

Tournerbury Woods Estate Wedding Guest Visitor Management Strategy

Introduction

- 1.1 The Shadow Appropriate Assessment¹ and Ecological Impact Assessment² submitted in support of the retrospective planning application for a wedding venue at Tournerbury Woods Estate have identified the need for a Visitor Management Strategy (VMS). The purpose of the VMS is to ensure that events are planned and run in a way that avoids adverse impact on the ecological interest features of the site and surrounds.
- 1.2 This VMS has been prepared in consultation with Natural England and presents an operational framework designed to avoid inappropriate access and/or use of ecologically important areas within the Tournerbury Woods Estate that are sensitive to disturbance by either the wedding guests themselves, or the activities in which they partake. The VMS identifies a series of controls that define the:
 - type of activity appropriate within an area identified as ecologically sensitive
 - timing of an activity relative to a season that is ecologically sensitive; or,
 - extent of an activity within an ecologically sensitive area or context.
- 1.3 Adherence to the VMS will be secured through condition of the retrospective planning consent.
- 1.4 Natural England has reviewed the VMS and subject to minor revisions now included, has confirmed that the content is appropriate to the avoidance and mitigation of impacts identified in both the Shadow Appropriate Assessment and the Ecological Impact Assessment.
- 1.5 This VMS represents the latest and final version of a document prepared for preceding planning applications, which has been revised in response to concerns raised about the potential for environmental harm to arise. The VMS responds to both evidenced and perceived potentials for harm.

Visitor Management Strategy

- 2.1 Two areas within the Tournerbury Woods Estate have been identified as having potential ecological sensitivity and for which access controls are required. These are:
 - **The Bury**, within which a Heronry is present (point A on the attached plan). The Bury is a mixture of semi-natural broad-leaved woodland within Saxon earthworks. The Heronry is located adjacent to, and over an existing access track serving the events

¹ Holbury Consultancy Services Ltd, 2020. Tournerbury Woods Estate. Shadow Appropriate Assessment. For Tournerbury Woods Estate.

² Hampshire Ecological Services Ltd, 2020. Tournerbury Woods Estate. Ecological Impact Assessment. For Tournerbury Woods Estate

site, that runs along the western flank of the Bury, in a roughly north to south direction. Application APP 23/00076 proposes this access track will cease to be used by venue guests and suppliers.

- The intertidal muds of **the foreshore** for their support of overwintering waterfowl. Wedding guests use the Harbour Lawn (point B on figure 1) during weddings, which sits immediately adjacent to the foreshore and from which access to the intertidal area is possible.

2.2 In addition:

- Tournerbury Plantation lies to the west of the site, and comprises secondary woodland established on former open ground in the late 19th Century. A plateau of land lies to the immediate north and north west of the lake in the Plantation, and this area is used for camping (area C on figure 1). Although Tournerbury Plantation is not ecologically sensitive itself, it lies in proximity to the Bury, flagging the need to carefully control camping use of this site.
- Pipistrelle bat populations are present across the site, feeding at the woodland edge along tracks and field margins, and with a small roost (common pipistrelle) located in Woods Cottage. Bat foraging behaviours can be affected by night time lighting and it is therefore important to minimise the scope for impact in this regard.

2.3 Controls, to be secured through condition (either specifically or through this agreement), are as follows:

- ***The Bury***

When APP 23/00076 is approved and implemented, an alternative access track (originally granted by HBC APP/17/00207) becomes the primary access route to the Tournerbury Woods Estate. All guest and public access to the venue area will transfer to the new access route at all times. Signs will be placed at point E on the VMS aerial photograph (Figure 1) directing guests to use the new access route at all times and avoid The Bury area

- ***The foreshore***

Access: wedding and event guest access to the Harbour Lawn will not be permissible on any event day taking place during the period 1st November to 31st March inclusively. This will be secured by means of a rope barrier and signage erected across the access track to the Harbour Lawn. The sign will read “*No public / guest access beyond this point. Overwintering birds protected area*”. The barrier and sign will be erected at area ‘D’ on the accompanying VMS aerial photograph (Figure 1).

