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| **Ecology Planning Application Response** |  |  |  |  |
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| Date: 04 October 2021 |
| From: Emma Foster, Ecology Officer |

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| **Application reference:** | 21/03865/APP & 21/03866/ALB |
| **Site:** | 26 Sandhill Road,  East Claydon,  Buckinghamshire,  MK18 2LY |
| **Proposal:** | Proposed detached single storey outbuilding. |
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| **Summary** | |
| **No objection subject to condition of biodiversity enhancement features.** | |
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| **Discussion** | |
| It is considered there is not a reasonable likelihood of protected species or habitats being affected by the proposed development due to the relatively low impact and scale of the proposals.  However, the proposals involve development within 100m of ponds, where great crested newts are known to present. The proposed development site is classified as a ‘Red’ impact risk area for great crested newts. This indicates that there is high suitability habitat for newts on site and/or in the surrounding landscape. Therefore, the applicant should follow the advice provided below with respect to great crested newts.  **Biodiversity Enhancement**  In line with recognised good practice and government policy on biodiversity and sustainability, all practical opportunities should be taken to harmonise the built development with the needs of wildlife. In this instance it is appropriate for the following provisions for wildlife to be built into the development:  **Bats:** A bat crevice integrated into the building on a southerly aspect/orientation (south, south-west and south-east) under the weather boards will need to be included within the design for this conversion. The crevice should be inserted as high into the gable apex as possible in the location identified below. Please see orange dot for example below.      **House martins**: 1 House Martin nestcup positioned beneath the eaves of the building at a minimum height of 2m, on a northerly aspect/orientation (north, north-east and north-west). Droppings can accumulate beneath house martin nests, so nest cups shown avoid positioning above doorways. Example specification includes the Nestbox Company Eco House Martin Nest, created with permanent and long lasting materials, as shown below. Please see blue dot for example.      Other product specifications are available and may be appropriate, however it is imperative that the biodiversity features are integrated into suitable structures, rather than vulnerable, isolated and temporary boxes for example, in order to help ensure the success of such features. The location and model of the features need to be clearly marked on the approved plans and drawings. Alternatively, these features can be secured by condition if this application is approved. | |
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| **Condition** | |
| **Restrictions on commencement of development until specific biodiversity outcomes are achieved**  *Condition: Prior to the commencement of any development details of biodiversity features of* ***1 bat crevice and 1 house martin nestcup to be incorporated into the building*** *shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall proceed in accordance with the approved biodiversity features, which shall have been installed prior to the first occupation of the development and retained thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.* | |
| **Informative** | |
| **Protection of great crested newts and their breeding/resting places**  *Informative:**The applicant is reminded that, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to: deliberately capture, disturb, injure or kill great crested newts; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; deliberately obstructing access to a resting or sheltering place. Planning consent for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under these acts. Ponds, other water bodies and vegetation, such as grassland, scrub and woodland, and also brownfield sites, may support great crested newts. Where proposed activities might result in one or more of the above offences, it is possible to apply for a derogation licence from Natural England or opt into Buckinghamshire Council’s District Licence.  If a great crested newt is encountered during works , all works must cease until advice has been sought from Natural England, as failure to do so could result in prosecutable offences being committed.* | |
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| **Legislation, Policy and Guidance** | |
| **Features to Encourage Biodiversity**  The Aylesbury Vale Green Infrastructure Strategy states that development in suitable areas should provide bat or bird roosting provision within the fabric of the buildings.  Local Plan Policy ‘NE1 Biodiversity and Geodiversity’ of the Aylesbury Local Plan 2013-2033 states that: *“h. Development proposals will be expected to promote site permeability for wildlife and avoid the fragmentation of wildlife corridors, incorporating features to encourage biodiversity, and retain and where possible enhance existing features of nature conservation value on site. Existing ecological networks should be identified and maintained to avoid habitat fragmentation, and ecological corridors including water courses should form an essential component of green infrastructure provision in association with new development to ensure habitat connectivity*”.  Local Plan Policy ‘NE1 Biodiversity and Geodiversity’ of the Aylesbury Local Plan 2013-2033 states that: *“i. Where there is potential for development, the design and layout of the development should secure biodiversity enhancement and the council will use planning conditions and obligations as needed to help achieve the aims of the biodiversity opportunity area*”. | |