

Dear Lewis,

APP/20/01221 | Erection of retail foodstore with associated car parking, access, landscaping and engineering works. | Land to the west of B&Q, Purbrook Way, Havant 21.0069

Thank you for consulting me on this application. Thank you for your patience.

The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (RPS, October 2020). The site comprises an area of dense scrub and rough grassland situated at the edge of an existing commercial development. The site sits within an immediate landscape dominated by woodland, with a large number of woodland Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) present. The grassland on site is reasonably species-rich, with two orchid species noted amongst a range of other herbaceous plants.

The scrub habitat is linked to areas of scrub and woodland off-site and then connected to the areas of woodland in the surrounding area. Whilst the scrub is likely of relatively recent origin I would expect it to almost certainly support hazel dormice, a species recorded from several locations in close proximity to this site. Further surveys for hazel dormouse are required and these should be provided prior to determination.

This site sits well-within the zone of likely Bechstein's bat occurrence, and the well-wooded character of the immediate landscape is likely to support a good range of bat species. I do not consider the existing commercial development, and associated lighting, to be a substantial negative factor: Bechstein's bat is recorded in suburban locations elsewhere in the surrounding landscape. I would not expect the site to support roosting bats (due to any absence of larger trees), but its proximity to optimal woodland habitat and the presence of connective scrub habitat mean that the site is likely to form part of the foraging and commuting resource for local bat populations. I consider that bat activity surveys are necessary, given the proposed loss of most of the on-site scrub and the introduction of new lighting.

In summary, additional survey effort is necessary in order to determine the impacts associated with this proposal. These surveys, and any necessary mitigation, compensation and enhancement proposals must be provided prior to determination. I would expect any future submissions to include a fully-detailed mitigation, compensation and enhancement strategy that is suited to the local ecological network, is deliverable and can be secured by condition. Measurable biodiversity net gain will be expected. This will require coordination between the ecological advice and

landscape and lighting proposals. Ecological plantings/seeding within the landscaping plan should reflect the underlying geology and compliment surrounding habitat types.

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

Kind regards,

Tristan

Tristan Norton

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