



Bombus Ecology Ltd
The White House
50 Mackie Drive
Guisborough
North Yorkshire
TS14 6DJ

Via Email

15th June 2023

Fiona Tiplady, Rural Solutions

Re: Popeley Farm Gomersall

Dear Sir/Madam

I was consulted upon by Rural Solutions to visit site to investigate the barns on site and provide an opinion with regards to suitability for bats.

I am David Pollard BSc (Hons) MRSB Director of Ecology at Bombus Ecology and I am a lifelong naturalist and I have been a professional ecologist/zoologist for over twenty-five years specialising in wildlife management particularly birds, mammals and reptiles/amphibians. I have Class Level 2 2017-29217-CLS-CLS with respect to bats.

I inspected all the farm buildings including ones that were specified as target buildings

From my external and Internal inspections my considered opinion is that all the target buildings are of negligible potential for roosting bats due to their construction and the amount of ambient light from open fronts or skylights.

The barns which are of most interest are steel frame buildings with corrugated roofs and skylights, some with Yorkshire Boarding. The roof structure and overall construction leads to too much change in temperature i.e. roosting bats like a constant temperature the corrugated roof and steel frame leads to dramatic changes in temperature i.e. too hot during day and then too cold at nights due to heat dissipation. The skylights will provide too much ambient light during the day thus sub optimal for roosting bats which prefer dark warm environments.

Other buildings are derelict with no roof on them and there are a number of timber framed sheds housing livestock which have a corrugated metal roof and are open fronted.

There is a large stone built barn with a metal corrugated roof – this is not one of the target buildings – however it is well appointed with a paucity of cracks offering little or no roosting opportunities for bats and the metal roof will have a distinctive temperature gradient as discussed above

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Thus, in conclusion

The target buildings are deemed to be of negligible potential for roosting bats and as such no further surveys will be required for the Popeley Farm Site.

Bombus Ecology Ltd would recommend the following:

Mitigation

- Ideally, any demolition/reconstruction activities should take place outside the nominal bird breeding season (March to August) This sort of building can provide nesting opportunities for house martins, swallows or other commensal species. If this is not achievable then the ecologist will provide advice and potentially a watching brief.
- There is a strong recommendation for the use of a bitumen type felt/2nd Generation membrane as opposed to first generation breathable membranes within the roofs of the redeveloped buildings.
- In the unlikely event, a bat is found during the redevelopment, work should cease on that section and the Ecologist at Bombus Ecology informed will provide a watching brief and method statement.
- It is recommended that a wildlife-friendly, low-level lighting scheme should be adopted during and post-development to minimise disturbance to any nocturnal wildlife using the peripheries of site, such as bats foraging along the site boundaries. Further details can be obtained from the ecologist.

Enhancement

Emerging Government policy supports the pursuit of measurable net gains for biodiversity. The Environment Bill includes a requirement of 10% for biodiversity net gain on all development sites. Looking at the proposal there is the potential for measurable net gains well in excess of 10%.

The following measures are proposed to achieve the required biodiversity gain:



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- Incorporation of bird or bat boxes across site providing extra potential roosting/nesting resource for a number of common species of bat/birds, thus improving biodiversity. 2 bat tiles could be installed as part of the works.
- Replanting of a range of ruderal type plants and scrub that will attract pollinators along the periphery of development area.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me

Yours Sincerely

David

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Images



Image 1 Large open fronted barn with corrugated roof and skylights in rear section



Image 2 Internal Structure of rear section



Image 3 Derelict barn



Image 4 Small Workshop with skylights and windows



Image 5 Internal structure of large barn with Yorkshire Boarding Skylights and corrugated roof



Image 6 Large Stone built barn with metal roof – to be retained