**From:** Charlotte Watkins   
**Sent:** 08 May 2019 12:55  
**To:** Bob Neville  
**Subject:** RE: 19/00457/OUT - The Beeches Heyford Road Steeple Aston

Bob

The site is of some ecological value in particular some parts of the grassland and the woodland. The ecological survey makes recommendations to minimise the loss to biodiversity on site but we would expect a clear overall net gain to be demonstrated here also in line with local policy and National guidance and I do not consider that is likely within the current plan. I would recommend they submit a Biodiversity Impact Assessment metric to show that a net gain can be achieved on site.

In general the recommendations made in term of buffers and measures of working to prevent harm to protected species are all appropriate as are the recommended enhancements on site in terms of bird and bat boxes and provisions for hedgehogs and reptiles. It should be ensured that close board fencing is not used on site (or where it is ‘hedgehog highways’ must be made at the base to allow movement by this species). Due to the likely value of the surrounding vegetation to nocturnal species such as bats, a lighting strategy should be submitted.

They have allocated a 3m to the boundary and fenced it in their plans – I couldn’t tell if this included the valuable habitat on the bund at plot 5.

The ecological survey recommends a PRA of the outbuildings on site and the D & A statement says this has been done. I could not find this within the documents – do you have a copy. In addition it states that further surveys were recommended but have not yet been done – usually this information should be submitted **prior to approval** as should any bat species be present we need to know how this will be dealt with on site through mitigation or licence.

If you are minded to grant permission here I would recommend a condition that includes section 5.3 of the Ecological report, They need a full bat survey of the relevant building with mitigation included where necessary which must be sent to us for approval, they need a full biodiversity enhancement plan showing a clear gain in habitats for biodiversity as well as additional measures such as integrated bird and bat boxes within any new dwellings and on mature trees.

Please get back to me for any clearer condition wording.

Kind regards

Charlotte

**Dr Charlotte Watkins**

**Ecology Officer**

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[www.cherwell.gov.uk](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/)

*Office hours: Monday and Wednesday mornings*

**From:** Bob Neville   
**Sent:** 07 May 2019 11:20  
**To:** Charlotte Watkins  
**Subject:** 19/00457/OUT - The Beeches Heyford Road Steeple Aston

Ref.: 19/00457/OUT

Address: The Beeches Heyford Road Steeple Aston

Proposal: Erection of up to 8 No dwellings with all matters reserved except the means of access onto Heyford Road

Good morning Charlotte

Have you had a chance to look at the above application? It’s due a decision this Thursday and I am currently writing up my recommendation of refusal. Any comments you wish to make on the submitted Ecological Impact Assessment would be appreciated.

Regards

**Bob Neville** MSc

**Senior Planning Officer**

**General Developments Planning Team**

Cherwell District Council & South Northamptonshire Council

Direct Dial 01295 221875 Ext. 1875

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