

The Planning Inspectorate

COMMENTS ON CASE (Online Version)

Please note that comments about this case need to be made within the timetable. This can be found in the notification letter sent by the local planning authority or the start date letter. Comments submitted after the deadline may be considered invalid and returned to sender.

Appeal Reference: APP/C3430/C/23/3324336

DETAILS OF THE CASE

Appeal Reference	APP/C3430/C/23/3324336
Appeal By	MAXIMUM PROJECTS LTD
Site Address	Leighton Pools, Chillington Lane Codsall Wood WV8 1QF

SENDER DETAILS

Name	MR CLIVE EVANS
Address	Leighton View Cottage Chillington Lane Codsall WOLVERHAMPTON WV8 1QF

ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

In what capacity do you wish to make representations on this case?

- Appellant
- Agent
- Interested Party / Person
- Land Owner
- Rule 6 (6)

What kind of representation are you making?

- Final Comments
- Proof of Evidence
- Statement
- Statement of Common Ground
- Interested Party/Person Correspondence
- Other

COMMENT DOCUMENTS

The documents listed below were uploaded with this form:

Relates to Section: REPRESENTATION
Document Description: Your comments on the appeal.
File name: Environmental report.pdf

PLEASE ENSURE THAT A COPY OF THIS SHEET IS ENCLOSED WHEN POSTING THE ABOVE DOCUMENTS TO US

L 23-07 173.1

11 August 2023

STATEMENT OF ECOLOGICAL VALUE OF HABITATS AT LEIGHTON POOLS.

This letter is prepared on behalf of Mr Clive Evans, the owner of Leighton Pools, Codsall Wood. It follows a site visit on 31st July 2023 by Ben Jones BSc (hons) MSc MCIEEM, holder of bat and newt licences in both England and Wales.

There are several pools present on site, one of which dates back to the early 1900s. It is understood that other ponds have been dug within the last 15 years by the client, some of which are stocked with fish to support the fishing business.



Figure 1. Overview of land owned by Mr Evans

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At least one of the pools has been left to nature and contains a good density of both aquatic and marginal vegetation that supports large numbers of dragonfly and damselfly species.



Figure 2. Pool left for wildlife

On the banks of this pool is a small off-the-grid shack that volunteers use when staying to help with land and habitat management. This is single storey and constructed of timber to blend into the surrounds. It is unlikely to be of any ecological value or detriment.



Figure 3. Off-grid cabin

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All the pools are surrounded with trees of varying maturity, including some veteran trees such as a mature oak which is protected by a TPO. This appears in a line of TPO trees according to the search, but the rest of the trees were removed in the early 1990s by a previous site owner. The remaining oak tree in this line appears to be in good health, though no potential roost features for bats were seen.



Figure 4. Oak tree with TPO



Figure 5. Approximate location of the TPO tree line removed in early 1990s

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As the pools are used as a fishing spot, the pools require access on all sides to get to the fishing platforms, this is maintained by the client by maintaining an approximately 1m wide grass pathway, widening in areas to provide space to pitch temporary tents.



Figure 6. Mown grass path and tent area

The areas around the grassland has been left to grow wild. This includes several ruderal species and areas of bramble scrub.



Figure 7. Scrub and ruderal either side of the pathway

Some sections have crushed stone hardstanding where old vehicular access was formalised. This is also surrounded by ruderal, trees and log piles which are of high ecological value.

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Figure 8. Hardstanding mosaic

The variety in sward height between the pathway, hardstanding and the scrub create a mosaic of habitats that will be beneficial to a number of species including invertebrates, small mammals and passerine birds.

Surrounding the site along its boundaries are moderate density woodlands of young and semi-mature trees.



Figure 9. Woodland to northwest of site

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Habitat management conducted around the site includes leaving fallen branches and trees as deadwood within the ruderal. This is valuable to numerous species as the timber rots, several fungal species rely on such habitats for their reproductive cycles, and invertebrates will readily colonise rotten timber and therefore support higher trophic levels.



Figure 10. Dead wood

Nearby building work conducted after a previous assessment by Greenscape Environmental has resulted in a significant pile of rubble. This was originally due to be removed, but was instead recommended that this be formalised into a hibernaculum which provides even further habitat for small mammals, as well as reptiles and amphibians that are likely to be in the area.

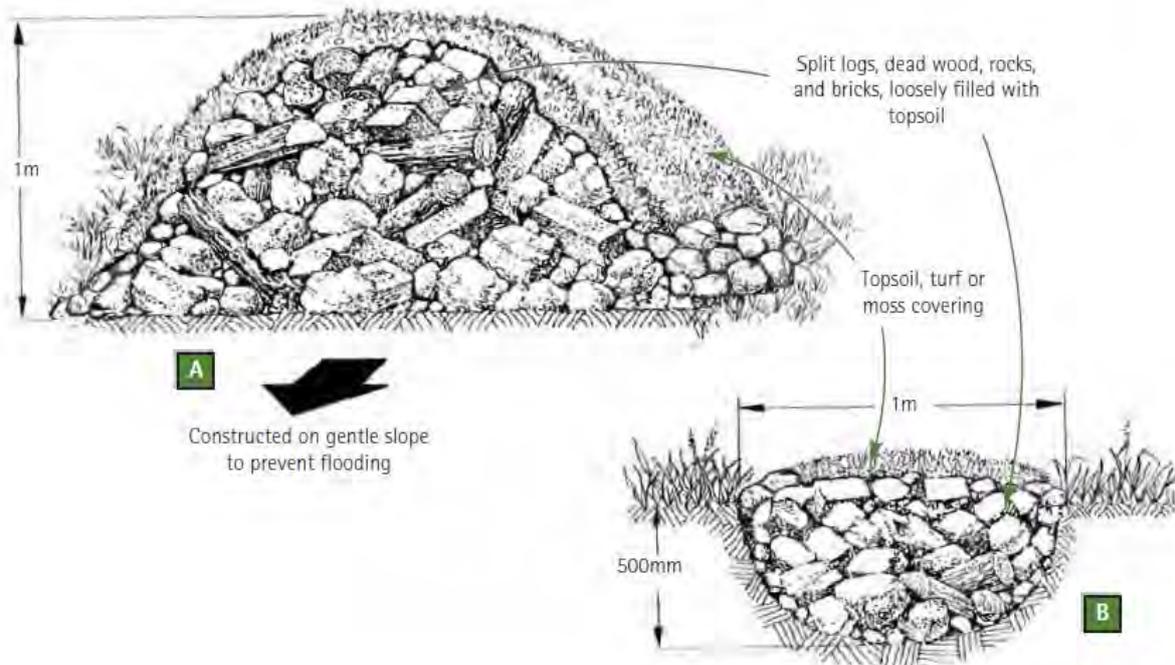


Figure 11. Hibernaculum design

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Other habitats on site include pasture fields that are rotationally grazed, with the remainders weeded and left as buttercup meadows, of significant value for butterflies and other invertebrates.



Figure 12. Buttercup meadow

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Another pool has a former boat house which has collapsed. There is a chance this could act as shelter for aquatic birds, but it was not accessible at the time of survey to check for nests.



Figure 13. Collapsed boat house

Overall the land around the fishing pools is being managed in a way that is beneficial for wildlife and ongoing management to the same degree is sure to support a diverse range of biodiversity.

Yours sincerely,



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For and on behalf of
Greenscape Environmental Ltd
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