

Havant Thicket Reservoir

Phase 7 & 8 – Landscaping and Discharge Structures

HBC ref: App/26/00679

EHDC ref: EHDC-26-1027

While I would generally support the landscape and discharge structure proposals submitted with the Phase 7 & 8 application there are some concerns that should be addressed by the LPA

before the application is approved. Information that is missing and should be provided includes;

- I. Advanced tree and hedge planting areas missing from drawings (see Appendix A). The advanced tree and hedgerow planting was approved in writing by both LPA's (East Hants District Council & Havant Borough Council) to enable the early establishment of new habitats, and to enhance the eastern wildlife corridor which was essential due to the loss of The Avenue woodland corridor. The planting is integral to the scheme and must be retained and maintained in future by the applicant. The missing areas of advanced planting and hedgerows must be added to the Phase 8 drawings **before** approval.
- II. Missing Statement of Conformity with the Environmental Statement
- III. Lack of detail on the location and construction for fencing which must be stockproof to prevent dog access, which is essential to the establishment of habitats and their protection from future disturbance (see Appendix D)
- IV. No detail provided on the location/ construction detail for stockproof gates to allow access to the protected habitat areas for future grounds maintenance, including the embankment wildflower meadows which will presumably be accessed from the operational maintenance track?
- V. Details for barriers/ gates at new and existing access points to the site have not been provided. These details are essential to control access to the site, including stopping access to motorbikes and antisocial behaviour.(see Appendix E)
- VI. The spacing of bars on the emergency drawdown structure grill must be small enough to stop a small child gaining access. This detail is missing from the drawing showing the Control Building & Courtyard Headwall.
- VII. The detail for control measures at the busy crossroads at the end of The Avenue, where cyclist and pedestrians emerging from SCP have to cross the maintenance track/ bridleway to access The Avenue Staircase to the reservoir viewpoint is missing. This is an obvious conflict point where control measures will be needed to slow down cyclists and horses. What barriers, bollards, textured or coloured surfacing will be provided at the crossing point, or on the approach, to improve safety at this busy intersection?
- VIII. The detail for the control measures where the busy multi-user crest track and the operational access road/ bridleway join other paths (new & old) to minimise conflict are missing. Noting that the new link path shown joining the crest track to the existing eastern perimeter path is surprisingly narrow for the main circular route around the reservoir.
- IX. The existing bridle way link to Manor Lodge Road is missing from the drawings (General Arrangements, Amended Eastern Section & Recreational Access drawings).
- X. No detail for the location/ surface materials to be used for the French drain at the toe of the embankment.

In addition, to obtaining further information/ drawings to clarify these details the LPA should have further discussion with the applicant regarding the following matters.

- a) The provision of a bridge or culvert to provide safe access over the Riders Lane Stream within the site. To ensure that the scheme meets the Environmental Design Principles set out on page 15 of the Planning Statement by using intelligent design to make the site safe, remove a long-term health & safety risk, while providing a shorter link to SCP from Warren Park which is more accessible to people of all abilities and ages (see Appendix B).
- b) Additional tree planting to restore ancient woodland NE and east of Round Wood (see Appendix C)
- c) The orientation and width of the path where the multi-user crest track connects to the existing eastern perimeter path to provide a more seamless and safe transfer of pedestrians and cyclists using the circular route around the reservoir.
- d) The decision to make the entry path from the SW corner of the site a cycle access which is unnecessary as there are already 2 cycle access points along Swanmore Road and this will increase the risk of unauthorised motorcycle access to the site (see Appendix F)
- e) What additional measures will be installed at the two 90 degree bends on the narrow eastern perimeter path to slow down bikes to make future use of the existing path safer. The current hazard will increase when the numbers of visitors rise once the reservoir site opens. The path is on land owned by Portsmouth Water and the increased use that will result from the operation of the new development must be considered and addressed.
- f) Incorporating disease resistant elm into the planting mix for hedges and scrub for the benefit of invertebrates including white letter hairstreak butterflies.

