

# HAVANT THICKET RESERVOIR

RESERVED MATTERS APPLICATION

NORTH WEST CORNER

PLANNING STATEMENT



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## Background

This Planning Statement supports the application for the approval of Reserved Matters relating to Phase 9 – North West Corner and Visitor Centre, in connection with the Section 73 Planning Permission reference APP/24/00312 as amended by Non Material Amendment approvals APP/25/00837 and APP/25/00859 (hereafter referred to as the 'Section 73 permission') for a reservoir and associated infrastructure on land at Havant Thicket, adjacent to Sir George Staunton Country Park and Middle Park Way, Havant.

As part of the hybrid consent, outline planning permission was granted for the North West Corner and Visitor Centre, subject to the approval of reserved matters pursuant to Condition 2 (together with the detail specified in Condition 7).

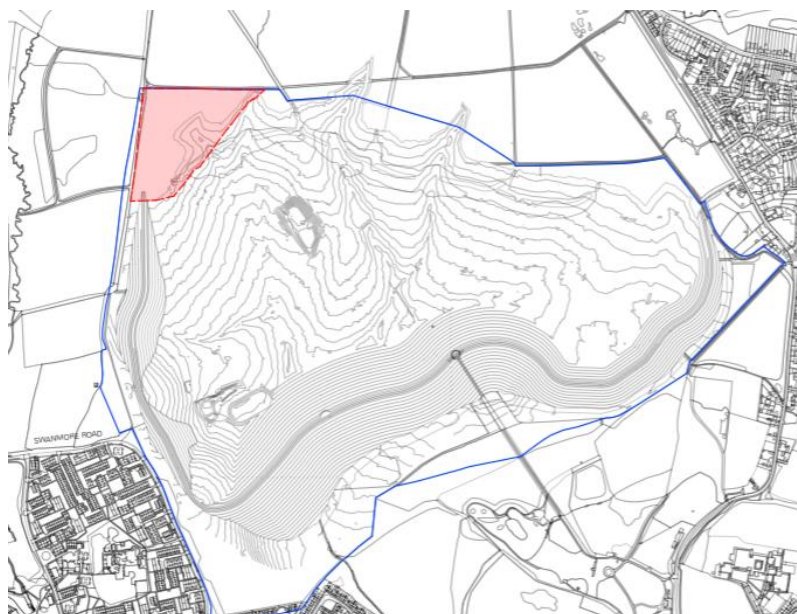
This application is therefore seeking approval of the following Reserved Matters for Phase 9 – North West Corner and Visitor Centre, the details of which are set out in Section 2 of this Statement:

- Siting
- Scale
- External appearance
- Landscaping

This Reserved Matters Application (RMA) is for the red line area as shown on Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Location of Reserved Matters within Overall Reservoir Boundary**

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## Overview of the Approved Reservoir Scheme

The reservoir, when constructed, will be filled with surplus water drawn from the springs at the Bedhampton Pumping Station when flows are at their highest in Winter and stored at the reservoir to enable provision of supply to Portsmouth Water customers in the summer months as required. The increase in water supplies available on completion of the scheme will help Portsmouth Water to free up existing supplies in the west of the catchment area to share with Southern Water's customers to meet the region's challenges in the future, in particular relating to abstraction licence changes, predicted population growth and climate change which will all place pressure on meeting future water supply demand.

Complementary to its infrastructure resilience function, the reservoir will provide a new recreational facility/resource in an area which the community can access on foot, by bike, or through existing bus routes. It offers further opportunities to improve the wider footpath, cycleway, and bridleway networks in the area.

The Reservoir will provide a new wetland habitat and associated area for nature conservation. The proximity of the reservoir to the internationally important Langstone Harbour means that it can be used as a safe retreat for roosting birds when there is disturbance in the Harbour (Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC)).

The focal point of the recreational facilities for the reservoir will be the north west corner of the reservoir, and a series of facilities will be provided in this area including:

- A Visitor Centre, providing a focus for public engagement with the reservoir, with a reception and exhibition area, shop, café and restaurant facilities, an education / conference space, staff spaces, and toilets. We are proposing that this building has a location set over water.
- A Visitor Hub Building comprising an energy centre, with all services which are better located on land, a café kiosk, catering stores and public toilets, including a Changing Places facility.
- An education bird hide, suitable for usage by a half-class group of 15 students.
- Associated landscape elements including car and bus parking, covered cycle stands picnic and play areas, paths, roads and boardwalks, signage and wayfinding, other ancillary facilities and infrastructure, and CCTV coverage.

Outline planning permission has been granted for these facilities and the detailed design is the subject of this RMA.

## Reserved Matters Application Documents

This RMA comprises the following documents:

- Covering letter
- Application form
- Design and Access Statement
- Planning Statement (this document)

- Statement of Community Involvement Statement of Conformity with the Environmental Statement (Phase 9 – North West Corner)
- Application drawings – as set out in Section 2 of this Planning Statement

## Environmental Impact Assessment

The original planning application was supported by an Environmental Statement (ES) which reported the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The EIA process was based on the parameters for a range of elements as set out in the Development Specification that was submitted and approved as part of the respective planning permissions.

An ES Addendum (2024) was submitted with the Section 73 application, which concluded that there are no new or materially different significant effects to those identified in the 2020 ES.

A Statement of Conformity with the Environmental Statement (Phase 9 – North West Corner) has been submitted as part of this RMA. The report considers whether the proposed detailed design for the North West Corner is likely to give rise to any new or materially different effects to those identified in the 2020 ES and the 2024 ES Addendum. The report concludes that the Phase 9 North West Corner design submitted for Reserved Matters approval does not give rise to any new or materially different effects to those reported in the 2020 ES and the 2024 ES Addendum.

## Public Consultation and Engagement

Engagement on recreational facilities and the Visitor Centre began during the preparation of the original planning application for the Havant Thicket Reservoir (HTR), which was approved in October 2021. Furthermore, there has been ongoing engagement on HTR, including on the issue of recreation, with around over 70 community representatives and other stakeholders via the dedicated reservoir project Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG). The SAG was first established in 2004 and has been meeting on a regular basis since 2020.

Detailed community engagement to inform this RMA began in April 2025. This engagement has included a broad stakeholder community through SAG meetings and workshops, specific engagement with local under-18 stakeholders and student ambassadors and formal customer research.

Full details and outcomes of the consultation are set out in the Statement of Community Involvement submitted as part of the RMA.

## Pre-application advice

A series of pre-application discussions have taken place with Havant Borough Council (as Local Planning Authority (LPA)) and East Hants District Council throughout 2025-2026. These have focussed on:

- The principle of the development and accordance with the Section 73 permission
- The planning condition discharge applications to accompany the RMA

- Siting and scale of the north west corner and Visitor Centre
- External appearance and materials
- Landscape design
- Ecology
- Sustainability

Pre-application discussions have also been held with Hampshire County Council on highways matters and the interface with Staunton Country Park to the south east, and with Forestry England on the interface with Havant Thicket woodland to the north.

