
From: Planning For Nature
Sent: 27 October 2022 17:35
To: Johnston, Christopher; Planning Comments (SMDC)
Cc:
Subject: SMD/2021/0796 & 0805 The Old Barn

Categories:

SMD/2021/0796 & 0805

The Old Barn, Smithy Lane, Farley, ST10 3BQ

Conservation of Listed Building and Change of Use as guest accommodation, holiday lets.

0.015 hectares

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 –amendments required.

Required prior to determination:

1. Revised mitigation providing a bat loft or bat box suitable for brown long-eared bats.
2. Check proposed swallow box does not conflict with building conservation requirements- propose alternative if so.

Secure via condition should approval be granted:

3. Bat precautions and mitigation as set out in revised mitigation scheme
4. Nesting bird precautions to be followed, and compensatory bird nesting features for swallows and wrens shown on updated plan.
5. Landscaping scheme

Documents reviewed:

- Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment and Bird Survey dated 11th August 2022 by S. Christopher Smith
- Proposed plans and elevations

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'.

Small-scale landscaping should be included- opportunities to break up concrete areas to form garden/ green areas, and to create permeable parking areas e.g. reinforced grass or gravel, planting such as climbers on walls.

A landscaping scheme should be secured via condition.

SPECIES

Bats

The bat survey dated 11th August 2022 carried out three emergence surveys and found the building is being used as a day roost by Brown long eared bats and Common pipistrelle bats.

A license from natural England will be required to undertake the change of use of the building, Mitigation proposed is bat access tiles/ slates on the northern and southern elevations of the roof.

This mitigation would provide for pipistrelles as they are crevice-dwelling, however this would not compensate for the loss of the open roof void which is used by brown long-eared bats. A bat loft would ideally be provided within one end of the roof apex. If this is not possible, a suitable bat box for brown long-eared bats is required.

The LPA must consider the 3 tests under Habitat Regulations:

- 1. the activity must be for a certain purpose - for example, for scientific research or in the case of development, 'preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment '*
- 2. there must be no satisfactory alternative that will cause less harm to the species*
- 3. the activity must not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.*

We consider that tests 1 and 2 would be met as the building could not be re-used and maintained otherwise. Test 3 requires that proposed roosting features are the same or better quality, and this is not the case at present

Revised mitigation with a bat loft or bat box suitable for brown long-eared bats is required.

Birds

Swallows and wrens were recorded nesting in the structure. Recommendations for protection and replacement nesting feature to be secured via condition.

The swallow nest box recommended is quite large and this would need to be agreed from a heritage conservation point of view. An integrated area within the roof space for swallows could be an alternative.

Regards,

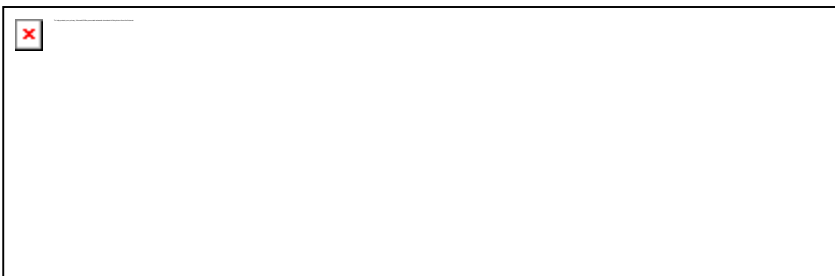
Kate Dewey BSc (Hons) MCIEEM

Senior Planning Officer



Please note, ecology advice is provided to SMDC 2 days per week- working days are normally Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Planning consultations



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