

From:



Date:



Application Consultation 20NP0013 Evistones Cottage, Rochester, Northumberland, NE19 1RY
24 March 2020 10:44:23

Dear Jay,

I have examined the documents sent regarding this application and I note that it is an alteration to a previously permitted development 19NP0014. I note that although the Planning Statement says on p23 that the bat report has been revised the version is still Feb 19 – the version I saw before. I do note that the plans have been revised to show the revised bat loft (plan no. 046 dated Jul 19) and that there is a brief letter from the ecological consultant to say the revised drawing (no ref given) with the proposed larger loft is acceptable.

Although these details are not ideal given these anomalies, I have considered the changes and my previous reply and I do not wish to change my comments. My reply from April 19 on the previous application still stand (with the exception of the plan reference number) and I would like you to take this as my response. See below. We should ensure that the revised plans are conditioned as well as all my previous comments regarding the mitigation and compensation. In addition the provision for nesting birds and other species should also be included as per the revised plans and the original report.

If you have any queries, please get back to me.

Yours sincerely,

Gill Thompson

Comments from 25/04/19 on 19NP0014

Dear Jay,

I have read the ecological report incorporating a bat survey that accompanies this application and note that roosts of four species of bat including maternity roosts of two species will be lost if the buildings are demolished. Case law has shown that where a planning application is likely to have implications for European protected species, explicit consideration must be given to the three tests enshrined in Regulation 53 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, either in the Committee Report or, in the case of delegated decisions, in the Planning Officer's own notes. Even though Natural England will assess the licence application, as the competent Authority the National Park Authority must evaluate the three tests to determine if such a licence is likely to be suitable before granting planning permission.

The 3 tests are:

- The proposal must be required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest or for public health and safety
- There must be no satisfactory alternative to the proposal
- The proposal will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the favourable conservation status of the species in its natural range.

The first two tests are planning related and if the proposals are in line with the local plan they are usually seen to be met. The third of these tests is examined in terms of the mitigation proposals submitted by the applicant. After looking at the documents provided my advice for

this application is as follows:

The mitigation and compensation listed in the report includes erection of bats boxes, construction of bat provision in the new buildings, timing restrictions for some work and working methodologies. Natural England standing advice states that the type and function of replacement roosts should perform the same function as those which they replace. In this instance, I think that the 12 bat boxes (including 5 maternity and 1 hibernation) suggested should be sufficient to ensure suitable boxes are available prior to work commencing. The species recorded will use bat boxes, and these are suitable for maternity use and the and hibernation as well as smaller roosts. The provision of new crevices in the new buildings should replace the existing roost sites once built. The methodology and timing suggested for the works seems acceptable to prevent physical harm, including avoidance of the maternity and hibernation period for certain works such as removal of roofs and stones. The locations of the bat crevices in the new building are shown on the plans received 24th April (drawing number 019).

In summary, it is my opinion that the current mitigation suggested is sufficient. The numbers of bats are estimated as being important at the parish level but if the mitigation is put in place and work carried out in line with the bat report it is likely to be successful given the other details provided. The third test will be met as the proposals are unlikely to detrimentally affect the conservation status of the bat species present on site.

In addition to bats the other species of interest found using the buildings were swallows and house martins. There would be a loss of nest sites for these species and the mitigation suggests incorporation of artificial nest provision in G.5.1. together with demolition outside the bird nesting season. This should also be made a condition together with the provision of a barn owl box to ensure no loss of biodiversity and possibly a net gain. I note these provisions are also shown on plan 019.

Other mitigation and working methods relating to reptiles and invasive species should be undertaken as outlined in the report.

If all these are made a condition I have no objections to the application.

If you wish to discuss further please get in touch.

Yours sincerely,
Gill Thompson

From: DC Consultation
Sent: 28 February 2020 14:03
To: Gill Thompson
Subject: Planning Application Consultation 20NP0013 Evistones Cottage, Rochester, Northumberland, NE19 1RY

Please see the attached consultation regarding a planning application which has been received by Northumberland National Park Authority. Full details can be viewed at <http://nnpa.planning-register.co.uk/plaPlanningAppDisplay.aspx?AppNo=20NP0013>