

Date: 8 May 2025
Application: 250959



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

WBC Ecology Newts

Development Management &
Compliance

P.O. Box 157

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Berkshire, RG40 1BN

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Dear WBC Ecology Newts,

Full Planning Approval Consultation

Application Number: 250959

Applicant: - - -

Site Address: Former Prince Bros Service Station, Old Bath Road, Reading, RG10 9QJ

Parish: Invalid code

Grid Reference: Easting - 478168, Northing - 176036

Type of Development: Minor General industrial/storage/warehouse (1-999 sqm)

Proposal: Full application for demolition of two existing buildings and a garage and the change of use from service station to a fuel oil storage and distribution facility including the recladding of the existing building, installation of 8 no. fuel oil storage tanks, refurbishment of hardstanding, car parking and associated works.

Case Officer: Marcus Watts

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 250959. 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:	250959
Address:	Former Prince Bros Service Station, Old Bath Road, Reading, RG10 9QJ.		
Proposal:	Full application for demolition of two existing buildings and a garage and the change of use from service station to a fuel oil storage and distribution facility including the recladding of the existing building, installation of 8 no. fuel oil storage tanks, refurbishment of hardstanding, car parking and associated works.		
Type of Development:	Minor General industrial/storage/warehouse (1-999 sqm)		
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 falls within a red Impact Risk Zone for great crested newts. There appears to be a single pond within 500m, located approximately 100m south-east of the site. There are many impediments to newt dispersal into the application site, including water courses, large lakes and the A3032.

The applicant has provided an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA; Rachel Hacking Ecology, February 2025). The EcIA sets out that the majority of the site is unsuitable for great crested newts, being developed hardstanding, but some suitable areas of scrub and wet woodland are present within the south of the site. The EcIA states that while a great crested newt survey has not been carried out, the species is unlikely to be present within the site and the low risk of impacts can be controlled through avoidance measures. I agree with this assessment.

I recommend that if the Council is minded to approve the application, a compliance condition is used to secure that the Reasonable Avoidance Measures within the EcIA (paragraphs 5.3.1 & 5.3.2) are adhered to.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Condition

Great crested newt avoidance measures

The development hereby approved shall be implemented strictly in accordance with the Reasonable Avoidance Method Statement for amphibians and reptiles detailed within the supporting document Ecological Impact Assessment (Rachel Hacking Ecology, February 2025).

Reason: To minimise the impacts of development on biodiversity, in accordance with Policy CP7 of Wokingham Borough Council's Core Strategy, Section 15 of the NPPF, Circular 06/2005 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

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; intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a resting or sheltering place. Planning permission for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. Should great crested newts be found at any stage of the development works, then all works should cease, and a professional and/or suitably qualified and experienced ecologist (or Natural England) should be contacted for advice on any special precautions before continuing, including the need for a licence.

Date:	15/05/2025	Signed:	NatureSpace
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