

Dear Lewis,

APP/21/01267 | Approval of Reserved Matters in respect to Phase 1 Plot 5 of APP/17/01324 (new employment uses, hotel and access road) comprising construction of 3no. B8 storage and distribution units totalling 6,877sqm for Condition B3(i) - (v) plot access, layout, scale, appearance & landscaping; Condition B5 Other Matters criteria (a) - (i) inclusive; and Discharge of Conditions A3, A5, A10, A17, A18, B9 & B10; incorporating revisions to previously approved Parameter Plans forming part of the Environmental Statement dated March 2012 for APP/12/00338, as amended by APP/17/01324. | Phase 5, Dunsbury Park, Fitzwygram Way, Havant 22.0217

Thank you for consulting me on this reserved matters application for Plots 5a and 5b.

The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Geengage, September 2021) and a Bat Survey Report (Greengage, December 2021). The site comprises a previously cleared plot of land on the western edge of the wider Dunsbury site.

The development plot is immediately adjacent to Beechwood East Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), which is one of a number of extensive ancient woodland sites in this local landscape. Other plot boundaries contain existing important hedgerow habitat containing a good range of plant species indicative of well-established habitat.

The principles of appropriate ecological mitigation/compensation and enhancement were established at the hybrid application stage several years ago, and in essence comprise the retention and buffering of woodlands and hedgerow corridors and the use of widespread biodiverse planting/seeding throughout the built zones, all based upon updated ecological assessments as necessary. The area is known to support species of high conservation concern, notably Hazel Dormouse and the very rare Bechstein's Bat, and ecological impacts should be viewed in light of the overall cumulative effects of ongoing development in the surrounding area.

Bat surveys carried out between July and October 2021 have recorded a variety of bat species within the site and wider area. Bat activity was notably lower within the development plot than elsewhere. The species recorded included mouse-eared (*Myotis*) species which, in this location, is highly likely to include the very rare Bechstein's Bat. The uncommon but wide-ranging Western Barbastelle was also recorded. The bat report acknowledges that further survey effort is required, with

surveys having been commissioned in mid-summer 2021, thereby missing the important spring/early summer bat activity period. It is important that these additional surveys are carried out and used to inform ecological mitigation measures.

The submitted lighting strategy shows that there will be no spillage onto the adjacent SINC woodland and with a 1lux contour that does overlap in several places with the important eastern boundary hedgerow. I would welcome comment from the ecologist on the submitted lighting strategy and whether this has any implications for nocturnal species using the eastern boundary e.g. Hazel Dormouse and bats. Can these areas of spillage be reduced?

The proposed landscape plan includes details of wildflower seeding areas along the western embankment. I am supportive of any measures to enhance/increase biodiversity along this boundary (especially being adjacent to the SINC and more recent woodland plantings) but wonder if allowing existing vegetation to establish into a more diverse grassland/herbage/scrub habitat would provide a better outcome overall rather than utilising purchased wildflower seed of unknown provenance. The choice of any seed mix is critical, and should be appropriate to the neutral/slightly base-poor soils of this area. Some form of neutral-to-acid grass sward would be appropriate in this area. Allowing natural colonisation, particularly of native scrub species, would not only provide a natural succession of vegetation types but also provide habitat for species such as Hazel Dormouse and nesting birds.

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

Kind regards,

Tristan

Tristan Norton

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