

Construction Ecological Management Plan

May 2026

Land west of Trowes Lane and
north of Charlton Lane,
Swallowfield

Prepared by
CSA Environmental

On behalf of
Vistry Southern

Report No: CSA/7874/01

This report may contain sensitive ecological information. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to determine if this should be made publicly available.

Report Reference	Revision	Date	Prepared by	Approved by	Comments
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Background

- 1.1 This Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEcMP) has been prepared by CSA Environmental on behalf of Vistry Southern. It provides details of the ecological management measures to be implemented during the construction phase of development at land west of Trowes Lane and north of Charlton Lane, Swallowfield (hereafter referred to as 'the Site'). Outline planning permission was granted at appeal on 19 July 2024 (appeal reference APP/X0360/W/24/3340006) for the construction of up to 81 residential units with all matters reserved except for access (planning reference 230422).
- 1.2 The planning application was supported by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) (CSA/5643/05). The EclA was informed by an ecological desktop study and extended Phase 1 Habitat survey both undertaken in July 2021. Further targeted species surveys in respect of bats, badger, dormice, breeding birds, reptiles and great crested newts, alongside dedicated botanical surveys to inform a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment (CSA/5643/13), were completed between September 2021 and July 2022.

Purpose of Document

- 1.3 Condition 3 of the outline planning decision states that:

"No development hereby permitted shall commence until a construction method statement, including a construction ecological management plan, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The statement shall include but not be limited to the following:

- *construction of suitable works access*
- *the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors*
- *loading and unloading of plant and materials*
- *storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development*
- *the erection and maintenance of security hoarding*
- *wheel washing facilities*
- *measures to control the emission of noise, dust and dirt during construction*
- *a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works*
- *hours of construction*
- *hours of delivery*
- *mitigation and avoidance measures for ecology and biodiversity."*

- 1.4 This CEcMP has been prepared in specific respect to of item (k) with other more general matters of environmental good practice during construction to be addressed in a broader Construction Management Plan prepared by Ardent Consulting Engineers.

Roles and Responsibilities

- 1.5 The Developer, Vistry Southern, will appoint CSA Environmental or other appropriately qualified ecologists to provide an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW), to be responsible for advising relevant persons with regard to ecological issues. Responsibilities of the ECoW will include, though not necessarily be limited to:
- Advising on the locations of ecological constraints, such as protected or notable species.
 - Supervising key works activities to ensure the correct implementation of ecological impact avoidance and mitigation measures as set out here-in.
 - Monitoring site works to ensure adherence to the procedures set out here-in, as well as general environmental best practice.
 - Liaising as required with site personnel, Vistry Southern and the Council Biodiversity Officer on ecological issues.
- 1.6 The responsibilities of Vistry Southern will include, though are not limited to:
- Adhering to the procedures set out here-in, including by any appointed third-party contractor.
 - Liaising as necessary with the ECoW regarding any uncertainties in the procedures set out here-in, or where there is any concern of impacts to ecological features.

2.0 LEGISLATION, PLANNING POLICY & STANDING ADVICE

Legislation

- 2.1 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) make prescriptions for the designation and protection of Sites of Community Importance ('European sites', i.e. Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas) and European Protected Species (EPS). The latter include all native bats, great crested newts, dormice, otters and certain reptiles, listed under Annex II of the Regulations. Following the UK's departure from the European Union, the provisions of the Regulations have been retained through enactment of the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, which came into force on 31 December 2020.
- 2.2 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended, principally by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) forms the basis for protection of statutory designated sites of national importance (e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest; SSSIs) and native species that are rare and vulnerable in a national context.
- 2.3 Badgers are protected individually under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. This makes it an offence to wilfully kill or injure a badger, or to damage any part of, destroy or obstruct access to a sett. It is also an offence to disturb a badger while occupying a sett.
- 2.4 All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected under subsection 1(1) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is an offence to kill or injure any wild bird, to take or destroy their eggs, or to take, damage or destroy their nests while in use or being built.
- 2.5 All native British reptile species are listed within Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and are afforded protection against intentional or reckless killing and injury under parts of sub-section 9(1) of the Act.

3.0 BASELINE ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

Habitats and Flora

- 3.1 An extended Phase 1 Habitat survey was carried out in fine and dry weather conditions on 16 July 2021 by Mark Rose MCIEEM and Sophie Vines, encompassing the Site and immediately adjacent habitats that could be viewed.
- 3.2 The Site was found to comprise a single arable field surrounded by uncultivated field margins, native species hedgerows and an area of mixed semi-natural woodland to the south (see Habitats Plan in Appendix A).

