

APP/20/00455 | Outline application (with all matters reserved except for access) for the construction of up to 56No dwellings, open space, landscaping, access, the demolition of 149 Lovedean Lane and associated works (part of application site within Havant Borough Council). | Land at Cottage Farm, 149 Lovedean Lane, Waterlooville 20.0821

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 Survey (EcoSupport, January 2020). The site comprises primarily agriculturally-improved grassland with boundary hedging to the north, grazed grassland to the west and residential development to the south, east and north).

Overall, I am content that a suitable level of ecological assessment has been carried out and that the potential ecological constraints are understood. Surveys for burrowing mammals, foraging/commuting bats and reptiles have been undertaken as well as an assessment of vegetation communities.

No evidence of badgers was recorded and a small population of slow-worms is present within areas of longer grassland/herbage. Surveys carried out for the development immediately to the north also recorded small numbers of three common reptile species, although the habitat at that site was of better quality.

A typical assemblage of flying bat species was recorded during walked transects and automated detector surveys carried out in 2019. The assemblage of species recorded tallies with previous bat survey results from the development site to the north – a range of characteristic species associated with rural habitats. The site lies within range of nationally-important roosts of the very rare Bechstein's bat and is theoretically well-within the foraging range of bats from these roosts situated near Horndean and Rowland's Castle. It is interesting to note that very few mouse-eared bat species (the group of six/seven similar bats to which Bechstein's belongs) were recorded at this site and this again chimes with surveys conducted to the north in 2014. Peaks in mouse-eared bat activity occurred in June, September and October although numbers of recordings were very low compared to other species. Overall, considering the generally poor nature of the habitat within the site I am content that sufficient bat activity surveys have been conducted and that an accurate assessment of the bat fauna at this site has been carried out.

In terms of impacts, the proposal will entail a net loss of grassland habitat, albeit species-poor and so will inevitably reduce opportunities for foraging bats and reptiles in particular. Outline mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures have been included which entails the use of ecological plantings and the installation of bat and bird boxes.

If you are minded to grant permission, can I suggest that a site-wide detailed Ecological Mitigation, Compensation and Enhancement Strategy is submitted. This should be a comprehensive document that provides detailed prescriptions for ensuring that existing retained ecological features are protected and that areas of proposed ecological landscaping are established and maintained in perpetuity. This document

should accord with other submissions including a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP), Lighting Plan and Landscaping Plan/Planting Specification.

Development shall proceed in accordance with the ecological mitigation measures detailed within the Ecological Survey (EcoSupport, January 2020) unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Reason: to protect biodiversity in accordance with the Conservation Regulations 2017, Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, the NERC Act (2006), NPPF 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

**Senior Ecologist
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Coronavirus (Covid-19)

Hampshire County Council's response to the Covid-19 is available here (<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/coronavirus>).

In line with Government advice to reduce non-essential travel and work from home where possible, Ecology officers are now working remotely. Whilst we will endeavour to conduct our services in a timely manner and to meet statutory timescales where we can, there may be some impact to the services we deliver. We will ensure that we keep all applicants / interested parties informed of any further impacts to our services should they arise. The Council's response also means that no non-essential site visits or face to face meetings will be undertaken until further notice. Essential and contractual surveys may continue take place where there is no risk to the surveyor or the public, and in line with Government advice. This will be reviewed on an on-going basis.



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Specialist Environment Services provides data, advice and assessments for ecology, heritage and landscape.

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