

Ecology response for DC/22/93657 condition 7 Land North West of Winchester Road, Boorley Green, Hampshire, SO32 2BX

Discharge of conditions application following reserved matters approval RM/19/86658 for conditions 8 (Tree Pit Details), 9 (Large-scale Details), 10 (Hard Surfacing Details) and 11 (Bin Collection Points) for Boorley Garden Phase 3B only; condition 12 (Front Door Colours) for Phases 3B & 3D; and conditions 7 (Soft Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan) and 13 (Pedestrian Gates) for the whole of Boorley Gardens Phase 3.

Additional Notes: Comments are only required in relation to condition 7, thanks

Liz Harrison

26/2/24

I have reviewed the Soft Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan by ACD (Rev B, March 2020) with respect to the related Ecology consultation response (21/1/20).

Section 8.16 states All planted areas shall be given an application of an approved top dressing at the rate of 40g/m² in May. This is in the Shrub and Tree Planting section but it should be clear that this is only for shrubs and trees and will not include wildflower or native hedgerow areas. In Section 13 it mentions that fertiliser/top dressing is not to be used in wildflower areas but this is not included in 8.16.

Section 9.3 states that pruning operations (for hedges) are to be undertaken in August or September. This must be amended to state that any hedge trimming is to be done outside of bird nesting season which is usually considered to be March through August inclusive, however it may start earlier due to climate change or a warm winter. If this is not possible then hedge trimming must only be done immediately after a nesting bird check by a suitably qualified ecologist. Nesting birds are protected from disturbance by the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended). Birds may still be nesting in August. If an active nest is found it should be protected from disturbance by a 5 m buffer until after the young have fledged and left the nest.

9.3 should also be amended to *trimming will be done on a 3-year rotation, trimming only 1 side or the top per year to allow fruit to develop **and remain available for wildlife throughout the year.***

12.1 states that *Monitoring visits and management will take place outside the breeding season* but does not specify which breeding seasons this includes or when these start and finish. Amphibians, invertebrates and breeding birds must be considered.

Desilting and leaf removal as described in section 12.4 should also be done outside of any hibernation or breeding seasons.

Section 12.5 recommends that an annual inspection of swales be carried out with the Local Authority in June of each year. The Local Authority ecology team does not have the capacity to participate in inspection visits. An ecological consultant will need to do the inspections and their report must be submitted to the Local Authority for review.

Section 13.0, the summary of maintenance schedules, must be amended to include the information listed above.

The Years 1-5 Landscape Maintenance Matrix shows shrubs to be maintained in June and October. The June visit must include checks for nesting birds as described above with reference to section 9.3. In the Hedges section it shows spring flowering decorative hedges to be trimmed in June which is within bird nesting season even though it states *and outside of nesting season (annually)*.

The Ecology consultation response (21/1/20) also mentioned creating and maintaining variation in the edge habitat around the hedgerows in the N-S green corridor and in the northern boundary hedge. This needs to be maintained with a range of light and temperature conditions for the benefit of invertebrates. Specific instructions on how to achieve this variation must also be included in the Soft Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist