



Claire Booth
Planning
Ribble Valley Borough Council

Email: ecology@lancashire.gov.uk
Your ref: CONECO/3/2012/0780
Our ref: 03/12/0780/ASM/ASP/RS
Date: 28th September 2012

Dear Claire Booth,

Ecological comments

Planning Application No: **3/2012/0780**
Proposals: **Proposed erection of a detached garage and carport**
Location: **Lower Monubent Farm**
District: **Ribble Valley**

Thank you for your consultation in respect of the above planning application.

The location of the proposed garage and carport is restricted to the forecourt area and partly on the footprint of the former buildings. Although our records show that the footprint of the proposed development is partly within Lower Monubent Meadows Biological Heritage Site / BHS 75SE10, reference to historic aerial photographs and mapping indicates that this is due to an error in the mapping of the BHS boundary. I therefore conclude that the development would not result in a loss of BHS extent. Provided that no materials are stored on the BHS, it seems reasonably unlikely that the proposals would result in any impacts on the BHS.

Aerial photographs and records accessible to Lancashire County Council indicate that there is a pond in close proximity to the proposed development. This pond may have the potential to support Great Crested Newt, as well as other amphibians including Common Toad (a Species of Principal Importance). As the proposed development is restricted to the forecourt area and due to the scale of the development it would be unreasonable to require surveys. However, as Great Crested Newt and other amphibians may be in the area it would be appropriate for materials to be stored on hard standing, in order to avoid amphibians using them as a temporary place of shelter, and for any possible places of shelter to be affected by the development (such as rubble piles etc) to be searched carefully prior to removal. This and the above matter regarding the BHS can be dealt with by the following **planning condition**:

- In order to avoid potential impacts on amphibians and Lower Monubent Meadows Biological Heritage Site:
 - The storage of materials and vehicle movements associated with the proposed development shall be confined to the forecourt area / hard standing.
 - All areas of suitable terrestrial habitat for amphibians, including likely places of shelter (such as rubble piles), shall be carefully searched immediately prior to

- removal / development works. Any amphibians encountered shall be moved to a safe area of suitable habitat, which will then remain undisturbed.
- If the presence of Great Crested Newt is detected or suspected at any stage before or during development works, then works must not proceed until advice has been sought regarding the need for Natural England a licence.

It is not clear from the information submitted and aerials photographs whether or not any potential habitat for breeding birds will be affected by the proposed development (for example piles rubble, scrub etc). If potential breeding habitat for birds is to be affected then I recommend that the following **planning condition** is attached to any approval in order to avoid impacts on nesting birds during the works:

- Vegetation clearance works, clearance of any other potential bird nesting habitat or other works that may affect nesting birds will be avoided between March and August inclusive, unless the absence of nesting birds has been confirmed by further surveys or inspections.

The above comments are based on a review of documents submitted with the planning application as well as a review of ecological records, maps and aerial photographs accessible to Lancashire County Council.

The above comments represent the professional opinion of an ecologist and do not constitute professional legal advice. You may wish to seek professional legal interpretation of the relevant wildlife legislation cited above.

I hope these comments are helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Stevens
Ecologist
Lancashire County Council