

Dear Sir/Madam

DET/2024/0050

Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: Change of Use of Buildings on Agricultural Units and former Agricultural Buildings to 7 Dwellinghouses (Class C3), which may include extension of the building and/or building operations reasonably necessary for the conversion

Agricultural Building, Lodgedale Farm, Main Road, Hollington, Staffordshire ST10 4HS

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.

We have viewed the following documents:

- Preliminary Roost Assessment for Bats and Birds (Absolute Ecology, November 2024)

SUMMARY – Having reviewed the information provided we have **no objection**.

The following comments should be noted for information and the recommendations within the report should be complied with. We have suggested additional recommendations with regards to protecting trees and ensuring nesting birds remain unaffected during construction.

BAT SURVEY

A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) has been carried out at a suitable time of year following appropriate guidelines for survey and evaluation. The assessment included a desk study was undertaken including evaluation of known bat records within 2km of the site.

The PRA reports that the building, a modern agricultural barn, holds Negligible bats roost potential and does not impact upon habitats with value for commuting or foraging bats. No significant constraints were noted during the survey. No further surveys in relation to bats and their roosts are recommended.

The desk review identifies a small number of bat records in the local area, comprising common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats, indicating bats are present within the local area. Other ecological features, such as streams, are reported as being sufficiently distant from the site so as to be unaffected.

We note the nearest designated site is Broadmoor Wood Ancient Woodland (not mentioned in the report), however the woodland is approx. 150m to the west of the site and we consider this to be sufficiently distant to remain unaffected by the scheme.

No active nests were recorded in the building (however, we note the assessment was outside of the key bird nesting season). Measures to ensure nesting birds are protected during construction should be provided.

Trees appear to be present on the boundary of the site, and suitable measures to protect these features should be put in place during construction work.

Recommendations are made for:

- Consideration of external lighting design in relation to potential impacts on the local bat population present in the general area.
- Two bat boxes to be installed (specifications provided in the report).
- Two bird boxes to be installed (specifications provided in the report).

The recommendations of the report are welcomed, and a suitable ecologically sensitive lighting plan and a location map of the bat and bird box installations should be provided in due course.

Regards,

Dated 10 December 2024