Jetty: the site offers occasional use of a temporary jetty. Use will be restricted. It will be available for use between 1st April to 31st October inclusively, to prevent disturbance to feeding waterfowl over the core wintering period.

Dogs: all wedding and event guests bringing dogs on site will be required to keep their dogs on short leads at all times to prevent uncontrolled dogs finding their way to the foreshore.

Fireworks: wedding and event guests or suppliers will not be permitted to bring fireworks to site at any time of year. This has historically been a contractual requirement and will continue to be so.

Noise: noise levels at the foreshore from amplified music during the over wintering waterfowl season (1st October to 30th March) will not exceed 69dBA and will accord with the submitted and approved Noise management Plan.

- ***The Plantation***

Camping: tents associated with the implementation of Planning Permission APP/23/00076 will only be pitched within the designated camping area (area C on Figure 1).

All campers will be directed to specific pitches to ensure the location is managed and pitches are properly rotated over the summer. A record will be kept of tent locations to ensure that they are effectively rotated from one use of the site to the next.

Camping will take place on no more than 11 nights per year and will be restricted to no more than 8 pitches on any one night. Camping will only take place in association with a booked wedding or event.

All campers will be provided with a Code of Conduct when shown to their pitch on arrival. The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to set out the basis on which camping is permissible. See **Appendix 1**.

Camp fires: campfires are not, and will not be permissible. This has historically been a contractual requirement of the wedding / event party and will continue to be so.

Site management:

- No trees will be removed from the plantation area and deadwood will be left standing unless it poses a health and safety risk. If removed as part of safety management it will be placed adjacent to the camping area on the woodland floor, to promote eco-system services through natural decay processes.
- No vegetation management is permissible by either users of the camping area or the operator. This means that no tree pruning, removal of trees or understorey, or removal of deadwood will take place to facilitate camping or whilst camping is occurring on site.
- Once pitches are vacated, on the day after the event the camping is associated with, the operator will litter pick, bag and remove all rubbish from the area over which camping has taken place, making good the pitch as may be necessary.

While these site management measures have been defined in relation to the Plantation, they will apply across the entirety of the venue area application site. This area is delineated by the red line boundary and red hatching on submitted Location Plan (indicating access to Public Highway). This is attached as an appendix to this document for ease of reference (**Appendix 2**) and also shows the camping area C. In addition, and for clarity and monitoring purposes, a

topographical map has been included in the appendix to more clearly locate the camping area, which comprises a small part of the events area indicated by red-line hatching.

Bat boxes: The site will be enhanced for bats using at least ten tree mounted woodcrete/woodstone or sturdy wooden bat boxes. These create secure crevices for bats as an opportunity for roosting. These will be placed in the Plantation woodland where the younger trees mean that there are likely to be fewer trees that have feature that roosting bats could use. The bat boxes will be put in place prior to the next bat active season, following grant of planning permission for APP/23/00076, which normally commences in/around May each year.

Bird boxes: An additional 10 bird boxes will also be provided and placed across the woodland to enhance those currently existing and to further support the existing “good availability of supporting features for nesting birds dependent upon woodpecker holes and cavities in trees.”³

³ A review of the condition of Tournembury Woods, part of Chichester Harbour SSSI by Graham Steven and Alex Foy, November 2022.

A plan/map to show the location of the bat and bird boxes is provided titled “Bat and Bird box mitigation location plan No 1.”

