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Date: 4th April 2025

Re: Application Number: 24/00433/FUL

Update Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of Agricultural Buildings at Washingley Farm, Green End, Great Stukeley, Cambridgeshire.

Proposal: Erection of 6 residential dwellings and garages following demolition of 5 barns (Pursuant to 22/00950/FUL).

Introduction & Methodology

Skilled Ecology Consultancy Ltd. was instructed to undertake an update Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) for Condition 8 of the approved planning permission.

The update survey was undertaken on the 28th March 2025 by experienced ecologist Tommy Root BSc (Hons) ACIEEM (licensed to survey for bats- level 2 and great crested newts- level 1). The survey followed CIEEM guidelines and included searching for potential and risk of impact to protected, priority or rare species and notable habitats on and adjacent to the site.

The proposed construction zone has been cleared and is now bare ground. The two ponds have been retained, as well as grassland beyond the construction zone and boundary hedgerows.

Several past ecology surveys have been undertaken including:

- PEA survey on the 1st August 2018.
- Full great crested newt surveys of all ponds within 250m in April 2019
- Full reptile survey of site and surrounding land in June/July 2019
- An update PEA on the 7th July 2021 including a great crested newt assessment of all local ponds within 250m.
- Two dusk emergence bat surveys on Building 8 on the 7th July 2021 & 21st July 2021
- One dawn re-entry bat survey on Building 8 on the 4th August 2021.

Survey Results

No signs or evidence of protected, priority or rare species (including bats) were discovered during the 2025 survey.

2025 habitat survey results include:

West side rough improved grassland (Modified Grass- Poor Condition) – plant species: cow parsley Anthriscus sylvestris, white dead-nettle Lamium album, lords & ladies Arum maculatum, spear thistle Cirsium vulgare, greater plantain Plantago major, bramble Rubus fruticosus agg, stinging nettle Urtica dioica, curled dock Rumex crispus, dandelion Taraxacum officinale agg, hogweed Heracleum sphondylium, cleavers Galium aparine, lesser celandine Ficaria verna, Iris species, red dead-nettle Lamium purpureum, ground ivy Glechoma hederacea, ivy Hedera helix

Main site area – recently cleared bare ground with rubble: periwinkle species Vinca sp, bramble Rubus fruticosus agg, hemlock Conium maculatum, white dead-nettle Lamium album, hairy bittercress Cardamine hirsuta, lords and ladies Arum maculatum, white clover Trifolium repens, dovesfoot cranesbill Geranium molle, common chickweed Stellaria media

Northern rough improved grassland (Modified Grass- Poor Condition): Yorkshire fog Holcus lanatus, bristly ox tongue Helminthotheca echioides, bramble Rubus fruticosus agg, blackthorn Prunus spinosa, curled dock Rumex crispus, ground ivy Glechoma hederacea, hemlock Conium maculatum, hairy bittercress Cardamine hirsuta, hogweed Heracleum sphondylium, spear thistle Cirsium vulgare, yarrow Achillea millefolium

Northwest side boundary: elm species Ulmus sp (3 large – late mature, 2 – early mature), hawthorn Crataegus monogyna (all small), ivy Hedera helix

Northeast copse: elm species Ulmus sp (one large, others small), hawthorn Crataegus monogyna. On ground under trees: Ground ivy Glechoma hederacea, lords and ladies Arum maculatum, white clover Trifolium repens, cleavers Galium aparine

Birds recorded in 2025 included: carrion crow Corvus corone, jackdaw Coloeus monedula, robin Erithacus rubecula, blue tit Cyanistes caeruleus, chiff-chaff Phylloscopus collybita.

The ponds on site were assessed again for suitability and presence of great crested newts. Although slightly early for formal pond surveys, the ponds were checked for eggs and adults due to recent mild weather likely to have brought great crested newts out of hibernation in the local area. The ponds were identified as ‘Poor’ in suitability for great crested newts and no eggs or adults were found. See table 1 below for the full results.

Table 1: Habitat Suitability Index score for ponds at Washingley Farm. 28th March 2025. Both ponds, in their current state, scored 'Poor'.

Pond	Pond – mid site	Pond - northeast
SI1 - Location	1	1
SI2 - Pond area	0.05	0.05
SI3 - Pond drying	0.5	0.5
SI4 - Water quality	0.33	0.33
SI4 - Shade	1	1
SI6 - Fowl	1	1
SI7 - Fish	1	1
SI8 - Ponds	1	1
SI9 - Terr'l habitat	0.33	0.33
SI10 - Macrophytes	0.3	0.3
HSI	**0.49**	**0.49**

HSI Pond suitability

<0.5 = poor

0.5 – 0.59 = below average

0.6 – 0.69 = average

0.7 – 0.79 = good

> 0.8 = excellent

Discussion & Conclusion

Overall, it was considered that no new ecological risks to protected, priority or rare species or notable habitats were present in 2025 compared to previous surveys.

Please note that mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) calculations are not required.

However, in accordance with previous ecological surveys and reports the below recommendations should be undertaken.

