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Sent: 05 April 2016 16:23

To: David Eaves

Subject: RE: APP/15/01435 | Outline application for residential development (175 dwellings) with associated infrastructure. | Land South of Bartons Road, Havant 16.0425

Hi David,

Many thanks for forwarding the ecologist's comments.

My overall concerns in respect to Bechstein's bats are that the bat surveys did record mouse-eared bats (the large group of bats to which Bechstein's belongs) but these could not be identified to species level. With the presence of Bechstein's bats a very real possibility here it is entirely feasible that the species is present: there is no apparent reason why this is not so as the site is very close to major roosts. Bechstein's bats in this part of Hampshire persist in a landscape of fragmented woodlands and many of the largest roosts are within non-wooded areas such as golf courses and individual parkland trees: they are not only recorded in woodlands and their use of open/suboptimal habitats such as grassland and coniferous plantations has been confirmed by recent detailed studies in the surrounding landscape. Essentially, we do not know what these bats are doing in this landscape with any great certainty (except that they are not restricted to woodland) and therefore features such as grassland and hedgerows and even plantation woodland are potential Bechstein's habitat, forming important components of the overall resource used by the wider population. The vast bulk of the application site is indeed unsuitable arable farmland and I agree that the site overall is not suitable bat habitat. The northern semi-improved grassland is however suitable foraging habitat and in particular the woodland and parkland area to the east at Southleigh Park House appears very suitable for roosts.

Although it is clear that there would be no loss of woodland habitat (and thus roosts would be unaffected) this is a very substantial application which may result in wider impacts affecting adjacent areas. I would expect further detail to be provided on Bechstein's bats in order to provide robust justification as to why this species would not occur and potentially be impacted, given the information available to demonstrate that the species is not wholly restricted to woodland habitats. Full details of site lighting will need to be provided in order that its implications for bats can be assessed.

I would presume that this site may act as a gateway development for other adjacent areas and so it is important that a standard for baseline ecological survey for Bechstein's bats is set out.

I trust this is suitable for the meantime – I will try to speak with the applicant's ecologist this week.

Kind regards,

Tristan

Tristan Norton

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