If the LPA are minded to grant consent then **I would request that the following conditions be applied.**

1. To require provision of a safe means for pedestrians to cross the Riders Lane stream at Point A (Appendix B) on the boundary path, with the reason being in the interests of public safety during high flow events and to improve path connectivity to SCP. Detail to be approved by the LPA and in place before the reservoir site opens to the public.
2. Submission of a scheme for additional native tree planting to the NE and east of Round Wood to restore ancient woodland lost to be approved by the LPA. Trees to be planted within a deer fenced area the first planting season after permission is granted and thereafter maintained for a period of at least 10 years, including watering as required.
3. Details of fencing and gate locations and construction details to be submitted to and agreed by the LPA, including the provision of stockproof fencing to protect all areas of tree planting, the wildflower meadows on the embankments (top and bottom), the pools and rush pasture habitats, as well as provision of deer fencing around Round Wood to prevent public access and enable the ancient woodland to develop an understorey.
4. The details of access management measures at entrances to the site where not included on the approved drawings to be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority and **installed prior** to the reservoir site opening to the public. Discharge of this condition should be determined by the Planning Committee.

5. Details of the safety control measures that will be provided at the intersection of The Avenue and the operational access road/ bridleway to be submitted to and approved by the LPA. All approved measures to be in place before the reservoir site opens to the public.
6. Detail of the layout and control measures that will ensure the safe passage of all users from the multi-user crest path and operation access track/ bridleway with all other paths, including the existing eastern perimeter path which forms part of the new circular routes around the reservoir site.
7. Details of the safety control measures that will be provided along the existing eastern perimeter path owned by the applicant to slow down cyclists at the 2 blind bends alongside Gipsies Plain.

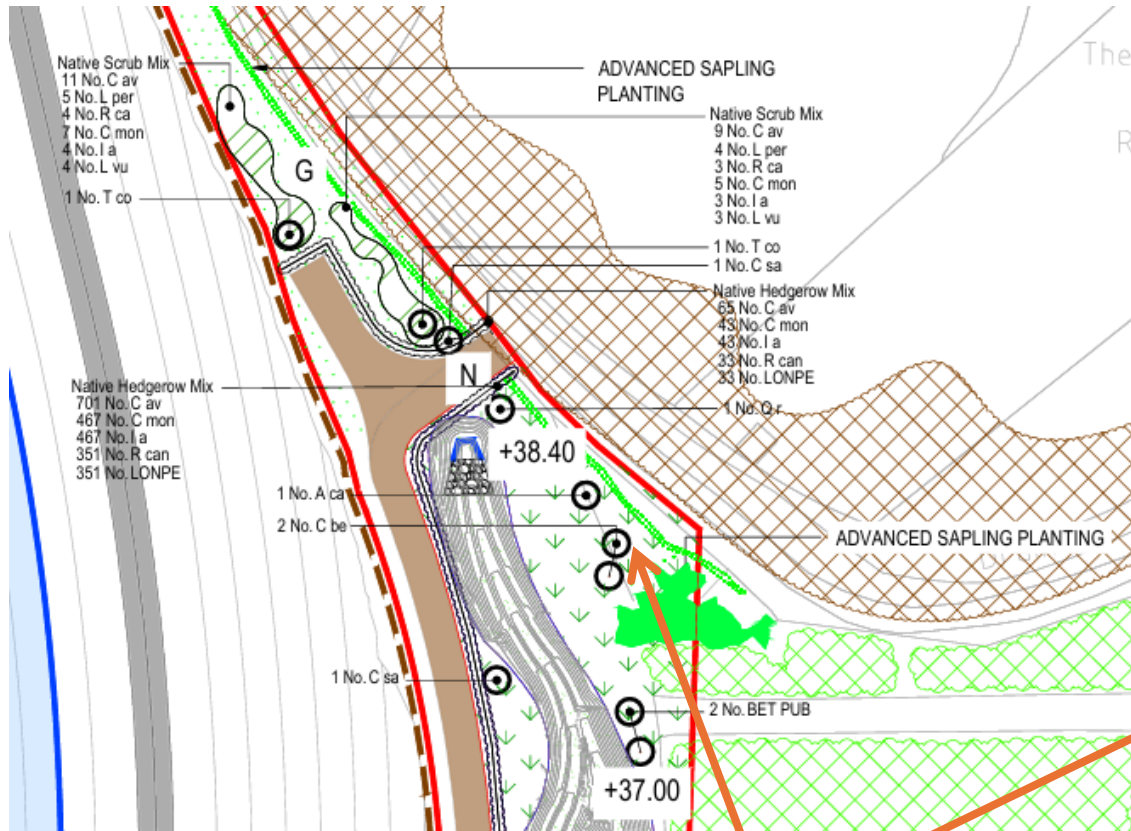
I note on the HBC planning portal that the application is allocated for a delegated decision. My understanding was that all phases of the reservoir application were to be determined by the Planning Committee. This is a critical application for the future use of the site, and it should be determined by committee to ensure that community concerns are given appropriate weight.

