

Appendix 4

Retrospective planning permission Tournerbury Woods – Planning application APP/21/01310

Appendix to HMPC Ltd letter 17th August 2022

SSSI/AONB and Nature Reserve Wedding Venues

A designation such as SSSI status, AONB or Nature Reserve and others does not mean that weddings, events etc. cannot take place within these designated areas.

Many of the sites shown below rely specifically on the income generated by such events in order to help them preserve and conserve their special environments. This is simply all that Tournerbury does.

Below is a small sample, out of a very great number of such designated sites, around the country that hire out their special and protected locations for weddings and events.

The two can go hand in hand for the benefit of the site. Evidence that this is the case at Tournerbury is provided by the consistently favourable condition site assessments made by Natural England of Tournerbury Woods over the many years in which weddings and events have been taking place on site.

This is in stark contrast to the results of assessments made in the vast majority of the other SSSI units within Chichester Harbour who have not benefitted from such investment.

We draw your attention to venue 16 below, sited to the east of Tournerbury, across Chichester Harbour but is subject to very similar environmental and SSSI considerations as Tournerbury Woods Estate.

1. Elmley Nature Reserve – Isle of Sheppey SSSI, SPA and Ramsar, National Nature Reserve

<https://www.elmleynaturereserve.co.uk/>

Huge number of rare and endangered species and especially important for breeding wading birds and over-wintering birds. Designated in 1991 as a National Nature Reserve (by Natural England). It is a site of international wildlife significance.

Sustainability is at the heart of all they do, as is wildlife conservation. They believe that the best way to safeguard the natural environment is to ensure that people understand and appreciate their local wildlife. They are passionate about sharing Elmley and its wildlife to new people and ensuring their guests have the best possible experience of the nature at Elmley.

Wedding party and guests stay in the middle of the Nature Reserve in bespoke huts and bell tents. Live bands and discos encouraged and acoustic songs around the fire are encouraged for those who are glamping. Up to 200 people per event. Music stops at midnight, but can continue acoustically around the fire pit. Licensed for ceremonies and have a drink and entertainment licence. Pop up bell tent village accommodates up to 90.

Guests are *“welcome to explore the Reserve over your stay, walk along miles of nature trails, enjoy a sunset swim from Elmley’s private beach, enjoy a wedding morning yoga session on the hay meadows.”*

2. Folly Farm, Avon Wildlife Trust, Bristol SSSI – 250 acre AONB, Nature Reserve and SSSI

<https://www.follyfarm.org/>

Dowlings Wood at Folly Farm is a SSSI because it is a good example of traditionally managed, unimproved neutral grassland, now rare in Britain. Meadows are also SSSI designated.

An award-winning education, conference and wedding venue. Offers accommodation for up to 58 people in the 18th century farmhouse and converted cow shed studios, and also camping. An inspirational conference and meeting venue. It offers unique team-building activities and is a beautiful, relaxed wedding venue. Private hire is also available for family celebrations and retreats. They offer packages for birthdays to stag and hen-do's. The barn buildings can host up to 100 guests, marquees can be put up on site. Amplified music switched off at midnight and bar closes. Guests can then move to the firepit. No set time for guests to leave.

3. SW Lakes Trust – Devon – AONB's and SSSI's

<https://www.swlakestrust.org.uk/>

Offer wedding venues across Devon, Cornwall and West Somerset. Very flexible to requirements of couple and allow discos, live bands and walks around the sites for large numbers of guests

Example is Roadford Lake, a local nature reserve with rare protected dormice on site

<https://www.swlakestrust.org.uk/roadford-lake-cafe-and-venue>

Quote from their website: *"Overlooking beautiful views across the lake, Roadford Lake is a unique venue for your wedding, meeting, celebration or event."*

4. Lower Grenofen, Tavistock SSSI, Devon - AONB, SSSI

<https://lowergrenofen.co.uk/>

Up to 120 guests, live bands and discos. Bar closes at 12.15 and guests are off site by 12.30am

Site is in an AONB and part of the grounds are a SSSI. Natural England found the venue to be 100% favourable condition. The SSSI is notified for rare lichens and moss and for the rare brown fritillary butterfly.

5. Warmell SSSI Dorset – SSSI (rare heathland) and part of Dorset AONB

<https://www.warmwell-house.com>

Marquee for up to 120 guests or more. Accommodation is provided and includes shepherds huts.

Website quote *"We encourage guests to make the most of the estate; taking in the breath-taking views, exploring the grounds, walking the scenic footpaths and losing yourself"*

6. St Nectans Glen SSSI, Tintagel, Cornwall – AONB, SSSI

<https://www.st-nectansglen.co.uk>

SSSI due to rare specimens of plants. Licensed for weddings and also offer hand-fastings. Provide a team of staff to help organise events.

7. Walthamstow Wetland Centre – SSSI, SPA, Ramsar of international importance,

<https://walthamstowwetlands.com/>

Walthamstow Wetlands is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. It also forms part of the Lee Valley Special Protection Area and is on the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance.

10 reservoirs offer a haven for overwintering wildfowl, such as pochard and gadwall, and are regionally important for breeding birds such as grey heron, tufted duck and little egret. Swifts visit during the spring and kingfisher and peregrine falcon can be seen all year round. It has a heronry of some 40 nests (conservative estimate).