Fauna

- 3.3 The EcIA presented an evaluation of the Site's potential to support protected and notable species, and the potential effects of development there-on. The pertinent details of this evaluation are summarised below.

Bats

- 3.4 Three seasonal transect surveys undertaken in September 2021 and May and July 2022 recorded at least seven bat species utilising the Site including common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, long-eared bats *Plecotus* sp., *Nyctalus* species, *Myotis* species and barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*. The majority of contacts recorded were of common pipistrelle bats (c. 71% of total contacts), predominantly recorded to be foraging along the boundary vegetation and woodland edge.
- 3.5 Seasonal automated static monitoring was undertaken in September 2021 and May and July 2022, using two static detectors on each occasion located along the northern and southern site boundaries. Consistent with the results of the transect surveys, bat activity during the static monitoring was dominated by common pipistrelle (c. 90% of total contacts), followed by soprano pipistrelle (c. 7%). A greater diversity of species was recorded than that of the transect surveys, with the addition of Nathusius' pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*, confirmed brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus* and serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*.
- 3.6 A single contact of the nationally rare barbastelle bat species was recorded during the transect surveys along the woodland edge in the eastern portion of the Site. A further two contacts of barbastelle were recorded in the northern portion of the Site during the static monitoring surveys, with the species therefore anticipated to be utilising the Site occasionally as part of a wider dispersal area. As baseline conditions

have remained relatively similar since these surveys were undertaken, it can be presumed that assemblages and activity remain akin to that previously recorded within the Site.

Badgers

- 3.7 A dedicated badger walkover was undertaken in April 2022 whereby surveyors completed a thorough check for badger setts and field signs. While the on-site habitats are suitable for sett building, alongside providing dispersal and foraging opportunities, no evidence of badger was identified. However, with consideration of the species transient nature, their use of the Site is likely to change over time, with it possible that new setts may be built on-site.

Breeding Birds

- 3.8 Breeding bird surveys were undertaken across four survey visits between April and June 2023 from which the Site was found to support a limited breeding bird assemblage, considered proportionate to its relatively small size and lack of habitat diversity. Breeding activity was found to be restricted to the unmanaged field margins, woodland edge and boundary vegetation.

Reptiles

- 3.9 Seven reptile refugia surveys were undertaken between May and July 2022, which resulted in a peak count of a single juvenile grass snake *Natrix Helvetica* on two survey visits. No further reptiles of any species were recorded. The Site was therefore concluded to support a very low population of grass snake which are anticipated to occasionally visit the Site as part of a wider home range (no doubt including off-site ponds to the north).

Great Crested Newt

- 3.10 Great crested newt surveys were undertaken between March and June 2022, with local records indicating their presence within close proximity to the Site and a total of nine ponds identified within a dispersible range.
- 3.11 Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessments were undertaken of Ponds P1-3 and P5-9, with access not permitted for Pond P4. Environmental DNA (eDNA) samples were subsequently taken from Ponds P1-2, P5-6 and P9a, with access not permitted for the remaining ponds. Positive results were returned for Ponds P5 and P9a, with negative results returned for the remaining sampled ponds. Two further ponds, P9b and P10, were discovered later into the season.
- 3.12 Population estimate surveys, including torching, egg search and bottle trapping were undertaken of Ponds P9a-10. Pond P5 dried up after the eDNA sample was taken following a period of dry weather and therefore no surveys could be undertaken. Great crested newts were confirmed to be present within Pond P9a, with a peak count of one adult

spotted while torching across the six survey visits. No further evidence of great crested newts was recorded across the population estimate surveys.

- 3.13 With the presence of great crested newt confirmed within a dispersible range of the Site, it was therefore concluded possible that the species may be utilising the on-site habitats during their terrestrial phase.

4.0 MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS

General

Pre-commencement Walkover

- 4.1 Prior to the commencement of any construction or site preparation works, the ECoW will undertake a site walkover survey to confirm that the baseline ecological conditions have not changed significantly from those which were reported here-in.
- 4.2 In the event that any new ecological constraints to development are identified, or where the status of any important ecological feature has altered significantly, this will be reported to Vistry Southern, and consideration will be given to whether additional or altered mitigation measures are required under this CEMP. Where such additions or alterations are made, a revised copy of the CEMP will be submitted to Wokingham Borough Council.