The pre-application advice and detailed comments received has informed the design and the approach to the applications. The advice received indicates that the LPA considers the RMA proposals to aligned with the approved outline permission:

- The LPA confirms that the proposed Visitor Centre complies with the approved scheme parameters, including the approved location within the 100m × 70m development zone and being significantly below the maximum permitted dimensions of 35m × 55m and 10m in height. It also confirms that the approved parameter plans allow the Visitor Centre to be located either on land or over water within the designated zone.
- The LPA considers that the proposed siting reflects the vision established by the original committee report, with the Visitor Centre appropriately located on the waterfront within the north-west corner. They also state that the architectural design, scale and appearance are appropriate to its setting and successfully reflect the aspirations of the outline permission.
- The LPA confirms that the Visitor Hub Building is capable of being considered as part of the RMA
- The LPA's Ecologist raises no substantive biodiversity concerns, supports the proposed landscape zoning, reedbeds, boardwalks, native-led planting and educational opportunities, and considers the proposals to offer significant benefits for both wildlife and public enjoyment.
- The LPA welcomes the inclusion of low-carbon materials, solar PV and opportunities for biodiversity-focused roof design, while encouraging these measures to be enhanced where practicable. They also support the proposed nature-themed play space, interpretive signage and educational facilities as integral elements of the Visitor Centre.

## Structure of this Planning Statement

This Planning Statement provides:

- A description of the Reserved Matters development relating to Phase 9 – North West Corner and Visitor Centre (Section 2)
- A description of how the proposals comply with the development parameters and the development specification set by the Section 73 permission in Section 3.

- A description of the Reserved Matters developments accordance with planning policy (Section 4).
- A summary and conclusion (Section 5).

This planning statement sets out that the siting, scale, appearance, and landscaping of the Visitors Centre accords with the approved outline design parameters and development specification. The Statement also explains how the submitted information serves to provide sufficient detail to discharge the RMA.

## Discharge of Planning Conditions

Separate applications are also being made to the LPA to discharge the requirements of the various design related conditions attached to the Section 73 permission relevant to this phase of the development. These include:

- Condition 13 – Disability Access
- Condition 18 – Car Park Barrier Details (as part of the Condition 28 submission)
- Condition 20 – Lighting Strategy
- Condition 27 – Tree Survey and Updated Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan (combined with conditions 18 and 28)
- Condition 28 – Landscape Details (combined with Conditions 18 and 27)
- Condition 29 – Renewable Energy Strategy
- Condition 32 – Flood Risk Scheme (combined with Condition 34)
- Condition 34 – Foul and Surface Water Sewerage Disposal (combined with Condition 35)
- Condition 36 – Ecological Mitigation, Compensation and Enhancement Measures

Conditions related to the construction of this phase of the development will be submitted at a later date, when a contractor has been appointed.

**Figure 2: Visualisation of the North West Corner of the Reservoir, including the Visitor Centre**



## 2. DESCRIPTION OF RESERVED MATTERS DEVELOPMENT

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### Introduction

The site for these proposals is situated within the north-west corner of the wider HTR Project. Access to the site is provided on Manor Lodge Road (B2149), situated between Horndean to the north and Durrants Stream to the south. The site is bounded by Warren Park to the south-west, Havant Thicket to the north, Rowlands Castle to the east and Staunton Country Park to the south-east.

The proposed location for the new Visitor Centre and associated facilities is currently the site compound for the reservoir contractor. It is intended that as much of the existing site topography, site drainage and parking areas will be reused as possible.

The application boundary also incorporates a compartment of the reservoir wetlands, which has played a key role in informing the design response.

Inherently, the north-west corner site has a strong visual and spatial relationship with the viewing platform located to the south-east, on the opposite side of the reservoir.

This section provides a description of the development for which reserved matters approval is sought, together with a detailed review of each reserved matter for the key components of the development.

### Description of the Development

The HTR Visitor Centre and Associated Recreational Facilities project in the North-West portion of the reservoir site comprises the following elements:

- A Visitor Centre, providing a focus for public engagement with the reservoir, with a reception and exhibition area, shop, café and restaurant facilities, an education / conference space, staff spaces, and toilets. We are proposing that this building has a location set over water.
- A Visitor Hub Building comprising an energy centre, with all services which are better located on land, a café kiosk, catering stores and public toilets, including a Changing Places facility.
- An education bird hide, suitable for usage by a half-class group of 15 students.
- Associated landscape elements including car and bus parking, covered cycle stands picnic and play areas, paths, roads and boardwalks, signage and wayfinding, other ancillary facilities and infrastructure, and CCTV coverage.

This RMA covers the whole of the North West Corner of the site. Condition 7 lists a non-exhaustive list of details that should be included in the RM application, including details of any non-residential buildings. It has been confirmed by the LPA that the Visitor Hub Building

can be authorised by this RMA, as part of the overall masterplan of facilities that are to be provided in the North West Corner of the site. Full details of the siting, design, external appearance of the Hub building are provided in this RMA.

## Reserved Matters

The application is seeking approval of the following 'reserved matters' for Phase 9 – North West Corner:

- Siting
- Scale
- External appearance
- Landscaping

Each of the reserved matters is addressed below, with reference to the application drawings that provide further details.

## Drawings Accompanying this RMA

The following drawings accompany this RMA (for approval):

- 2462-UF-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0001 – Site Location Plan
- 2462-UF-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0002 – Site Block Plan
- 2462-UF-XX-GF-DR-A-0011 – Visitor Centre Floor Plan as proposed
- 2462-UF-XX-GF-DR-A-0012 – Visitor Centre Access Walkway Floor Plan as proposed
- 2462-UF-XX-GF-DR-A-0015 – Visitor Hub Building as proposed (Floor Plan, Roof Plan and Sections)
- 2462-UF-XX-GF-DR-A-0016 – Educational Bird Hide as proposed (Floor Plan, Roof Plan, Sections and Elevations)
- 2462-UF-XX-RP-DR-A-0021 – Visitor Centre Roof Plan as proposed
- 2462-UF-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0031 – Visitor Centre Sections as proposed
- 2462-UF-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0050 – Visitor Centre Elevations as proposed
- 2462-UF-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0052 – Visitor Centre Access Walkway Elevations and Sections as proposed
- 2462-UF-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0054 – Visitor Hub Building Elevations as proposed
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-0001 – Landscape Masterplan
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-0002 – Soil Management Strategy
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-0003 – Wayfinding & Signage Strategy
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-0004 – Grass & Wildflower Mix Strategy
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-0006 – Hard Landscape Strategy
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-4001 – Typical Tree Pits
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-4002 – Tree Pits on Mounds
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-4003 – Typical Paving Details
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-4004 – Typical Surface Details

- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-4005 – Typical Fence Details
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-4006 – Typical Soil Depths
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-4007 – Typical Street Furniture (1 of 2)
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-4008 – Typical Street Furniture (2 of 2)
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-4009 – Northern Car Park Entrance Barrier Control
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-4010 – Typical Pond Details
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-4011 – Culvert Plinth Detail
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-4012 – Typical Boardwalk Details (1 of 2)
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-4013 – Typical Boardwalk Details (2 of 2)
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-4015 – Southern Car Park Entrance Barrier Control
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-DR-L-4016 – Emergency Access Barrier Control
- LP2412-FIR-00-ZZ-DR-L-5001 – Landscape Planting Plan (Sheet 1)
- LP2412-FIR-00-ZZ-DR-L-5002 – Landscape Planting Plan (Sheet 2)
- LP2412-FIR-00-ZZ-DR-L-5003 – Landscape Planting Plan (Sheet 3)
- LP2412-FIR-00-ZZ-DR-L-5004 – Landscape Planting Plan (Sheet 4)
- LP2412-FIR-00-ZZ-DR-L-5005 – Landscape Planting Plan (Sheet 5)
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-SH-L-7001 – Nursery Stock Schedule
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-SH-L-7002 – Semi-Mature Tree Schedule
- LP2412-FIR-XX-XX-SH-LP-007003 – Shrub Schedule

## Siting

The Section 73 permission provides some parameters for the siting of facilities in the north west corner. Specifically, a parameter within which the Visitor Centre should be located (a 100m x 70m overall zone) and a parameter within which the Educational Bird Hide should be located (to the north of the Visitor Centre). The Section 73 permission is less prescriptive for the other elements of the north west corner.

This section provides a description of the siting and layout of the various facilities and amenities in the north west corner, with reference to a series of accompanying drawings which provide the detail.

### ***Overall Siting for the North West Corner***

The overall siting for the north west corner has been shaped by a series of defined parameters for the key buildings, and a careful and considered Landscaping Masterplan for the whole area, which provides a cohesive layout for the facilities. This is provided as a drawing accompanying the application.

The Visitor Centre is located at the heart of the development, set on the water with views overlooking HTR and The Wetlands. It is located on a diagonal treelined axis from the northern access road. This enables visitors to quickly orientate themselves as they enter the site.

The axis establishes the division between the principal areas of recreation and leisure to the south and the more naturalized areas and education to the north.

The Terrace is located on the shoreline at the centre of the axis. It forms the main pedestrian area connected to the Visitor Centre via a board walk. The Terrace provides space for orientation and way finding for the Visitor Centre facilities and the wider reservoir grounds.

Parking and trafficked areas are condensed to the western edges of the site to ensure that vehicles are excluded from areas adjacent to the reservoir and wetlands.

The main northern car park is situated on the existing areas of hard standing built for the construction compound. The secondary southern car park is located to the south with links to Warren Park. There is not direct connection between the car parks to prevent creating a short-cut across the site.

The coach drop-off is located to the north of the main axis, providing a segregated set-down and pick up point away from the main car parks to reduce congestion.

The play area is located closely to south, making it more accessible to the local community. It is located next to the picnic area.

The overall siting of the north west corner is shown on the accompanying application drawings.

The siting of the north west corner facilities has been informed by ecological considerations set out in the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan, which identifies the habitats surrounding the visitor centre as a mixture of grassland enhancement/creation, shoreline habitat creation and wetland. The LEMP recognises visitor pressure as a key human factor requiring active management, noting that visitor activity (including dogs) has the potential to disturb sensitive species, and that this has directly informed where landscape features and visitor facilities are located. The potential impacts of visitors during both construction and operation have also been assessed and further detail on how the siting has been shaped to avoid and mitigate ecological impacts is provided in the submitted Biodiversity Mitigation and Compensation Strategy under Condition 36.

### ***Siting of the Visitor Centre***

The proposed siting of the Visitor Centre has ensured that the building footprint sits within its designated 100 x 70 metre location zone identified in accordance with the Section 73 planning permission requirements, as shown on Figure 3 below.

**Figure 3: Approved Parameters and Siting of the Visitor Centre and Educational Bird Hide**



The *Outline Landscape Plan for the North West Corner* that was approved as part of the planning permission states that ‘the location of the visitor centre could be on an island or on land in this location and will be subject to further detailed design’. This is demonstrated by the extent of the parameter above.

It is proposed that the Visitor Centre is sited within the body of water forming part of the wetlands area. This location will provide huge visitor appeal due its ability to provide a distinctive and immersive experience, enabling direct engagement with the surrounding natural landscape. This approach has been used successfully by the design team at other in-water visitor centres across the UK, including at the Attenborough Nature Reserve, Nottinghamshire and Brockholes Nature Reserve, Lancashire.

Positioning the Visitor Centre within the wetlands also provides an effective security solution, removing the need for visually intrusive high-security perimeter fencing to protect the building outside operational hours. A 25-metre length boardwalk is proposed to connect the Visitor Centre to the reservoir edge. This boardwalk incorporates a discreet drawbridge, which can be raised outside of visiting hours to prevent unauthorised access to the building.

The boardwalk to the Visitor Centre has been intentionally aligned with the central pedestrian route from the proposed car parking, establishing a strong visual axis running from north-west to south-east. This arrangement creates a clear and intuitive sense of arrival and wayfinding for visitors approaching the site.

The location of the building on water, set onto a floating pontoon, has other benefits. It reduces the sub-structural requirements for the building, eliminating the need for extensive piled foundations beyond four locating posts in each corner of the building. The specific location also offers enticing views in each of four directions with external viewing terraces on all sides; by contrast a land-locked building would only be likely to have an appealing view over the water in one direction.

Additionally, from our experience of directly relevant precedent projects, and from the positive feedback from many stakeholders, we recognise that people find buildings on water an exciting and attractive proposition, and we believe that the extensively glazed, naturally lit and ventilated building design with its expressive timber frame and roof structure and wide usage of natural materials will be a joyful place to visit.

This not only will provide a lovely and engaging facility for the local community but also an enticement for people to engage with nature more deeply.

The building will also feature exhibition display panels helping explain the project and the wildlife at the reservoir.

The siting of the Visitor Centre is shown on the is shown on the accompanying application drawings.

### ***Siting of the Educational Bird Hide***

The siting of the bird hide has ensured that it is located within its designated 15 x 40 metre location zone presented within the approved plans and shown on Figure 3.

The intention for this building is to be specifically an Educational Bird Hide, providing students and children with an introduction into observing birds and other wildlife. Because of this, the bird hide has been positioned to the north-eastern corner of the Visitor Centre and associated recreational facilities portion of the reservoir site, beyond the proposed meadows area, to ensure it benefits from a quieter location. The building is located on the land's edge to allow a greater viewer experience of the reservoir. It has been positioned at the head of connecting walkways, creating a triangle of access between itself, the Visitor Centre and coach drop off area, which is where school groups will arrive to the site.

The siting of the Educational Bird Hide is shown on the is shown on the accompanying application drawings.

### ***Siting of the Visitor Hub Building***

We have recognised the benefit of some accommodation being located on land; especially those elements of the building which require regular servicing and access, including food stores and plant accommodation; and have therefore proposed an on-land Visitor Hub Building.

This accommodation would also provide public toilets and a café kiosk, serving, amongst others, people using the picnic and play areas, with a location immediately adjacent to this area. This approach provides an alternative offer for walkers and those with children using the play area and added resilience to the Visitor Centre on busier days.

The Visitor Hub Building has been carefully sited within the overall Landscaping Masterplan close to the play area, picnic and car park facilities.

## Scale

As part of the hybrid permission (approved in 2021), the overall scale of the recreational facilities in the north west corner was defined, as well as parameters for the scale of both the Visitor Centre and the Educational Bird Hide.

### Scale of the North West Corner Facilities

The north west corner area extends to approximately 57,000sqm. The scale of the north west corner facilities accords with the Section 73 planning permission. A medium level of usage was consulted on and informed the original planning application and is reflected in a series of parameters and specifications therein. The medium level of usage equates to a projection of 318,000 visitors per annum, and a commensurate level of parking provision.

This was deliberately conceived as holding a vital balance between public amenity and protection for future flora and fauna. The medium projection places high value on both ambitions and sets out to provide a setting for substantial public amenity and enjoyment, whilst creating extensive space for undisturbed habitat creation. Every design decision for both the buildings and wider landscape stems from this position of balance: from car-park numbers, to building design approaches, to the arrangement of functions within the wider landscape.

### Scale of the Visitor Centre

The Visitor Centre including its surrounding terraces is proposed to be 27m wide by 47m long and 8m from finished floor level to top of turrets. This accordingly is less than the maximum allowance sizes permitted by the Outline Planning Consent of 35 x 55m and maximum height of 10m.

The Boardwalk connecting the visitor centre to land is proposed to be approximately 25m long, this includes a drawbridge element which is proposed to be 3m long.

### Scale of the Educational Bird Hide

The Educational Bird Hide is proposed to be 7.7m long by 7.7m wide and 4.75m from finished floor level to top of roof. This is less than the maximum allowance sizes permitted by the Section 73 planning permission.

### Scale of the Visitor Hub Building

This is a new provision but is a significantly smaller building than the Visitor Centre, measuring 7.4m from finished floor level to top of roof. Its footprint is proposed to be 13.7m long x 13.7m wide.

## External Appearance

The external appearance of the proposed buildings has been considered holistically, to ensure that there is consistency and cohesion in the design across the buildings, adding to the sense of place in the north west corner of the reservoir as a whole. This section explains the key features of the external appearance of each building.

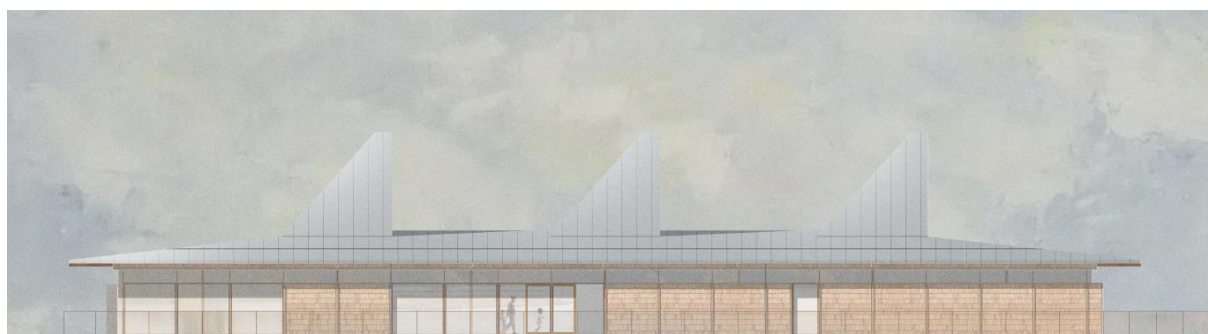
### External Appearance of the Visitor Centre

The external appearance of the Visitor Centre is shown on the accompanying application drawings and is described in detail in the accompanying Design and Access Statement:

As set out in Section 3 of this Planning Statement, the external appearance of the Visitor Centre is in accordance with the parameters, principles and standards set out in Condition 2 of the approved Section 73 permission and the associated Development Specification.

The proposed Visitor Centre design is simple, and relatively modular in approach, seeking to use as much of the available site-won oak as possible, to provide both the structural frame for the building and the external wall cladding and floor boards. The use of site-won oak for the building frame has been carefully developed for efficiency and visual appeal, with triangulating roof members left on show.

### Figure 4: Artist's impression of the Visitor Centre elevation



The low-pitch hipped roof is punctuated with 3 steeply pitched turrets providing internal drama, external character and additional natural light and ventilation opportunities. The large overhang of the roof provides sheltered space and avoidance of solar gain; and has been optimised with the services engineer using parametric modelling to provide the most effective overhang distance and design, with an overhang set at 1500mm.

Proposed building materials are selected to be hard-wearing, to meet WELL building recommendations<sup>1</sup>, to have ultra-low embodied carbon wherever possible and to be affordable within the project budget. Internal and external walls will use hempcrete cassettes, which have excellent design life characteristics and ultra-low embodied carbon, as well as an attractive appearance.

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<sup>1</sup> The WELL Building Standard is a globally recognised, performance-based certification system administered by the International WELL Building Institute (IWBI). It focusses on design, operations and behaviours in the built environment to actively support human health, happiness and well-being.

**Figure 5: Artist's impression of the Visitor Centre**



External wall cladding will use site-won oak shingles, with large glazed openings to maximise views. Both the windows and external terraces deliberately frame views in several directions, noting that the wetlands environment affords good views out to the reservoir and back towards the land. All glazing will be Bird Protection Glass: which is invisible for humans but will protect against risk of bird strike.

The roof will be fully supported stainless steel, which has an outstanding design life, with the underside of ceilings to the main spaces lined with oak boarding.

### **External Appearance of the Educational Bird Hide**

The external appearance of the Bird Hide is shown on the accompanying application drawings and is described in detail in the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

The Bird Hide will use 450mm thickness rammed earth external walls; where the robustness of the walls will provide good protection against vandalism and general wear and tear. These will use site won clay: ideally drawing from the four types of clay found on site if this proves possible.

**Figure 6: Artist's impression of the Educational Bide Hide**



The hide will accommodate a half-class group of students with two teachers and will be very minimally serviced. Shutters open to provide discrete viewing slots to observe wildlife. It is proposed to use site-won clay rammed earth walls for external walls capped with stainless steel cladding at high level, along with stainless steel roofing. This long-life design approach maximises the design and procurement efficiency of using similar materials to the main Visitor Centre.

The access door will be fabricated from corten or similar. Wherever we have noted above using site-won materials there are considerable environmental benefits. The key advantages in each case will be reduced costs, reduced haulage journeys, reduced embodied carbon, and a greater sense of place for the character of the project.

