



Louise Sherwell <louisesherwell@warwickshire.gov.uk>

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## 16\_02446\_F Heyford Park

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David Cole <davidcole@warwickshire.gov.uk>

2 March 2017 at 12:08

To: Louise Sherwell <louisesherwell@warwickshire.gov.uk>

Hi Louise,

My response is below. If you think this okay, will you send it or do you want me?

David

16/02446/F | Erection of 297 residential dwellings (Use Class C3) comprising a mix of open market and affordable housing, together with associated works including provision of new and amended vehicular and pedestrian accesses, public open space, landscaping, utilities and infrastructure, and demolition of existing built structures and site clearance works | Heyford Park Camp Road Upper Heyford Bicester OX25 5HD

I have viewed the plans for the proposed development and read the Ecology and Nature Conservation assessment (Chapter 12) of the Environmental Statement. The surveys and assessment by Aspect Ecology appear to have been undertaken in accordance with appropriate methodology and I broadly agree with the assessment of the potential impact of the proposals on existing habitats and species.

The application site is not subject to any nature conservation designation and the development should not affect nearby designated sites. The proposals would involve the loss of a range of habitats including poor semi-improved grassland, amenity grassland, several trees and scattered shrubs including native species, and short sections of species-poor native hedgerow. A large number of disused buildings would be demolished. The reports assessment that the affected habitats have a low ecological value appears to be appropriate based on the survey information provided. The habitats that would be lost do provide suitable habitat for a range of species including commuting and foraging bats, badgers and reptiles. The retention of boundary hedgerows and trees as part of a green corridor is welcomed.

Specific surveys were undertaken for bats, badger, great crested newt and reptiles. Bats surveys found evidence of usage by two bat species, Brown long-eared bat and Natterer's bat (the second species is uncommon in Oxfordshire) in three existing buildings, all identified as infrequently used feeding perches. These roosts are considered to be of low conservation significance but their destruction will nonetheless constitute an offence so will need to be done under a licence from Natural England (see recommended condition below). Some bat commuting and foraging activity was also recorded on the application. Surveys found evidence of badgers commuting across the site but no setts or signs of foraging were seen. Surveys found no great crested newts and the report considers it unlikely that this species uses the site. No reptiles were found during surveys but the report considers that the application site provides potential for reptiles to move through the site therefore there is a low risk to reptiles from construction activities. Habitats on site do provide opportunities for nesting birds which could therefore be adversely impacted construction activities.

The recommendations for protective measures for protected species and retained habitats during the construction phase (including site clearance) described in section 12.5 are broadly appropriate and we recommend that full details are provided through submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) required by planning condition prior to commencement of any site clearance (please see condition below).

The mitigation measures to be incorporated into the design including habitat retention and enhancement measures detailed in section 12.5 of the report are acceptable. The retention of existing boundary hedgerows and trees as part of a green corridor (which will also include the creation of swales forming part of SuDs scheme) is welcomed as are the suggestions in Habitats and Ecological Features (section 12.5.12) that these corridors are protected during the operational phase by design measures, information provided to households and by long-term management.

The recommendations for further enhancements including habitat creation described in section 12.6 are welcome and, if managed principally for wildlife over the long-term should provide benefits for wildlife. We recommend that these recommendations are incorporated into a combined landscape and ecological management plan secured by a condition attached to any planning consent. The LEMP should identify who is responsible for the long-term management of the site to secure future appropriate management and monitoring. Full details of the locations/types of proposed bat and bird boxes should also be provided. We recommend that a variety of box designs are used in carefully positioned locations so as to attract a variety of bat and bird species. The development will result in the loss of perching roosts (used by Brown long-eared bat and Natterer's bat) located in open areas of three separate existing buildings. Suitable replacement roost sites should be provided for these species. Tree/shrub planting should give preference to locally appropriate native species.

I recommend the following conditions are attached to any planning consent:

#### K1 Mitigation Strategy for Bats

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, including any demolition and any works of site clearance, a mitigation strategy for bats, which shall include timing of works, and the location, design and timing of any alternative roosts to be provided, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the mitigation works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason KR1

#### K4 Bat/Newt Licence Required to Implement Permission

Where an offence under Regulation 41 of the Habitat and Species Regulations 2010 is likely to occur in respect of the development hereby approved, no works of site clearance, demolition or construction shall take place which are likely to impact on bats until a licence to affect such species has been granted in accordance with the aforementioned Regulations and a copy thereof has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason KR1

#### K20 Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the LEMP shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

*Reason KR2*

#### K21 CEMP for Biodiversity

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, including any works of site clearance, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which shall include details of the measures to be taken to ensure that construction works do not adversely affect biodiversity, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved CEMP.

*Reason KR2*

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David Cole  
Assistant Ecologist  
Ecological Services  
Community Services  
PO Box 43  
Warwick  
CV34 4SX  
Tel: 01926 418060