

Consultee Comments for Planning Application APP/22/00669

Application Summary

Application Number: APP/22/00669

Address: Land at Kingscroft Farm adjacent to Ridgway and, Marples Way, Havant

Proposal: Outline planning application with all matters reserved (except for access) for the development of up to 120 residential dwellings (C3 Use), with access from Meyrick Road, the provision of open space, landscaping and other associated works including demolition of existing buildings on site.

Case Officer: Lesley Wells

Consultee Details

Name: Consultee Principal Ecologist

Address: Public Service Plaza, Civic Centre Road, Havant PO9 2AX

Email: Not Available

On Behalf Of: Ecologist

Comments

Dear Lesley,

APP/22/00669 | Outline planning application with all matters reserved (except for access) for the development of up to 120 residential dwellings (C3 Use), with access from Meyrick Road, the provision of open space, landscaping and other associated works including demolition of existing buildings on site. | Land at Kingscroft Farm adjacent to Ridgway and, Marples Way, Havant

Thank you for consulting me on this application.

The application is accompanied by a Biodiversity Enhancement & Management Strategy (EcoSupport, September 2023). This has been submitted in response to previous comments. Also included is a Bat Activity map. I have collated previous comments on ecological matters alongside my response to this latest information.

I acknowledge that surveys for Hazel Dormouse have been completed and that this species is likely absent from the site: no further action is necessary. The site has been shown to support a small population of Slow-worms, and the BEMS includes details of avoidance/mitigation measures for reptiles. This entails the careful management of suitable habitat to ensure direct impacts are avoided, followed by the use of reptile fencing to ensure that impacts continue to be avoided during construction. Similarly, for nesting birds some avoidance and mitigation measures are detailed and are acceptable. Bat activity surveys have demonstrated that the site supports a reasonable assemblage of foraging/commuting species, dominated by the two commoner Pipistrelle species. The site is considered to be of local value for bat species. The Bat Activity map

shows that activity was mostly concentrated along the well vegetated site boundaries, with the northern and far western edges adjacent to the Hermitage Stream most active. I am content that direct impacts to bats will be relatively limited, although no details of lighting have yet been provided: a fully detailed lighting contour plan should be secured by condition and should be guided by the recommendations within the BEMS and previous ecological assessment.

The fields immediately west of the site are botanically interesting and are best described as floodplain pasture with saline elements. These pastures are mapped as the Priority Habitat Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh. There are a number of interesting plant records from these grazed fields records held by the Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland (BSBI) contain many more species than those identified within the ecology report - and indicate a rich floodplain grassland flora, likely to be of county level interest and the site is likely of SINC quality. The botanical interest of these fields is maintained through the underlying geology and hydrological conditions but also crucially by continued grazing. It is therefore essential that this land continues to be managed appropriately, ideally through seasonal/flexible low-level grazing (cattle would be preferable to horses, allowing a more diverse grass sward), and that no public access is allowed. The BEMS contains a series of broad recommendations for management of this area which are fine for the present time but will need to be developed into more detailed management prescriptions: this can be secured through condition. Given the loss of grassland habitat within the developed area it will be necessary to secure suitable management of the western fields as compensation.

Further general detail is provided on the retained areas of grassland within the developed area, including an intention to manage areas as wildflower grassland through flexible cutting/mowing. I am conscious that no detailed layout or landscaping has yet been provided, and therefore any habitat management measures will need to respond to any detailed design layout. I am satisfied that full details location, management methods and timing, responsibilities, funding, monitoring can be secured through condition. Detailed design must be informed by the ecological constraints.

The northern/western boundary of the site is adjacent to the Hermitage Stream, a valuable watercourse of high ecological value. There is potential for development proposals to result in impacts (direct and indirect) on the stream and its riparian habitats and the species associated with them. I acknowledge the intention to provide a buffer to the stream corridor (8 metres has been stated) but clearly the outline nature of the application provides limited reassurance that this will be deliverable as a minimum. Again, further detail on exactly how this buffer will work will be required through the submission of further details if permitted. Further details should include landscaping, lighting, fencing, management and responsibilities.

I note the intention to provide a substantial number of integral bat boxes and nest boxes for Common Swift, as well as to include bug hotels and features for Hedgehogs. Again, full details of these features location, type can be included within further details secured by condition.

If you are minded to grant permission, can I suggest that all ecological avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures are included within a single, comprehensive Ecological Mitigation, Compensation and Enhancement Strategy.

Prior to the commencement of any development activities, an Ecological Mitigation, Compensation and Enhancement Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Strategy shall be in accordance with the outline ecological measures detailed within the Biodiversity Enhancement & Management Strategy (EcoSupport, September 2023) and shall include (but not necessarily be restricted to): full details of all ecological avoidance and mitigation measures, to include timings, methods and responsibilities; full details of all ecological compensation and enhancement measures, including location, composition, establishment and ongoing management, monitoring and responsibilities. Reason: to protect and enhance biodiversity in accordance with the Environment Act 2021, Conservation Regulations 2017, Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, NPPF, NERC Act 2006 and Policy CS 11 of the Havant Borough Core Strategy March 2011.

If you have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Tristan

Tristan Norton

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