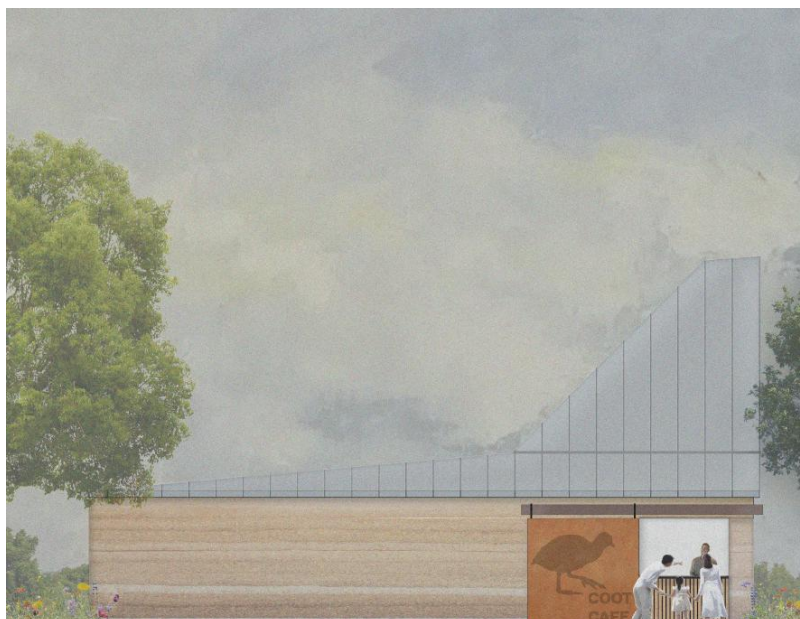
### **External Appearance of the Visitor Hub Building**

The external appearance of the Visitor Hub Building is shown on the accompanying application drawings and is described in detail in the accompanying Design and Access Statement:

The Visitor Hub Building will use also use 450mm thickness rammed earth external walls with a site won dressed sandstone plinth to protect the rammed earth walls from groundwater degradation.

The roof will comprise a fully supported standing seam stainless vertical cladding, with a turret to reflect that of the Visitor Centre. A steel sliding security shutter with café branding will also be provided to the kiosk window.

**Figure 7: Artist's impression of the Visitor Hub Building**



## Landscaping

The landscaping proposals for the north west corner are shown on the accompanying application drawings and described in detail in the accompanying Design and Access Statement:

As set out in Section 3 of this Planning Statement, the landscaping proposals for the north west corner are in accordance with the parameters, principles and standards set out in Condition 2 of the approved Section 73 permission and the associated Development Specification.

The landscape strategy seeks to create a high-quality visitor destination whilst maintaining the ecological value of the reservoir environment. The proposals are founded on a balanced approach that combines public access, recreation, education and enjoyment with the creation and protection of habitats associated with the reservoir and surrounding countryside.

The landscape framework comprises a series of interconnected spaces and features centred around the Visitor Centre, including car parking areas, pedestrian and cycle routes, boardwalks, picnic and seating areas, a children's play area, pond-dipping facilities, interpretation features, signage and wayfinding, cycle parking, public art and associated visitor infrastructure. The proposals are designed to integrate with the wider network of recreational routes around the reservoir and adjoining countryside.

A key component of the scheme is the creation of a varied mosaic of landscape character areas that reflect the local landscape setting. These include wetland habitats, reedbeds, marginal aquatic planting, species-rich meadow grassland and native woodland planting. Together these elements provide ecological connectivity, enhance biodiversity and create a strong landscape setting for the Visitor Centre and associated recreational facilities.

The northern part of the site is designed to provide a transition between the visitor facilities and the more sensitive ecological areas surrounding the reservoir. Extensive meadow planting, woodland buffers and reedbed habitats are proposed to provide habitat creation opportunities, reinforce the natural character of the site and help manage visitor movement. Boardwalks and viewing areas are incorporated within these areas to allow visitors to experience the wetlands whilst minimising disturbance to wildlife.

The planting proposals utilise predominantly native species and are structured around a hierarchy of woodland planting, avenue tree planting, meadow grassland and wetland planting. Woodland planting will strengthen links between existing areas of woodland surrounding the reservoir, whilst avenue tree planting will provide visual structure, aid wayfinding and soften the appearance of the car parking areas and access routes.

The recreational offer is focused around a substantial nature-based play area located close to the main visitor hub. The play space incorporates a range of equipment and activity zones suitable for different age groups, including climbing, balancing, swings, water play and informal play opportunities. Earth modelling, planting and seating areas are integrated throughout the play environment to create an attractive and inclusive destination that encourages longer visits and supports the overall visitor experience.

The landscape proposals also place significant emphasis on accessibility, safety and legibility. A network of accessible pedestrian and cycle routes links the Visitor Centre, bird hide, play facilities, parking areas and wider recreational routes. Wayfinding, interpretation, lighting, seating and other public realm elements are incorporated throughout the site to support visitor orientation, comfort and enjoyment while maintaining the natural character of the reservoir setting.

### 3. ACCORDANCE WITH OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION

The principle of the north-west corner RMA development is established by the outline planning permission. This section explains how the submitted details accord with the following key aspects of the planning permission:

- Description of development
- Development specification (including parameters and design principles)
- Approved drawings
- Planning conditions
- The Environmental Statement
- Relevant planning obligations

#### Accordance with the Description of Development

The proposed development which is the subject of this RMA accords with the description of development in the outline planning application, which states (emphasis added):

*Outline application for (matters to be considered outlined in Table 2.2 in the submitted Development Specification) control house partially incorporated within landscaped earth mounding adjacent to the south west embankment; together with provision of other earth embankments. **Construction of a visitor centre / cafe, with storage areas and welfare facilities to the northwest of the reservoir to be used for recreational and education purposes; Provision of picnic area(s) and children's play area(s).** Access routes from both junctions to the visitor car park; **visitor car park comprising 193 car parking spaces and between 70 and 75 overflow spaces plus spaces for staff, coach/minibus and disabled drivers sited to the north west of the reservoir.** Creation of a permanent wetland on the northern side of the reservoir and **construction of bird watching hide/screen(s); recreational facilities for public amenity. Provision of perimeter tracks and a network of bridleways, cycle paths and footpaths; Construction of a slipway on the western bank of the reservoir for operational use only and a small section of the proposed pipeline (210m).***

#### Accordance with the Development Specification

The development is required to be carried out in accordance with the Development Specification that was submitted and approved as part of the Section 73 planning permissions. This is the key document that sets out the approved parameters and expectations for how the detailed design would be developed.

Specifically, the Development Specification requires the RMA for the North West Corner to accord with:

- Scheme Parameters – Table 2.2 of the Development Specification
- Scheme Environmental Design Principles – Paragraph 3.2 of the Development Specification
- Detailed Design Standards and Principles – Paragraph 3.3 of the Development Specification
- Specification

The following tables set out how the RMA for the North West Corner accords with these.

#### ***Accordance with the Scheme Parameters***

The following scheme parameters, as set out in the approved Development Specification, have informed the preparation of the reserved matters and associated planning condition applications in relation to the North West Corner.

**Table 1: Accordance of the RMA with the Scheme Parameters**

| <b>Scheme Parameters (Section 73 permission)</b>                                            | <b>Accordance of RMA</b>                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The maximum envelope for the Visitor Centre shall be 35m x 55m, and a maximum height of 10m | The Visitor Centre including its surrounding terraces is proposed to be 27m wide by 47m long and 8m from finished floor level to top of turrets. This accordingly is less than the maximum allowance sizes permitted. |
| Maximum envelope for the Bird Hide of 9m x 20m and a maximum height of 5m                   | The Educational Bird Hide is proposed to be 7.7m long by 7.7m wide and 4.75m from finished floor level to top of roof. This is less than the maximum allowance sizes permitted by the Section 73 planning permission. |

#### ***Accordance with the Scheme Environmental Design Principles***

The following environmental scheme design principles, as set out in the approved Development Specification, have informed the preparation of the reserved matters and associated planning condition applications in relation to the North West Corner.

