



Watchfield Parish Council

Natural Environment Team
Countryside Services
Oxfordshire County Council,
Signal Court,
Old Station Way,
Eynsham OX29 4TL

October 30th, 2012

Dear Sir,

Re: Proposed demolition of building by CCS Developments LLP at Cowan's Camp Depot, High Street, Watchfield, Oxfordshire

With reference to the above application Watchfield Parish Council would like the following points to be taken into consideration:-

1. Ground level water storage tanks on the site have been known to provide a habitat for Great Crested Newts which are prevalent in the area. Their continued presence cannot be confirmed due to the fenced nature of the site but it is unlikely that they have vacated this undisturbed environment. The Great Crested Newt is fully protected under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation Regulations 1994. We are concerned that demolition work will begin before an adequate and certified survey has been carried out by the proper authorities.
2. There is constant bat activity in the vicinity of the Depot and it is extremely unlikely that bats have not utilised the vaulted roofs of these long-vacant buildings as roosts. All bat species are protected by UK (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) and European law (Conservation Regulations 1994). Under this legislation bat roosts are protected from damage, destruction or obstruction, whether or not bats are currently present, We request a full site survey to be done prior to any work being carried out on the site.
3. There are regular sightings of Barn Owls, Hobbys, Red Kites and Swifts hunting across the field adjacent to Cowan's Camp Depot and we ask that a survey be undertaken to ascertain whether the Depot contains any nesting sites for these protected birds (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981), or whether demolition work would disturb adjacent sites.

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk

Chairman

Mr D Gale – 7 Eagle Lane – Watchfield – Oxon – SN6 8TF

Tel: 01793 783859 – e-mail derekgale@tiscali.co.uk

Clerk

Dr C Matthews – 8 Barrington Road – Watchfield – Oxon – SN6 8SU

Tel: 01793 784217 – e-mail watchfieldclerk@hotmail.co.uk



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4. The age and construction of the buildings mean there is a strong likelihood that roofing and other construction elements will contain asbestos. Due consideration should be taken to negate the effect of dangerous particulate matter spreading to neighbouring domestic dwellings and land used by the public and animals.
5. Decontamination of the site may be required due to the prior use of the buildings by the MoD and, in particular, the Royal Mechanical and Electrical Engineers. The National Planning Policy Framework 2012, section 109, states that the planning system should enhance the natural and local environment by remediating contaminated land.

Watchfield Parish Council strongly feels that CCS Developments LLP should not be allowed to demolish the buildings at Cowan's Camp Depot, or carry out any work on the site, before full conservation, ecology and contamination surveys have been carried out by the appropriate authorities. The District Council and Planning Authorities, alongside the Parish Council, have a duty to conserve the biodiversity of the area under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and weight should be given to the National Planning Policy Framework, section 109, which promotes the minimising of impacts on biodiversity.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. Please kindly acknowledge receipt of this letter by emailing me using the address below.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Cindy Matthews,
Clerk to Watchfield Parish Council

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk

Chairman

Mr D Gale – 7 Eagle Lane – Watchfield – Oxon – SN6 8TF

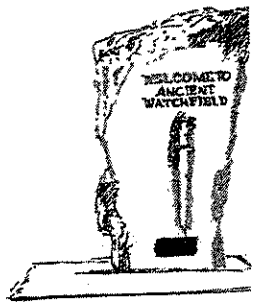
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Handwritten initials



Watchfield Parish Council

Martin Deans
Planning Department,
The Vale of the White Horse District Council,
Abbey House,
Abbey Close,
Abingdon,
Oxfordshire,
OX14 3JE

November 13th, 2012

Dear Mr Deans,

Re: Proposed demolition of building by CCS Developments LLP at Cowan's Camp Depot, High Street, Watchfield, Oxfordshire (P12/V2257/D)

Below is an addendum to previous comment by Watchfield Parish Council following the documentation released for the application for outline planning permission on this site (P12/V2283/O):-

Surveys carried out by RSK Environment Ltd on behalf of CCS Developments LLP have identified a medium breeding population of Great Crested Newts in the emergency water supply tanks in the area earmarked for demolition (alongside a greater population of smooth newts). Therefore, a Natural England Great Crested Newt development licence will be needed before works commence and the associated measures needed to create alternative habitats done prior to demolition, alongside removal at the correct time of year, monitoring and control.

A reptile survey, also carried out on behalf of CCS Developments LLP by RSK Environment Ltd, has identified grass snake habitats within the area earmarked for demolition. In fact, S17 held the largest population identified over the whole site. Trapping days for translocation of these reptiles should only be carried out when minimum daytime temperatures are 8°C or above (typically mid-March to mid-October). Therefore, demolition should be delayed until all legal requirements for the safe translocation have been satisfied.

A bat survey carried out by BSG Ecology on behalf of CCS Developments LLP has identified three buildings within the site contain bat roosts and observed activity by Pipistrelle and Brown Long-Eared bats. Therefore, measures licenced by Natural England will need to be carried out at appropriate times of the year to ensure these protected species are not disturbed.

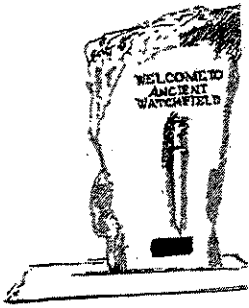
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Watchfield Parish Council strongly feels that CCS Developments LLP should not be allowed to demolish the buildings at Cowan's Camp Depot, or carry out any work on the site, before detailed plans have been drawn up to mitigate the concerns outlined above, and the correct licences obtained and professionals involved. The District Council and Planning Authorities, alongside the Parish Council, have a duty to conserve the biodiversity of the area under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and weight should be given to the National Planning Policy Framework, section 109, which promotes the minimising of impacts on biodiversity. Granting of permission to demolish this site prior to outline or full planning permission being granted could lead to the unnecessary destruction of important habitats for protected species.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Cindy Matthews,
Clerk to Watchfield Parish Council

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