

Dear Mrs McMurray,

RE: APP/18/00897 HRA & Appropriate Assessment - Demolition of an existing dwelling and construction of 9x2 bedroom flats; including associated access, landscaping and parking. 15 Langstone Road, Havant PO9 1RA

No objection

Natural England notes that your authority, as competent authority under the provisions of the Habitats Regulations, has undertaken an Appropriate Assessment of the proposal, in accordance with Regulation 63 of the Regulations. Natural England is a statutory consultee on the Appropriate Assessment stage of the Habitats Regulations Assessment process.

Your appropriate assessment concludes that your authority is able to ascertain that the proposal will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of any of the sites in question. Having considered the assessment, and the measures proposed to mitigate for all identified adverse effects that could potentially occur as a result of the proposal, Natural England advises that we concur with the assessment conclusions, providing that all mitigation measures are appropriately secured in any permission given.

Please note in future cases where the necessary avoidance and mitigation measures are limited to collecting a funding contribution that is in line with an agreed strategic approach for the mitigation of impacts on European Sites then, provided no other adverse impacts are identified by your authority's appropriate assessment, your authority may be assured that Natural England agrees that the Appropriate Assessment can conclude that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the European Sites. In such cases Natural England will not require a Regulation 63 appropriate assessment consultation.

Other Advice

Landscape advice

The proposed development is for a site within or close to a nationally designated landscape namely Chichester Harbour AONB. Natural England advises that the planning authority uses national and local policies, together with local landscape expertise and information to determine the proposal. The policy and statutory framework to guide your decision and the role of local advice are explained below.

Your decision should be guided by paragraph 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework which gives the highest status of protection for the 'landscape and scenic beauty' of AONBs and National Parks. For major development proposals paragraph 172 sets out criteria to determine whether the development should exceptionally be permitted within the designated landscape.

Alongside national policy you should also apply landscape policies set out in your development plan, or appropriate saved policies.

We also advise that you consult the relevant AONB Partnership or Conservation Board. Their knowledge of the site and its wider landscape setting, together with the aims and objectives of the AONB's statutory management plan, will be a valuable contribution to the planning decision. Where available, a local Landscape Character Assessment can also be a helpful guide to the landscape's sensitivity to this type of development and its capacity to accommodate the proposed development.

The statutory purpose of the AONB is to conserve and enhance the area's natural beauty. You should assess the application carefully as to whether the proposed development would have a significant impact on or harm that statutory purpose. Relevant to this is the duty on public bodies to 'have regard' for that statutory purpose in carrying out their functions (S85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000). The Planning Practice Guidance confirms that this duty also applies to proposals outside the designated area but impacting on its natural beauty.

Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan

Natural England recommends that the application is supported by a Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan (BMEP) that has been agreed by a Hampshire County Council (HCC) Ecologist. This will ensure the proposal meets the requirements of the standing advice and the additional requirements for biodiversity enhancement as set out in National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 8, 170, 174 and 175d. The scope of the BMEP should be agreed with the HCC Ecologist and will need to consider reptiles (in particular slow worms), bats and nesting birds.

Natural England welcomes the ecological enhancements suggested in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report. In line with this report, Natural England recommend that the application should include a consideration of what existing environmental features on and around the site can be retained or enhanced or what new features could be incorporated into the development proposal. Examples might include:

- Incorporating swift boxes or bat boxes into the design of new buildings.
- Using native plants in landscaping schemes for better nectar and seed sources for bees and birds.
- Creating a new pond as an attractive feature on the site.
- Planting trees characteristic to the local area to make a positive contribution to the local landscape.
- Sensitive lighting, angled away from surrounding trees
- Planting native hedge along the access drive to enhance the connectivity of the site.

We recommend the applicants make use of the Defra [biodiversity metric](#), which is a clear and methodical calculation for net gain in biodiversity for individual planning proposals.

Water Environment

Natural England welcomes the Flood Risk Assessment Report which proposes soakaways to mitigate against increased storm water surface discharge.

Natural England recommends that all new development adopt the higher standard of water efficiency under the Building Regulations (which equates to 110 litres /head/day including external water use) and re-use in line with best practice. Consideration should be given to the use of grey water recycling systems and efficient appliances.

Local wildlife sites

Local wildlife or geological sites should also be considered for impacts under the proposals. Natural England note that the proposal is in close proximity to Wade Court Park and Southmoor Reserve. Further information in relation to Sites of importance to Nature Conservation are available from the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC):

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/environment/biodiversity/informationcentre/sincs>

Protected Species

Natural England has produced [standing advice](#) to help planning authorities understand the impact of particular developments on protected species. We advise you to refer to this advice. Natural England will only provide bespoke advice on protected species where they form part of a SSSI or in exceptional circumstances.

Kind regards,

Rebecca Berry

Rebecca Berry

Sustainable Development Adviser

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