**Table 2: Accordance of the RMA with the Environmental Design Principles**

| <b>Environmental Design Principles</b>                                                                                                        | <b>Accordance of RMA</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Create a safe environment to work and play. Use creative and intelligent design to minimise any short and long-term health and safety issues. | The design meets all regulatory and best practice guidance for inclusive and safe usage for all. Passive supervision principles are included so that people are on view inside and outside the buildings: corridors are eliminated and the play area is surrounded by a viewing mound for parents. The education suite in the visitor centre has discrete facilities, including |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | toilets so that good safeguarding practices can be effected.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Maintain and integrate with the rural landscape character and woodland setting, through the design layout and material selection process, and where possible developing soft engineering solutions - limiting structures and ancillary clutter.                               | The design maximises natural materials: oak framing, oak cladding shingles, timber play equipment, rammed earth and hempcrete walls to integrate with the rural character. External structures are minimised with no extraneous clutter.                                                                                                                                             |
| Design to be sympathetic to and blend in with the historic park and gardens landscape. Specifically considering Impact on setting and views to and from the designated sites including the Grade II listed park and gardens, conservation area and South Downs National Park. | The designs are sympathetic to their heritage setting, with careful and considered designs giving the building structures character without being visually obtrusive. The use of natural materials helps the designs blend in well to their sensitive setting.                                                                                                                       |
| Design to minimise whole life costs such as maintenance and need for replacement ensuring durability in a challenging public setting and flexibility in the design to manage future requirements.                                                                             | The visitor centre is protected by its on-water setting with a drawbridge to mitigate against out of hours usage. The timber frame and clad building is robust: oak shingles and stainless-steel roofs can achieve a design life of up to 100 years. The Educational Bird Hide and Visitor Hub Building utilise rammed earth walls for robustness and to mitigate against vandalism. |
| Maintain and enhance public access to the site, optimise opportunities to link to existing walking, cycling and bridleway routes.                                                                                                                                             | The design maintains and enhances public access by suitable pathways and cycleways connecting with other routes around the reservoir, making these routes suitable for visitors to the visitor centre and play area only and for visitors seeking to explore the surrounding areas including Staunton County Park.                                                                   |
| Design of the site and all facilities for all ages and abilities.                                                                                                                                                                                                             | This has been central to the design - to be accessible for all: with diverse age play equipment, education spaces across the site, and step free accessible routes and buildings throughout.                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Incorporate recreational facilities that are in keeping with the quiet enjoyment of the countryside setting, optimising health and wellbeing opportunities.                                                                                                                   | The recreational facilities promote walking and cycling, and enjoyment of nature. The on-water visitor centre and education bird hide both entice the public to enjoy flora and fauna at close hand and will be an exciting context for engendering a love of nature.                                                                                                                |
| Optimise educational opportunities in all design elements.                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Education opportunities are provide in many locations: in interpretative information panels within the visitor centre and across the landscape, in the provision of a highly-serviced education suite in the visitor centre, in the provision of an enticing education bird hide, in                                                                                                 |

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|                                                                                                                                                                                   | the presentation of ecological plant mechanisms through a window into the visitor centre's plant room, in the provision of a pond dipping area and in the educational aspects of the play area.                                                                                                                                                    |
| Maximise opportunities for biodiversity in the design of the landscape and buildings and minimise and mitigate any conflict with wildlife through forward planning.               | The soft landscape design prioritises indigenous planting and provides a great variety of species diversity for the promotion of a rich range of flora and fauna.                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Where possible avoid ancient woodland, an irreplaceable habitat, and maintain a minimum 15m gap as buffer along the boundary (apart from at boundary with Staunton Country Park). | The ancient woodland is avoided in the design.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Incorporate public art into the design in an innovative and robust way.                                                                                                           | Passive provision is made for the incorporation of public art into the landscape at a future date. Public art will utilise robust and enduring materials                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Incorporate interpretation of the wider historic landscape and connections to the Grade II* RPG at Leigh Park and Sir George Staunton Conservation Area.                          | The interpretative panels will incorporate information about the wider historic landscape and connections to the Grade II* RPG at Leigh Park and Sir George Staunton Conservation Area.                                                                                                                                                            |
| Optimise opportunities for a sustainable design where practical to include:                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Improving energy efficiency in base design, consider decentralised low carbon energy sources to achieve an overall improvement in operational energy efficiency.                  | The buildings will utilise heat pumps; and are designed for exceptionally low operational carbon usage: maximising natural light and ventilation and with exceptional air tightness and thermal performance in excess of Building Regulations requirements.                                                                                        |
| Improving climate resilience of the reservoir, ensuring management of reservoir flows, considering whole life sustainability impacts.                                             | This principle is predominantly addressed in the reserved matters submission for the main reservoir and wetlands phases submissions. However, various sustainable measures, such as passive cooling, PV cells on car parking, and heat pumps have been included in the design to increase climate resilience of the visitor centre.                |
| Minimising material quantities as much as possible and select alternative low carbon materials in design wherever possible.                                                       | The buildings have been efficiently designed to minimise footprint and maximise flexible usage (for instance the education space can integrate with the cafe to provide a larger restaurant area by opening the sliding folding door between) and to use low embodied carbon materials: rammed earth, site won oak framing, timber, and hempcrete. |
| Support the UK's Net Zero Carbon target by minimising where practical greenhouse gas                                                                                              | The buildings have been efficiently designed to minimise footprint and maximise flexible usage                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

|                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| emissions at all stages of the infrastructure lifecycle, and maximising opportunities for greenhouse gas removals through sequestration by vegetation and renewable energy generation. | (for instance the education space can integrate with the cafe to provide a larger restaurant area by opening the sliding folding door between,) and to use low embodied carbon materials: rammed earth, site won oak framing, timber, and hempcrete.                                                              |
| Design infrastructure which is resilient to expected climate change and extreme weather events                                                                                         | The infrastructure and designs have been designed to anticipate climate change and extreme weather events, including the environmental modelling of the Visitor Centre, the floating position of the building which means it can accommodate flood conditions, and the species selection in the landscape design. |

### ***Accordance with the Detailed Design Principles***

The following detailed standards and principles, as set out in the approved Development Specification, have informed the preparation of the reserved matters and associated planning condition applications in relation to the North West Corner.

**Table 3: Accordance of the RMA with the Detailed Design Principles**

| <b>Detailed Design Principles</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>Accordance of RMA</b>                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Site Access</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                             |
| Permissive paths around the Visitor Centre will be a minimum 2m wide.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | This has been applied to all paths.                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Visitor Centre</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                             |
| <p>The visitor centre should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A reception area with information about water wildlife, the historic environment, and the activities for visitors;</li> <li>- A large open plan café with large windows to give views over the wetland, with seating for up to 50 people;</li> <li>- A waterside terrace, with wildlife viewing facilities and space for additional visitors;</li> <li>- A small space where locally grown food, art and other produce could be sold;</li> <li>- A flexible education and community space, with a separate outdoor area, cloakroom, toilets and storage; and</li> <li>- A staff area with office, break room, store and toilet.</li> </ul> | All these facilities are provided; please refer to drawing 0011 2462-UF-XX-GF-DR-A-0011-P0 for a detailed plan of the visitor centre showing each facility. |
| Level access to be provided to all public areas, including access from the café to the terrace area.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | There is step-free level access throughout.                                                                                                                 |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
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| Wayfinding signposts and markers to the centre and hide to be provided in the landscape, in materials in keeping with the natural surroundings, with clear signage located near/on the buildings.                             | The wayfinding will be developed as part of the Site Management Plan and later planning condition discharges but will use natural robust materials with clear signage on or near the buildings.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Sympathetic lighting to be provided to routes and key facilities.                                                                                                                                                             | Please refer to application under Condition 20 which provides full details of the sympathetic lighting design proposed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| A small refuse area to be located within the visitor centre near the kitchen with the main secure bins store located within the car parking area.                                                                             | This has been provided within the kitchen area in the visitor centre, with the main secure bins store located within the car parking area.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Access for emergency vehicles will be provided from the car park.                                                                                                                                                             | Access is provided both from the north and southern access roads and through the site.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Natural materials are proposed for the exterior of the visitor centre and educational bird hide to reflect the surrounding habitats, combined with large areas of glazing to provide views across the wetlands and reservoir. | The visitor centre uses natural materials throughout including site won oak framing, oak and rubber floors, oak shingle external cladding, hempcrete internal walls, fully supported long-life stainless-steel roofing, and has extensive glazing as shown on elevations 0050 2462-UF-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0050-P0 and 0051 2462-UF-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0051-P0. The Educational Bird Hide also has extensive glazing as shown on elevations on drawing 0056 2462-UF-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0056-P0 with external walls formed on hempcrete and internal walls using timber frame studwork. |
| Where roof plant is required, this should be incorporated into the building fabric or screened.                                                                                                                               | All roof plant is incorporated into the building fabric.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| The design should incorporate natural security solutions.                                                                                                                                                                     | The visitor centre has a drawbridge to mitigate against unauthorised access, CCTV and high-quality door and window locks. The education bird hide and Visitor Hub Building utilise rammed earth external walls and steel / aluminium doors and shutters for security.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Adequate cycle parking to be provided.                                                                                                                                                                                        | This has been provided as part of the designs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Car Park</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| The design of the car park to be in keeping with the rural nature of the reservoir site and improve connectivity for wildlife between Bells Copse and Havant Thicket.                                                         | The design of the car park has been developed to be sensitive to the rural nature of the site, both in terms of layout and materials.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 5% of the total parking allocation will be for accessible parking as set out by HCC in the Parking Strategy and Guidance.                                                                                                     | The total number of parking spaces to be provided is 296, including overflow and staff spaces. Of these 17 will be accessible                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | spaces (approximately 6%), and 28 will be spaces for electric vehicle charging. There are also three bus bays & two horse drop-off bays.                                                        |
| <b>Public Art</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| A wide interpretation of public art should include use of features such as benches, walls and signposts. An integrated approach of public art with street furniture will be explored for items such as benches, cycle racks and bins. | Passive provision is made for the incorporation of public art into the landscape at a future date. Public art will utilise robust and enduring materials                                        |
| Public art should be used in part to celebrate and enhance the natural and cultural history of the area, including references to heritage features impacted by the Scheme, such as the Avenue.                                        | Passive provision is made for the incorporation of public art into the landscape at a future date. Public art will utilise robust and enduring materials                                        |
| <b>Play Space</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Spaced play to combine nature-themed playground equipment with trails and greenways will create a playful trail experience for children and families.                                                                                 | This will be developed as part of the later Site Management Plan on a site-wide level. However, the proposed play spaces in the north west corner will act as a key focus for play activity.    |
| Spaced play to be included along the shorter 2km pedestrian route through the woodland north of the visitor centre.                                                                                                                   | This is outside of the north west corner boundary, but will be developed as part of the later Site Management Plan.                                                                             |
| <b>Signage</b><br>Legible signage will be provided. Clear signage to guide visitors to the visitor centre, trails and bird watching areas. Site specific signage, which complements the natural setting will be used.                 | The wayfinding will be developed as part of the Site Management Plan and later planning condition discharges but will use natural robust materials with clear signage on or near the buildings. |

## Accordance with the Approved Drawings

Condition 3 of the outline planning permission contains a series of approved drawings with which RMAs must accord. Of specific relevance to this RMA is the *Outline Landscape Plan for the North West Corner*. This design for which approval is sought accords with this plan and the indicated parameters, as described in Section 2 of this Planning Statement.

## Accordance with Planning Conditions

This RMA has been prepared in accordance with Condition 2 of the outline planning permission which requires the submission of reserved matters in accordance with the development specification, the approved documents and drawings in Condition 3, and the specific requirements of Condition 7 which states some of the key features that this RMA must provide. Specifically:

- ✓ Consideration of the play area location (currently in proximity to the bin store, a more suitable location should be explored);

- ✓ Any non-residential buildings to achieve BREEAM 'Very Good' certification and/or contribute to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions using 'Fabric First' principles and renewable technology (i.e. solar PV);
- ✓ Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras linked to a monitoring station to provide for immediate response to incidents as they are occurring. The detailed CCTV layout, camera locations and associated technical specifications are currently being developed and will be finalised during the next stage of design. In the interests of site security, these details are not included within the publicly available planning submission, as their disclosure could compromise the effectiveness of the proposed security measures.
- ✓ Electric Vehicle (EV) parking spaces and charging points;
- ✓ Cycle parking (within a covered Sheffield stand).

### Accordance with Environmental Statement

A Statement of Conformity with the Environmental Statement (Phase 9 – North West Corner) has been submitted as part of this RMA. The report considers whether the proposed detailed design for the North West Corner is likely to give rise to any new or materially different effects to those identified in the 2020 ES and the 2024 ES Addendum.

The report concludes that the Phase 9 North West Corner design submitted for Reserved Matters approval does not give rise to any new or materially different effects to those reported in the 2020 ES and the 2024 ES Addendum.

## 4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT AND ASSESSMENT

### National Planning and Water Resources Policy

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development which, for decision taking, means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Since planning permission was granted, national policy has placed increasing emphasis on the timely delivery of strategic water resources infrastructure. Whilst HTR is already under construction and is not one of the Government's programme of nine future reservoirs, recent Government policy and announcements have reinforced the national importance of schemes such as Havant Thicket in improving long-term water resilience and supporting sustainable growth.

### Local Planning Policy

This RMA relates to the North West Corner of the approved HTR development, which lies within the administrative area of Havant Borough Council.

The adopted development plan for Havant Borough comprises:

- Havant Borough Core Strategy (2011);
- Havant Borough Local Plan (Allocations) (2014); and
- Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (2013).

