

GMEU response

Summary

Potential ecological issues include bats, nesting birds and biodiversity mitigation and enhancement.

Proximity to Kirklees Valley SBI & LNR

The revised location does not increase the risk of negative impacts to the ecological value of the Valley. As previously I am satisfied that no further information or measures are required.

Bats

I previously accepted that the static caravan had negligible bat roosting potential despite the high risk location, the Kirklees Valley a known hot spot for bat foraging. This position has not changed. The new application also includes the demolition of the stables. The applicant has described the building and noted that this type of building is a very low risk structure. Whilst I would tend to agree, we require more evidence that the buildings are as described. *I therefore recommend that prior to determination, internal and external photographs are provided of buildings and structures proposed for demolition.* If following provision of photographs we determine that bat assessments are required then this information should also be provided prior to determination.

Nesting Birds

Whilst trees and shrubs are shown as primarily retained, the structures proposed for removal may provide nesting opportunities for species such as swallow. All British birds nests and eggs (with certain limited exceptions) are protected by Section 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended. As a precaution, I recommend a condition along the following lines be applied to any permission.

No works to trees or shrubs shall occur or demolition commence between the 1st March and 31st August in any year unless a detailed bird nest survey by a suitably experienced ecologist has been carried out immediately prior to clearance and written confirmation provided that no active bird nests are present which has been agreed in writing by the LPA

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. The development is located on very low value habitats, with existing trees retained and new screen planting proposed. I am satisfied that if the planning is native and appropriate to the location mitigation and enhancement will be achieved. Mitigation may also be required for nesting birds and this is a good location to install bat boxes. *The details can be conditioned.*