Post-completion Compliance Check

- 4.3 Following completion, the ECoW will undertake a final site visit to confirm that all ecological enhancement features as prescribed here-in have been correctly installed. In the event that any have been missed, this will be communicated with Vistry Southern who will be responsible for taking remedial action, with advice provided by the ECoW. Final confirmation that all prescribed ecological enhancement features have been correctly incorporated, including photographic evidence, will be provided to Wokingham Borough Council by Vistry Southern.

Enhancement

- 4.4 Native mixed scrub planting will provide a transitional edge and between existing boundary vegetation and grassland habitat types, alongside new opportunities for nesting, sheltering and dispersing fauna. This planting will also serve to buffer and bolster the existing hedgerows and mature trees.
- 4.5 Landscaped open space will comprise wildflower planting to encourage native flora and fauna within the Site. The peripheries will be subject to a reduced mowing regime to allow for a diverse sward to develop and encourage invertebrate diversity. This will in turn provide opportunities for other wildlife such as birds, reptiles and small mammals.
- 4.6 The Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) basin feature in the southern portion of the Site will be engineered to retain a permanently wet centre to serve a dual function as a wildlife pond, in turn creating new sheltering and foraging opportunities for a diversity of invertebrate and amphibian species. This will also result in a greater abundance of prey species for grass snake utilising the aquatic margins.

- 4.7 Native hedgerow planting around the peripheries of the Site will provide new opportunities for dispersing and sheltering fauna, increasing overall connectivity across the Site. Furthermore, the woodland will be enhanced through strategic thinning to create temporary open space for the ground flora and sapling trees to regenerate, alongside the creation of log piles to provide sheltering opportunities for small mammals and amphibians.

Bats

Protection Measures

- 4.8 The on-site boundary vegetation will be largely retained and protected from development effects, with the exception of a small section from Hedgerow H1 (c. 15m) to be lost to facilitate vehicular access. This loss will not significantly affect the continuity of the on-site linear vegetation, with structural planting proposed to infill the retained length of hedgerow such that it can continue to provide a connective feature for foraging and dispersing bats.
- 4.9 Construction of the development does not require the removal of any trees or structures with the potential to support roosting bats, therefore no further specific protection measures are necessitated in this regard.

Outcome

- 4.10 Subject to the implementation of the above measures, no impacts to roosting bats are likely to occur during construction of the development, and new long-term roosting opportunities will be delivered within the fabric of new builds and within newly planted trees as they mature and develop natural roost features. New hedgerow planting will increase connectivity both within the Site and to the surrounding landscape and create more opportunities for foraging and dispersing bats.

Terrestrial Mammals

Protection Measures

- 4.11 No evidence of badger activity has been recorded on-site to date, however, due to their transient nature and habits of creating new setts over time, a pre-commencement survey will be completed on a precautionary basis to confirm presence/likely absence of badger setts from the Site. In the event of an on-site sett being present, the ECoW will provide a scope of further monitoring to assess its usage (e.g. stick monitoring/camera trapping). If direct impacts to the sett cannot be objectively ruled out, this plan will be supplemented with a badger mitigation method statement and shared with the Wokingham Borough Council Biodiversity Officer. If direct impacts cannot be avoided, there will be a statutory requirement to secure derogation licensing from Natural England, which may incur delays.

- 4.12 During the construction phase of development general precautions will be taken to ensure no animals are harmed:
- Where any pits/trenches are left open overnight, planks will be placed within these pits or trenches created at an angle of no more than 45 degrees in order to provide a means of escape for any animals which may fall in.
 - In the event that animals are found trapped or injured within the site, no attempt will be made to approach the animal and the RSPCA will be contacted immediately.
- 4.13 Rabbits and foxes receive no relevant statutory protection; however, efforts will be made to minimise reasonably avoidable impacts to animal welfare that could arise through crushing/entrapment. Removed sections of hedgerow will be reduced to ground level and all arisings removed, with no earthworks taking place for a period of 48 hours in the event that fox earths or mammal burrows are discovered. It is anticipated that the removal of vegetation cover will prompt animals to disperse to alternative habitats.

Enhancement Measures

- 4.14 In order to maintain site permeability for hedgehogs *Erinaceus europaeus*, 'hedgehog highways' will be created. Hedgehog-friendly gravel boards or equivalent, providing a minimum 5 x 5 inch gap, will be incorporated within close-board garden fences. These gaps will be denoted by 'hedgehog highway' signs such that residents are encouraged to keep the gaps open.

