

Dear Steve,

APP/21/01451 | Reserved Matters application for the scale and appearance of the development, the landscaping of the site and the layout of buildings pursuant to Planning Permission ref. APP/17/00863 (B) (Outline Application (All Matters Reserved except means of access) for the demolition of 1983 office building and associated brick and glass corridor link and development of up to 70 residential units, associated landscaping, parking and infrastructure works). Request to Discharge Condition 17 of Planning Permission APP/17/00863 (B) as amended by APP/21/01292 (Design Code) and Condition 26 of Permission APP/17/00863 (B) (viability assessment). | Southleigh Park House, Eastleigh Road, Havant, PO9 2PE 22.0161

Thank you for consulting me on this application. I have provided detailed consultation advice on a previous application at this site (APP/17/00863) in 2017 and 2018. The application is accompanied by an Ecological Assessment Revision 2 (ECOSA, April 2018). I am surprised that this report has not been subject to an update: indeed the report itself suggest that an update should be provided after 12 months. Also included is an Updated Ground Level Tree Assessment & Bat Emergence/Re-entry Survey Summary Report (ECOSA, December 2020), which provides information on the potential presence of roosting bats within trees scheduled for removal. Whilst this update report is welcome, it focusses only on trees and bats and does not therefore account for any changes to the site design and any implications this may have for ecological receptors.

In summary, the site had been shown to support an interesting bat assemblage including the very rare Bechstein's bat as well as Western Barbastelle and several other species. The site as a whole is not of significant ecological value, containing a range of buildings of varying age alongside formal lawn areas and varied ornamental plantings and native woodland habitat but is of high importance due to its use by rare bat species. The proposals will entail the loss of significant numbers of trees and general vegetation as well as the introduction of artificial lighting.

Before providing any further comment I would therefore request that the ecological assessment is updated to reflect the latest site layout. It is worth highlighting the advice I provided on the pre-application submission in May 2021: *'I would expect any future application to be accompanied by updated ecological surveys and impact assessment. This should include updated bat surveys, investigating the presence of roosting bats within the various buildings as well as the use of the site by foraging/commuting bats. The presence of Bechstein's bats must be assessed, using bespoke survey methods e.g. trapping as appropriate. It is essential that specialist advice is sought and that the site is placed within the context of the wider landscape and its important Bechstein's bat population: an assessment of cumulative impacts on this population will be necessary. The updated ecological assessment should include an investigation of all on-site trees for their bat roosting potential. The on-site pond should be assessed for its ecological value, including its value for amphibian species'*. It is also worth noting that many of the ecological surveys for species (e.g. GCN, bat trapping surveys) are now over five years old.

NPPF, Circular 06/2005 and Natural England Standing Advice on Protected Species, require that planning decisions are based on full, up-to-date ecological information and it is essential that all necessary survey, assessment and mitigation information is available to the LPA prior to determination, particularly in the case of protected species, which are a material planning consideration. This will enable the LPA to determine the application on the basis of full knowledge about the ecological impacts of the proposal and to ensure that any impacts can and will be mitigated, and are acceptable.

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

Kind regards,

Tristan

Tristan Norton

**Senior Ecologist
Ecology Team**

Specialist Environment Services
Economy, Transport and Environment Department
Hampshire County Council
Elizabeth II Court West
The Castle, Winchester
Hampshire SO23 8UD
Direct Line: 01962 832335
Mobile: 07784 261774
E-mail: tristan.norton@hants.gov.uk; www.hants.gov.uk/biodiversity

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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Please note that this advice is given in accordance with the Service Level Agreement that has been signed between Hampshire County Council and your Council. These comments are expressed as a professional view provided to Havant Borough Council and should not, therefore, be interpreted as those of Hampshire County Council.