Havant Thicket Reservoir Project Manager (Retired)

19 October 2026

Appendix A – Existing tree and hedge planting is missing from the landscape drawings and must be added before approval

New hedgerow planted missing or obscured?



General Arrangement Sheet 5 of 5 extract



Amended Eastern Section Drawing extract

Bright green splotch area /linear feature (on map above) are not shown on the drawing key but are assumed to be the recent (2025/26) hedgerow planted alongside the existing boundary path and old bridleway infill planting. Both are missing on the Eastern Section drawing.

Note: The existing triangular area of advanced tree planting from 2018/19 north of the bright green splotch (see orange arrows above) incorrectly shown as wildflower seeding, rather than existing woodland planting. This is important as the tree planting forms part of the

thickening for the western wildlife corridor which mitigates for the loss of The Avenue and must be retained. **The missing existing planting should be shown on both the General Arrangement and Eastern Section drawing.**



General Arrangement Sheet 5 of 5 extract



Amended Eastern Section Drawing extract

Existing hedgerow planting missing from landscape drawings

This hedgerow planted in 2018/19 must be retained as it forms part of the wildlife corridor connectivity between SCP woodland and Havant Thicket. **The landscape drawings should be updated to show all the existing advanced planting before the application is approved.**

Note: Page 10 of the Statement of Community Involvement submitted with the application acknowledged that this had previously been raised by stakeholders and indicated that the drawings had been updated, but advanced planting details are still missing (see above) and need to be added.

Advance planting in the eastern wildlife corridor area should be reflected on drawings	Following concerns flagged by stakeholders that not all advance planting was reflected on drawings, the advance planting areas were re-surveyed and details passed on to design teams.	All application drawings have been updated to include advance planting in the eastern wildlife corridor, Gipsies Plain and Memory Park planting areas.
--	--	--

A further area of the advanced planting missing from the Amended Eastern Section drawing is the 6m wide rectangular area adjacent to where Cedar Drive enters the woodland'. Advanced tree planting was undertaken both north and south of the Durrants Stream to improve connectivity, with parkland standards also planted south of the stream which are not shown.

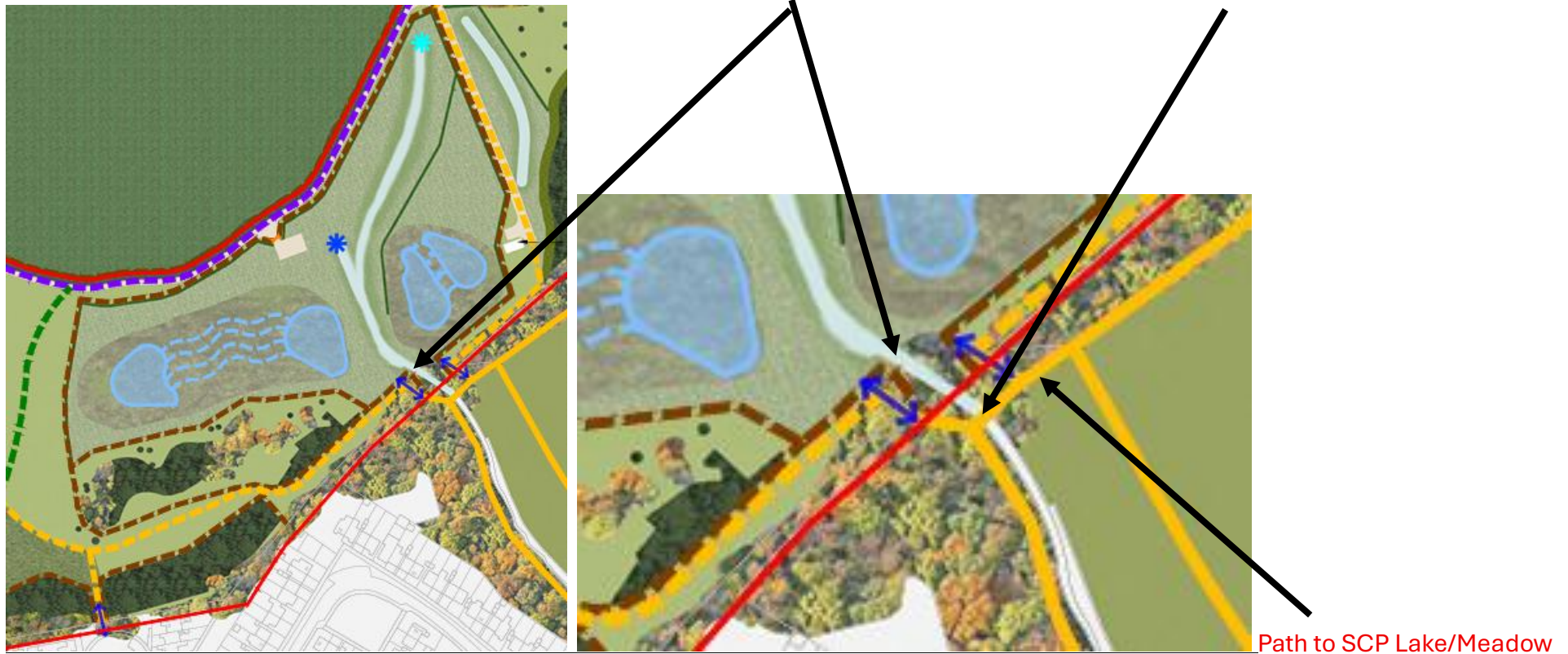
The advanced tree and hedgerow planting was approved in writing by both LPA's (East Hants District Council and Havant Borough Council) to enable the early establishment of new habitats, and to enhance the eastern wildlife corridor which was essential due to the loss of The Avenue woodland corridor. The planting is integral to the scheme and must be retained and maintained in future by the applicant. The missing areas of advanced planting and hedgerows must be added to the Phase 8 drawings before the application is approved.