Consultation has recently taken place on the emerging Building a Better Future Local Plan. However, the Plan remains at an early stage in its preparation and, in accordance with paragraph 49 of the NPPF, only limited weight can be afforded to its emerging policies. The adopted development plan therefore remains the primary basis for the determination of this application.

The local planning policy context relevant to this RMA has not materially changed since the grant of the Section 73 permission. The adopted development plan remains unchanged, whilst the emerging Local Plan continues to be at an early stage of preparation and therefore attracts limited weight. Accordingly, the policy basis against which the detailed Reserved Matters proposals fall to be determined remains substantially the same as that previously considered by the Local Planning Authority.

Having regard to the nature of the RMA, the principal planning policy considerations relate to:

- Principle of the Development
- Design Quality;
- Landscape and Green Infrastructure;
- Biodiversity;
- Sustainable Design and Climate Change; and
- Accessibility and Inclusive Design.

These matters are considered in turn below through the assessment of the individual Reserved Matters.

## Principle of the Development

The principle of the HTR development has already been established through the grant of outline planning permission and the subsequent Section 73 permission. Accordingly, this application seeks approval solely of the outstanding Reserved Matters for the North West Corner Visitor Centre and associated visitor facilities.

The adopted Development Plan identifies HTR as a strategic infrastructure project under Policy CS18, recognising its importance in securing a resilient water supply whilst delivering significant environmental, recreational and public access benefits. The submitted Reserved Matters have been prepared in accordance with the approved Description of Development, Parameter Plans, Development Specification and Design Principles and therefore give effect to the strategic objectives established through the extant planning permission. The proposals are therefore consistent with the spatial strategy of the Development Plan and the established principle of development.

## Design Quality

Policy CS16 (High Quality Design) seeks to ensure that new development achieves a high standard of architectural quality, responds positively to local character, creates safe and attractive environments and demonstrates a strong relationship with its landscape setting. These objectives are reinforced by the design principles contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

The proposed Visitor Centre has been carefully developed as a contemporary yet understated building that sits comfortably within the wider reservoir landscape. The building adopts a simple and legible form, utilises natural and low embodied carbon materials, and has been designed to maximise views whilst minimising its visual presence within the landscape. The use of site-won oak for the structural frame and external cladding, together with hempcrete wall construction, bird-friendly glazing and a restrained palette of durable materials, creates a distinctive building that reflects its unique setting. The proposals therefore deliver a high-quality design consistent with the objectives of Policy CS16

## Landscape and Green Infrastructure

The consented reservoir development lies within a shallow valley and comprises predominantly open grassland with some woodland, vegetation and ditches. The South Downs National Park lies to the north east of the reservoir site.

The wider reservoir site contains a number of areas of Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) (The Avenue, Clearing and Round Wood). The Corsican Pine Plantation is classified as Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS). Where the consented reservoir development proposed tree clearance, much of this has now taken place in accordance with the respective Section 73 planning permissions and conditions.

Due to the location of the North West Corner, it will not be visible from the South Downs National Park and does not require the removal of any additional trees or any further vegetation clearance.

Paragraph 187 of the NPPF advises that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Paragraph 189 requires great weight to be afforded to the conservation and enhancement of the landscape, scenic beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of National Parks.

Policies CS11 Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage of Havant Borough and DM8 Conservation, Protection and Enhancement Existing Natural Features of the Havant Borough Core Strategy (2011), seek to protect and enhance the special environment and heritage of the borough and to conserve, protect and enhance its natural features. Policy CS13 (Green Infrastructure) seeks to conserve and enhance the Borough's natural environment, strengthen green infrastructure networks and ensure that development is appropriately integrated into its landscape setting. The Development Plan also promotes opportunities for recreation, public enjoyment and enhanced accessibility to green infrastructure.

Landscape forms a fundamental component of the North West Corner proposals. The Reserved Matters deliver an extensive programme of native tree and woodland planting, species-rich grassland, wetland habitats, public open space, play provision, pedestrian routes and high-quality public realm which integrate the Visitor Centre into its surroundings. The landscape proposals reinforce the wider reservoir masterplan, create a welcoming experience and strengthen ecological connectivity whilst providing an attractive and accessible destination for visitors. The proposals therefore accord with the objectives of Policies CS11, DM8, and CS13

## Biodiversity

Policy CS11 requires development to conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, whilst the Development Plan seeks to ensure that opportunities are taken to improve ecological networks and secure long-term environmental benefits.

The detailed landscape proposals have been developed alongside the ecological strategy for the wider reservoir development and provide substantial habitat creation and enhancement through native woodland planting, wetland vegetation, meadow establishment and sensitive

management of visitor access. The Reserved Matters maintain the ecological principles established through the approved Environmental Statement and incorporate measures to protect wildlife whilst enhancing opportunities for nature recovery. The accompanying Statement of Conformity confirms that the proposals remain within the parameters assessed through the Environmental Impact Assessment. Accordingly, the proposals support the biodiversity objectives of the Development Plan and deliver measurable environmental enhancements.

## 5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

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This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a RMA for the North West Corner of the approved HTR development, comprising the Visitor Centre and associated visitor facilities, landscaping, parking, access and public realm.

The principle of the development has already been established through the grant of hybrid planning permission and the subsequent Section 73 permission. This application therefore seeks approval only of the outstanding Reserved Matters and demonstrates that the detailed proposals have been developed fully in accordance with the approved planning framework.

As demonstrated throughout this Planning Statement, the Reserved Matters accord with the approved Description of Development, the Development Specification and Design Principles, the approved Parameter Plans and the environmental parameters established through the Environmental Impact Assessment. The proposals have also been developed having regard to the relevant planning conditions, including those which establish specific requirements for the North West Corner development.

The submitted proposals have been carefully designed to create an attractive and distinctive visitor destination which responds positively to its unique landscape setting whilst delivering the aspirations established through the approved masterplan. The Visitor Centre adopts a high-quality architectural approach founded upon simplicity, durability and sustainability, using site-won oak, low embodied carbon materials and passive environmental design principles to create a building that is both functional and visually appropriate to its setting.

Landscape forms an integral component of the proposals, creating a welcoming arrival experience whilst reinforcing the wider environmental objectives of the reservoir development. Extensive native planting, habitat creation, public open space, play provision and pedestrian connections combine to deliver a landscape-led scheme which enhances biodiversity, strengthens green infrastructure and provides an exceptional recreational resource for both local communities and visitors.

The proposals also promote sustainable and inclusive access through the provision of accessible routes, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, covered cycle parking, high-quality visitor facilities and an integrated parking layout which supports the anticipated operational requirements of the Visitor Centre whilst respecting the character of the surrounding landscape.

The RMA has been developed in accordance with the relevant policies of the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. They represent a high-quality, sustainable and well-considered design solution which delivers the vision established through the approved planning permission whilst remaining fully consistent with the approved planning framework.

For these reasons, it is respectfully concluded that the proposed Reserved Matters should be approved, thereby enabling the delivery of the North West Corner Visitor Centre and

associated visitor facilities as an integral component of the regionally significant HTR development.

