation swallow nesting features included within the building design.
2. Drainage plan (if required).

Further bat mitigation may be required pending survey results.

Documents reviewed:

- Block Plan
- Design & Access Statement
- Ecology Report
- Location Plan
- Plan as Existing
- Plan as Proposed

DESIGNATED WILDLIFE SITES & WIDER ECOLOGICAL NETWORK

No wildlife sites are located close to the development and the limited scope of the works will not impact on the wider ecological network.

HABITATS

Biodiversity Net Gain

Policy NE1 in the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan Adopted September 2020, expects that 'all development where possible seeks to deliver a net gain in biodiversity proportionate to the size and scale of the development. In circumstances where adverse impacts are demonstrated to be unavoidable, developers will be required to ensure that impacts are appropriately mitigated, with suitable compensation measures towards loss of habitat used only as a last resort where there is no alternative'

A net gain should be achievable with suitable landscaping enhancements. This could include some of the following: a short flowery lawn mix, climbers, fruit trees, new native hedges on new boundaries, enhance existing hedges with trees/ additional species, re-seed disturbed areas with wildflower meadow mix, create a pond or wetland for surface and treated water discharges. ***A soft landscaping plan should be secured via condition.***

Drainage

If new drainage infrastructure is proposed, a drainage plan following SuDS principles should be secured via condition.

SPECIES

Bats

In accordance with the recommendations set out in the ecology report (Elite Ecology, November 2021) further bat survey effort is required. Buildings B1 and B3 require a minimum of two surveys, whilst B2 requires a minimum of one survey. Activity surveys can be undertaken May inclusive to September, however, a minimum of 50% of surveys for each structure need to be within the optimal survey period. The report recommends that a minimum of 5 surveyors are required to adequately cover the structures.

Mitigation, compensation and/or enhancements may be needed pending survey results.

Further bat survey effort required prior to determination.

Birds

The ecology report states that: *"For the swallow (Hirundo rustica) nests, it will be necessary to incorporate eaves/ridge overhangs or easily accessible loft spaces. This will give these specimens the necessary internal opportunities to continue to nest at the site. These features should be located in the southern section of the re-developed site. These should be enhanced with the inclusion of two No.10 Schwegler Swallow Nest boxes per feature."*

Ideally, we would like to see swallow access to the loft space incorporated, even if it is a small boxed off section separated to the rest of the loft – as this will ensure nesting opportunities are secured long-term. This needs to be included at the design stage as it will be an integrated feature.

The ecology report also recommends the inclusion of other bird boxes within the landholding.

Condition needed for updated plans showing swallow compensation and other bird box enhancements.

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Planning consultations- please send to planning@staffs-wildlife.org.uk

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2 Attachments



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