



Derbyshire
Wildlife Trust

Sandy Hill, Main Street,
Middleton, Matlock, DE4 4LR

T 01773 881188

E enquiries@derbyshirewt.co.uk

 @derbyswildlife

 Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust is registered in
England and Wales, company number 715675
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Planning Applications Manager
High Peak Borough Council
Planning Department
Municipal Buildings
Glossop
Derbyshire
SK13 8AF

For the attention of Faye Plant

Your Ref: DET/2021/0002

Our ref: DWTHPK593a

3rd August 2021

Dear Faye

Proposal: 4 proposed houses created by converting barns.

Location: Gow Hole Farm, Gow Hole, Furness Vale, Derbyshire, SK23 7QE

Application Ref No: DET/2021/0002

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 High Peak 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

Updated bat surveys and a building inspection have now been undertaken at the above site (Rachel Hacking Ecology, June 2021). The building inspection identified bat droppings in both barns and feeding remains in the roof void of Barn 2 (note - the barns are not numbered on the report figures). The barns were considered to have 'moderate' potential to support roosting bats and two nocturnal surveys were undertaken. However these did not identify any bats emerging

from the buildings. Consequently the report recommends that no further survey or mitigation is required.

We have concerns that a third nocturnal bat survey was not undertaken when evidence of bats was found yet no bats were recorded during the two surveys. Guidance (Collins, 2016) advises that in this situation further survey visits would be advantageous to be confident in a negative result. In addition, the spread of surveyors would appear not to cover all elevations of the buildings and therefore there is a risk that emerging bats could have been missed. Also, no DNA analysis of the droppings was undertaken to identify the species of bat which has previously used the barns.

To increase the confidence that bats will not be adversely impacted by proposals, we advise that either a) a third survey is undertaken, preferably a dawn survey to increase the chances of recording bats returning to roost and to provide greater coverage with the same number of surveyors or b) a method statement and watching brief is conditioned for works. The preferred approach should be confirmed by the applicant/their ecologists and secured through an appropriately worded condition.

It should also be clarified whether any roosting features could be retained in situ i.e. any gaps in stonework and whether either roof void could be retained for use by bats (I am not clear whether both voids will be fully converted). Additional features, such as bat boxes, would also help to retain some roosting opportunity on site as recommended in Section 5.4 of the report. Retention of existing features and provision of new features should be secured through an appropriately worded condition.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ED', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Libby Duggan-Jones MBiolSci MCIEEM
Biodiversity Planning Officer

Endnote:

Please see our planning pages <https://www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/planning> for ecological advice on submitting a planning application, finding an ecological consultant and information on mitigation and enhancement.