

Date: 9 May 2025
Application: 251086



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

WBC Ecology Newts

Development Management &
Compliance

P.O. Box 157

Shute End, Wokingham

Berkshire, RG40 1BN

Tel: (0118) 974 6000

Minicom No: (0118) 974 6991

Dear WBC Ecology Newts,

Outline Planning Approval Consultation

Application Number: 251086

Applicant: Cooper Estates Strategic Land Ltd

Site Address: Land At Stanbury House, Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood, RG7 1AJ

Parish: Shinfield

Grid Reference: Easting - 471273, Northing - 166781

Type of Development: Major Dwellings (10+)

Proposal: Outline application for the proposed development of up to 63 dwellings with 50% delivered as affordable homes. (All matters reserved except for means of access.)

Case Officer: Connie Davis

Development Management has received the above application and we require your comments on the proposal using the recommended memorandum below. The documents associated with this are available to view in NEC DM using the application number 251086. Alternatively, public documents are available to view on the Council's planning application search page: [Wokingham Borough Council Online Planning](#).

Please index your response into NEC DM against the application. If you are recommending conditions, you should give a reason with reference to relevant policies. A list of standard conditions can be found on the Z Drive at: [Z:\Standard Planning Conditions](#).

Your observations are required in respect of this application within **10 working days** of the above date or **15 working days** if the development type is classed as a major development.

Yours sincerely,
Development Management & Compliance

MEMORANDUM

From:	NatureSpace District Licensing Officer		
Service	WBC Ecology Newts	App No:	251086
Address:	Land At Stanbury House, Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood, RG7 1AJ.		
Proposal:	Outline application for the proposed development of up to 63 dwellings with 50% delivered as affordable homes. (All matters reserved except for means of access.)		
Type of Development:	Major Dwellings (10+)		
Site Visit Made:	Yes/No		

Summary Of Recommendations

- ☐ No comment
- ☒ No objection
- ☐ No objection subject to conditions (and reasons) **stated below**
- ☐ Request further information before determination as **stated below**
- ☐ Objection due to the reason(s) **stated below**

Comments On Proposal

The application site is within an amber impact risk zone, indicating an area of suitable habitat and likely great crested newt (GCN) presence. There are nine mapped ponds within 500m of the site boundary, six of which have recorded great crested newt presence. The nearest pond is immediately adjacent to the site boundary and connected to the site by ditches which run through the site. Great crested newts are confirmed to be present within this pond.

The applicant has provided an Ecological Appraisal report (EA; Aspect Ecology, March 2025). This includes information on habitats within the site and surveys for great crested newts. A low population of great crested newts has been confirmed within the pond immediately adjacent to the site (referred to as P2) and a pond 190m south-east (P3). P3 has been confirmed as a breeding site, but no evidence of breeding was recorded in P2. Other ponds (P4 and P5) within the survey area were not accessed, but it would be reasonable to assume these ponds are part of the local great crested newt metapopulation. A great crested newt was also recorded in terrestrial habitat within the site, confirming that GCN traverse the site and may use terrestrial habitats for foraging and shelter.

The Ecological Appraisal states that considering the large scale of the development and area of terrestrial habitat which will be lost, an offence in relation to GCN is considered likely and so a licence is required. I agree with this assessment. There are two licensing options available: a site-based mitigation licence or Wokingham

Borough Council's district licence. A mitigation licence can only be applied for after planning consent for the development is in place. Conversely, the district licence application must be made before planning determination. If the applicant wishes to join the district licence scheme, this could be done alongside the current outline application, or as part of a future reserved matters application (if the current application gains consent). Requirements of these two licensing approaches are different. The mitigation licence may require updated survey information, particularly considering the limitations to access and age of survey data (some of which is six years old). The district licence does not require updated surveys

Conditions & Reasons (if required)			
Date:	29/05/2025	Signed:	NatureSpace