

Boddingtons Planning

Newt Impact Assessment

**The erection of a marquee during winter months –
1st October to 31st March annually for the storage and repair of
boats**

at

**Val Wyatt Marine
Willow Marina
Willow Lane
Wargrave
RG10 8LH**

November 2025

Background

The marina has operated on site since the 1930s. The main purpose of the business is the sale, mooring, maintenance and storage of boats.

Each winter it is necessary to lift boats from the water to store on the land. There are approximately 200 boats on site for hard standing storage during October to March/April each year. The timing of boats being returned to customers depends on weather and river conditions in the months leading up to the start of Spring. Some years relaunch is completed in May.

The advantage of being able to store undercover is that various works of repair and maintenance can be carried out by staff on site throughout the winter on behalf of the owners without having the wait for dry weather conditions. It makes the winter operations more efficient and ensures that most works are complete by the spring, and more boats can be returned to the water earlier rather than having to wait for better weather to complete the backlog. Such works as painting, teak cleaning and polishing as well as overhauls and more serious repairs are carried out and are weather dependant. Boat cleaning also requires cover.

The marquee was purchased in 2018 and is now completing its third year. The fact that it has been in location for this time is testament to its screened location and lack of impact on neighbours. The Marquee is erected for this winter as the permission expires next April

At the end of the winter period the marquee is dismantled and stored on site over the summer period. The only view into the site is from the river and when activity is at its greatest the marquee is not erected.

The marquee allows approximately 20 boats in addition to the extant capacity of around 30 boats to be stored and worked on undercover, with around 150 outside on the hardstandings. The location of the marquee allows some rotation of boats which is difficult with the other accommodation, again speeding winter works

Boats not under cover will be covered individually by plastic tarpaulins or heavy winter covers. (see photo). Such covers are not required for boats undercover in buildings or the marquee.

The applicant has found the arrangement approved to be very successful and flexible for the winter operations of the marina

Proposal

The proposal is for the erection of a marquee for the storage and maintenance of boats ancillary to the marina business for 6 months within a year (1st October to 31st March). This effectively the renewal of the previous permission that has inured for the past 5 years on site without any issue. However, the applicant wishes to extend the length of the marquee from 36 to 54m as shown on the submitted plans. A new permission is therefore required.

However, as the temporary period to allow the council to consider the impact of the marquee in principle has been ongoing for 5 years they may consider that it is not necessary to impose a further 5-year temporary permission. That is a matter for the LPA to decide given that the proposal is different from that previously approved.

Under section 72 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the local planning authority may grant planning permission for a specified temporary period only.

Circumstances where a temporary permission may be appropriate include where a trial run is needed in order to assess the effect of the development on the area or where it is expected that the planning circumstances will change in a particular way at the end of that period.

It will rarely be justifiable to grant a second temporary permission (except in cases where changing circumstances provide a clear rationale, such as temporary classrooms and other school facilities). Further permissions can normally be granted permanently or refused if there is clear justification for doing so. There is no presumption that a temporary grant of planning permission will then be granted permanently.

A condition requiring the demolition after a stated period of a building that is clearly intended to be permanent is unlikely to pass the test of reasonableness.

Conditions requiring demolition of buildings which are imposed on planning permissions for change of use are unlikely to relate fairly and reasonably to the development permitted.

Planning History

Planning permission was granted for a temporary period of 5 years for the location of a marquee within the marina site for 6 months of the year (1st October to 31 March each year. (ref 210538) Approved April 2021.

GCN Assessment

The site is identified as lying within a Great Crested Newt Habitat Zone and a GCN statement is required.

In March 2025 a PEA was undertaken over the whole of the marina site. It is attached and states:

Amphibians

The survey confirmed that the marina waters and adjacent hardstanding areas do not provide suitable habitat for amphibians. Regular boat activity, fish presence, and human disturbance make breeding unlikely, and no suitable terrestrial refuges or ponds are present within the construction footprint. As such, the likelihood of encountering amphibians, including great crested newts, is very low.

No specific protection measures for amphibians are required given the lack of suitable habitat. Nonetheless, as a precaution, any stored materials, waste, or spoil heaps should be kept off the ground where possible to avoid creating temporary refuges that amphibians could exploit.

In August 2025 in response to planning application 251040 a CEMP was submitted and approved for works on the same site. We submit that report as it may be pertinent to this application in respect of the process and is pertinent in respect of the ecological method statement to be applied on the site. It replicates the advice in respect of amphibians found in the PEA.

Discussion

The marquee will be erected for winter and taken down in summer. The marquee takes only a day or two to erect and disassemble by hand and has little impact on the ground in respect of the use of equipment or the small space covered by each of the feet of the frame.

There are no sides to the marquee so there is no impediment to animals moving around as they do during the summer.

Of course, the GCN hibernate in winter, and they typically find sheltered, frost-free locations on land, such as under logs, in compost heaps, or in underground

burrows, though some may overwinter at the bottom of a pond. There are no features of this nature on the land subject to the application.

Conclusion.

So there is limited opportunity to harm GCN whether they are found in this area. The PEA has indicated that the location is a poor likely habitat location and thus the impact on the GCN is considered to be very limited.