Note A1: The additional hedgerow, tree and scrub planting close to the Manor Lodge Road paddock (which is under threat of development) is essential as this is a narrow pinch point in the eastern wildlife corridor connecting SCP and Havant Thicket, which needs to be reinforced and all vegetation maintained. If trees die, they must be replaced as part of the landscape maintenance plan for approved planting. In order for this to be a requirement all of the landscaping including that already completed must be shown on the landscape plans to be approved.

Note A2: It would be helpful if the drawings for Phase 8 also showed the landscaping approved in relation to the previous S73 and Southern Access Road applications, so that the relationship between different planting areas can be easily understood. For example, the planting either side of The Avenue Staircase feature is not shown on the current drawings, so it is not possible to see how it links to the Phase 8 fencing at the toe of the embankment to prevent dog access to the wildflower meadows on the embankment.

Appendix B – Need for a bridge or culvert to provide safe access across the Riders Lane Stream & improved link to SCP

A. Location of existing temporary works crossing B. Unsafe existing crossing (no bridge)



The LPA should discuss with the applicant retaining the existing culvert in the Riders Lane Stream at point A, which is currently used by site worker as a means of safely crossing the Riders Lane Stream to replace the unsafe crossing at point B (see arrows above) to provide a continuous path along the SW edge of the site and safer access to Staunton Country Park (SCP). At present residents have to wade through the stream to cross into SCP and negotiate very slippery steep banks in winter. Having a safe crossing to enable the Warren Park community and site visitors to get to the SCP Lake / Meadow would be a great asset to the community. It would help compensate them for years of disruption and reduced access to the site during construction of the reservoir.

- With a delay of a further 5 years in construction announced in 2026 it is the least that the Company could do for the community.

In response to a request by stakeholders for a safe crossing to be provided, the Applicant advised on page 12 of the Statement of Community Involvement.

A new pedestrian bridge over the realigned Riders Lane Stream is highly desirable to improve connectivity of existing footpaths	This request was discussed with project teams to assess feasibility or alternative solutions to provide the required connectivity.	It is not possible to provide a crossing over the section of realigned Riders Lane channel inside the reservoir site due to operational restrictions surrounding the discharge channel and possible high velocity flows.	Footpath routes have been incorporated on either side of the realigned Riders Lane channel each connecting to the embankment toe track in order to provide the requested connectivity.
---	--	--	--

- The alternative safe route to the north requires a long diversion, which means the temptation will still be for the public to cross the stream at the unsafe crossing point B to get to SCP. The length of the diversion reduces access for the elderly and those with mobility issues.
- The concern expressed by the applicant regarding discharge velocities must equally apply to the existing unsafe crossing point (B) which is only about 30m to the south.
- During a high flow emergency drawdown event it must be better for Portsmouth Water to have a safe crossing they can control, rather than know there is an uncontrolled crossing further south where people already enter the stream to cross. It is incumbent on Portsmouth Water to reduce the risk which is being created by the need for emergency discharge, including during regular testing.
- If a safe crossing point is not provided in the design now it is inevitable that a desire line will form across the river at Point A within the red line boundary. Surely, it is better to design out the problem now, rather than to try and deal with an inevitable problem retrospectively.

