

Consultee Comments for Planning Application APP/20/00761

Application Summary

Application Number: APP/20/00761

Address: Land on the east side of Helmsley House, Bartons Road, and west of Normandy Road, Havant.

Proposal: Erection of a 64 bed older persons care home (Use Class C2) together with construction of new access road, car/cycle parking, drainage works, hard/soft landscaping and other associated infrastructure.

Case Officer: Lewis Oliver

Consultee Details

Name: Mr Tristan Norton

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Email: tristan.norton@hants.gov.uk

On Behalf Of: County Ecologist

Comments

Dear Lewis,

APP/20/00761 | Erection of a 64 bed older persons care home (Use Class C2) together with construction of new access road, car/cycle parking, drainage works, hard/soft landscaping and other associated infrastructure. | Land on the east side of Helmsley House, Bartons Road, and west of Normandy Road, Havant. 20.1287

Thank you for consulting me on this application.

The application is accompanied by an updated Ecological Appraisal (FPCR, November 2020). The site comprises primarily agriculturally derived species-poor grassland with boundary hedging and areas of woodland with a high proportion of planted and self-sown non-native species. I am content that the site is of limited ecological value overall.

In terms of protected species, the site is generally unconstrained (except for bats see below) and I am content that the stated mitigation measures for common reptiles and badgers are sensible and acceptable.

Bat surveys have now been completed and the results discussed. The site has been shown to support a good assemblage of bat species typical of a semi-rural site in southern Hampshire. As well as common and widespread species, the surveys highlight the presence of mouse-eared bats of the genus *Myotis*, with c.14% of all bat calls belonging to this group. Whilst it may be sensible to make an assumption that many of these calls will be the more common mouse-eared species (e.g.

Natterers or Daubentons bats) the fact remains that this part of Hampshire is known to support a substantial breeding population of the very rare Bechsteins bat. Bechsteins bat has been recorded within close proximity to this site and has been shown to use a wide range of habitats within the landscape, including open grassland, hedgerows and coniferous plantations. Nursery roosts are most likely to occur within older woodlands but also occur locally within individual trees in parkland settings and hedgerows. Female Bechsteins bats regularly switch roosts and therefore the overall breeding population is dependent on the presence of numerous roost locations spread across the landscape. Whilst there is no indication that Bechsteins bats are constraint at this site in particular, there is sufficient justification (based on the presence of known maternity roosts in two local woodlands Bartons Copse to the north and Southleigh Forest to the north-east - and recent records from other sites close by) for assuming that the species is more likely than not to occur on occasion and that the site forms part of a much larger fabric of suitable sites across the wider area. It is therefore essential that potential impacts such as habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, disturbance and lighting are considered within this context.

The submitted lighting plan (Kingfisher, September 2020) shows lux values of up to c.20 lux immediately abutting the retained tree line at the eastern boundary, and shows the majority of this tree line falling within the 5 lux contour of the proposed 6m lighting columns. Light spillage of this magnitude is not consistent with protecting bat flight corridors, especially with Bechsteins bat presence in the immediate landscape. I would request further explanation of how light spillage along this retained tree line can be further reduced/avoided.

Bat surveys of two trees were carried out by a different ecological consultancy. The results of these surveys are mentioned but not discussed in detail, and there are no details of all trees surveyed. From my review of the submitted Arboricultural Development Statement there would appear not to be any trees with obvious potential bat roost features but it would be prudent to request further detail of bat tree assessments, given the presence of Bechsteins bat locally and that species particular reliance on individual tree roosts within the landscape.

Once the queries above have been addressed I would not raise any significant concerns in relation to the proposals. Further details of specific ecological enhancement measures (such as the number, type and location of bat and bird boxes, the composition of new semi-natural habitat, management of retained and new habitats) can be secured through a pre-commencement site-wide ecological mitigation, compensation and enhancement strategy.

If you have any queries please dont hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Tristan

Tristan Norton

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