

68477 – Dry Gap Farm, Shuttleworth

Thank you for consulting the GMEU

Summary

The developer's ecological consultant identified no significant ecological issues. Issues relating to bats, nesting birds and biodiversity enhancement measures can be resolved via condition and or informative.

Bats

Valid bat surveys have been provided. The building was assessed as moderate risk and in line with best practice subject to two further surveys. No evidence of bats roosting was identified. It is therefore very unlikely that the development will negatively impact on the conservation status of bats in the locality. As bats can on occasion turn up in unexpected locations, I recommend an informative along the following lines is applied to any permission.

Whilst the building to be extended is low risk for bats, the applicant is reminded that under the 2019 Regulations it is an offence to disturb, harm or kill bats. If a bat is found all work should cease immediately and a suitably licensed bat worker employed to assess how best to safeguard the bat(s). Natural England should also be informed.

Nesting Birds

House sparrow were recorded as probably nesting on the building to be extended. All British birds nests and eggs (with certain limited exceptions) are protected by Section 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended. I recommend a condition along the following lines be applied to any permission.

No roof works shall 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 building works 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 does not appear to negatively impact on any vegetated habitats, no mitigation is therefore required. The development will however potentially result in the loss of house sparrow nesting habitat and bat roosting opportunities. ***I therefore recommend mitigation is provided through inclusion of a house sparrow terrace and bat box. The details can be conditioned.***

Ecologist

GM Ecology Unit