

MEMORANDUM

From:	NatureSpace		
Service	WBC Ecology Newts	App No:	242421
Address:	School Road, Arborfield Cross.		
Proposal:	Outline application for the proposed redevelopment of the site and erection of up to 95 no. dwellings with associated access, infrastructure, open space, landscaping and associated works. (All matters reserved except for means of access).		
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

The applicant has provided an ecological report (Ecological Assessment, Land North of School Road, Arborfield Cross, Derek Finnie Associates, September 2024).

The ecological report identifies three ponds within 500m of the application site boundary. Pond P1 is located approximately 30m from the application site but was found to be dry at the time of attempted survey in April 2024. Ponds P2 and P3 were not subject to survey but were noted to be 400-500m from the application site with relatively poor ecological connectivity to the site.

An ecological report provided with a previous application (App. No. 180596) at this location has also been reviewed (Ecological Assessment, Land Adjacent to School Road, Arborfield Cross, Berkshire, Ecology Solutions Ltd, February 2018). This report identifies the same three ponds as above and states that pond P1 was dry in May 2017, and ponds P2 and P3 were considered unsuitable for great crested newts.

Two ponds, located approximately 300m west of the application site, have not been considered in either of the above ecological reports. However, the application site falls largely within a green Impact Risk Zone for great crested newts, as modelled by district licence mapping, and all nearby ponds are relatively isolated with limited connectivity to other ponds and/or the application site.

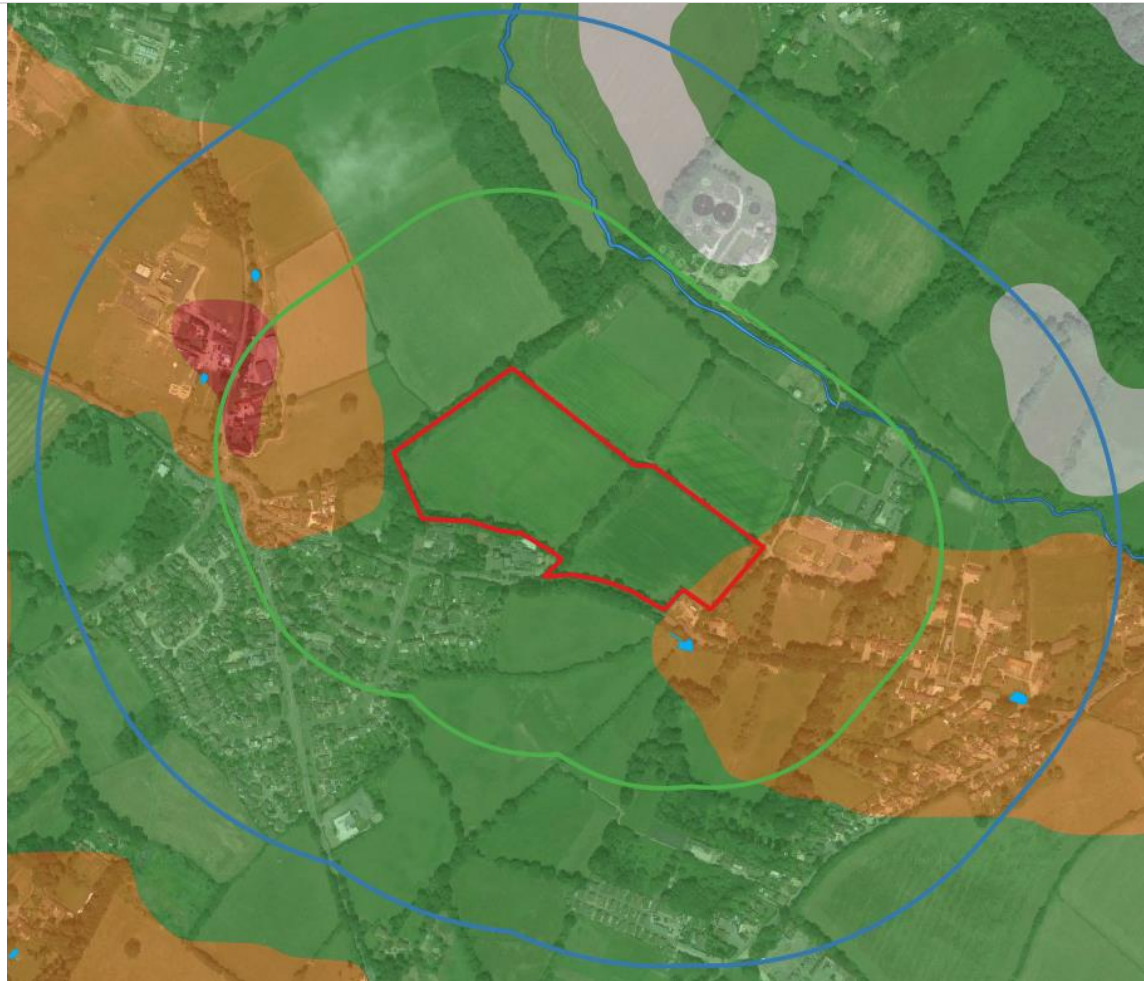


Figure above: Outline of the site (red) in the context of the surrounding landscape, including the Impact Risk Zones for GCN. Ponds are shown in light blue. A 250m buffer is shown around the site in green and a 500m buffer in blue. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

I am satisfied that great crested newts are likely absent from the application site, however given that ponds within 500m have not been surveyed I recommend that the below informative is supplied if the proposed development is approved.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

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 approval for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. Should great crested newts be found at any stages 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:	09/10/2024	Signed:	NatureSpace
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