



Our Ref: P14/14

17th April 2015

Mr Shaun Harkin
Bellway Homes (Wessex)

By Email only: shaun.harkin@bellway.co.uk

Dear Shaun,

Goldring Close, Hayling Island – Ecological Comments to Updated Plans

Thank-you for sending over the proposed new layout of the above scheme. I have reviewed the latest site plans and soft landscape plans and this letter provides ecological comments to this revised layout, along with responses for other site matters.

Comments to Updated Plans

I understand that soft landscaping plans have been revised along the eastern boundary to accommodate an attenuation basin which is now required to help alleviate surface water issues on site.

Although the layout has changed in this area it appears that these changes will not present any new constraints in terms of ecology and will not prevent the implementation of the proposed mitigation and enhancements outlined in the 'Biodiversity Mitigation, Enhancement & Management Plan' (EPR, 2014). In fact, if landscaped appropriately this feature could enhance the ecological value of the site even further and potentially offer a new habitat onto the site (if water is retained in this feature). Therefore, the new layout could potentially be of greater benefit to wildlife than the original layout.

Comments to Site Matters

North Western Field Boundary

It was raised during our site meeting on 2nd April 2015 that part of the buffer along the north-western boundary had been accidentally removed during the ground clearance works, which resulted in the removal of approximately 50m of grassland. Although an incident such as this should not have occurred it is highly unlikely that any protected species would have been present in this area at the time of the removal given the low value of the habitat, its current condition and the fact that reptiles have not been recorded in this northern field. I am pleased with Bellway's immediate response to rectify the issue. It was evident that the area had been re-levelled and I gather this area will be reseeded as well. To prevent an occurrence like this happening again I would suggest that the tree

protection fencing is realigned to include the entire length of this 1m buffer or a new parallel line of heras fence is installed along this boundary.

Mammal Gaps

Initially I recommended that the boundary fencing (particularly the acoustic fencing along the eastern boundary) should provide gaps intermittently along the route to ensure the development site is permeable for mammals. However, on reflection this would enable mammals (e.g. Hedgehogs) to access the site too easily and could put them at unnecessary risk of harm. I believe the boundary buffer is more appropriate for commuting purposes and will ensure they are directed along a safer route across the site. Therefore, I would not suggest these mammal gaps are created.

In addition, I would recommend that as the construction progresses southwards that the acoustic fencing be removed accordingly. This will help encourage animals onto the site much sooner than waiting for the entire development to finish.

Buffer Strip along Eastern Boundary

The buffer between the acoustic fencing and the hedgeline is appropriate along the south-eastern boundary, however some construction material is present along this stretch (probably a result of the recent high winds we have encountered) so I would suggest that these items are removed from this area to prevent any obstructions for animals.

The buffer along the north-eastern boundary is slightly narrower than anticipated but with the introduction of the attenuation basin I understand the reasons why the fence line has had to be moved slightly more towards the hedgeline. There is still sufficient space to allow animals to commute along this area it just means this stretch is more shaded. Slow Worms have not been recorded in this area so this will not present any constraints in terms of basking opportunities.

Mitigation & Enhancement Features

Section 4 of the Biodiversity Mitigation, Enhancement & Management Plan provided detail on the features to be created on site. This included the installation of the various wildlife boxes and landscaping features. The table below summarises when each of these features need to be completed. The stag beetle loggery, reptile hibernaculum and brash piles are to be completed during the construction phase. It should be highlighted that the boundary fencing will ideally need to be removed in order to create these features and it is recommended that this is done before the area is landscaped. The hedgehog box should not be installed until the entire construction phase has been completed and the whole site has been landscaped.

Feature	Date completed/to be completed
Bat/Bird boxes (trees)	Installed in September 2014
Bat/Bird boxes (integral)	Create during construction phase
Stag Beetle loggery	Create during construction phase
Reptile hibernaculum	Create during construction phase
Brash Piles	Create during construction phase
Hedgehog Box	Install post-construction

I trust that the above provides you with the information that you require, but please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,



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