

From: [David Dutton](#)
To: [Development Management](#)
Subject: Planning application 25/00613/HOUS Sheep Bank Farm
Date: 27 August 2025 10:04:38

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Hi Sam

Thank you for consulting the GMEU.

Proximity to South Pennines Special Protection Area (SPA)

The development is less than 200m from the SPA, designated for its breeding birds. I am satisfied however that the development can be screened out of requiring an appropriate assessment, as the risk of disturbance for such a minor development during construction, at that distance is negligible and there is no likely significant increase in recreational disturbance as there is no increase in the number of dwellings. No further information is required.

Bats

The building has been subject a to day time assessment, hibernation survey and dusk surveys. No evidence of bats roosting in the building was identified. I have no reason to doubt the findings of the report. Owing to the large number of potential bat roosting features identified and because individual bats can on occasion utilise any potential roosting opportunities, I recommend an informative along the following lines is applied to any permission.

Whilst the building to be extended has been found to be very 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).

Nesting Birds

No evidence of birds nesting on the building appears to have been recorded, though the ecological consultant assessed the building as providing bird nesting opportunities. On balance given the photographs indicate various works are ongoing, I am satisfied that all that is required is an informative along the following lines.

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 a wild bird, while the nest is in use or being built. Planning consent does not provide a defence against prosecution under this act. If a birds nest is suspected work should cease immediately and a suitably experienced ecologist employed to assess how best to safeguard the nest(s).

Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment & Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Section 187 of the NPPF 2024 states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. 10% BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). The development will result in the loss of a small area of low value grassland to the extension (already lost based on site photographs but evident on aerial photographs prior to renovation works commencing). Wildlife issues are restricted to loss of potential bat roosting and bird nesting features.

Householder applications are exempt from 10% BNG.

I recommend that mitigation and enhancement is provided for the minor ecological losses. This could include such measures as bat boxes, a house sparrow terrace or planting of a native tree in the garden. I have no strong views on what actually is provided. *The details can be provided via condition.*

David Dutton

Ecologist

Planning and Transportation

Planning and Transportation

Place

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