Ecological Design Strategy (EDS)

Landscape designs have been drafted including production of a Landscape Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) with native and/or wildlife attracting shrubs and trees used, as well as species rich lawns and native species rich hedgerows. The LEMP also includes detail on new habitat boxes for bats, birds and invertebrates, as well as log piles for use by amphibians and other wildlife and hedgehog highways etc. Recommendations for pond planting with appropriate maintenance is also provided. No additional recommendations were considered necessary, nor was it considered necessary to repeat the information already detailed in the LEMP.

The LEMP also provides detail on appropriate and proportionate impact avoidance measures for protected species based on the original Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. It is not considered necessary to repeat this advice. However, one item that should also be included is further detail on appropriate wildlife friendly external lighting (see below).

As an overview to the potential impacts of lighting on bats, it is now well documented that all UK bat species are sensitive to light and are affected in different ways by light. The types of light most likely to impact negatively upon bats are high wattage white light with an ultraviolet spectrum. The impacts to bats are reduced when the wattage is reduced and ultraviolet light is removed. In addition, bats are less sensitive to red light then white light. Lighting impacts on bats are most detrimental close to roosts which can be abandoned, as well as along foraging routes, such as river corridors, hedgerows and woodland edges and along commuting routes where bats can be forced to use suboptimal habitat for commuting because of lighting and in worse cases can be prevented from reaching foraging grounds altogether by lighting. It is also recognised that some bat species are more sensitive than others to increased lighting levels (Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting, Institution of Lighting Professionals, 2023).

Therefore, to minimise impacts to foraging and commuting bats and other nocturnal wildlife likely to use the boundary habitats, all external lighting will include only low wattage, warm white, Light Emitting Diode (LED) and be directed downward. The lighting will be set on sensors to reduce the length of time the site is illuminated. Specifically, the LED bulbs will contain only warm white lights of <2700k (see Appendix 2 below for detail).

Should anything further be required, please do contact me.

Yours sincerely,



APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Photographs

Photograph 1: The site – viewed from the south at Washingley Farm, Great Stukeley. 28th March 2025



Photograph by [redacted] 2025

Photograph 2: Southwest site boundary at Washingley Farm, Great Stukeley. 28th March 2025



Photograph by [redacted] 2025

Photograph 3: Northwest site boundary at Washingley Farm, Great Stukeley. 28th March 2025



Photograph by [redacted] 2025

Photograph 4: Northern boundary with grassland at Washingley Farm, Great Stukeley. 28th March 2025



Photograph by [redacted] 2025

Photograph 5: Eastern boundary at Washingley Farm, Great Stukeley. 28th March 2025



Photograph by [redacted] 2025

Photograph 6: Mid-site pond at Washingley Farm, Great Stukeley. 28th March 2025



Photograph by [redacted] 2025

Photograph 7: North east pond at Washingley Farm, Great Stukeley. 28th March 2025



Photograph by [redacted] 2025

Appendix 2: Lighting

Figure 1: Proposed lighting specification (<2700k LED warm white downlight).

AVA 200

astro

GENERAL

LOCATION:	Exterior
CLASS:	CE (Class I)
IP RATING:	IP44
BATHROOM ZONE:	Zone 2, 3
DRIVER REQUIRED:	No
INSTALLATION ORIENTATION:	Wall Mount - Vertical
MAIN MATERIAL:	Metal - Aluminium/Brass
DIMENSIONS (mm):	H: 200 W: 75 D: 81
CUT OUT HOLE :	-
RECESS DEPTH (mm):	-
FIRE RATING:	-
CABLE LENGTH (mm):	-



CODE: 1428005
FINISH: TEXTURED BLACK
GROSS WEIGHT: 0.77kg



CODE: 1428016
FINISH: SOLID BRASS
GROSS WEIGHT: 1.5kg

LAMP

LIGHT SOURCE:	LED GU10
WATTAGE:	6W
LAMP INCLUDED:	No
MAXIMUM LAMP LENGTH (mm):	79
LUMINOUS FLUX (lm):	-
COLOUR TEMP (K):	Lamp Dependent
CRI (Ra):	Lamp Dependent
MACADAM ELLIPSE:	Lamp Dependent
TILT ADJUSTABLE ANGLE (°):	-
ROTATION ADJUSTABLE ANGLE (°):	-
LIFETIME (hrs):	Lamp Dependent
BEAM ANGLE (°):	Lamp Dependent

ELECTRICAL

SWITCHED:	No
DIMMABLE:	Yes
DIMMING METHOD:	Lamp Dependent
SUPPLY FREQUENCY (Hz):	-
DRIVER/BALLAST VOLTAGE (V):	-
DRIVER LIFETIME (hrs):	-
EFFICACY (lm/W):	Lamp Dependent

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

SHADE INCLUDED:	-
SHADE/DIFFUSER MATERIAL:	Glass
SHADE/DIFFUSER FINISH	Clear
F MARK:	Suitable for mounting on flammable materials

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