Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Jenna Buss
Date:	7/11/2023
Application number:	PL/2023/07556
Proposal:	Erection of 19 new industrial units (Class E & B8 Uses)
Site address:	Land South of Templars Way Industrial Estate, Royal Wootton Bassett, SN4 7SR
Case officer:	Callan Powers

Recommendations:

	No Comment
	Support
	No objection
	Condition (no objection subject to conditions)
x	Objection - further information required
	Objection in principle
	HRA completed

Further Information Required:

	Issue	Policy/Legislative Compliance	Date information requested & Further information required	Satisfactorily addressed (Document & Date)
1	Protected Species GCN	WCA Habitat Regs	A HSI for GCN, Impact assessment and Mitigation Strategy. Or DLL agreed with NE.	
2	BNG	NPPF, CP50	Clarification of the Landscape Plan and Submission of the Management proposals.	

The outstanding document(s) listed above are needed to enable the council's ecology team to consider all the relevant impacts and benefits of the proposed scheme. The council's ecologists will provide a further response once <u>all</u> the above information has been submitted via the case officer.
Please Note: When resubmitting a revised document, ALL changes must be highlighted to enable review.

Thank you for consulting Ecology, I have reviewed the application and supporting documents against OS Maps and aerial photography of the site and surrounding area, together with GIS layers of statutory and non-statutory sites and existing records of protected species.

Information reviewed to inform this response included:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. August 2023. Kedd Ltd;
- Landscape Scheme KD. TMPL.1.D.006. Aigist 2023. Kedd Ltd;
- BNG Assessment. August 2023. Kedd Ltd and;
- Planning, Design and Access Statement. September 2023. Kedd Ltd.

<u>Protected Species</u>

As outlined within our response for application PL/2022/03125, the site lies within the Amber zone for GCN. Amber zones contain main population centres for GCN and comprise important connecting habitat that aids natural dispersal. The application area also falls within a Core Strategic Opportunity Area for GCN. The core areas contain a pond density of 2+ ponds and are located within a 1km square where great crested newt presence has been predicted, a record for GCN also exists just to the north. The current hedgerows on site also have the potential to support GCN.

In carrying out its statutory function, the LPA must be reasonably sure that the proposal will not result in significant adverse effects on protected habitats or species. The information outlined above must therefore be submitted and reviewed by the LPA's ecology team prior to determination of the application.

As there are records of GCN present in the local area and the hedgerows could be utilized by GCN, an assessment of the ponds suitability to support GCN and a mitigation strategy for GCN will be required.

District Level Licensing
As Great Crested Newts are known to be in the area, the applicant may wish to consider District Level Licensing (DLL). Instead of carrying out site-specific mitigation and compensation, the applicant can apply to Natural England to determine whether the scheme is eligible for DLL. Once the scheme is accepted under the District Level Licensing Scheme for Great Crested Newts, the *Impact Assessment and Conservation Payment Certificate* (*IACPC)*, which must be signed by the applicant and countersigned by Natural England should be submitted to the LPA.

Biodiversity Net Gain
We welcome the submission of the BNG metric which demonstrates a significant net gain in linear units and a gain for area units. Although the unit area net gain is below the 10% suggested, in this instance, the enhancements proposed will contribute to biodiversity locally and therefore in this case will be acceptable.

The metric is also supported by the Landscape Scheme drawings which outline the landscape proposals. However, the hedgerow location is unclear on the southern boundary and appears to be impacted by the proposed parking spaces. Clarification is required to ensure that the hedgerow proposals are possible and/or the parking area moved to allow for hedgerow planting.

There is also insufficient information in relation to the proposed management of the site to ensure the habitats created will be retained in perpetuity. This information is also required to ensure reasonable likelihood that the BNG proposals can be met in the longer term.

The ecology report also includes recommendations for bird and bat boxes. To provide increased opportunities for biodiversity it is expected that new developments will provide integral features to benefit biodiversity such as for birds, bats and invertebrates. Details of the proposals and locations for such biodiversity enhancements should also be included on technical drawings.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist	Date