

Date: 4 June 2025
Application: 251310



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

WBC Ecology Newts

Development Management &
Compliance

P.O. Box 157

Shute End, Wokingham

Berkshire, RG40 1BN

Tel: (0118) 974 6000

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Dear WBC Ecology Newts,

Screening opinion Consultation

Application Number: 251310

Applicant: Rubix Land Ltd

Site Address: Land at Blackcroft Farm, Reading Road, Arborfield

Parish: Finchampstead

Grid Reference: Easting - 476136, Northing - 163950

Type of Development:

Proposal: Screening Opinion application for an Environmental Impact Assessment for the proposed residential development comprising of Retirement village comprising 200 specialist homes, including a community leisure complex and a care home; erection of 450 residential dwellings including 40% affordable homes; local centre; expansion of Blackcroft Farm Industrial Estate; primary vehicular access onto Reading Road, consisting of a new 4-arm roundabout junction; landscaped public open space, and Sustainable Urban Drainage System and wildlife enhancements.

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 251310. 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:	251310
Address:	Land at Blackcroft Farm, Reading Road, Arborfield.		
Proposal:	Screening Opinion application for an Environmental Impact Assessment for the proposed residential development comprising of Retirement village comprising 200 specialist homes, including a community leisure complex and a care home; erection of 450 residential dwellings including 40% affordable homes; local centre; expansion of Blackcroft Farm Industrial Estate; primary vehicular access onto Reading Road, consisting of a new 4-arm roundabout junction; landscaped public open space, and Sustainable Urban Drainage System and wildlife enhancements.		
Type of Development:			
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

Thank you for consulting me on this application. While I am unable to advise you on whether or not an Environmental Impact Assessment should be required, I can provide comments to inform any future application at this site.

The majority of the site is within a green impact risk zone for great crested newts, though a portion of the site is within an amber zone. There is a pond on site and a further 8 ponds within 500m of the site boundary (based on OS maps which may not reflect the current state of neighbouring development). Natural England Standing Advice guidance for local planning authorities advises that surveys on ponds up to 500m from development sites should be requested.

Great crested newts could potentially be present within the application site, so any future application should include information regarding the suitability of the site to support great crested newts to rule out any impacts as part of the proposal. The applicant may wish to join the Council's District Licence which does not require

seasonally constrained newt survey work. More details on the District Licensing Scheme operated by the Council can be found at www.naturespaceuk.com

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Date:	17/06/2025	Signed:	NatureSpace
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