

[REDACTED]

Sent: 22 October 2013 14:58
To: Aaron Wright
Cc: Planning and Development Shared Mailbox; Havant Auto-Reply
Subject: APP/13/00576 53 Hart Plain Avenue, Waterlooville, PO8 8RG 13.1163

Dear Aaron,

APP/13/00576 Demolition of existing 3 bed bungalow and construction of 4No. 4 bed detached houses, 3 with integral garages and 1 detached garage and associated parking and landscaping with access from Wedgewood Way. 53 Hart Plain Avenue, Waterlooville, PO8 8RG 13.1163

Thank you for consulting me on this application. In summary, I consider that additional information is required in respect to roosting bats and details of reptile translocation.

The application is accompanied by an 'Ecological Impact Assessment' report (The Environmental Project Consulting Group, October 2013) which provides a sound assessment of the site's current ecological value. In summary, the site comprises a single residential bungalow surrounded by a defunct garden plot containing unmanaged tussocky grassland, areas of taller herbaceous vegetation, scrub and trees. The site is essentially isolated within a densely-urban area and is thus considered to be of ecological value at a local level only. Overall, the ecological assessment is of a good standard and makes well-reasoned statements regarding the site's value to various legally-protected species.

Based on the initial Phase 1 survey, Phase 2 surveys were undertaken to assess the presence/likely absence of roosting bats within the bungalow and reptile species in the grounds. The bat survey was undertaken in mid-September which is just outside of the optimal survey period – however September 2013 was very mild and bats were certainly very active throughout that month: I don't see the timing as a significant limitation in this case. No bats were recorded roosting within the bungalow and there was a low level of activity noted in the site as a whole.

Whilst I am content that a sufficient level of survey effort has been expended upon the bungalow, I would like to seek clarification on the possible presence of roosting bats within an on-site tree. Local residents have stated that survey works in relation to previous planning application in 2006 highlighted the presence of roosting bats within a large oak tree within the grounds of the application site – this tree is apparently covered by a Tree Protection Order. Having investigated the details of the 2006 application (06/66444/004) I can find no evidence of any ecological reports so I cannot at this time comment on the presence of roosting bats: I would welcome further information from the applicant on this matter, as clearly the presence of bats within an on-site tree may have implications for this application. It is clear that, in general, local residents place great value on this area of land and consider that it is a haven for local wildlife.

The site has been shown to support a population of reptiles, although no population size estimate has been provided – a quick count by me has put the number of slow-worms in the high 20s or thereabouts, plus there is a possibility of common lizard occurring (I cannot see common newts moving fast enough to be confused with lizards as suggested in the report). In any case, the site clearly supports a population of reptiles which is likely to be significant at the local level, given the general absence of any substantial open greenspace.

A series of recommendations are provided which explain that a capture and translocation strategy will be employed in order to remove reptiles from the site prior to commencement of development

works. Whilst the methods proposed are all perfectly reasonable and in line with industry best-practice, I consider that additional information is required on the destination of reptiles translocated from site. No information is provided on the receptor site and it is therefore not possible for the local planning authority to comment on the validity of any reptile mitigation plans. As discussed in the report, any receptor site must first be demonstrated to be available and suitable. Availability may be via land under the applicant's control or, if third-party land is required, evidence must be provided of a suitable legal agreement such as Section 106. Suitability refers to whether the receptor site exhibits habitat of sufficient extent and quality to accommodate any translocated animals or whether management is needed. The receptor site must also not be at carrying capacity for reptiles, should be immediately available and should be secure in the long-term. It is essential that full details of any proposed receptor site are provided in order that the LPA can secure any mitigation measures through condition.

In summary, whilst I do not consider there to be any insurmountable ecological constraints at this site, I do consider that clarification is needed in respect to tree-roosting bats and reptile translocation methods. I recommend that this information is sought from the applicant prior to further consideration of the application.

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

Kind regards,

Tristan

Tristan Norton

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