

<b>Ecology Team Consultation Response</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	26.08.2025
<b>Planning Ref:</b>	4/25/2270/0F1
<b>Description:</b>	Conversion of barn to dwelling.

The County Ecologist accepts that this development is exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain.

### **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 barn conversion.

- **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 long barn (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 barn 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**

The County Ecologist approves the bat access slate design submitted as part of the application to comply with conditions previously set out for the application.

A bats-specific lighting scheme will be designed during construction and operation to minimise light impact. This should be in line with the guidance note for Bats and Artificial Lighting (Bat Conservation Trust, 2023). This must be submitted to the council prior to the start of development.

As stated in Section 4.4 of the bat report produced by Lakeland Ecology (June 2025) the following methodology and timing for works must be followed to ensure that no bats are harmed and that the identified roosts are not damaged, destroyed or obstructed. If this cannot be followed, then a European Protected Species Licence from Natural England will be required:

- An Ecological Clerk of Works to be employed to oversee the commencement of the development.
- **The roosts R1, R2 and RH must be retained, and no pointing or any structural works must be conducted to the gaps within building B2 where the roosts were identified.**

- The access to the identified roosts must not be obscured by scaffolding, building materials or any other temporary structures / features used during the conversion works.
- Any works located within a 2m radius from the identified roosts should proceed with care; use of power tools that can create excessive noise or vibration should be reduced wherever possible within the section of the stone wall directly adjacent to the identified roosts (within 2m radius).
- The external walls of the building continue to provide roosting suitability for bats once the conversion works have been completed. External crevices requiring pointing can be retained by placing a pipe or tube (25mm diameter) in the gap and pointing around this (remove the tube immediately after the mortar has set). See Appendix IV for the additional guidance on the retention of the gaps in the external stonework.
- Contractors must be made aware of the identified roosts and the potential for bats to be present. Contractors must be provided with this methodology.
- External works must avoid the period around dusk/dawn, and no artificial light should be directed at the roof area or identified roosts.

Additionally, the conversion works to the barn 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.**

### ***Enhancement Features***

Two bat boxes to be installed within the barn conversion, 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 barn conversion to provide opportunities for breeding birds such as:

- Schwegler No. 17 swift nest box
- Schwegler 1SP sparrow terrace

- WoodStone Swallow Nest Bowl