

# Consultee Comment for planning application 21/00343/F

<b>Application Number</b>	21/00343/F
<b>Location</b>	Land East Of The Leys Adderbury
<b>Proposal</b>	Erection of 2 dwellings
<b>Case Officer</b>	Bob Neville
<b>Organisation</b>	Ecology (CDC)
<b>Name</b>	Charlotte Watkins (Ecology Officer)
<b>Address</b>	Ecology Cherwell District Council Bodicote House White Post Road Bodicote Banbury OX15 4AA
<b>Type of Comment</b>	Comment
<b>Type</b>	

**Comments**

Bob I have looked through the above application. There are a number of ecological issues on site, the principal ones affecting protected species are the presence of Great Crested Newts and bats. The surveys for each are now a few years old but a later ecological appraisal has been carried out which looked for change on site. As the presence of both these EPS are known and can now be assumed I would not request further survey at this point. They will require a bat licence and this should be conditioned. The suggested mitigation is such that I think they are likely to obtain a licence on application. Updated surveys are likely to be required for the licence application and the details of the mitigation required may therefore alter under Natural England's guidance. There should be flexibility within the plans to accommodate this (e.g. possibility of larger bat loft on bin store, additional access points, boxes, tubes etc.. on new dwellings). Great Crested Newts are present on site and the site is within the red zone for habitat suitability meaning it is highly suitable being between two ponds. The applicants ecologists plan to deal with the likely impacts on GCN through a series of avoidance measures. There are some limited proposals for enhancements for GCN on site which could serve as mitigation and must be implemented. I am willing to trust their ecologists judgement on the need for a licence however it is unclear as to whether the assessment made in 2018 refers to a similar proposed layout in terms of impact as that for this application. The avoidance measures are in themselves appropriate however there remains the distinct possibility of encountering a great crested newt on site and therefore needing to stop work and then seek a licence. Applying for a District licence before submission, so this eventuality was accounted for, would have been a far better option here and one I would be more comfortable with. As it stands, along with other measures needed to protect wildlife on site the requirements for avoidance of harm to GCN are somewhat complicated in terms of timings and when ecological supervision is required. I would recommend that a CEMP is submitted pre-commencement which brings together all the construction and clearance related ecological requirements including those for bats, plants (snakes head fritillary and invasive species), reptiles, GCN and birds (thrush in particular) in one workable document with clear timings to ensure nothing is carried out in the wrong sequence or without adequate survey/supervision. The development will require the loss of fairly substantial areas of habitat ? woodland, scrub and grassland ? despite the limited size of the site overall. There appears in the plan to be some landscaping retained and hopefully more proposed but as some of the space will need to be given to mitigation habitat for Great Crested Newts (for which there is no plan for its location?) I think they may struggle to achieve an overall net gain for biodiversity here which is required through National guidance and local policy. I would recommend that a full landscaping plan and Ecological management statement for the site is conditioned showing where various habitat gains will be made and how, where mitigation for GCN will be sited, vegetation retained and to be created, where the snakes head fritillary will be relocated to etc.. . This should also clearly show how a net gain is being achieved and the condition should include a requirement to do so. Use of a Biodiversity Impact Calculation metric may be helpful to show this clearly, despite the smaller size of the site. In addition enhancements for biodiversity and mitigation for opportunities lost to species should be included on site (these could be shown on a landscaping plan or separate plans). For example: open fronted nest boxes for thrush and wagtail, hedgehog highways must be included through close board fencing as must commuting corridors for GCN, bird bricks and boxes to be integrated into new dwellings and onto retained trees, bat bricks within new dwellings over and above mitigation, measures for invertebrates etc.. where these are sited within the private curtilage of the dwellings there

will need to be measures to encourage their retention (e.g. integration where possible). A lighting scheme needs to be included in some form to ensure nocturnal wildlife is not affected or any of the features put in for bats on dwellings. Whilst I do not object to the development there is lot that is required on site to make it ecologically acceptable in terms of the content that will be needed in conditions. Please do get back to me with any queries and apologies for the delayed response. Kind regards Charlotte Dr Charlotte Watkins Ecology Officer Tel: 01295 227912 Email: Charlotte.Watkins@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk www.cherwell.gov.uk

**Received Date**

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**Attachments**