In addition to birds, Walthamstow Wetlands is home to invertebrates such as damselflies, dragonflies, speckled wood butterflies and thick-kneed beetles, and a number of different species of bats and amphibians.

Website quote *“unique spaces can be hired for a wide range of events, whether it be an intimate family dinner or large corporate summer party, to a grand wedding with your nearest and dearest. All of our venues possess a beautifully wild character, guaranteed to leave an impact on your guests.”*

Weddings started here in 2017. They are held at Walthamstow, Woodberry and Camley Street sites. The events can be large or small. Guests are allowed (invited) to enjoy a walk around the sites and DJ's or live bands are permitted.

8. Brockholes Nature Reserve, Lancashire – Lancashire Wildlife Trust – Nature reserve

<http://www.brockholes.org/>
<https://www.brockholes.org/weddings?fbclid=IwAR0ZUlsq42RLGylj1KnV-3zz8Mr4CG8EXXvPkn9K4gWV8DQo9YKKZLZjaZY>

250 acre reserve of wetlands and woodlands. Wedding venue floats on the water.

9. Hayling Island Golf Club SSSI

<https://www.haylinggolf.co.uk/>

Hayling Links golf course forms part of the Sinah Common SSSI – important for its different grasses. Regularly holds events including weddings and parties and corporate events on the site.

10. Chatsworth House SSSI, Peak District

<https://www.chatsworth.org/>

Old Park designated for rare woodland features. Located just south of Chatsworth House wedding and events venue and tourist destination.

11. Manor Farm, Upton Cheyney (Cotswolds, Bath and Bristol) – A SSSI

<https://www.manorfarmuptoncheyney.com/>

DIY Marquee wedding venue and glamping accommodation also offer corporate events, retreats and workshops.

Website quote *“we believe that regenerative methods, and diversification are the future of British farming.”*

12. Leighton Moss Reserve, Silverdale, North West England, RSPB run site and in Arnsdale and Silverdale AONB, SSSI, SAC and Ramsar

<https://www.weddingbooker.com/venue/rspb-leighton-moss-nature-reserve>

Have a civil license for ceremonies and two sites for weddings within the Reserve.

13. Donington Park Farmhouse Hotel, Castle Donington – SSSI

<https://parkfarmhouse.co.uk/>

A 32.9 ha site managed as a deer park. Areas of bracken and ancient oaks providing habitats for rare beetles and spiders. Privately owned – no public access.

Donington Park Farmhouse Hotel is within the SSSI. Have been hosting weddings since 1984. Fully licensed for up to 300 guests. Weddings on any day of the year – no restrictions. Licensed bar.

14. Sherwood Glade – 25 acres of private woodland in the middle of Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve

<https://www.sherwoodglade.co.uk/about/>

Weddings/events held April – October for up to 200 guests in specialist Tipi marquee. Accommodation on site is in cabins, camping or glamping.

15. Fison Barn Wittenham Clumps (Earth Trust Site) South Oxfordshire – scheduled ancient monument, Little Wittenham wood is a SSSI and a SAC and in the AONB

<https://earthtrust.org.uk/about/venue-hire/wedding-venue-hire/>

Can have weddings of up to 200 guests – licensed for civil ceremonies and also have hand-fasting and humanist ceremonies at various locations across the site. Started weddings in 2009. Weddings help the trust to raise funds to care for their special spaces.

16. Itchenor Sailing Club – Itchenor – Located within the Chichester Harbour AONB with pontoon and decking structures used by wedding guests in the Chichester Harbour SSSI.

<https://www.itchenorsc.co.uk/ashore/your-wedding-at-isc-1>

Itchenor Sailing Club is used for weddings and events without any of the mitigation measures in place at Tournurbury. It is heavily promoted as a wedding venue and is immediately adjacent to the Chichester Harbour Conservancy Office.

The Chichester Harbour Conservancy (who are primary objectors to the Tournurbury applications) are a Landlord to Itchenor Sailing Club and perversely receive rent from the success of Itchenor Sailing Club's weddings and events.

Use of the waterfront facilities (in the SSSI and AONB and the club house (in the AONB) are promoted to potential wedding guests.

Please see screenshot below from the Itchenor Sailing Club weddings webpage -

Your Wedding at ISC



Set within an Area of Outstanding National Beauty, with truly spectacular scenery, Itchenor Sailing Club is perfectly situated to host your dream wedding. For a stunning coastal wedding reception venue, not far from the city of Chichester on the South Coast, easily accessible by land and sea, whilst just a stone's throw from London. We can host a beautiful wedding, with a unique waterside setting tailored to you. This idyllic venue will provide the wow factor for your special day.

Our wonderful chef will put together mouth-watering canapés and dishes for your guests to enjoy, sourced from local suppliers as they gather together inside the main clubhouse or outside on the lawn, boasting superb views over Chichester Harbour. Meanwhile our professional and friendly staff will work with you to ensure every detail of your wedding is considered

From a drinks reception on the waterfront-facing lawn and a sumptuous wedding breakfast, to a party you will remember for years to come; we can help you create a spectacular day.

At any time of year, whether you are looking for a cosy winter wedding or prefer a summer celebration, for civil partnerships and wedding parties of all sizes, we can give you the flexibility to create a day that is bespoke to your needs.

What's more, we can provide on site accommodation for up to 30 in various double and twin rooms so your guests have no further to go than upstairs at the end of your special day.

