**From:** Charlotte Watkins
**Sent:** 25 May 2018 11:50
**To:** Caroline Ford
**Cc:** DC Support
**Subject:** 18/00484/OUT

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**Land North And Adjoining Home Farm Banbury Road B4100 Caversfield**

Caroline

The submitted Ecological Assessment is generally fine. They have not yet run any scenarios through the BIA calculator (just assessed what is already there). Whilst it is appropriate to rerun any calculations following the detailed layout of the scheme we need them to at least include a rough estimate of proposed created and retained habitats in a calculation up front to show what can be achieved and to give an opportunity for discussion before detailed layouts are considered. Should the results of the BIA once run show a net gain is not fully achievable on site the applicants will need to be prepared to consider off site compensation.

Generally there is little of particular ecological concern on site and the outlined ‘embedded mitigation’ should be sufficient to protect much of it. There is a watercourse to the South East to which it is proposed to have a large buffer – this should limit impacts and allow species such as Otter (should they use it) to continue to move through the site. This buffer will need to be maintained during construction also. They propose a pre-commencement survey for badgers which I would agree with and a range of working methods and checks to avoid harm to other species (nesting birds, reptiles) to be included in a **CEMP**. A full lighting strategy and plan will be needed which takes account of the proximity of bat roosts and allows their continued use of the site for commuting.

As per Section 9(e) of the Ecotown SPD a contribution will be required for off-site mitigation of farmland birds due to the cumulative impact on these species.

There are some suggestions for biodiversity enhancements on site and I think it is likely that the suggestions within the green space could achieve an overall net gain for biodiversity in terms of habitat provision (although a check using a BIA tool will help us confirm this aspect). The illustrative masterplan suggests one large pond within the green space. Consideration should be given as to whether this or a series of smaller ponds would be most beneficial to wildlife. Inclusion of bird and bat boxes on mature trees and provision for invertebrates are outlined within the green space and these are appropriate also.

I could not find however any mention of measures for biodiversity within the built environment in this assessment and these are important to ensure a quality development in ecological terms. The inclusion of bat and bird provisions (bat tubes, raised ridge tiles, bat boxes, swift bricks, house sparrow terraces etc..) integrated within the dwellings is a way of ensuring these provisions for the lifetime of the development, involve less management, encourage species which favour these conditions and make wildlife more accessible to people. I would therefore expect to see these included throughout the scheme in appropriate places. In addition features such as hedgehog passes where needed, green roofs, rain gardens, amphibian friendly kerbs and ponds should all be considered for inclusion within the built environment.

Following submission of an agreed Biodiversity Impact Assessment I would recommend the following conditions or similar to any permission (K17 and K20 could be combined):

**K8       Protected Species Check**

           Prior to, and within two months of, the commencement of the development, the site shall be thoroughly checked by a suitably qualified ecologist to ensure that no protected species, which could be harmed by the development, have moved on to the site since the previous surveys were carried out. Should any protected species be found during this check, full details of mitigation measures to prevent their harm 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 mitigation scheme.

            [Reason KR1](#JR1)

**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 KR3

**K21     Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMP) for Biodiversity**

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, including any demolition and 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](#JR2)

**K17     Biodiversity Enhancement**

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, including any demolition, and any works of site clearance, a method statement for enhancing biodiversity within green space and the built environment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the biodiversity enhancement measures shall be carried out and retained in accordance with the approved details.

            Reason KR3

Kind regards

Charlotte

**Dr Charlotte Watkins**

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