

From: Derek Richardson <derek.richardson@tameside.gov.uk>
Sent: 29 July 2019 13:49
To: Devcon Mailbox
Subject: App 06/2019/0752 Land at Cardwell Farm Garstang Road Preston - Ecology Response

Dear Jonathan Evans

Thank you for consulting the Ecology Unit on the above planning application and accompanying Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Report and Great Crested Newt Survey report (Rachel Hacking Ecology, 2018). The surveys have been undertaken by a suitably qualified Ecologist, whose work is known to the Unit. Although some of the surveys were conducted in 2017 and 2018 we would regard the survey findings as sufficiently up-to-date to be relevant to this application.

Our comments are as follows -

The proposed application site comprises fields of permanent pasture land separated and partly bordered by hedgelines and fences. Residential properties are adjacent to the north and south of part of the site and Garstang Road is to the west. Small watercourses (used as drainage ditches) run through parts of the site and there are a number of ponds on the site and within 250m of the site. There is a small area of woodland at the southern boundary of the site.

Great Crested Newt (GCN)

I would accept the results of the great crested newt surveys that the development proposal is unlikely to cause harm to great crested newts. Nevertheless other amphibian species may be present in the ponds and may use terrestrial habitat on the site. I note that it is the intention to retain the ponds on the site and this proposal is welcomed. However, to avoid any possible harm to newts and any other amphibians which may cross the site a robust set of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) for avoidance of harm to amphibians should be adopted throughout the works, including during site clearance, preparation and construction. We would therefore recommend that a Reasonable Avoidance Method Statement be submitted to and agreed by the LPA and once agreed implemented in full. We would recommend that a **condition** to this effect be placed on any permission, if granted.

Bats

If any of the trees on the site requires any works or indeed needs to be felled then immediately prior to any works/felling a daytime inspection of the tree should be undertaken by a suitably qualified bat consultant to ensure that no bats or evidence of bats exists. We would recommend that a **condition** to this effect be placed on any permission.

Birds

The trees and hedgerows have the potential to support nesting birds. All birds, with the exception of certain pest species, and their nests are protected under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). We would therefore recommend that works to trees and hedgerows should not be undertaken in the main bird breeding season (March to July inclusive), unless nesting birds are found to be absent, by a suitably qualified person. We would therefore suggest that a **condition** to this effect be placed on any permission, if granted, in order to protect wild birds.

Habitats, including Trees & Hedgerows

The development will result in the loss of agricultural grassland. Although the grassland is species-poor the losses will not be insignificant. However the landscape plans for the development show meaningful areas of greenspace retained and improved by new planting, particularly new tree planting. Landscape corridors are to be retained at the site boundaries and through the site, greenspace will be retained around the ponds and the new houses will have garden spaces

All trees and hedgerows to be retained on the site should be protected from the development to prevent damage to the root system. Protection should follow guidelines presented within BS 5837:2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition & construction'. We would therefore recommend a **condition** to this effect should be placed on any permission.

Biodiversity Enhancement

In line with Section 11 of the NPPF, we would recommend that opportunities for biodiversity enhancement be incorporated into the new development. These should include:

- Bat bricks and/or tubes within the new development
- Bat boxes
- Bird boxes
- Native tree, shrub and flowering perennial planting
- Bolstering of hedgerows
- Gaps under boundaries to allow access for hedgehogs

In conclusion we are satisfied that the application can be forwarded for determination and that any permission if granted is supported by the **conditions/informative** above.

Should you have any queries relating to the above comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Derek Richardson
Principal Ecologist

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