If the current culvert at Point A is considered too small to accommodate emergency drawdown flow it can be replaced with a larger culvert or bridge which can.

I would urge the LPA to address this long-standing health & safety concern which has repeatedly been raised with Portsmouth Water by stakeholders. It could be dealt with by a planning condition requiring a safe means of crossing the Riders Lane stream at Point A on the SW boundary path, with the reason being in the interests of public safety during high flow events and to improve path connectivity to SCP.

This would ensure that the scheme meets the Environmental Design Principles set out on page 15 of the Planning Statement, copied below for ease of reference, by using intelligent design to make the site safe, remove a long-term health & safety risk, while providing a shorter link to SCP from Warren Park which is more accessible to people of all abilities and ages.

Table 3.2 – Accordance with Scheme Environmental Design Principles

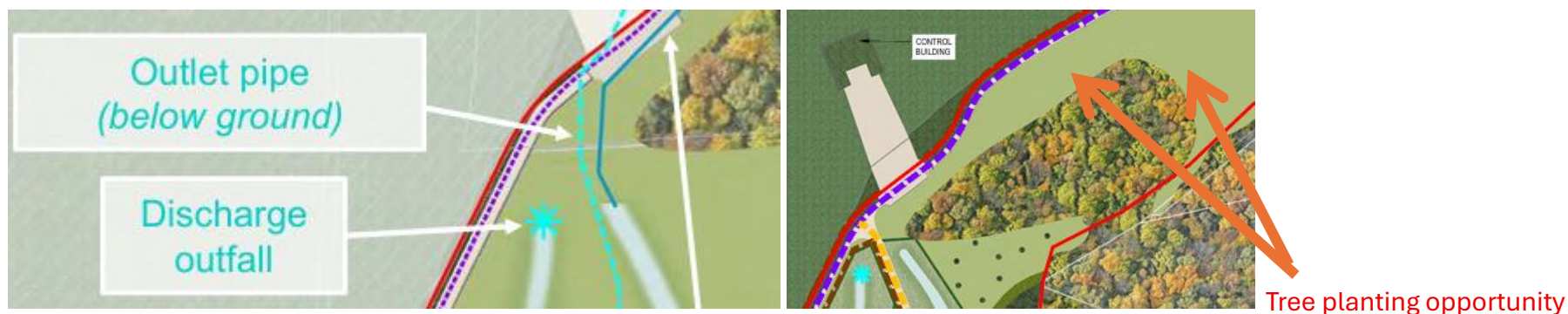
Design Principle	Accordance of reserved matters application
Create a safe environment to work and play. Use creative and intelligent design to minimise any short and long-term health and safety issues.	The Phase 7 & 8 RMA structures and landscaping have been designed to meet health and safety standards with appropriate fencing and gates.
Maintain and enhance public access to the site, optimise opportunities to link to existing walking, cycling and bridleway routes.	The Phase 7 & 8 RMA includes diverted Bridleway 120 and well as numerous other enhancements to public access across the reservoir site, including consideration of all ages and abilities and the quite enjoyment of the countryside setting.
Design of the site and all facilities for all ages and abilities.	

A fundamental requirement of the original planning consent was to improve links to the existing path network and a bridge or culvert at Point A on the SW boundary of the site would improve connectivity both within and outside the site, especially to Staunton Country Park.

Appendix C - Request for additional tree planting north & east of Round Wood to restore ancient woodland

Applicant response to stakeholder request for ancient woodland restoration planting in the Statement of Community Involvement (page 11)

Native tree planting is recommended north of Roundwood to create a graded edge to the woodland	Comments regarding removal of ancient woodland prior to the main embankment moving north are noted. Request for additional planting in this area was passed on to landscape design team for review.	It is not possible to plant trees in this area due to clashes with below ground pipework, however, the area will be seeded with EM5 Wildflower mix.	Although the embankment moved north as part of the Section 73 permission, the area between the embankment toe and Roundwood is being utilised for below ground pipework, including the eastern surface water drainage which feeds the rush pasture habitat.
--	---	---	---



Extract of workshop presentation slide – Operational details (extract) -pdf page 39 (Statement of Community Involvement) shows the alignment of the pipes between the Control House and Round Wood

There should be space to plant trees immediately to the NE and east of Round Wood (see orange arrows) to restore ancient woodland and create a transitional edge habitat that would be beneficial for wildlife and create a more natural graded landscape, while avoiding the underground pipework. The LPA should request that the applicant give this further consideration.

