

Date: 11 November 2025
Application: 252688



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

WBC Ecology

Development Management &
Compliance

P.O. Box 157

Shute End, Wokingham

Berkshire, RG40 1BN

Tel: (0118) 974 6000

Minicom No: (0118) 974 6991

Dear WBC Ecology,

Householder Consultation

Application Number: 252688

Applicant: Mr and Mrs Chris and Julie Dering

Site Address: Orchards Paddock, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Wokingham, RG7 1PT

Parish: Swallowfield

Grid Reference: Easting - 472177, Northing - 165224

Type of Development: Other Householder

Proposal: Householder application for the proposed new dormer extension and conservatory to dwelling, erection of detached three bay garage, outdoor swimming pool and associated landscaping. Demolition of existing garage and outbuildings. Gate position to be moved backwards into site to allow for vehicle space off the main highway.

Case Officer: Claire Moore

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 252688. 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 requested from the case officer.

Your observations are required in respect of this application by **2 December 2025**.

Yours sincerely,
Development Management & Compliance

MEMORANDUM

From:	District Licensing Officer NatureSpace		
Service	WBC Ecology	App No:	252688
Address:	Orchards Paddock, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Wokingham, RG7 1PT.		
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed new dormer extension and conservatory to dwelling, erection of detached three bay garage, outdoor swimming pool and associated landscaping. Demolition of existing garage and outbuildings. Gate position to be moved backwards into site to allow for vehicle space off the main highway.		
Type of Development:	Other Householder		
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

Summary:

This planning application is for the proposed new dormer extension and conservatory to dwelling, erection of detached three bay garage, outdoor swimming pool and associated landscaping. Demolition of existing garage and outbuildings. Gate position to be moved backwards into site to allow for vehicle space off the main highway.

- The development falls within the red impact risk zone for Great crested newts. Impact risk zones have been derived through advanced modelling to create a species distribution map which predicts likely presence. In the red impact zone, there is suitable habitat and a high likelihood of Great crested newt presence.
- There are 5 ponds within 500m of the development proposal. One of which falls within the red line boundary.
- There is a Great crested newt records within 250m of the site.

- The design and access statement also shows a dilapidated outbuilding (Fig. 07) that is proposed to be demolished which has the potential to act as refuge for GCN.
- There is direct connectivity between the development and surrounding features in the landscape.



Figure 1: 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. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Ecological Information:

- The applicant has provided a bat survey report (Hampshire Ecological Services Ltd, 2025) which includes a Great crested newt precautionary working method statement (GCN PWMS) as it is stated that there is a low risk of impacting GCN given the available habitat on site.
- Given the lack of survey data for the on-site and nearby ponds it is not possible to establish if PWMs would be suitable as; if the on-site pond is being utilised by GCN there is a reasonable likelihood of GCN dispersing onto site and be encountered during construction works or being encountered when demolishing the outbuilding.

Recommendation:

I am not satisfied that the applicant has adequately demonstrated that there will no impact to Great crested newts as a result of the development being approved. Despite the small scale of the development due to the proximity of the nearby pond and Great crested newt records in the area there is a potential impact to GCN.

Therefore, in line with the guidance from Natural England (Great crested newts: District Level Licensing for development projects, Natural England, March 2021), there is a reasonable likelihood that Great crested newts will be impacted by the development proposals and therefore, the applicant must either:

- Provide further information relating to the pond situated within the red line boundary and within 250m in line with Natural England's Standing Advice, to rule out impacts to Great crested newts, or demonstrate how any impacts can be addressed through appropriate mitigation/compensation proposals*.
- Alternatively, the applicant may wish to join the NatureSpace district licencing scheme and submit a NatureSpace certificate to demonstrate that the impacts of the proposed development can be addressed through Wokingham Bourough Council's District Licence.

*To do so, surveys to determine presence/likely absence and population size class assessments may need to be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist in accordance with the Great crested newt Mitigation Guidelines (2001) (and if using eDNA surveys, the Great crested newt Environmental eDNA Technical Advice Note (Natural England 2014)). If GCN are identified, appropriate mitigation and compensatory measures will need to be identified to satisfy planning requirements and a site-based mitigation licence may be required. Surveys are seasonally constrained.

More details on the district licensing scheme operated by the council can be found at www.naturespaceuk.com

Wokingham Bourough Council holds a Great Crested Newt Organisational (or "District") Licence granted by Natural England. This is administered by NatureSpace Partnership through their District Licensing Scheme as the council's delivery partner. A dedicated District Licensing Officer is employed by NatureSpace to provide impartial advice to the council and help guide them and planning applicants through the process. All services and arrangements are facilitated in an unbiased, independent and transparent manner. You can find out more at www.naturespaceuk.com

Date:	02/12/2025	Signed:	NatureSpace
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