

Ecology response amended for F/23/96639 EAST HORTON GOLF CENTRE, MORTIMERS LANE, FAIR OAK, EASTLEIGH, SO50 7EA

Construction of a new plant/ equipment store and workshop, and erection of segregated aggregate bays.

Clare Martin

5/2/24

I have reviewed the Extended Phase 1 Ecological Assessment by Phillips Ecology (January 2024).

*The report states: "The main habitats which will be directly impacted by the proposed development are hardstanding, bare ground and short perennial. As such, very little vegetation will be impacted by the works and any that is to be removed is easily replicable and of little botanical value. It is considered that there will be no impact to habitats of ecological importance such as priority habitats as a result of its loss. However, the uncompensated removal of any of the surrounding scrub or trees would result in a net loss of biodiversity at the site which would be contrary to NPPF" and to local plan policies.*

The site has been assessed as having low suitability for foraging and commuting bats, moderate potential for commuting badgers, moderate potential for hedgehogs, low potential for reptiles, low potential for commuting great crested newts and low potential for breeding birds.

No further surveys will be required.

The mitigation measures and biodiversity enhancements specified in section 14 of this report are appropriate and shall be implemented.

The applicants must be reminded that for future applications, site clearance (such as removal of vegetation from the bund in the northeast corner of the red line boundary (see section 3.4)) in advance of a planning application will not be tolerated. The Environment Act 2021 allows the LPA to use the pre-clearance value of the site to determine compensation for loss of habitat if it has been cleared any time after January 2020 and before submission of a planning application. This can be easily determined from dated aerial photos, such as those available on Google Earth.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist

4/1/24

This site is in a red impact risk zone for great crested newts and there are at least 5 ponds within 500 m, with one pond within Land at Knowle Lane, Fair Oak SINC approximately 35 m

north of the site. The SINC is designated 2B, *Semi-improved grasslands which retain a significant element of unimproved grassland* and some of which is also designated as *Other purple moor grass and rush pastures* priority habitat. There are records of bats, stag beetles, and notable plants nearby. Amphibians, breeding birds and bats may be using the woodland and the SINC.

A biodiversity checklist has been submitted but has not been completed accurately, with all statements ticked no or marked X without due consideration of adjacent ecological features. Qc has been checked no, when it should be yes, as the SINC and wetland is within 100 m of the site. Qd has also been checked as no, but it has not been demonstrated that this proposal would not have an impact on the SINC or priority habitat within in. In section 2A, the questions about aquatic habitat and ponds within 200 m have been marked X when they should have been Y. The woodland to the east of the site has not been characterised, it may be mature deciduous woodland, so that question should be marked Y. There appears to be grassland in the SINC adjacent to the site so that question should also be marked Y.

The existing site plan shows most of the area within the red line boundary as concrete hardstanding, however the aerial photos on Google maps and Grid Reference Finder shows some vegetation may be present around the site boundaries, with an area of woodland along the eastern boundary. The proposed site plan (December 2023) shows the red line boundary of the site adjacent to this woodland, extending into the woodland canopy and root protection zones of the trees. The Indicative sections plan appears to show the woodland on a bund separating it from the East Hampshire Golf Club car park, but the extent of the bund is not clear from this plan. The plan shows the bund and car park to the left of the building, with the elevation design which looks like the southern elevation. This would place the bund and car park to the west of the proposed building, but on aerial photos the car park is located to the east of the building.

Even though the majority of this site is hardstanding, the proposed development has the potential to affect the ecological features adjacent to the site. The site may also contain brownfield mosaic priority habitat. An Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) is required before determination. The report must include a proposed biodiversity enhancement plan appropriate for the site. Naturespace should also be consulted. A wildlife sensitive lighting plan, which conforms to the latest Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting Professionals guidelines (GN/08/2023), is required and can be conditioned.

The proposed surface water drainage arrangements are shown on the External Works Plan by Exdell Management (December 2023). Storm drainage from the roof is shown emptying into an infiltration/attenuation tank. There is also a small surface water channel shown across the site entrance with a petrol interceptor on the pipe between the channel and the infiltration/attenuation tank.

Further surface water drainage information is required. Exceedance flow routes must be shown on a plan. The pollution hazard and mitigation indices must be calculated using the simple index approach (as shown in the Ciria SuDS manual p 568 and 569) to ensure that there is no pollution risk to the surrounding environment. Large tipper lorries would be used to deliver aggregates, sand and other materials, golf course maintenance plant and machinery is stored outdoors and in the building, and fuel, fertilisers and chemicals could spill in this area. The planning statement estimates that up to 970 tonnes of aggregates are stored and used on site every year. The impact of dust on the nearby ecological receptors must also be addressed. The Highway Technical Note by Nick Culhane (no date) states that if the building were leased at any time in the future the likely traffic impact could be up to a daily total of 50 two-way vehicle movements which could generate a greater pollution hazard than normal golf course operations. This will need to be accounted for in the simple index calculations.

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