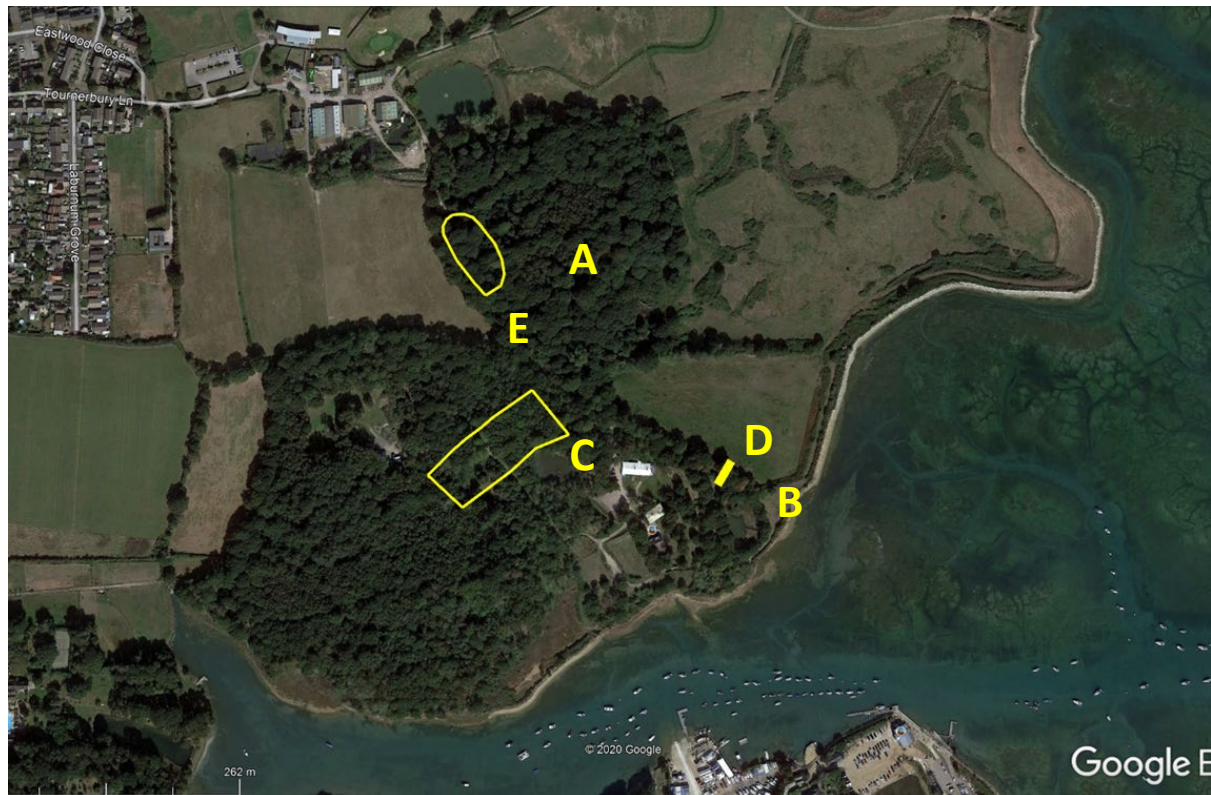
- ***Woods Cottage & Venue area: lighting***

Outside lighting: outside lighting will be angled to the ground and will avoid spillage of greater than 1lux onto the trees and woodland, wherever possible. Any additional future lighting must be warm spectrum non-UV LED lighting, and angled to the ground.

Direction: lighting will be directed to illuminate only the immediate area required and with as sharp a downward angle as possible. The lit area will where possible avoid being directed at, or towards, retained vegetation or where bats are known to roost in Woods Cottage. A shield or hood will be used where necessary to control or restrict the area to be lit. Any new wide-angle lighting will be avoided. Lighting will be monitored during operation and modified if necessary.

Security lighting: lighting of greater than 2000 lumens will not be employed. If new lights are installed to deter crime or for the health and safety of guests they will be fitted with a movement sensor adjusted to the minimum to reduce the amount of “lit time”.

Figure 1 Aerial photo showing features relevant to the control of wedding guests during wedding parties



Access management along the Right of Way (private part of Tournembury Lane from end of the adopted Highway to the boundary of the Tournembury Woods Estate)

