

APP/20/00363 | Demolition of existing single storey structure and construction of a 3 storey building housing 20No. 1 bedroom 1 person apartments with integrated refuse and cycle storage for Havant Housing Association. | The Coal Yard, 178A West Street, Havant, PO9 1LR 20.0774

Thank you for consulting me on this application. Thank you for your patience during the long delay in responding.

The application is accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment (ECOSA, July 2019). The site comprises an overgrown area containing former allotments, secondary woodland, dense scrub and semi-improved grassland. The site is unusual in the context of the immediate surrounding area, which is generally densely developed. The site is bordered to the west by the Hermitage Stream.

The proposals entail the clearance of all vegetation within the site, resulting in the loss of trees, scrub and grassland habitat and an overall loss of biodiversity. Surveys have recorded a low population of slow-worms at the site, a typical assemblage of bird species and potential for foraging bats to be present. Although the site is overgrown, and therefore of relatively recent interest in terms of biodiversity, the overall net loss will need to be addressed in accordance with Policy CS11 of the Havant Borough Core Strategy 2011.

Sensible recommendations for ecological mitigation during and prior to construction are made, entailing the avoidance of clearance works during the bird nesting season (or otherwise supervised) and the supervised removal of slow-worms from the immediate construction zone into retained habitat in the north of the site (however, this is not explained in detail and I am unsure exactly what habitat is being retained here and how this accords with the proposed wildflower meadow). The developed site will include an area of sown wildflower grassland in the north which will, once established and properly maintained, provide a valuable biodiversity resource in the site. As ever, its success is dependent upon a commitment to long-term appropriate management and I would recommend that details of this are provided (the submitted Landscaping Scheme Schedule includes no details and I note that your Landscape Officer has made similar comments).

The proposed building offers an opportunity to provide some simple ecological enhancements and I would wish to see further use of integral bird and bat nesting and roosting features. Given the scale and height of the building there is certainly space for several more than the three boxes recommended.

Once these minor details are clarified, and if you are minded to grant permission I would be happy to suggest that ecological mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures are secured by condition.

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

Kind regards,

Tristan

Tristan Norton

**Senior Ecologist
Ecology Team**