

Planning Application EHDC-26-1027 for HTR Reserved Matters Phases 7 and 8 response.

Comment on behalf of Havant Climate Alliance and Havant Friends of the Earth

Missing Information

We broadly agree with the Phase 8 landscape proposals within this application. However significant information is lacking. This must to be addressed before permission is granted, or a series of planning conditions are needed which require these omissions to be addressed. We are therefore objecting.

Need for Local Planning Committee response

The proposals significantly concern amenities that will be available to local residents, as well as the quality of future habitats for wildlife in our area. Therefore we think that any decision about this application, and any associated conditions, should to be taken by the relevant Local Planning Committees, rather than being subject to a Delegated Decision.

A. Phase 8. Landscape Proposals

1. Public Access and Motorcycles

The drawings show 10 access points to the site, although only 3 specify who they are for.

For many years there has been a problem with people on motorcycles entering the tracks through Havant Thicket and travelling through them at speed. It is very important to prevent them accessing the site. If this is not done, they will present a nuisance and a danger to other visitors, as well as causing disturbance to wildlife and degradation of carefully created habitats.

Kissing gates with a side gate openable by a radar key, might be suitable for pedestrians and some visitors with disabilities, but those with larger mobility scooters, plus cyclists and horse riders will need a different solution.

There is potential conflict between the need to allow access for all while keeping motorcycles out of the site.

The Planning Statement from Adams Hendry, points to the need for further dialogue and alignment with the Recreation and Access Strategy before final details of the access management measures are agreed. We support their proposal that the decision about this application should come with a Planning Condition requiring details of access management measures at entrances to the site ...to be submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authorities prior to the reservoir site opening to the public. We agree that there is a need for focussed stakeholder discussion about this, which also takes equality issues into account. A stakeholder workshop is required involving all potential user groups, including those with disabilities, to agree the best compromise. Any conclusion should then be subject to a Local Authority Planning decision.

Adams Hendry say that this should only apply to those entrances not included in current approved drawings. However we think that all entrances should be available for discussion by stakeholders prior to a final decision being made about access arrangements.

2. Other Access Issues

The bridleway link between the maintenance track and Manor Lodge Road is not shown.

There is no indication of what controls will be in place to ensure the safety of different types of visitor, where different paths and tracks cross e.g. will there be warning signs to slow down when approaching a junction?

3. Fencing

We are pleased to see that fencing is now planned round the toe of the embankment, and around habitat areas, although type of fencing is not specified. To be effective against children and dogs, this must be stockmesh fencing. It is stated that there will be gaps in this for maintenance access. As these gaps will also provide a route for children and dogs to access the protected habitats and the embankment, we think that any gaps should have stockproof gates. For the same reason, fencing or dense hedging should continue either side of the Avenue Staircase to join fencing or hedging along the Crest Path.

4. End of Maintenance Track in the East

Drawings show no clear link between the Maintenance Track where it ends in the east, the Eastern Perimeter Track and the Crest Path. This should be clearly defined, in order to ensure the safety of different visitor groups.

5. Eastern Wildlife Corridor

Advance tree and hedge planting to reinforce the pinch point of the eastern wildlife corridor, has not been shown in the drawings. Neither has advance planting along "Cedar Drive". Both were approved by the Local Planning Authorities. Further planting is also planned for the eastern corridor pinch-point but cannot take place until construction has been completed. Again, this has not been illustrated. The wildlife corridors provide important habitat connection and must be of sufficient width to support this.

Drawings should illustrate planned planting, before planning permission is granted.

6. South West Corner of Reservoir Site

A permanent bridge is needed to allow safe crossing across Riders Lane Stream where there is currently a temporary culvert. This is popular as it allows people to cross the stream without having to detour into Staunton Country Park. Without this people will be tempted to take their own short-cut over the stream, which will present risks when the culvert is no longer there.

There are no sign of plans to restore and reinforce ancient woodland at Round Wood. We would like to see plans for new planting of native trees, to the north-east and east of the existing Wood, clear of underground pipework.

7. Native Planting Mix

We would like to see disease resistant elm included in the planting mix for hedges and scrub, to benefit invertebrates, including the white letter hairstreak butterfly.

8. North East Corner of Reservoir

This area of landscape does not appear to have been covered by previous planning applications. The proposal is for Rush Pasture here, although we have been advised that the site will be too dry in summer to support it. We understand that design work is not yet completed for this area. Unless an effective solution can be found, we recommend that this should be left as grassland.

B. Phase 7. Spillways, Pipework and Channels

It would be useful to see an illustration of what the Spillways will look like in the landscape, as well as the diagrams provided.

Safety grill bars spaced at 100 mm should be sufficient to prevent small children entering the spillway, but more closely spaced bars would be advisable to prevent small dogs or other small mammals from entering.