- 2.4 Application APP 23/00076 proposes using a new access route to Tournembury Woods, which has been previously granted planning permission under reference APP/17/00207. The new route will become a new Right of Way to replace the existing Right of Way that is owned by the Applicants in order to access the Tournembury Woods Estate. This access route will avoid the Bury area (A) and other environmentally sensitive areas.
- 2.5 The new access will be managed by the applicant to ensure it is available and safe to use at all times by visitors to the site. Following its construction to a standard required by the planning permission and it's bringing into use, the applicant will:
- Maintain and repair potholes along the Right of Way to aid safe access.
 - Erect clear signage at the entrance and exit to the Right of Way to remind guests to be considerate to all neighbours when leaving the venue.
 - Erect clear signage at the entry and exit to the new access track (particularly at the Bell Mouth by Tournembury Farm) to direct guests, suppliers, taxis, coaches etc away from neighbouring Tournembury Farm properties and its commercial yard area, and clearly direct them towards the public highway on exit, or towards the venue on entrance.
 - Manage overgrowing vegetation along the Right of Way to ensure the current long sightlines are maintained.

2.6 Management controls in operation on event days.

- A venue manager will be present and contactable on site from the commencement of a hire period to the time all guests and suppliers have left site.
- Clear signage will be erected at exit of the Tournerbury Woods Estate (before accessing the Right of Way) requesting exiting guests / suppliers to drive quietly and considerably to the public highway.
- Clear signage will be erected at the entry and exit to the new track (at the Bell Mouth by Tournerbury Farm) to direct guests, suppliers, taxis, coaches etc towards the venue or public highway (depending upon direction of travel) and ensure no guest access to Tournerbury Farm, and its associated residential properties and commercial yard area.
- For events where guest numbers exceed 150, during the 'peak' leaving hour at the end of an event, a traffic marshal will be stationed at the exit to the Tournerbury Woods Estate to ensure driver compliance with the signage instructions.
- All Bands and DJ's to exclusively use the installed Zone Array sound ceiling for front of house amplification when performing in the marquee. Bands and DJ's cannot use their own front of house Public Address speakers.
- Throughout an event, the site manager will regularly monitor the grounds of the venue area to ensure that guests are not freely wandering away from the core venue area. Contact details for the manager will be made available publicly.
- Between events the applicant will review the boundaries of the event area to ensure there has been no transgression into sensitive areas. Should any damage be

identified, this will be made good and the boundary definition will be strengthened or modified as appropriate.

- A suitably qualified ecologist will be instructed by the applicant every four years to undertake an ecological survey of the woodland to monitor its condition and identify any trends in condition over time. Condition will be measured against the five management objectives listed in Natural England's Condition Review (November 2022) identified necessary to maintain the biological interest of the site and SSSI in good condition. The monitoring will be used to inform further woodland management. Findings will be shared with Natural England and or the local planning authority as appropriate.

Conclusion

- 3.1 This VMS sets out a series of controls that will be applied to all weddings and events at Tournerbury Woods subsequent to the granting of planning permission. The control measures will be enforceable by the planning authority by means of this VMS which, together with its compliance, will be a condition of any planning permission.
- 3.2 Assessments within both the Shadow Appropriate Assessment and the Ecological Impact Assessment have shown that adherence to these controls will either avoid adverse impact on sensitive habitats and species, or mitigate the level of impact to an acceptable level.

Appendix 1
Tournerbury Woods Estate
Overnight camping
Code of conduct.

Tournerbury Woods Estate
Overnight camping
Code of conduct

Tournerbury Woods Estate is a special place and it is important that we look after and respect the quiet and natural environment that it offers. Whilst camping overnight we ask that you follow our code of conduct.

Please ensure that you:

- are considerate and courteous to others at all times
- stay within the designated camping area and do not wander into the woodland beyond
- take all litter and rubbish home with you
- keep noise levels to a minimum to avoid disturbing those around you and our woodland wildlife
- use hand held torches for purpose of lighting and switch off when not needed
- use the portaloos and washing facilities in the car park, provided for your use
- do not dig, or otherwise damage the woodland soils
- do not remove or damage any of the natural resources around you

Fires or BBQ's of any description are strictly prohibited at all times. The risk of fire is high.

Please note that no music (acoustic or amplified) is allowed in the camping area at any time.

If you find or see a problem, please let us know so that we can sort it out for you. Call 07894401891

Remember: tread lightly, leave only footprints and take home nothing but your memories.

Appendix 2
Topographical and
location plans to show
position of campsite.

