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**To:** Richard Greig <[Richard.Greig@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.Greig@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)>

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**Subject:** 23/00853/OUT

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Land East of Warwick Road, Banbury

With regard to the above application, in general the proposals include a good amount of greenspace and landscaping proposals which will help to buffer the effects of the development on wildlife within the wider landscape. A Biodiversity impact assessment has been carried out and demonstrates an acceptable level of biodiversity net gain in both habitats and hedgerows on site. In general the habitat conditions and habitat types proposed within the BIA are reasonable for the proposed usage of the site and green spaces. The actual metric (as opposed to a summary) must also be included in application documents at reserved matters stage and with any LEMP when layout is confirmed.

There are some Priority and Protected species on site which require protection and mitigation. Foraging and commuting bats, including rarer species such as a Barbastelle, will require large buffers to hedgerows and woodland edges and a sensitive lighting strategy that ensures there is no light spill into areas of importance to these species should be conditioned. Badgers are present and so update surveys will be required before any works on site and a mitigation strategy produced. It should be possible to retain setts on site.

Along with other red list bird species and Brown Hare (Priority species) the site has seven Skylark (red list) territories present which would be lost to the development. Whilst there is the intention to manage recreational areas to the East as grassland and open parkland and it is stated that this will help mitigate the loss to these species, this green space looks to be publicly accessible throughout and likely to be used for recreation by this but also adjacent developments. With off lead dogs etc.. I think it is unlikely that this land could mitigate for the loss of the skylark nesting habitats. The fact that there is only one skylark territory in an adjacent field is likely a reflection of the fact that this field is currently less suitable and therefore is not a positive point for it accommodating displaced species from the main site.

This adjacent field appears to be in the same ownership (blue line land included in ecological survey) and I would suggest that consideration is given to this agricultural field being specifically managed for the benefit of skylark, other red list farmland birds and Brown Hare and a management plan compatible with the mitigation for these species and its current agricultural use is agreed to. This could then mitigate fully for any loss to farmland birds and Brown Hare on site and act as a refuge from amenity use.

Within the built environment the applicant should be aware that in line with guidance 'Biodiversity in the Built Environment', CDC seeks the equivalent of a minimum of one bat/bird/invertebrate feature per dwelling (though these may be best clustered) integrated into the fabric of new buildings to ensure their retention for the lifetime of the development. Such measures should be included in any LEMP.

Beyond this I do not have any further ecological concerns. I would recommend a CEMP, LEMP (with metric showing a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain and habitat monitoring program), update badger and protected species surveys, lighting strategy and farmland bird mitigation scheme are conditioned should permission be granted.

Please get back to me with any queries

Kind regards

Charlotte

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