

Date: 9 July 2025
Application: 251458



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

WBC Ecology Newts

Development Management &
Compliance

P.O. Box 157

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Dear WBC Ecology Newts,

Full Planning Approval Consultation

Application Number: 251458

Applicant: Michael Ward

Site Address: Jardine Meadows, Croft Road, Shinfield, RG7 1YP

Parish: Shinfield

Grid Reference: Easting - , Northing -

Type of Development: Minor Dwellings (1-9)

Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of 2no. detached 4-bedroom dwellings, access and associated landscaping.

Case Officer: Kieran Neumann

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 251458. 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:	251458
Address:	Jardine Meadows, Croft Road, Shinfield, RG7 1YP.		
Proposal:	Full application for the proposed erection of 2no. detached 4-bedroom dwellings, access and associated landscaping.		
Type of Development:	Minor Dwellings (1-9)		
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

The application site falls within a red impact risk zone, indicating highly suitable habitat for great crested newts and a likelihood of presence. The application site is well connected to surrounding habitat by the woodland to the east and a wet ditch to the south. There is a nearby recent record of great crested newts to the south-east, indicative of a breeding population within the vicinity of the application site. There is a pond 35m north of the application site.

A similar previous application at this site (233039) was refused, in part for failing to provide sufficient information regarding impacts to great crested newts and how these will be avoided.

Request for further information

An appropriate suite of reasonable avoidance measures should be provided in order to sufficiently demonstrate that the proposed development will not negatively impact great crested newts and/or their habitat. This should include an assessment of the likely impacts in the absence of such measures.

Alternatively, the applicant may wish to join the Council's District Licence Scheme and submit a NatureSpace certificate to demonstrate that any impacts of the proposed development can be addressed through Wokingham Borough Council's District Licence.

Detailed comments

An appropriate assessment of the likely impacts of the proposed development on great crested newts has not been provided. The proposed avoidance measures for great crested newts are insufficient. The complete avoidance measures are limited to:

“To mitigate the risk of great crested newts, other amphibians, or reptiles, being injured by development, it is recommended that the grassland within the proposed development area be kept shorter than 5cm. Prior to ground works, reptile exclusion fencing should be erected around the construction area and maintained until practical completion.”

“To avoid any animals becoming trapped or injured during construction, open trenches should be covered at night, or if this is not possible, scaffold planks should be placed in them to create ramps, enabling escape.”

For various reasons, use of reptile/amphibian exclusion fencing should be avoided unless necessary and appropriate. Such fencing is known to often create a sheltering habitat in the soil at the base of the fence which is attractive to amphibians. Great crested newts have been encountered sheltering in soil crevices at the base of exclusion fencing during fence removal, which risks injury to great crested newts and potentially constitutes destruction of a resting place (both criminal offences). Therefore, it is recommended that use of exclusion fencing is carried out under licence. Exclusion fencing can come into conflict with construction activities if improperly planned and managed. It can inhibit the movement of vehicles, personnel and equipment, which may lead to it being removed or tampered with. It can be easily damaged, potentially allowing great crested newts to enter the site. It therefore requires a high level of ecologist involvement to plan placement, oversee installation, inform site personnel, regularly inspect its integrity and carry out maintenance, then finally oversee removal.

Potential impacts on great crested newts during vegetation clearance have not been considered. The Arboricultural Implications Report shows understorey clearance will take place within the wooded area. Measures are necessary to avoid potential killing/injury/disturbance and damage/destruction of resting places during such works. It will also be necessary to remove all arisings to prevent creation of additional sheltering habitat within the site.

The ecological report submitted with application 233039 shows a pile of loose soil and vegetation within the site which could provide refuge for great crested newts. Tree stumps are evident which could provide shelter around the base/roots. These features have not been adequately reported on and avoidance measures should consider these and any other potential places of shelter.

Avoidance measures should include a ‘toolbox talk’ to inform site personnel of the potential presence of great crested newts, the legislation protecting them, how to identify them, avoidance measures, and what to do if one is found.

It is essential that the written avoidance measures stipulate the procedure in case great crested newt is encountered during works.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)			
Date:	23/07/2025	Signed:	NatureSpace