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16th October 2014

Your Ref: APP/14/00863
Our Ref: 13.70.3.33

Dear Ms Haywood

PROPOSAL:

DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND ERECTION OF 55 DWELLINGS; COMPRISING 6NO. 2 BED FLATS; 2 BED HOUSES; 33NO. 3 BED HOUSES; 6NO. 4 BED HOUSES AND 1NO. 5 BED HOUSE; TOGETHER WITH ACCESS, LANDSCAPING, CAR PARKING AND OPEN SPACE (17 UNITS WITHIN EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT) JOINT APPLICATION WITH HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL AND EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL, HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL IS THE LEAD AUTHORITY.

LOCATION:

LAND NORTH OF EASTLEIGH HOUSE COTTAGES, BARTONS ROAD, HAVANT

DESIGNATED SITES:

BARTON'S COPSE AND THE SLIP – SITE OF IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION (SINC)(1A)

The Wildlife Trust has recently been made aware of this application through consultation with other conservation organisations. We understand that the consultation period for this application has now closed, however due to significant concerns with regard to potential impacts on the very rare Bechstein's bat *Myotis bechsteinii* which is known to be present in the area, we wish to object to the proposals. We consider that based on the information provided there is insufficient evidence to determine that the species will not be adversely impacted by the proposals.

The proposals involve the development of 55 dwellings and include the removal of veteran oak trees, which could form part of the roosting or foraging habitat for the species. The application is supported by a thorough bat survey report¹ which identifies the presence of at least seven species of bat, including unidentified bats of the *Myotis* genus. Unfortunately this report does not address the issue of the potential for Bechstein's bat to be present at the site since the survey methodology has relied upon the use of aural bat detectors; a method which is known to be an unreliable method for identifying Bechstein's bat.

¹ WYG (2014) Barton's Road, Havant – Bat Survey Report – Linden Homes

Given the proximity of the site to a roost of this very rare bat species, we consider that there is a very real possibility that the species may use the site for roosting and foraging. We would expect that more detailed bats surveys are carried out, which involve the capture of bats for identification in the hand.

The above advice is given based on the information made available at this time and may change should further or amended details be submitted. If you wish to discuss these matters further, then please do not hesitate to do so. I also ask that you keep the Trust informed of the progress and outcome of this application.

Yours sincerely



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