

From: Norton, Tristan <Tristan.Norton@hants.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 November 2014 09:12
To: Heather Lealan
Cc: Planning and Development Shared Mailbox; Havant Auto-Reply
Subject: APP/14/00547 Land west of Horndean Road and south of Southleigh Road 14.1313

Dear Heather,

APP/14/00547 | Outline planning permission for 125 residential units and a water retention area. All matters reserved except access and levels | Land west of Horndean Road and south of Southleigh Road 14.1313

Thank you for re-consulting me on this application. The application is now accompanied by a Bat Tree Climbing Survey report (The Ecology Co-op, October 2014) which adds to the pre-existing ecological reports for the site. There is also a Habitat Creation and Management Plan and Outline Mitigation Proposals report (The Ecology Co-op, March 2014).

Bats

The addition of tree climbing surveys is welcomed and does allow a much more detailed understanding of the potential for tree-roosting bats to be present. The survey has highlighted the fact that a number of trees do indeed support features suitable for bats and, although no direct evidence was noted, there remains the very real possibility that bat roosts could occur here. As mentioned in my previous responses, the absence of standard bat emergence/re-entry survey works is unfortunate, as is the lack of robust site-wide bat activity data (indeed the ecologist's report describes the survey effort as suboptimal). Therefore, in the absence of robust empirical data it is imperative that a precautionary approach is adopted in terms of bat mitigation.

The trees identified as offering potential are to be retained within the site but they must also be retained within a habitat matrix which allows for their continued suitability for bats (and other organisms): the impacts of lighting for instance could render these trees unusable and so negate the point of retaining them on site. Four of the trees are situated along the south-western boundary and will sit adjacent to the proposed 'wetland' attenuation basin whilst the last is within the small copse to the north. One would therefore expect that there is no requirement for any lighting of these trees at all and that a darkened link could be made between the two features, for example at the south-western corner of the pond area greenspace where a section of hedging is proposed. I would expect fine details of the lighting scheme (light spillage analysis, luminaire type, lamp type etc.) and how this may impact ecology to be included within any future reserved matters application. Again, due to the inadequacies in the overall bat survey effort it is essential that the design layout reflects the need to protect ecological features and provide for continuing ecological functionality: the site layout is flexible and the ecology is not.

Habitat Creation and Management plan

This document includes details of the site-wide measures proposed to retain, protect and enhance the site's ecological features. In general I am content that the measures detailed within are guided by industry best practice and, if implemented as described, should be effective. I am pleased to see a commitment to maintain darkened areas along the western/south-western boundaries and around the pond in the north. Details of the chosen reptile receptor area will need to be provided also.

If you are minded to grant outline permission could I recommend that a single site-wide ecological mitigation and management plan is provided at reserved matters stage and secured now via a suitably-worded condition, such as:

Prior to the commencement of any development activities a fully-detailed scheme of site-wide ecological mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures (to include but not necessarily be restricted to: site plan showing all ecological features; detailed measures to protect and retain existing habitats and species; lighting plan; location, extent, composition and ongoing management of mitigation/compensation/enhancement habitat) shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Such details shall be in accordance with the outline mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures detailed within the Habitat Creation and Management Plan and Outline Mitigation Proposals report (The Ecology Co-op, March 2014). Any such measures shall thereafter be implemented in strict accordance with the agreed details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority and all mitigation features shall be retained and maintained in perpetuity. Reason: to provide ecological protection and enhancement in accordance with Conservation Regulations 2010, Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, NERC Act 2006, NPPF and Policy CS 11 of the Havant Borough Core Strategy March 2011.

I trust that this is suitable – if you have any queries please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Tristan

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