

Ecology Team Consultation Response	
Date:	26.08.2025
Planning Ref:	4/25/2269/0F1
Description:	Proposed alteration and extension of farmhouse into attached bank barn with new terrace. Extension to include garage and living room and a new front porch.

Suggested Planning Conditions

Breeding Birds

Works should be completed outside of the breeding bird period (March – August inclusive). If this is not possible a breeding bird check should be carried out no more than 48 hours prior to the planned development to ensure no birds and their nests are present. If active nests are discovered an appropriate buffer zone should be established and works within that area ceased until the young have naturally fledged.

Small Mammals

All development work should be carried out with care to avoid these small mammals such as hedgehogs. Contractors should be briefed about the potential presence of hedgehogs and Works should be supervised during initial clearance of the Site to avoid injury to any disturbed individuals.

Should any trenches and excavations be required, an escape route for animals that enter the trench must be provided, especially if left open overnight. Ramps should be no greater than of 45 degrees in angle. Ideally, any holes should be securely covered. This will ensure badgers are not trapped during work.

All excavations left open overnight or longer should be checked for animals prior to the continuation of works or infilling. Back filling should be completed immediately after any excavations, ideally back filling as an on-going process to the work in hand.

Stored materials should be raised (i.e. stored on pallets) in order to ensure that wildlife such as hedgehogs do not shelter in the piles.

Barn Owls

The County Ecologist approves the nest box design submitted as part of the application.

The following mitigation scheme must be implemented to reduce the risk of impact on the local barn owl population. In accordance with current guidance (Barn Owl Trust, 2015), these measures are required to offer satisfactory mitigation for the loss of a potential historical nest located within the farmhouse extension.

- Alternative nest provision in the form of a barn owl box to be erected on site before works commence (see Figure 3 of the bat report produced by Lakeland Ecology (June 2025)). This will offer nest / roost provision during works and reduce disturbance impact. This should be installed on site as soon as possible (at least 30 days prior to commencement of any potentially disturbing works on site). The nest box should be ideally placed within the interior of the farmhouse extension (which is not proposed for works under this scheme), with access for barn owls restored through the barn owl hole. Alternatively, the barn owl box should be positioned on a mature tree or pole in a sheltered, disturbance free location within close proximity to the barns.
- To ensure that nesting barn owls are not disturbed by the works and no offence is incidentally committed there must be a survey of the barns conducted pre-works to confirm 'current use'. The survey must be conducted by a suitably qualified person, no more than 3 days before the start of the conversion works.
- The conversion works must not commence between 1st March and 31st August or at any time while barn owls are nesting and until temporary alternative nesting provision has been made.
- To provide long-term compensation for the loss of the roost, a new and permanent nest feature should be provided on site. The proposed plans indicate that built-in barn owl nest boxes with the access through the existing owl holes will be provided along the southwest gable of the farm house conversion (one box per converted barn).
- Contractors must be made aware of the presence of barn owls when works commence. The alternative nest provision should be protected from any disturbance during the works.

Bats

Given that the bat roosts support an individual / small number of a common species and are classified as having a low conservation significance, no restrictions of timing of works apply other than a recommendation to avoid the coldest months.

The conversion works to the farmhouse should avoid commencing in the peak bat hibernation season (November – February). Although the risk of hibernating bats using the buildings is considered low, this precautionary recommendation is made due to the extreme vulnerability of hibernating bats to disturbance.

If bats are seen or suspected while work is in progress, work must pause immediately, and a licenced bat ecologist contacted for further advice.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The County Ecologist accepts that this development is exempt from BNG however the applicant must provide proof that the owners will live in the property for a minimum of three years.

Enhancement Features

Two bat boxes to be installed for the farmhouse development, either on trees or within the building structure, such as:

- Vivara Pro WoodStone Bat Box
- Low Profile WoodStone Bat Box
- 2F Schwegler Bat Box

Three bird boxes are to be integrated within the farmhouse development to provide opportunities for breeding birds such as:

- Schwegler No. 17 swift nest box
- Schwegler 1SP sparrow terrace
- WoodStone Swallow Nest Bowl