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Our Ref:

JTM/1856/AT/130524

Your Ref:

APP/24/00186 / 51680/008

Project No:

JTM/1856

Dear Mr Lakhan

Reserved Matters Application – Phase 2 – Wetland, Havant Thicket Reservoir HBC Ref: APP/24/00186 / EHDC Ref: 51680/008

Replacement Application Drawings and Response to Consultation Comments

It is noted that a number of consultation responses to the above applications have been received by the Councils and that these raise a series of very similar points. These are addressed below in this letter. In doing so an error has been identified on some of the application drawings and therefore replacement drawings are submitted with this letter as set out in Table 1 together with an explanation of what has been amended.

Engagement with the community and stakeholders on the design development of the wetland has been ongoing for in excess of five years and is well documented, therefore it is unreasonable to suggest that there has not been an opportunity to discuss issues related to the proposed development. The 'You Said, We Did' report submitted as part of the application is not intended be a full account of all stakeholder engagement. It reflects and addresses the most frequently asked questions and feedback received during the most recent pre-application consultation process.

It is important to note that the Reserved Matters Applications are within the parameters approved for the outline wetland element of the hybrid planning permissions and the design is in accordance with all other relevant documents including the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) July 2022 (HTR-ATK-ZZ-ZZ-RP-L-0002 REV C01), the Biodiversity Mitigation and Compensation Strategy BMCS July 2022 HTR-ATK-ZZ-ZZ-RP-Y-0001 Rev C01, and the Ecological Mitigation, Compensation and Enhancement Measures - Phase 2 Wetlands Reserved Matters-Discharge of Planning Condition 36 February 2024 (HTR-RHD-P2-XX-RP-Z-0002 Rev P02).

Similarly, it is important to note that the design for the wetland has been developed by a team of very experienced ecologists, landscape specialists and engineers and is considered a robust design to achieve the objectives set out in the above documents. This is confirmed by the statutory consultee response on the applications from Hampshire County Council's Ecologist, which states that *'Providing that this [CEMP] is implemented I would consider there to be no outstanding ecological concerns and I would consider that Condition 2 can be discharged on ecological grounds'*.



Raised landforms

The Applicant acknowledges that there has been an error on some of the Landscape General Arrangement drawings where not all the proposed raised landforms have been shown. This in turn may have led to some confusion amongst consultees and respondents based upon the cross sections that there is a continuous mound on the northern side of the wetland. **This is not the case.** To address this error, replacement drawings as set out in the Table 1 are enclosed with this letter.

Table 1: Replacement Application Drawings

Original Drawing	Replacement Drawing	Summary of changes
HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0056 Rev P07	HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0056 Rev P08	- Error in 'Design feature / objective - specific notes' text corrected to 'planting'.
HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0057 Rev P06	HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0057 Rev P07	- Mound added to compartment 4 of wetland north shore
HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0058 Rev P06	HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0058 Rev P07	- Mounds added to compartment 4 and 3 of wetland north shore - Cross section line W2 extend to match drawing
HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0059 Rev P06	HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0059 Rev P07	- Mounds added to compartment 3 and 2 of wetland north shore - Cross section line W3 extend to match drawing
HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0060 Rev P06	HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0060 Rev P07	- Mound added to compartment 2 of wetland north shore - Gates added to provide access to existing ride through woodland - Label added to existing fencing line - Minor amendment to proposed scrub planting to tie into existing retained features
HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0061 Rev P06	HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0061 Rev P07	- Minor amendment to proposed scrub planting to tie into existing retained features
HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0080 Rev P03	HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0080 Rev P04	- Illustrative person removed from Section W1 - Mound removed from W1 as it is outside the Reserved Matters Application boundary – landscaping details outside of boundary shown for illustrative and context purposes only - Landscaping detail amended on Section W2 to match drawing HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0058 Rev P07
HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0081 Rev P03	HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0081 Rev P04	- Landscaping detail amended on Sections W3 and W4 to match drawing HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0059 Rev P06 / HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0060 Rev P07

As part of the overall landscape and biodiversity strategy there are proposed to be a series of small raised landform features of varying heights across the north of the wetland area to compliment the island features within the wetland itself as shown on the replacement drawings. The proposals for the landforms north of the wetland area will increase habitat complexity, diversity and resilience within the area, by providing transitional habitats between the existing woodland and scrub and the wet grassland, wet scrub and wet woodland which will provide seasonally drier areas for the benefit of both flora and fauna. This is set out in the "Design feature / objective – specific notes" on drawing HTR-GHD-WL-ZZ-DR-L-0056.

The raised landforms are concentrated in small parts of wetland compartments 2, 3 and the eastern side of compartment 4 where there is no public access other than to the bird hides. Therefore the landforms will not affect any existing or proposed key public viewpoints as suggested in some representations, including from the location of the proposed visitors centre, which will be the subject of a separate Reserved Matters Application in the future. The raised landforms are, however, designed to help to reduce predation pressure on nesting birds on the islands / ephemeral features by breaking up predator's sight lines from the woodland and scrub to the north. The raised landforms are also a sustainable response to managing material required to be excavated to deepen some areas of the proposed wetland and achieve a neutral cut and fill balance within the retained wetland area, retaining existing soils within the wetland thereby maintaining the existing seedbed and avoid the need to transport material off site.

The proposed approach is in accordance with the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) July 2022 (HTR-ATK-ZZ-ZZ-RP-L-0002 REV C01), the Biodiversity Mitigation and Compensation Strategy BMCS July 2022 HTR-ATK-ZZ-ZZ-RP-Y-0001 Rev C01, and the Ecological Mitigation, Compensation and Enhancement Measures - Phase 2 Wetlands Reserved Matters-Discharge of Planning Condition 36 February 2024 (HTR-RHD-P2-XX-RP-Z-0002 Rev P02).

