

CONSULTATION TEMPLATE RESPONSE FROM LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL:

ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY PLANNING ADVICE

COUNTY, DISTRICT OR BOROUGH	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
APPLICATION NUMBER	26/00244/FUL
ADDRESS	Holywell Farm Desford Lane Ratby Leicester Leicestershire
DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	Conversion of traditional barn into a dwelling
PLANNING CASE OFFICER	Sophie Iliffe
DEPARTMENT	Ecology
PLANNING ECOLOGY OFFICER	Richard Kelly
DATE OF COMMENTS	08 April 2026
ECOLOGICAL DOCUMENTS REVIEWED:	
• Application Form • Location Plan: 25.335.OS2_1:1250 • Part Block Plan: 25.335.BP2_1:500 • Site Layout, Sheet 1 of 3: 25.335.20 • Site Layout, Sheet 2 of 3: 25.335.21 • Proposed Elevations, Floor Plans, Sheet 3 of 3: 25.335.22 • Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Barn A (Croft Ecology, March 2026) • Preliminary Roost Assessment & Bat Emergence Survey Report (Croft Ecology, October 2025) • Statutory BNG Metric v1 (Croft Ecology, March 2026) • Statutory Condition Assessment Sheets Croft Ecology, April 2025)	
SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:	
No comment	
No objection (for recommended conditions or informatives- see below)	
Recommend Refusal	
Holding Objection - Further information required	✓
REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:	
• An updated Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Barn B (Croft Ecology, March 2026) and Preliminary Roost Assessment & Bat Emergence Survey Report (Croft Ecology, October 2025) have been completed which are accepted and outlined below.	

Bats

- The report is proposing an integrated bat box is installed within the new dwelling as a permanent compensatory roost. This needs to be clearly marked on plan including model and location.
- **There is a holding objection until this is received.**

BNG Specific Comments

- BNG Metric - A-1 On-Site Habitat Baseline and A-3 On-Site Habitat Enhancement Strategic significance requires updating to: Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy in accordance with the published LNRS.
- Statutory Condition Assessment sheet for Tall forbs required.
- **There is a holding objection until the strategic significance is updated and condition assessment sheets supplied.**

Bats

- 2019 surveys of the building identified two, day roosts of common pipistrelle bats. The June and July 2025 emergence surveys concluded no emerging or re-entering bats. However, the building is in the same condition as 2019 survey and day roosts are common, the buildings are still considered to support two, day roosts of the species.
- **As such the Croft Ecology report recommends a Natural England bat licence will be required for works to proceed lawfully. Please see recommended Informatives.**
- The bat mitigation licence will require updated emergence surveys from the most recent active bat season (i.e. May-August). If works are to commence after May 2026, an ecologist should be consulted for advice.
- Mitigation will be required for the loss of the roosts. The Preliminary Roost Assessment & Bat Emergence Survey Report (October 2025) is proposing a series of mitigation measures in section 4.5 of the report which must be followed. **Please see recommended Conditions.**
- The report is also proposing a pre-commencement 2F Schwegler bat box (or similar approved) to be sited on a tree northeast of the building in advance of the works (Figure 3). This is accepted.

Birds

- There is evidence of nesting swallows and wren. Demolition works will be required to be undertaken outside the bird nesting season which runs from March to August inclusive to avoid disturbing nesting birds. If this is not possible then a nesting bird check will be required by a suitably experienced ecologist no more than 24 hours prior to removal and active nests left in place until fledged. **Please see Informatives.**

GCN and Reptiles

- Two ponds and a small stream were subject to HSII assessments with the ponds later subject to GCN eDNA sampling which were returned negative. There is a positive GCN pond over 500m away and the derelict buildings offered some potential for sheltering and hibernating reptiles and amphibians therefore it is recommended works proceed outside of the hibernation period and in accordance with the mitigation measures outlined in section 4.5 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Barn A report. **Please see recommended Conditions.**

- **Biodiversity Enhancements** – There will be a loss of swallow and wren nesting habitat as part of the works. Therefore, 2 swallow nest cups will be required to compensate and 1 open fronted nest box to provide a biodiversity net gain, as per the NPPF and NERC Act 2006. It is also recommended that landscaping includes native species of local provenance that will provide a range of plants to support pollinating insects as identified in the RHS plants for pollinators. **Please see recommended Conditions.**

BNG Specific Comments

- Currently, the 10% Biodiversity Net Gain is achievable on site with a +10.84% increase in Habitat Units.
- The significant on-site BNG will need to be secured for a period of 30 years for monitoring and compliance.
- A Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) and Biodiversity Gain Plan will also need to be secured by condition. **Please see recommended Conditions.**

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS TO BE APPLIED:

