

Preamble

I have tried using the Planning Portal and am getting an error message. I am, therefore, submitting my observations via email and via the Chair of Adur District Council.

Action by planning

Please **confirm** that my observations have been added to the representations in respect of this planning application.

I'm writing with reference to planning application **AWDM/0810/26** , and the ecology report submitted in support of that application. (The building of 10 dwellings at New Salts Farm Road.)

The section of the report that I wish to challenge is paragraph 3.19.

- "3.19 The scrub, shrubs and barns have the potential to support nesting birds. However, were not suitable for barn owls due to a lack of suitable ledges and high light and wind exposure within the barns".

Issue

The statement regarding barn owls implies that barn owls are not using the barns, and might even be interpreted to suggest that barn owls are absent from the site.

My own observations contradict any suggestion that barn owls don't use the site: they absolutely do. From my BTO/Birdtrack records I recorded a barn owl as follows:

New Salts Farm West, 07/05/2026 21:36

New Salts Farm West, 02/06/2026 21:09

On both occasions, a barn owl was seen carrying prey towards the barns, emerging very shortly afterwards to hunt again. This **very strongly suggests** that either a second owl was being fed and/or barn owl chicks were present.

The implication of these observations is as follows:

1. If planning permission is granted, it should be on condition that a barn owl box (possibly on a pole) is sited in a suitable location, based on the **advice** and **expertise** of a barn owl **specialist**.
2. If demolition of the barns is approved , there needs to be a cast iron guarantee that an independent and credible survey will investigate the possibility of barn owls nesting in one of the barns. To be clear, such a survey must be carried out at an appropriate time of year.
3. You are asked to note that the ecology report must not be interpreted as saying that no barn owls use the site. This is emphatically not the case.

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I am a highly competent ornithologist with over 40 years experience. My observation of barn owls using the fields around the barn and the strong suggestion that a breeding attempt has taken place in 2026 is beyond dispute.