Contrary to the suggestions in some representations the design is also in accordance with the 'Technical Note - Wetland concept and outline design, 29th April 2020 (HTR-ATK-XX-ZZ-RP-Z-001 Rev C02) which is part of Appendix B to the approved LEMP. Table 3.1 specifically states that compartments 2, 3 and 4 should include 'local ground manipulation to improve complexity, including island creation'. As the documents name suggests and as explained in the document, the technical note comprises an early concept and outline design for the wetland element of the development based on discussions with a wide range of stakeholders. It by no means represents a final design or agreed position in respect of the design of the wetland component of the development which is the subject of this Reserved Matters Application. This is clearly highlighted at the start of Appendix B of the LEMP – Outline Specifications, which states that the "Outline specifications are subject to amendments during the detailed design stage".

Bird Hides / Interpretation Buildings

The hybrid planning permission does not fix the location or the number of bird hides, they are granted permission in outline and details are to be approved in accordance with Condition 2. That said, the location of the bird hides shown on the reserved matters application drawings is in the same location as shown on the approved drawing listed in Condition 3 of the hybrid planning permission HTR-ATK-ZZ-ZZ-DR-L-0001 Reservoir Outline Masterplan. The proposals set out in the reserved matters application are therefore in accordance with the hybrid planning permission.

It is acknowledged that central bird hide is shown in a different location on drawing HTR-ATK-ZZ-ZZ-DR-L-0007 Key Plan 1, however, the proposed location on the reserved matters drawings is considered to represent the most appropriate position.

As stated on the reserved matters application drawings the bird hide / interpretation building locations are shown indicatively. Details of bird hide / interpretation buildings will be the subject of separate reserved matters application as part of the visitor centre phase to ensure consistency of design. Therefore the exact design and orientation has not been fixed, but it is anticipated that the design will enable 270-degree views across the wetlands. Views across compartment 3 will therefore be provided by the central location. In addition views across compartment 3 and its two island features will be afforded from the access track to the north which will cross the wet woodland.

Whilst the exact orientation of the bird hides is not fixed in the wetland reserved matters application and will be subject to the details to be approved through the visitor centre reserved matters applications, the two locations within the reserved matters application boundary are effectively fixed as a result of the access routes to them. The locations proposed are based on a combination of operational requirements for the management and maintenance of the wetland retaining structure, the need to limit public access to the wider wetland, and optimising the user experience, which is in keeping with the principles set out on the approved hybrid planning permission drawing HTR-ATK-ZZ-ZZ-DR-L-0001 Reservoir Outline Masterplan, whilst being mindful of established viewpoints.

The island features have not been dictated by the bird hide / interpretation building locations but have been designed and positioned to maximise their biodiversity benefit in line with the Technical Note - Wetland concept and outline design, 29th April 2020 (HTR-ATK-XX-ZZ-RP-Z-001 Rev C02), which is their primary purpose, whilst seeking to provide suitable opportunities for bird watching.

Habitat Complexity in Compartment 1

The reserved matters application design is considered to accord with the outline concept design, providing an area predominantly for reed bed habitat creation with some sedge that grades to scrub/wet woodland to the north.

Overall, within the Landscape General Arrangement Sheets 1-6 the range of Design Features/objectives notes and annotations help to further set out the environmental design for the wetland area. Compartment 1 includes features A, K, J and M and builds on the hedgerow restoration, scrub creation and grassland/ reedbed enhancement set out within the approved LEMP. Following more detailed site analysis, in terms of topography, drainage and retained woodland/ hedgerows, the shoreline habitat creation (ephemeral features, ditches, channels) is predominantly included within Compartment 0. Design objective K within Compartment 1 captures the design approach with reference to the foreshore diversity, but there is obvious transition of habitats from west to east which meets the LEMP objectives. Further detail will be provided on the detailed planting scheme and management of the wetlands to discharge Condition 28.

Water Depth and Ephemeral Shallows

The wetland and the ephemeral shallows have been developed by very experienced ecologists with significant experience planning and implementing wetland habitats taking into considered outline concept, the depth of water and the deterrent of predators. The design set out in the reserved matters application drawings is considered to be optimised to provide maximum biodiversity benefit.

Landscaping Details

The proposals set out in the reserved matters application have been developed by ecological specialists with significant experience planning and implementing wetland habitats. Where suitable and practicable, these wetland specialists have taken into account comments from local community representatives via the pre-application workshop, present Environment Sub-group and former Wetland Sub-group.

A combination of seeding and natural regeneration will be used in line with the LEMP and Soil Management Plan. Where seeding is required, for example on the wetland retaining structure to preserve engineering principles of the earthworks, soil erosion and slope stability, seed mixes will be mindful of native species/ecological requirements. Further detail will be provided on the detailed planting scheme and management of the wetlands to discharge Condition 28.

The wave protection for the Wetland embankment will be constructed in line with the current outline planning permission. This includes the use of Enkamat which, when laid on grass seeded soil slopes that are exposed to water, provides a permanent solution to issues caused by small wave action.

Restriction of Access to Wetland

The reserved matters application includes the location of stock proof fencing, combined with gated access and signage to clarify operational and maintenance access only. This is considered sufficient to limit public access.

Access to the western extent of the wetland will be restricted by the retention of the existing fencing to the north of this area, which is considered sufficient to limit public access.

Landscaping including fencing outside of the RMA boundary will be subject to a separate RMA for Phase 8 and will include, where necessary, further measures to limit access.

We trust that the replacement drawings and the above explanation provides sufficient information to address any questions that you may have as a result of the consultation responses received, however, if you have any that requires further clarification the please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Andy Turner

Andy Turner
Technical Director

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