

PLANNING CONSULTATION

To: Local Review Body

Date: 04/07/2022

From: Raffaella Diesel

☎ Ext 6977

Ref: 22/00007/REF and
21/01908/FUL

PLANNING CONSULTATION

Subject: East Lodge at Netherurd, West Linton

OBSERVATIONS OF: Ecology Officer

CONSULTATION REPLY

Relevant Local Development Plan (LDP) policies are EP1 International Nature Conservation Sites and Protected Species and EP2 National Nature Conservation and Protected Species and EP3 Local Biodiversity.

I have not visited the site to inform this consultation response. An assessment was made using desk survey data, aerial photography and details submitted by the applicant.

A bat and breeding bird survey was carried out by Stone's Wildlife Management.
The bat emergence survey was carried out in May 2022 (during the optimal survey season).

Three species of bats were recorded foraging around the building but no bats were recorded emerging from the lodge building.

Regarding breeding birds, I am unclear if breeding birds were found or not. This is because the recommendation section of the report states that "*The building is to be renovated and extended but the eaves of the building should have netting put across them so the house martins can gain access to nest.*"
House Martins are not mentioned anywhere else in the report.

In general, I would have **no objections** to the proposal, **subject to conditions, if birds are indeed currently nesting within the building/eaves.**

If birds are currently nesting under the eaves of the building, I recommend the following planning condition is added:

- No development shall be undertaken during the breeding bird season (March to August inclusive), unless in strict compliance with a Species Protection Plan for breeding birds, including provision for pre-development supplementary survey and compensatory nest boxes, that shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the ecological interest in accordance with Local Development Plan policies EP2 and EP3.

I would further recommend the following informative be added, should planning permission be granted, regardless of whether birds are currently breeding in the building or not:

- In the event that bats are discovered following the commencement of works, works should stop immediately and the developer must contact NatureScot for further guidance. Works can only recommence by following any guidance given by NatureScot. The developer and all contractors to be made aware of accepted standard procedures of working with bats at www.bats.org.uk.
- The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, (as amended), it is an offence to remove, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built. Planning consent for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this act. If nesting birds are discovered after works commence, such works must stop and a competent ecologist must be contacted for advice.