Outcome

- 4.15 With the implementation of the above controls, there will be a minimal risk of direct harm to terrestrial mammals during construction, while welfare impacts will be minimised and site permeability for hedgehogs will be maintained.

Bird Species

Protection Measures

- 4.16 In the absence of suitable avoidance and/or mitigation measures, the clearance of vegetation could potentially result in the damage or destruction of nests or eggs of breeding wild birds, constituting an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- 4.17 In order to minimise the potential for impacts to nesting birds, clearance of sections of hedgerow will be timed to occur, so far as possible, outside the peak nesting bird period (generally March through August/September inclusive). In the event that any vegetation must be removed during the bird nesting period, a nesting bird check will be undertaken by the ECoW to determine that no active nests will be

impacted. Should any active nests be identified, these will be protected within a suitably sized and clearly marked construction exclusion zone, to be determined by the ECoW, until all young have fledged.

Enhancement Measures

- 4.18 A total of 70 Habitat Integrated Swift Boxes (or similar integrated swift boxes) will be installed within new builds at the Site. Swift boxes are known to be used by a variety of species. The proposed locations of these boxes will be selected with reference to the consented elevations, so as to minimise direct sun exposure and where possible avoid windows/doors/car parking and thereby minimise potential conflicts with residents. Each box feature will be installed at least c. 5m above ground level, so far as is possible.

Outcome

- 4.19 Subject to implementation of the above controls, it is anticipated that site preparation will be completed without the damage or destruction of nests or eggs of breeding wild birds, and the provision of integrated nest box features will ensure long term opportunities for a variety of species.

Reptile Species

Protection Measures

- 4.20 In the absence of suitable avoidance and/or mitigation measures, the clearance of discrete areas of suitable vegetation at the Site could potentially result in the killing or injury of individual reptiles which may be present within the Site.
- 4.21 In order to minimise the risk of harm, any reptiles present will be encouraged to disperse of their own accord away from construction works areas, with phased habitat degradation of the discrete parcels of suitable habitat used to displace reptiles into adjacent, retained habitats.
- 4.22 The Site will continue to be managed until the start of site preparation works in order that reptiles are discouraged from colonising the working area.
- 4.23 At the outset of site preparation works, a site meeting will be held between the ECoW and appointed vegetation clearance contractor to review the prescriptions made here, discuss appropriate machinery, etc.
- 4.24 Vegetation clearance associated with the loss of a short section from Hedgerow H1 will initially take place to a height of c. 200mm above ground, with all arisings removed. After 48 hours (frost free), vegetation will be reduced to ground level, and maintained as such until the start of earthworks. Earthworks will be delayed by no less than a further 48 hours from completion of the vegetation removal.

- 4.25 Vegetation degradation will be completed during the reptile active season (broadly March through October), in order to minimise the potential for animals to enter hibernation below ground level within the working area.
- 4.26 In the event that any reptiles are encountered during working activities at any stage of site preparation or construction, works will cease immediately and the ECoW contacted for advice.

Outcome

- 4.27 Subject to implementation of the above controls, it is anticipated that site clearance will be achieved with minimal risk of the killing or injury of any common reptiles. Owing to new habitat creation shown in the soft landscaping proposals, the reptile carrying capacity of the on-site habitats will be maintained.

Amphibian Species

Protection Measures

- 4.28 In the absence of mitigation, the clearance of discrete areas of suitable vegetation at the Site could potentially result in the disturbance, killing or injury of individual great crested newts which may be present within the Site, and/or damage or destruction of a resting place used by great crested newt. This would constitute an offence under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
- 4.29 Development at the Site is to be implemented under the District Level Licence (DLL), which is administered on behalf of Wokingham Borough Council by NatureSpace Partnership. The Site is present within a 'green zone', as determined under the DLL scheme, and therefore additional measures for mitigation and compensation are not required.
- 4.30 The NatureSpace Partnership Certificate (Appendix C) stipulates which Activities and Operations of the licence are permitted on the Site, and these are provided as follows:
- **A5** – Capture, exclusion and relocation of great crested newts from terrestrial habitat. This can be undertaken by hand, hand searches of suitable features, destructive searches, night/torch searching and/or exclusion fencing. This includes fence installation and removal.
 - **A6** – Relocating great crested newts at imminent risk of harm on Development Land (by hand, hand searches and/or destructive searches).
 - **A7** – Site clearance, including removal of vegetation, hardstanding, buildings and landscaping.
 - **A8** – Removal of rubble and log piles and other potential hibernacula.