Appendix D – Need for more detail on the location and construction of fencing & gates, including stockproof design

There is a lack of detail on the landscape drawings for Phase 8 as to the nature of the fencing and where stockproof fencing and gates will be provided;

- Drawings show a dashed brown line which the key indicates to be a stockproof fence on the general arrangement drawings, but is simply described as ‘fencing’ on the key to the ‘Remaining Landscape Areas Eastern & Western Section’.
- The Recreational Access drawing includes a photograph of a stockproof post and rail fence, but the mesh size looks too small for small mammals to pass through, and it is not clear if the mesh reaches the ground to prevent dogs passing below. The mesh size needs to be sufficient to prevent dogs getting through, but large enough for small mammals to pass.
Note: Consideration also needs to be given to how badgers will be able to move around the site to forage, if a small mesh size is proposed will badger gates be installed at strategic points.
- There is no drawing showing the detail for fencing and gates. Is all fencing post and rail with stockproof mesh? A drawing showing the construction detail for stockproof fencing and any other fence type to be used should be provided.
- No fencing is shown around Round Wood which is immediately adjacent to a main public access route. Deer fencing needs to be provided to prevent access and enable an understory to develop across this remnant area of ancient woodland. Without appropriate fencing the ancient woodland floor will be trampled reducing its biodiversity potential.
- To the west of the realigned Durrants Stream access will be prevented by a hedge (see extract of cross section below), but this will not prevent dog access to the stream habitats unless a stockproof fence is incorporated with the hedge. No fence is currently shown, although a fence will also be needed to protect the hedge planting while it is establishing.
- No gates are shown in the dashed brown lines depicting new fences to allow access to the habitats they protect for maintenance. The drawings do not even show the location of the existing access gates to the advanced planting areas. These should be shown.

The lack of detail on fencing and the need for stockproof fencing and gates to prevent dog access to sensitive areas, including the wildflower meadows on the embankment and rush pasture/ pool areas, has previously been raised as a concern by stakeholders and some reassurance on this has been provided (see below), but the application still lacks specific details on what fencing and gates will be provided where and what the quality/ construction of that fencing will be.

Extract of Statement of Community Involvement page 9 re Applicant assurances on fencing

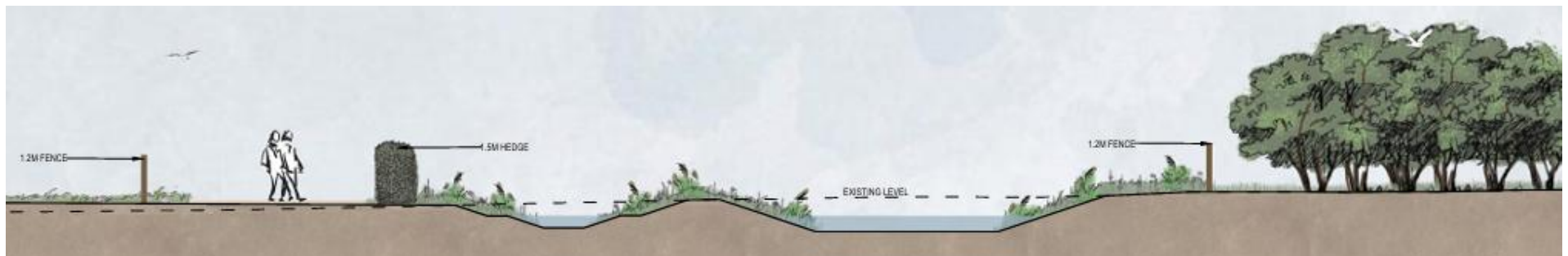
1.2m stockmesh fencing around rush pasture basins is welcomed – this should extend around the whole of the swale basin area and some (or all) of the existing goat willow	Feedback was passed on to design team producing landscaping drawings for the Reserved Matters application.	Fencing has been adjusted to connect the full perimeter of the rush pasture basins, all of the existing goat willow area and several areas of advance planting/retained vegetation. This is detailed on drawing HTR-GHD-P8-RP-DR-T-0007.
Clarity is needed on stockproof fencing on the main embankment	Fencing on the main embankment was confirmed as part of the approved Condition 28 landscaping package for the Phase 3 Reserved Matters. This includes stockproof fencing at the toe of the embankment adjacent to the maintenance track/bridleway.	

