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14 April 2022

Our ref: 551772pw14Apr22_L01

Dear Matthew

DUNSBURY PARK PLOTS 500-502 - ECOLOGY UPDATE

This letter provides an update to the ecology information in view of proposed changes to the boundaries and comments from the LPA.

Proposed Boundary Grading

The proposed change involves altering the original proposed retaining walls close to the site boundaries, to sloped banks.

This change does not affect the validity of, or recommendations within the submitted ecology and arboricultural reports.

Details of the precautionary approach relating to reptiles are within the CEMP, but the areas in question will still be cleared under supervision using a phased clearance to ensure that reptiles are not harmed. A slightly larger area will be subject to phased clearance than originally proposed, however it will still be a narrow strip at the site margins, for which phased clearance remains a proportionate level of mitigation, given the area concerned and low numbers of reptiles recorded.

The proposed changes offer an opportunity to integrate hibernacula into the new banks to enhance the site's value to reptiles and other wildlife. Indicative hibernacula locations are shown within the landscape plans.

The county ecologist's comments are noted regarding natural colonisation vs seeding - either would ultimately produce a favourable outcome, or a combination of the two, seeding in some areas, e.g. around hibernacula to aid quick establishment, and allowing natural colonisation in



other areas to increase the habitat diversity. Should seeding be required, seeds would be sourced from a reputable, UK supplier.

Lighting

The proposed lighting has been redesigned to further reduce levels of light spill onto the boundary vegetation. The changes include:

- Lowering column heights from 8m to 6m.
- Converting the eastern boundary fence to a 2.4m solid panel fence to reduce light spill.
- New tree planting in the north of the site.

The associated light diagrams show that light levels on the boundary hedges have been significantly reduced, to less than <0.5 lux along the vast majority of length of the hedge. Additional tree planting in the north of the site will provide further improvements.

Ongoing surveys

Dormouse and bat surveys are ongoing.

Dormouse tube checks are planned for April and May 2022 to achieve the 20 points required on the index of probability. However, as dormouse presence has been confirmed, appropriate mitigation has been designed, which includes:

- Protection of the boundary vegetation throughout the construction period with Heras fencing, to ensure that dormouse habitat is not disturbed.
- Minimising light spill onto the hedges / boundary vegetation (see above).
- Strengthening the northern boundary with additional tree planting.
- Inclusion of species of value to dormice in the landscaping proposals, e.g. hazel and honeysuckle.

Bat activity surveys will continue in April, May and June 2022. As noted previously, bat activity levels have been lower around plots 500-502 than elsewhere within the wider masterplan area. Results will be monitored over April, May and June, however the following measures are planned to ensure that the site retains its value to bats:

- Alterations to lighting design to minimise light spill onto the hedges / boundary vegetation (see above).
- Control / regulation of any lighting required during construction through inclusion of appropriate measures in the CEMP.

- Additional planting in the north of the site to strengthen the linear vegetation on this boundary.
- Provision of bat boxes on the eastern elevations of the new buildings.

We hope this provides sufficient clarity on the above points, please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely



Paul White
Principal Consultant
For and on behalf of Greengage Environmental Ltd