



Newt Conservation Partnership

Statement of Community Involvement

for Planning Application reference: PP-12767845

Land at Rowley Green Meadow, Stoke Park Farm

Proposed new pond complex of up to seven new clean water wildlife ponds at Stoke Park Farm, Eastleigh

Statement prepared by Anna-Marie Dennis, Newt Conservation Partnership South Hampshire Project Officer, January 2024

Statement of Community Involvement

1.1 Eastleigh Borough Council (EBC) held a public consultation on the future of Stoke Park Farm from 14 December 2022 for more than three months until 31 March 2023 [Stoke Park Farm consultation \(eastleigh.gov.uk\)](#). This included opportunity for the public to comment online and also in person at public meetings at Bishopstoke Community Association and Woodlands Community Centre.

1.2 The initial outline proposal for Rowley Green Meadow can be found here [Appendix A - Bishopstoke Land Proposal.pdf \(eastleigh.gov.uk\)](#) and comprised wetland and wildflower areas with no additional public access.

1.3 The Newt Conservation Partnership (NCP) approached EBC in March 2023 to identify potential suitable areas for new ponds for great crested newts (GCN) which could form Compensation Land under EBC 's District Licence for GCN (Organisational Licence WML-OR112).

1.4 Rowley Green Meadow was identified as being suitable and the NCP Project Officer and EBC Ecology and Trees Manager worked on a proposal which includes 7 ponds, new hedgerow, scrub development and tree planting. NCP will also carry out soil testing to assess the feasibility of wildflower meadow and species rich grassland creation. The proposal is broadly similar to the outline proposal in the public consultation, with more extensive wetland areas and additional tree and hedge planting.

1.5 The public consultation found that respondents were supportive of initiatives to promote, protect, restore and enhance the natural environment. Of particular relevance to this project, 76.32% of respondents supported creation of ponds and wetlands, 73.31% supported the creation of woodlands, 71.05% supported hedgerow and understorey planting, 74.81% supported the natural colonisation of strategic areas and 75.94% supported improving connectivity of wildlife corridors.

[Appendix 1 App C - Survey Data.pdf \(eastleigh.gov.uk\)](#)

1.6 An earlier draft of the proposal then formed part of a report to Cabinet in July 2023 which can be found here:

<https://meetings.eastleigh.gov.uk/documents/s50036267/Stoke%20Park%20Farm%20BiFOHH%20Cabinet.pdf>

1.7 Cabinet passed the report onto Bishopstoke, Fair Oak and Horton Heath Local Area Committee to discuss at their meeting on 12th July 2023. The EBC Ecology and Trees Manager and NCP Project Officer attended the meeting in order to answer any questions arising from the report – see minutes here:

[Agenda for Bishopstoke, Fair Oak and Horton Heath Local Area Committee on Wednesday, 12 July 2023, 6:30 pm - Meetings, agendas and minutes - Eastleigh Borough Council](#)

1.8 The Local Area Committee “Supported the Council entering into a 25 year agreement with the Newt Conservation Partnership to create habitat and ponds for great-crested newts, subject to planning permission and subject to feedback from the Local Area Committee”.

1.9 The recommendation was then noted by full Cabinet on 14th July – see minutes here:

[Agenda for Cabinet on Friday, 14 July 2023, 10:30 am - Meetings, agendas and minutes - Eastleigh Borough Council](#)