**Correspondence regarding ecology in relation to the development at Littlemoor Farm**

*Original decision notice – 19/10/2021*

Decision notice mentions the following reasons which the application was rejected:

* Loss of trees (and their associated benefits to biodiversity).
* Impacts on bats.
* Great crested newts (GCN) and reptiles. It was noted that the only mitigation measure required for GCN and reptiles was the erection of newt/reptile fencing ahead of and during works, to keep individuals off site.

*Comments from Jenny O’Neill - 12/11/2021*

Comments sent to Alex Veitch (and forwarded to the planning authority) include the following:

**Loss of trees:**

* The positioning of trees is constrained by the Council’s request that the house must be positioned at the rear of the plot.
* We recommend within the report compensatory planting of native tree species of local provenance within the site to enhance foraging and connectivity for bats and nesting opportunities for birds.
* 4 trees will need to be planted in line with the ecology comments regarding the Supplementary Planning Guidance for Trees, Woodlands, Hedgerows and Development.

**Bats:**

* Hedgerow is to be retained and we recommend hedgerow enhancement by native species planting (e.g. blackthorn, hawthorn, hazel) to strengthen this commuting feature.
* As our recommendations are designed for ‘worst case scenario’ in terms of avoidance of adverse impacts on light-averse species of bats that may be using the site (based on records), we consider that bat activity surveys would not be necessary (i.e. they would not change the outcome of the recommended precautionary lighting mitigation). A sensitive lighting plan is recommended and outlined in the report, to maintain a dark corridor, as well as the recommended compensatory planting. In our report we recommend that the positioning of the compensatory planting is incorporated into the new designs to inform the planning application.

**GCN and reptiles:**

* The amenity grassland onsite is well managed and as recommended in the report, should be maintained at a short sward height until construction is completed; therefore keeping the habitat unsuitable for amphibians and reptiles during the works.
* In our report we recommend that the small area of tall ruderal should be cleared following the mitigation strategy within the report, under supervision of an ecologist. Due to the size and scale of the development, and the very small area of suitable habitat to be cleared, we do not consider that any further mitigation is required in respect to GCN and reptiles.

No response to these comments was received from the local planning authority.

*Correspondence from Ceiri Rowlands - 21/04/2022*

An email from Ceiri Rowlands (Senior Planner) stated:

* “I also don’t envisage there being a reason for refusal related directly to ecology, i.e. the extent of the survey work and protected species.”

A second application was then submitted with the previously discussed biodiversity enhancement measures in place.

*Ecology Consultation Response – 17/08/2023*

Consultation response highlighted the following points:

* A lack of bat activity surveys – flight survey requested.
* Loss of trees.

*Comments from Jenny O’Neill – 01/08/2023*

Previous comments were sent to Colin Cheeseman, along with previous correspondence from Ceiri Rowlands regarding the need for survey work. We unfortunately received no response.