- **A11** – Construction activities.

4.31 The following Protocol conditions will apply:

- **P2** – Certain activities permitted by this licence require ecological expertise. Activities subject to this condition can only be carried out by an ecologist with an appropriate Great Crested Newts Survey Licence or under the direct supervision of such a person.
- **P3** – Where licence or protocol conditions refer to publications, licence users are expected to refer to the most up to date iteration available. Natural England can direct users to the relevant iterations.
- **P4** – The biosecurity guidelines in Amphibian Disease Precautions: A guide for UK fieldworkers, Advice Note 4 (available from www.arguk.org) must be observed by all licence users.
- **P5** – Great crested newts must not be relocated outside the Licenced Area, over a distance greater than 1 kilometre or beyond a significant barrier to dispersal without the permission of Natural England.
- **P8** – Persons capturing newts under this licence are expected to follow the advice on welfare considerations for capture programmes in the 'Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines' available from Natural England.
- **P11** – Great crested newts are not to be translocated to Compensation Land or other locations within the Licensed Area unless the terrestrial and/or aquatic habitats are suitable for great crested newts. The suitability of the site is to be confirmed by a suitably qualified person (e.g., an ecologist with a great crested newt survey licence).

Enhancement Measures

4.32 The proposals retain ample habitat to ensure the continued availability of terrestrial habitat opportunities for dispersing and sheltering amphibians, including native scrub, woodland and hedgerow planting. Furthermore, wildflower planting will create a diverse, tussocky sward, alongside new opportunities for breeding within the proposed wildlife pond.

Outcome

4.33 Subject to implementation of the above controls, including statutory derogation licencing, it is anticipated that site clearance will be achieved without detriment to the favourable conservation status of the local great crested newt population, and without contravention of the above Regulations. Owing to new habitat creation shown in the soft

landscaping proposals, the amphibian carrying capacity of the on-site habitats will be maintained.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 In the absence of ecological impact avoidance and mitigation measures, construction works at the Site have the potential to damage retained tree and hedgerow vegetation, and to kill or injure, and damage the habitats of, protected and priority species.
- 5.2 However, with the implementation of some straightforward measures, construction will be achieved lawfully and with minimal risk to important ecological features. These measures are summarised below.