- **Adherence to Report Recommendations** – The development hereby approved shall be implemented in strict accordance with the measures stated in section 4.5 of the Preliminary Roost Assessment & Bat Emergence Survey Report (Croft Ecology, October 2025) and section 4.5 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Barn A (Croft Ecology, March 2026).
- **Landscape Enhancement Plan** - No development shall take place until a biodiversity enhancement plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. Enhancements shall include (but is not limited to) at least two swallow nest cups, and one open fronted bird box with the makes/models and their locations. The biodiversity enhancement scheme shall include planting of hedgerows and trees of native species of local provenance and species to attract pollinating insects as identified in the RHS' 'Plants for Pollinators' database. Hedgerow mixes should include: 80% hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), plus any one or more of the following: field maple (*Acer campestre*), dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), dog rose (*Rosa canina*) and holly (*Ilex aquifolium*). Any enhancement measures need to be shown on all relevant submitted plans. All works are to proceed strictly in accordance with the approved scheme.
- **HMMP** - The development shall not commence until a 30 year Habitat Monitoring and Management Plan (HMMP), prepared in accordance with an approved Biodiversity Gain Plan, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved HMMP shall be strictly adhered to and implemented in full for its duration and shall contain the following:
 - a) Description and evaluation of the features to be managed;
 - b) Ecological trends and constraints on site that may influence management;
 - c) Aims, objectives and targets for management - links with local and national species and habitat action plans;
 - d) Description of the management operations necessary to achieving aims and objectives;
 - e) Preparation of a works schedule, including annual works schedule;
 - f) Details and a timetable of the monitoring needed to measure the effectiveness of management;
 - g) Details of the persons responsible for the implementation and monitoring;
 - h) mechanisms of adaptive management to account for necessary changes in work schedule to achieve the required targets; and
 - i) Details of methodology and frequency of monitoring reports to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority to assess biodiversity gain

(To enhance biodiversity, and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
ANY RECOMMENDED INFORMATIVES TO BE APPLIED:
EPS Licence – As per the Preliminary Roost Assessment & Bat Emergence Survey Report (Croft Ecology, October 2025). This development will require a bat licence from Natural England to make it lawful. You must be aware that to proceed with the development without first obtaining an EPS Licence could result in prosecution. Nesting Birds - Nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended); therefore, building demolition and significant alteration or vegetation clearance should take place outside the breeding season (March to August inclusive) unless carefully checked beforehand by a suitably qualified person.

PRE-DEVELOPMENT HABITAT BASELINE FOR BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG)	
THIS IS THE MINIMUM NATIONAL ESSENTIAL INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS (PPG paragraph 11) AND MUST BE SATISFIED PRIOR TO DETERMINATION:	
Confirmation that development is subject to statutory biodiversity gain condition	Y
Pre-development Habitat Plan of existing onsite habitat (to scale)	Y
Pre-development Habitat Value (on date of application or earlier)	Y
Completed Metric Calculation Tool	Y
Statement of Habitat Degradation where present (with dates and details)	N/A
Reason for proposing an earlier date if applicable (ie. degradation)	N/A
Description of Irreplaceable Habitat where present	N/A
SMALL SITES METRIC ONLY: “Competent person” information (ie. qualifications, skills, experience)	N/A
BNG METRIC INFORMATION missing or incorrect:	
Incomplete or incorrect cells are shown in metric (eg. habitat quantity, type or condition, strategic significance)	Y

POST DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG)	
PLEASE NOTE: THIS IS NOT ESSENTIAL INFORMATION PRIOR TO DETERMINATION. Post-development information is indicative only ; final proposals must be confirmed at Biodiversity Gain Plan statutory condition stage.	
ON-SITE SIGNIFICANT* BNG is proposed (If Y, please see later table)	Y
OFF-SITE APPLICANT-OWNED BNG is proposed (ie. Land shown on plan within the “blue line” boundary and inserted in “offsite” tab of statutory metric)	N
PLEASE NOTE: Where applicant-owned off-site or significant on-site BNG proposals are present, these should be secured and monitored for 30 years. The determining authority is responsible for monitoring for compliance.	
OFF-SITE PURCHASE** of BNG	
BNG units purchase from a third party to achieve 10% BNG uplift	N
Statutory biodiversity credits	N

PLEASE NOTE:** Where purchased BNG units are proposed, any purchased units from the national register are secured and monitored for 30 years by conservation covenant, separately from this planning application process.

POST DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS:

***TYPE OF SIGNIFICANT ON-SITE HABITAT PROPOSED:** (using the current government definition¹)

SIGNIFICANCE AS DEFINED IN PPG	POST DEVELOPMENT HABITAT TYPE PROPOSED	NUMBER OF UNITS
Medium or High Distinctiveness	Mixed scrub	0.01
Large number of units at Low Distinctiveness	N/A	N/A
Significant increase in Distinctiveness, Condition or Area	Other neutral grassland	0.50

Note for applicants: Please be aware that this advice is provided to the Local Planning Authority through a Service Level Agreement between the Local Planning Authority and Leicestershire County Council Ecology Team. Its purpose is to discharge the legal duties of the determining authority under The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) Regulations (2000), Regulations 4.

If you have any queries about the content, please correspond directly with the Planning Officer assigned to the planning application or discharge of condition application. We are unable to respond directly to applicant enquiries regarding the advice that we have provided to the determining authority.

The following legislation is used to assist in the assessment of planning applications:

Legislation source	Reference
National Planning Policy Framework	Paragraphs relevant to biodiversity, biodiversity net gain, ecological connectivity and protected species
Environment Act 2021	Mandatory Net Gain Biodiversity Duty Local Nature Recovery Strategy
District or Borough Local Plan and supporting SPD's	Local Plan policy
ODPM circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation	Requirement for species survey work and mitigation recommendations to be carried out prior to the determination of a planning application. Paras. 98 and 99
NERC Act 2006	Biodiversity Duty (see also Environment Act 2021) Section 41, habitats and species of Principal Importance (previously BAP)
Various International, European and National laws in relation to the protection of species and habitats	International and national site protection: Ramsar sites (from Ramsar Convention), Habitat and Birds Directives (Natura 2000 sites include SAC's and SPA's), SSSI's, National Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves. Habitats and Species protection: Habitat and Species Regulations (protected sites and species). Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended including special Schedule 1), Natural England Standing Advice. Badger Act.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/make-on-site-biodiversity-gains-as-a-developer#significant-on-site-enhancements>