General Arrangements Drawing Sheet 1 of 5 – Design feature/ objective – specific notes (HTR-GHD-P8-RP-DR-T-0006-PO2)

E. STOCK-PROOF FENCING HAS BEEN INCORPORATED WHERE NECESSARY TO PROTECT SENSITIVE HABITATS, RUSH PASTURE AREAS, SWALES, WETLAND FEATURES AND NEWLY ESTABLISHED PLANTING WHILST MAINTAINING HABITAT FUNCTION AND LONG-TERM ECOLOGICAL VALUE.

But it is not clear on all of the drawings whether all fences are stockproof to prevent dog access, and if not, which ones are? Is it all fences as shown on the General Arrangements drawings? If so, is the construction the same for all fences? Where is the construction detail?

There is also reference on the sections to existing advanced planting areas which are currently protected by 1.8m high deer fences with stockmesh **being replaced by 1.2m fences**. For example, REALIGNED DURRANTS STREAM CROSS SECTIONS R52-R52' extract below shows the Gipsies Plain Phase 1 woodland corridor protected by a 1.2m fence, not the existing 1.8m deer fence.



The existing deer fences protecting the advanced planted areas should only be replaced when they are at the end of their useful life and the trees within are well established. Despite construction activities deer are still present at the site, 2 were seen just outside deer fenced advanced planted areas on 7/10/26, and deer will quickly re-establish in larger numbers once the construction work is complete. Planted areas must be protected from deer grazing to enable the trees to establish.

Fencing is critical to the success of habitat establishment and will also determine the wildlife value as that depends on restricting disturbance, especially dog access. If the LPA are minded to approve the Phase 8 application without first seeking more information, then I request that a condition is applied to any consent granted to require;

Details of fencing and gate locations and construction details to be submitted to and agreed by the LPA, including the provision of stockproof fencing to protect all areas of tree planting, the wildflower meadows on the embankments (top and bottom), the pools and rush pasture habitats, as well as provision of deer fencing around Round Wood to prevent public access and enable the ancient woodland to develop an understorey.

Note D1: Detail also needs to be provided by the applicant of where new fences connect to existing fences, or fences to be erected in association with other phases of the reservoir development. For example;

- *The new fence west of the Leigh Park viewpoint illustrated on the Amended Western Section drawing for Phase 8 is not shown extending to connect to the existing fence. On the General Arrangement drawing (1 of 5) the text refers to 'tie in with existing woodland'. It should refer to connecting to the existing fence to reduce access to the existing woodland.*
- *The new fence at the base of the embankment in the vicinity of the control house needs to connect to the fencing around the Control House retaining walls, but that fence is not shown so the detail is unclear.*

Not D2: Existing access gates are not shown on the application drawings, but it is assumed that these are retained. For example, the existing access gates into the field at Gipsies Plain are not shown, nor are the gates to the advanced planted areas at Memory Park and Gipsies Plain. These should be shown on the drawings to aid understanding of access provisions, including for maintenance of landscaping.

Appendix E – Lack of information on access gates/ barriers at new and existing access points to the reservoir site

Access gates and barriers are not currently shown at new and existing access points at Rowlands Castle or Warren Park.

The only exception are 2 kissing gates shown at the pedestrian access points from Well Meadow in the SW. Even adjacent to Well Meadow the detail remains unclear. It is hoped that these are new kissing gates in the inner metal railings to replace the existing stiles and that they are additional to the 2 kissing gates that are already present in the outer boundary fence to the site.

- **The LPA should confirm there will be a kissing gate on the outer and inner boundary fence at the Well Meadow pedestrian entrances to enable access for people of all ages and mobility to access on foot.**

Access gates and barriers are an essential measure to limit entry to the correct user type for that path. However, they are also important to restricting access to motorcycles/ quads etc. which pose a risk to the safety of site users and habitats, helping to reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour through intelligent design.

The Planning Statement acknowledges that this information is missing at sections 2.10 & 2.11 it states;

Following pre-application engagement with Hampshire Highways, it is considered that further dialogue and alignment with the site wide Recreation and Access Strategy from the reservoir is required before the final details of access management measures at entrances to the site can be agreed. These details have therefore not been included in the RMA application, with the exception of two kissing gates which provide access to Well Meadow residential area to the south west of the site.

