

## Fairfields Pond, RG7 2DL

### Explanatory Note to be read with the Planning Application

#### Introduction

The land in the field to the west of Fairfields residence is known historically to be wet, especially over the winter period. Indeed, when the present owners of the field bought it from the local farmer, they were told that there was a pond in this field up to approximately 40 years ago, at which time the then owner of the field had filled it in. The photograph below was taken recently but shows the approximate position of the old pond and the newly proposed one.



Location of the proposed pond within the field

Notwithstanding that the area is not within the Environment Agency Flood zones, it does flood periodically making it low value for agricultural use and the current owner wishes to reinstate a pond to not only improve the drainage of the field but also improve the ecological status of the area by introducing aquatic habitats for birds, amphibians and small fish. This is not a commercial development and there is no intention to fish the pond.

#### Proposal

Drawing No 040-087-Fairfield\_PA01 submitted with this planning application indicates the land ownership boundary in blue and the outline of the proposed development in red. The proposed pond has an approximate area of 500m<sup>2</sup> and is situated within the development area of 2360m<sup>2</sup>, being the total area of the field affected by the excavation required to create the pond.

The owners of the land are Mr Bruno Bruty and Mrs Jackie Bruty who both live in the property known as Fairfields and the proposed pond is solely for the use and enjoyment of the owners.

The proposed depth of the pond will be no more than 1.4m, relatively flat across the pond bed with graded banks, shelved in some locations to allow for a variety of native aquatic plants to be planted. There is already a number of land drains within the field, and it is proposed to tap into these, particularly in the east, as a source of groundwater to refresh the water in the pond. Should water levels rise due to heavy rain, excess water will weir over a small spillway to the north and into an existing land drain that takes ground water to an existing ditch running south to north along the western boundary of the field.

The owners are proposing to plant and maintain native aquatic plants within and around the pond edge as well as a shrubs and wetland plants around the pond providing habitat and seclusion for birds and animals.

### **Existing ecological considerations**

The enclosed Biodiversity Checklist confirms that there are no SSSIs, SAC, SPA or Ramsar sites within 2kms of the site and that there are no Priority Habitats within 100m of the site apart from hedges supporting native species.

The hedgerow in question runs SW-NE to the south of the proposed development and comprises of holly, hawthorn, blackthorn, beech and hornbeam. There are no plans to interfere with this hedge during the construction of the pond and indeed, the owner has added saplings of the species mentioned to this and other hedges over recent years.

With reference to Section 3.3, there are no streams, rivers or lakes within 25m of the site and no existing ponds within 100m of the site. We have marked these with an X as the flow of water through the land drainage system will be no different to that existing at the present time, it will just have flowed through a pond prior to reaching its destination.

The ecology of the area will be enhanced by the habitats created by the construction of this pond, and it is the owners intention to construct the pond in as sympathetic manner as possible.

### **Methodology**

It would be the owner's intention to carry out these works in the late summer/early autumn after the bird nesting season but before the winter rains.

A topsoil and grass strip will be carried out first and the material set aside. The slopes and profiles of the pond will then be excavated as shown on the drawing and the exposed slopes than covered with the topsoil and turf from the temporary stockpile. Landscaping and planting around the pond can then take place, but only after the pond has been allowed to fill naturally from rain and groundwater and there is sufficient water in the pond will the aquatic planting take place.