Protection Measures

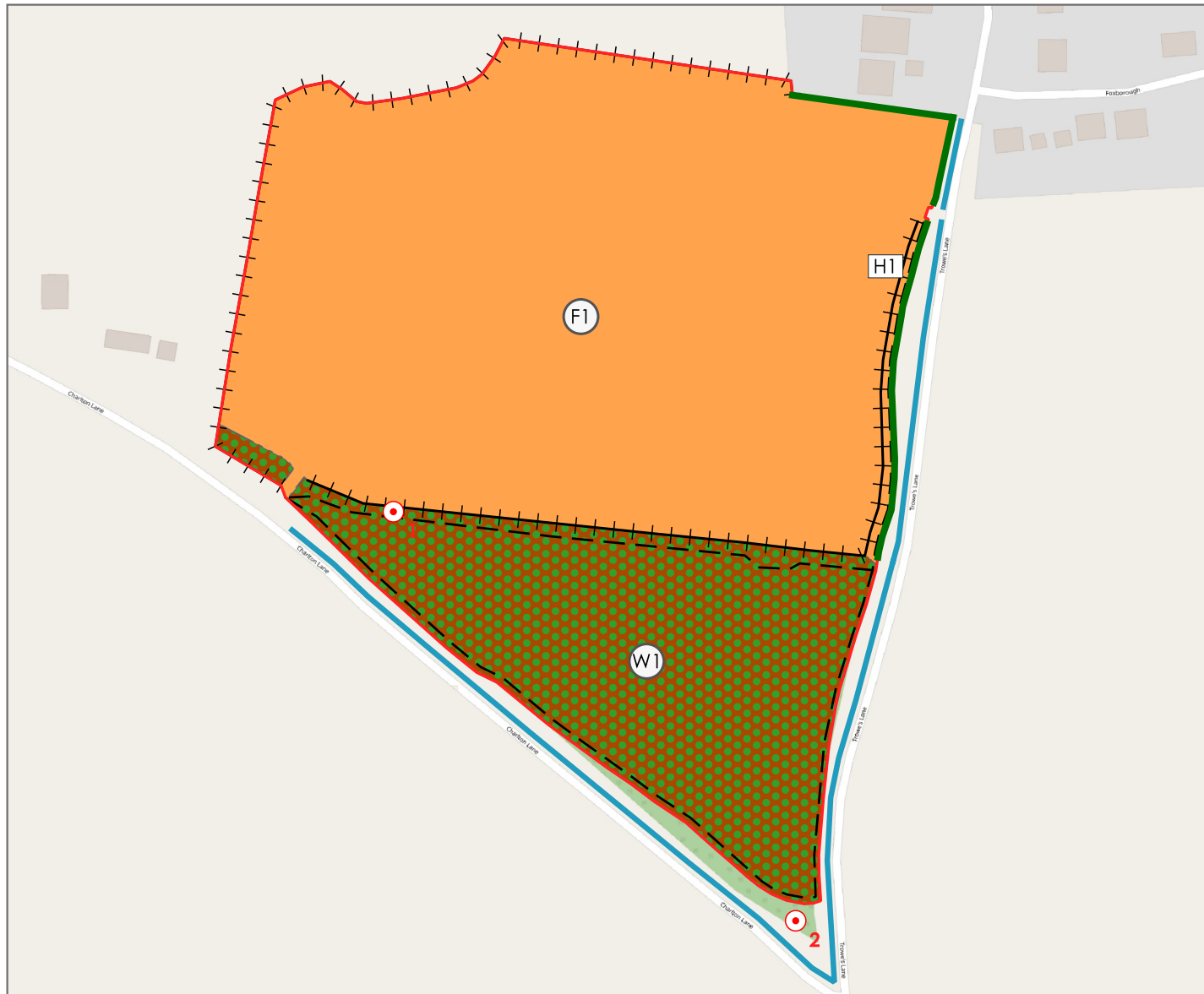
- A pre-commencement site walkover to determine presence/likely absence of badger setts from the Site
- Sensitive working methods during removal of sections of hedgerow in order to minimise potential impacts to common reptiles, mammals and great crested newts
- Removal of above ground vegetation outside the bird nesting period of March through August/September, or otherwise following confirmation by the ECoW that no active nests are present
- Financial contributions toward strategic conservation measures for great crested newts, and adherence to conditions of the District Level Licence

Enhancement Measures

- Installation of 70 swift nest boxes
- Installation of 10 bat box
- Integration of 'hedgehog highways'
- Native mixed scrub infill planting providing a transitional edge and between hedgerow and grassland habitat types, alongside new opportunities for nesting, sheltering and dispersing fauna.
- Peripheral wildflower planting within open spaces to be appropriately managed with a reduced mowing regime to allow for a diverse sward to develop and encourage invertebrate diversity.
- Dual purpose SuDS basin with retained permanently wet centre will create new sheltering and foraging opportunities for a diversity of invertebrate and amphibian species.
- c. 550m of species-rich and native hedgerow planting will increase the overall connectivity across the Site between existing vegetation, providing new opportunities for dispersing fauna.
- Woodland enhancement through strategic thinning to create temporary open space for the ground flora and sapling trees to regenerate, alongside the creation of log piles to provide new sheltering opportunities.

Appendix A

Habitats Plan



- Indicative site boundary
- Non-cereal crops (c1d)
- Other woodland; mixed (w1h)
- Hedgerows (h2)
- Seasonally wet ditch
- Fence
- Path
- Habitat reference
- Hedgerow reference
- Target note:
 - 1. Log pile
 - 2. Himalayan balsam present



Appendix B

Photographs



Photograph 1. View of Field F1, facing west.



Photograph 2. Bramble scrub along southern boundary, facing west.



Photograph 3. View of tussocky section in north-west corner surrounding the car park.



Photograph 4. Earth bank, facing south.



Photograph 5. Road verge adjacent to Harvest Ride, facing west.



Photograph 6. View of Hedgerow H1 to the east.



Photograph 7. Footpath within Woodland W1, facing north-west.



Photograph 8. View of Field F1 and Woodland W1, facing south-west.



Photograph 9. Semi-managed field margins along eastern aspect of Field F1.



Photograph 10. Field margins along the northern aspect of Field F1, facing west.



Photograph 11. View of Field F1, facing east.



