

69812 – Barrack Fold Farm, Knowsley Road, Airedale

Thank you for consulting the GMEU

Summary

Further bat information is recommended for the Barn proposed for conversion.

1. Bats

A valid bat report has been provided for the building proposed for demolition, no evidence of bats was found and the building assessed as having negligible bat roosting potential. I have no reason to doubt the findings of the report. No further information is required for this building.

No bat survey information has however been provided for the barn proposed for conversion. Whilst I note this building already has a prior approval no bat survey information appears to have been provided for this application (contrary to case law on type Q conversions where case law has determined that bat assessments can be required (case law see APP/L3245/W/15/3004467 Bridgenorth, Shropshire.))

As this is a new actual planning application and current guidance states it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development is established before the planning permission is granted otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision (UK Government Guidance within the ODPM Government Circular 06/2005).

I recommend that:

Prior to determination a bat assessment is carried out by a suitably experienced bat worker. The assessment should include as a minimum a visual inspection of the existing roof space for evidence of bats and exterior of the building for potential bat access points. Should the property be assessed as more than low risk, further information will be required prior to determination.

2. Nesting Birds

Outbuildings on farms are high risk for species such as swallow, house sparrow and barn owl. As part of the bat assessment, I would also recommend an assessment for nesting birds.

3. Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Section 174 of the NPPF 2021 states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Once further information has been provided on bats and nesting birds it is likely a condition can be applied (assuming no bats) on mitigation and enhancement requirements.

Ecologist

GM Ecology Unit