

Date: 13 February 2026
Application: 260126



**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,

Listed Building Consent Consultation

Application Number: 260126

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Close

Site Address: Riseley Farm, Part Lane, Swallowfield, Wokingham, RG7 1TB

Parish: Swallowfield

Grid Reference: Easting - 473235, Northing - 163828

Type of Development: Other Listed Building alteration or extension

Proposal: Application for the Listed Building Consent for the proposed repair and renovation of existing Grade II listed farmhouse, including chimney/fenestration alterations, internal alterations and external landscaping.

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 260126. 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 requested from the case officer.

Your observations are required in respect of this application by **23 February 2026**.

Yours sincerely,
Development Management & Compliance

MEMORANDUM

From:	Molly Thompson Berkshire District Licensing Officer		
Service	WBC Ecology Newts	App No:	260126
Address:	Riseley Farm, Part Lane, Swallowfield, Wokingham, RG7 1TB.		
Proposal:	Application for the Listed Building Consent for the proposed repair and renovation of existing Grade II listed farmhouse, including chimney/fenestration alterations, internal alterations and external landscaping.		
Type of Development:	Other Listed Building alteration or extension		
Site Visit Made:	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

Summary

- The development falls within the amber impacts zone for great crested newts. Impact risk zones have been derived through advanced modelling to create a species distribution map which predicts likely presence. In the amber impact zone, there is highly suitable habitat and a high likelihood of great crested newt presence.
- There are 2 ponds within 250m of the development proposal. These are 15m south and 95m southwest of the site boundary.
- The application itself is mostly limited to the sites original footprint with internal alterations and an extension of the garden patio. This patio extension will be impacting an area of managed garden (lawn).

Ecological Information

The applicant has provided an ecological technical note: 'Ecology Technical Note', Riseley Farm, Part Lane, Swallowfield, Crossland Ecology, 15th January 2026. In relation to great crested newts (GCN) the report states that "the habitats on-site provide very limited suitable habitat due to the lack of varied species diversity and sward length". A habitat suitability index (HSI) was completed on the pond closest to the development, returning a below average value of 0.56 (where <0.5 is poor and >0.8 is excellent). Although, a HSI is not conclusive of GCN presence, it indicates the reasonably low likelihood of the species using this pond.

The ponds themselves are relatively isolated with little in terms of suitable habitat to aid in great crested newt movement, with the wider surroundings comprising extensively of an arable landscape.

The ecological report includes standard precautionary working measures which should be adopted when clearance and construction on the site commence. Further recommendations are included below which may be used to reduce the likelihood of impacting GCN.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

We are satisfied that if this development was to be approved, it is unlikely to cause an impact on great crested newts and/or their habitat.

However, as this application site lies in the amber impact zone as per the modelled district licence impact map, which indicates that there is highly suitable habitat for GCN within the area surrounding the application site, and the proximity of the site to a pond, I recommend the use of the following informative:

The applicant is reminded that, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to (amongst other things): deliberately capture, disturb, injure or kill great crested newts; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; deliberately obstruct access to a resting or sheltering place. Planning approval for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under these acts. Should great crested newts be found at any stages of the development works, then all works should cease, and Natural England should be contacted for advice.

The following recommendations are provided due to the location of the site within an amber impact risk zone and the proximity of the development to 2 ponds, which the applicant can use to further reduce the likelihood of impacting GCN if they wish to:

- Any trenches left overnight should be covered or provided with ramps to prevent GCN from becoming trapped.
- Any building material should be stored on pallets or on an area of hardstanding to discourage GCN from using them as shelter.
- Any demolition materials should be stored in skips or similar containers rather than in piles on the ground and should be removed from the site each day where possible.

Date:	18/02/2026	Signed:	NatureSpace
--------------	------------	----------------	-------------