Photograph 12. Ruderal vegetation along western aspect of Field F1.

Appendix C

The Naturespace Partnership Certificate

NatureSpace Great Crested Newt District Licensing Scheme

Certificate

A CERTIFICATE DOES NOT PERMIT LICENSABLE WORKS TO COMMENCE. A FORMAL AUTHORISATION FROM
WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL TO WORK UNDER THEIR DISTRICT LICENCE MUST BE OBTAINED PRIOR TO
COMMENCEMENT.

Date of certificate issue: **13th January 2026**

Development title: **Land West of Trowes Lane**

Developer name: **Vistry Group**

Development location (8 figure grid reference): **SU 7234 6450**

Development address: **Land West of Trowes Lane and North of Charlton Lane, Swallowfield, RG7 1RT**

Planning application reference: **230422 granted at appeal APP/X0360/W/24/3340006**

Development plan reference: **"Land West of Trowes Lane: Impact plan for great crested newt District
Licensing (Version 1)", dated 1st November 2023**

This certificate confirms that the above development (as proposed in the assessed development proposals on plan "Land West of Trowes Lane: Impact plan for great crested newt District Licensing (Version 1)", dated 1st November 2023) has been evaluated by NatureSpace Partnership and (if/when planning approval has been granted) can be covered under the District Licence (WML-OR137 or a 'Further Licence').

This proposed development has been evaluated in relation to the terms and conditions of the District Licence and to the NatureSpace great crested newt strategy and no further compensation actions are required by the developer.

Once the planning authority has granted the developer an authorisation to cover works under their District Licence for great crested newts, licensable works may proceed at the site. The authorisation is a written letter, signed by the planning authority's signatory, and it forms a separate document to the planning permission Decision Notice.

Under the requirements of the District Licence, the planning permission must include the following planning requirement wordings and information points. In this instance, the requirement wording will be added to the Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP) which the applicant is required to submit to Wokingham Borough Council in order to discharge Planning Condition 3 of Decision 230422 granted at appeal APP/X0360/W/24/3340006:

Planning requirement: No development hereby permitted shall take place except in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Council's Organisational Licence (WML-OR137, or a 'Further Licence') and with the proposals detailed on plan "Land West of Trowes Lane: Impact plan for great crested newt District Licensing (Version 1)", dated 1st November 2023.

Reason: In order to ensure that adverse impacts on great crested newts are adequately mitigated and to ensure that site works are delivered in full compliance with the organisational licence (WML-OR137, or a 'Further Licence'), section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Circular 06/2005 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Informative: It is recommended that the NatureSpace Best Practice Principles are taken into account and implemented where possible and appropriate.

Informative: It is essential to note that any works or activities whatsoever undertaken on site (including ground investigations, site preparatory works or ground clearance) prior to receipt of the written authorisation from the planning authority which permits the development to proceed under the District Licence (WML-OR137, or a 'Further Licence') are not licensed under the great crested newt District Licence. Any such works or activities have no legal protection under the great crested newt District Licence and if offences against great crested newt are thereby committed then criminal investigation and prosecution by the police may follow.

The licence requires authorisations to specify which activities and operations are permitted from the list in Annex B of WML-OR137.

In this case, the **licensed activities and operations will be as follows: A5, A6, A7, A8, A11**

The following Protocol conditions will apply: P2, P3, P4, P5, P8, P11

Please see Annex 1 for full details of these activities and operations.

Once authorised, developers working under the District Licence also should note:

- 'Authorised developers' authorise (in writing) additional persons (e.g., employees, contractors) to act as 'Accredited Agents' under the District Licence;
- Authorised developers must ensure that all persons using the licence (including any Accredited Agents) must possess appropriate knowledge, training and experience to undertake licensed activities in accordance with the District Licence and accepted best practice;
- Developers must maintain a record of activities carried out under the District Licence and a list of any persons you authorise to act as 'Accredited Agents' - and provide a record of these activities and persons to Wokingham Borough Council or NatureSpace Partnership in a timely manner;
- It is a condition of any authorisation under the District Licence that reasonable requests for permission to access the site will be granted to employees and representatives of the Planning Authority and or Natural England for monitoring purposes;
- It is recommended that the attached Best Practice Principles are followed for all works on site.

Licensable acts which will be made lawful when an authorisation for the proposed development is issued under the District Licence:

Capture; Possess; Transport; Disturb; Killing & injuring; Damage & destroy resting places.