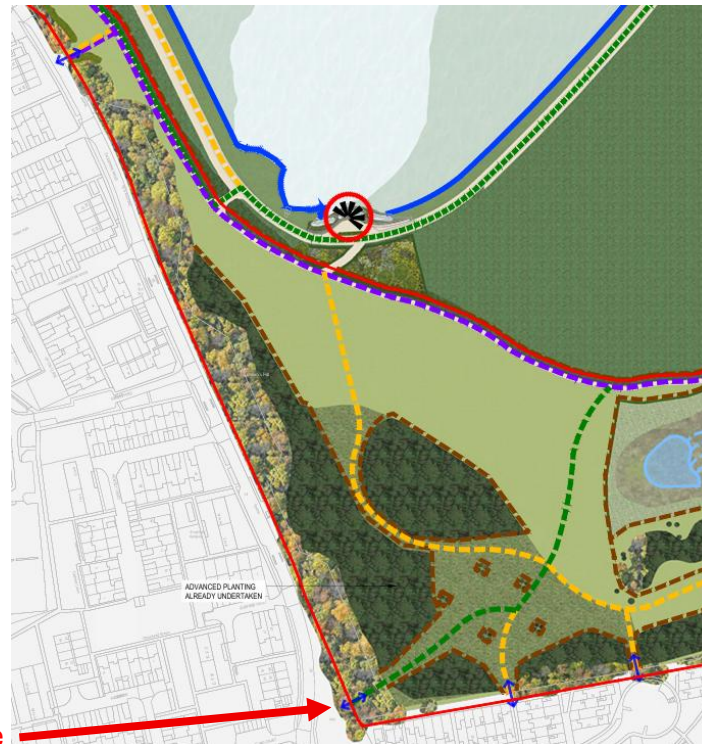
Instead, it is proposed that a planning condition is attached the Phase 7 & 8 RMA requiring the details of access management measures at entrances to the site where not included on the approved drawings to be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority prior to the reservoir site opening to the public. This will enable the final approach to be informed by the outcome of further stakeholder discussions and equality considerations, including compliance with the Equality Act 2010, and ensure there is alignment with the reservoir-wide Recreation and Access Strategy.

While it is acknowledged that control of access is a difficult balancing act with competing priorities, the area of the reservoir site has a very long history of unauthorised motorcycle use resulting in damage to habitats, health & safety risks and anti-social behaviour. Excellent provision for disabled and family access will be provided in the NW area of the reservoir site (the hub for visitor activities). **Barriers to restrict motorcycle access to the reservoir site must be a priority.**

Discharge of this condition should be determined by the Planning Committee to ensure community input on the final decision.

Appendix F – Control of the access point in the SW corner off Swanmore Road

The path that leads into the reservoir from Swanmore Road in the SW is currently a footpath with pedestrian access only via a kissing gate. On the application drawings for the Amended Western Section this is now indicated to be a made-up path for pedestrian and cycle use illustrated as a green dashed line on the Western Section drawing extract below.



SW corner existing pedestrian access with kissing gate

Making the access point in the SW corner accessible to cyclists will make it much harder to control unauthorised access by motorbikes.

Before the kissing gate was installed in the SW corner of the site the metal boundary fence here had been cut and was being used as an entry point for motorcycles. Due to its close proximity to the houses in Warren Park, youths on illegal bikes could easily enter the site without having to risk getting caught by riding on the roads. Installing the kissing gate to make a formal permissive pedestrian access resolved the problem.

It is only a short distance to the new access point close to the bus stop on Swanmore Road, which is denoted on the Phase 8 drawings as a multi-user access. Therefore, there is no need for the SW corner access point to be accessible to cyclists as they can cycle a little further north along Swanmore Road to get access to the site and the operational maintenance track/ bridleway route around the reservoir site, where the access is also close to the link track to the crest path which will be very popular with cyclists.

I would strongly recommend that the SW corner access point from Swanmore Road is retained as a pedestrian only access and that the existing kissing gate remains in place. It does not need to be a cycle access point as provision is already made at two points for cyclists off Swanmore Road.

More attention can then be focused on how to control access at the new entry point from Swanmore Road close to the bus stop and at the Southern Access Road entrance. That is likely to need to involve having a different access arrangement during the day time, with a more robust lockable barrier used in the evening/ nighttime period to control unauthorised access.