

MEMORANDUM

From:	Duncan Fisher Ecology Officer		
Service	WBC Ecology	App No:	260224
Address:	Land Located To The East Of Wa, Winnersh, Berkshire.		
Proposal:	PLEASE NOTE SLIGHT CHANGE IN DESCRIPTION Application for the approval of Reserved Matters Application relating to scale, layout, appearance and landscaping in respect of 111 dwellings pursuant to outline planning permission 230208 (as amended by 250640), including submission of details pursuant to conditions 10 (Arboriculture), 13 (BNG), and 14 (noise).		
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

Reserved Matters

Layout

The only ecological concern that I have regarding the layout of the roads and dwellings is in the north-west corner, where plots 1-6 back on to an ecologically valuable line of trees and plot 1 appears to absorb part of a line of trees into the garden.



Hard landscape proposals (drawing number: CSA/7168/211) shows the boundary as being garden separation fencing in accordance with developer's specification.



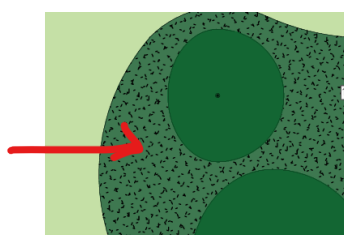
The Open Space Plan (drawing number: SK-301) does not show the space as being public open space.



This arrangement is likely to lead to encroachment of garden plots up to the ecologically valuable line of trees and risks loss of this linear feature. A preferable arrangement would be to not have the plots backing on to the linear feature. That way a more permanent hard landscaping feature can demarcate the separation between private and public space and the buffer to this ecologically valuable line of trees is more likely to be retained. In the current arrangement, at the very least, the western boundary treatment to these plots should be specified as a brick wall – as should the northern boundary of plot 1 with the boundary being brought away from the line of trees to give this space to be retained.

Soft Landscaping

The soft landscaping plans appear to use a dark green colour symbol that is not explained in the legend:



It may be that this is existing grass sward retained although that is shown as a white background to the stippling. Please can this be clarified. If it is this, it will have implications on the biodiversity net gain calculation as it is much more extensive than the area of modified grassland currently shown in the post-development scenario in the biodiversity net gain assessment.

Soft landscaping proposals phase 1 sheet of 3 (drawing number CSA/7168/200) has two areas of 'Thicket Mix' but these are not labelled to indicate which of the two mixes are to be applied. Please can this be added. I also note that the schedule only has one hedgerow type – shown in the legend as ornamental shrub planting – whereas the biodiversity net gain plan relies on a post development scenario with a second hedgerow type referred to as native hedgerow planting. Please can the soft landscaping plans and biodiversity net gain assessment be updated so they showing the same post-development scenario.

I am not convinced that the wildflower meadow mix, WF1, specified as Germinal Seeds WFG2 Flowering Meadow Mix, is appropriate for the locations specified. It includes non-native species and a high proportion of annuals which are unlikely to persist in the long-term. I recommend that this specification is changed to a more suitable mix capable of producing the target other neutral grassland habitat expected in the biodiversity net gain plan.

Hard Landscaping

The hard landscaping proposals sheets 1-3 (drawing numbers CSA/7168/211, CSA/7168/212, and CSA/7168/213) show a mix of brick walls, close board fencing and garden separation fencing to demarcate the garden spaces. Gardens are an important foraging resource for hedgehogs, a species of principal importance, and it is relevant under local plan policy TB23 for the development to provide ecological permeability for this species. I recommend that these plans are updated to show how hedgehog highway holes are to be provided within each length of boundary treatment between gardens and gardens and the wider open space.

Condition 6 - CEMP

I note that a Construction Environmental Management Plan (Phase 1) (CSA Environmental, ref: CSA/7168/07, August 2025) has been submitted.

I can recommend that this is sufficient to discharge condition 6 for this phase.

I note that the CEMP refers to a separate Reptile Mitigation Strategy (document ref: CSA/7168/09) which has not been submitted but will be needed to satisfy condition 16.

Condition 10 – Arboriculture

From an ecological perspective, I can recommend discharge of this condition for this phase.

Condition 12 - LEMP

I note that a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (CSA Environmental, ref: CSA/7168/06/A, December 2025) has been submitted.

I cannot recommend that this is sufficient to discharge condition 12 for this phase.

I have the following concerns:

- a) Maintenance operations listed in paragraph 4.2: why is there a need to rake-up any leaf litter and remove it from site? Is all leaf-litter to be removed or should this only be specified in very limited locations? Is there a need to remove from site or is there a compost location built into the design of the greenspace?
- b) Section 6 needs to contain objectives and prescriptions for the native hedgerow planting required for BNG.
- c) The maintenance schedule for existing grassland (section 12) is not appropriate for creating and maintaining other neutral grassland when the baseline is modified grassland.
- d) The maintenance schedule for wildflower meadows (section 12) recommends applying fertiliser twice a year. This is not appropriate for creating and maintaining other neutral grassland.
- e) No information is given as to the ongoing work required to enhance and maintain the Emm Brook – as specified in the biodiversity net gain plan.
- f) Appendix A includes soft landscaping plans that are likely to be revised following comments. The final approved version of the landscaping plans need to be included in this appendix.
- g) It is good that ecological enhancements have been listed in appendix B. Maintenance of the items proposed to be installed in the public open space should be covered in the main LEMP. I recommend that the hedgehog highway routes proposed in appendix B should have more connectivity between lines of back-to-back gardens. I recommend that the routes should also be shown in the hard landscaping plans where they are relevant to the boundary treatment proposals.

If these concerns can be addressed, I would be able to recommend discharge of condition 12 for this phase.

Condition 13 – Biodiversity Net Gain

I cannot recommend discharge of this condition for this phase.

I have the following concerns:

- a) The soft landscaping plans appear to be specifying large areas of existing modified grassland to be retained whereas the BNG proposed habitats plan has mapped these as other neutral grassland. What is the intervention that is going to create the enhancement predicted?
- b) The soft landscaping plans appear to be specifying ornamental hedgerow where the BNG proposed habitat plan is recording native hedgerow planting. The two plans need to align.
- c) Given the native hedgerow planting is predominately alongside the access roads and has ornamental planting proposed at its base, I am not convinced that it will achieve moderate condition. This needs to be more clearly justified or adjusted to poor condition.
- d) The BNG proposed habitats plan has mapped the attenuation basin as other neutral grassland in moderate condition. The soft landscaping plans do show that the planting has been tailored to the nature of the basin but I am not

convinced that it should be recorded as it has been. Unless a better justification is given, I recommend that this should be recorded as 'urban – sustainable urban drainage feature' and the condition should be assessed again the urban criteria tab.

- e) The current arrangement of plot 1's garden means that a small section of the line of trees along the northern edge should be recorded as lost. It may be that a reconfiguration of the layout allows for retention and the metric does not need to be changed on this aspect.

If these can be addressed then it will be possible to reassess whether a 10% net gain can be achieved. I note that currently this phase is not anticipating meeting the trading rules although the overall BNG assessment does satisfy the trading rules. Considering the trading rules, I would be able to recommend discharge of the condition for this phase provided the overarching BNG plan still shows the overall scheme is on track for meeting the rules.

Condition 14 – Noise

No comment

Conditions & Reasons (if required)			
Date:	15 April 2026	Signed:	D. Fisher