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP**SIGNED** (on behalf of **Nature Space Partnership**)

by



PROJECT OFFICER



SENIOR OFFICER

Important:

This certificate is not an authorisation to work under a District Licence. Authorisations are issued separately by the Licensee (Wokingham Borough Council), in writing once the development has been granted a valid planning permission.

District Licence expiry date note:

The District Licence (WML-OR137) is held by the Planning Authority, which is able to issue authorisations to developers with planning approval. All references to WML-OR137 within this document refer to the latest version of the licence as issued by Natural England. At the time of writing, this is referenced WML-OR137 issued on 22nd October 2023. The current District Licence is set to expire on 21st October 2026, at which point it will be renewed. The current 5-year limit on licence duration means that authorising documents will need to be amended as and when the licence is reissued by Natural England. The licence conditions expressly provide for 'Further Licences', and NatureSpace will manage the updating of this certificate and any authorisation documents at the appropriate time.



Planning Appeals:

In the event that the proposed development is refused, and a subsequent appeal made to the Planning Inspectorate, the District Licence documents will need to be reconfirmed by NatureSpace and then submitted to PINs as part of the appeal documentation. The applicant should contact NatureSpace in the event of an appeal to expedite this. Failure to do so could mean that the development would not be able to receive authorisation under the District Licence if approved at appeal.

Enquiries:

For any enquiries relating to this report please contact NatureSpace Partnership:

Email: info@naturespaceuk.com

Tel: 01865 688307

Website: <https://naturespaceuk.com/>

For any enquiries relating to District Licensing, please contact either NatureSpace Partnership, your planning authority or Natural England - gcndll@naturalengland.org.uk

Annex 1. Activities, Operations and Protocols under a District Licence

The District Licence contains a 'Protocol for activities and operations affecting great crested newts within the licensed area' (see Annex B of the licence) – which contains a list of activities, operations, and licensable acts. The full list in the District Licence does not apply in every authorisation under the District Licence. This report details the activities, methods and acts which would be permitted for the proposed development, based on the impacts as assessed.

Permitted activities and operations under the District Licence (subject to receiving planning approval and written authorisation from the planning authority):

- A5 Capture, exclusion, and relocation of great crested newts from terrestrial habitat (by hand, hand searches of suitable features and/or destructive searches, night/torch searching, exclusion fencing (including upright and one-way temporary amphibian fencing). NB: This includes fence installation and removal.
- A6 Relocating great crested newts at imminent risk of harm on Development Land (by hand, hand searches and/or destructive searches)
- A7 Site clearance - including removal of vegetation, hard- standing, buildings and landscaping
- A8 Removal of rubble and log piles and other potential hibernacula
- A11 Construction activities

Note that in this case, the activities and operations referenced A5 are not required under the licence, but will be included in the authorisation, to legally permit those activities should you have need for them (e.g., if you wish to install temporary amphibian fencing at any location to reduce risks to great crested newts during works).

Protocols

Annex B of the District Licence is a 'Protocol for activities and operations affecting great crested newts within the licensed area' and includes a number of additional 'Protocol conditions'. The full list does not apply in every authorisation under the District Licence. This report details the 'Protocol conditions' which would apply to this site, based on the impacts as assessed.

Protocol conditions (which would apply upon authorisation):

- P2 Certain activities permitted by this licence require ecological expertise. Activities subject to this condition can only be carried out by an ecologist with an appropriate Great Crested Newt Survey Licence or under the direct supervision of such a person.
- P3 Where licence or protocol conditions refer to publications, licence users are expected to refer to the most up to date iteration available. Natural England can direct users to the relevant iterations.
- P4 The biosecurity guidelines in Amphibian Disease Precautions: A guide for UK fieldworkers, Advice Note 4 (available from www.arguk.org) must be observed by all licence users.
- P5 Great crested newts must not be relocated outside the Licensed Area, over a distance greater than 1 kilometre or beyond a significant physical barrier to dispersal without the permission of Natural England.
- P8 Persons capturing newts under this licence are expected to follow the advice on welfare considerations for capture programmes in the 'Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines' available from Natural England.
- P11 Great crested newts are not to be translocated to Compensation Land or other locations within the Licensed Area unless the terrestrial and/or aquatic habitats are suitable for great crested newts. The suitability of the site is to be confirmed by a suitably qualified person (e.g., an ecologist with a great crested newt survey licence).

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