

Ecology response 23 4 24 for F/24/97188 UNIT H, GEORGE CURL WAY, EASTLEIGH, SO18 2RX

Creation of headquarters for Hampshire Isle of Wight Air Ambulance (HIOWAA) and other healthcare services to include offices; the creation of a helipad; change of use and minor alterations to existing building to form a mixed use comprising B2, B8, E(e) and E(g); and other associated works.

Rachael Morris

23/4/24

The proposed block plan amended (submitted 10/4/24) does not seem to match the plans for retaining vegetation on the eastern edge of the site. The impact of any changes in fencing must be reflected in the ecology report (Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment by Southern Planning Practice, March 2024)

Although the biodiversity metric submitted with this application is technically valid with no red flags, it has not been completed properly. The existing baseline habitat has not been fully entered into the metric, so it is not yet clear that 10% biodiversity net gain will be achieved.

The following information is required:

Metric tab name	Information given	Information missing	Notes
A-1 On-Site Habitat Baseline	Habitat types: Developed land sealed surface, urban tree blocks 1, 2-8, 9, and 10	The building is not shown on the UK Hab map or listed separately in the metric	The building will have the same value as developed land sealed surface.
A-1 On-Site Habitat Baseline	22 m of ornamental hedgerow on eastern boundary, containing willow and birch trees, bramble, cotoneaster, buddleia, privet.	The willow and birch trees to be removed within the 22m of ornamental hedgerow on the eastern side of the building need to be included separately in the baseline	These trees have a greater value than the ornamental hedgerow and this is not reflected in the metric. Replacement trees may be required.
B-2 On-Site Hedge Baseline	Hedge 1 and Hedge 2	The area labelled 847 introduced shrub along south side of building is not included in the baseline	Although this is proposed to be replaced with a native hedgerow, the existing line of introduced shrub/ non-native hedgerow has some value
B-2 On-Site Hedge Baseline	Two hedges of equal length (.06 km) have been listed and given	The user comments should identify these	Roughly 1/3 of the eastern hedgerow is

	identical values, neither has a reference number or comments	as the northern and eastern hedgerows	proposed to be removed.
B-2 On-Site Hedge Creation	A native hedgerow of 0.05 km is proposed to be created	It is not clear that this is really an enhancement of an existing area (labelled 847) rather than creation from no existing habitat	It would be more accurate to enter this on tab B-3 On-Site Hedge Enhancement.

Although birds are to be discouraged next to the airport, a range of flowering plants which attract pollinating insects over a long flowering time can be used as biodiversity enhancements. Mixed native hedgerow does score higher on the statutory metric than introduced shrub/non-native hedgerow, but some of the species proposed for the mixed native hedgerow (BNG Assessment report, section 7.3) produce fruits which would attract birds. While these are appropriate in other areas, they may not be as appropriate in this location for that reason.

Urban tree block 1 can be enhanced by adding more flowering plants to attract pollinators in the understorey. If the edges of the planting beds were delineated and slightly raised, this might discourage trampling.

Invasive non-native species such as snowberry and some species of cotoneaster must not be spread into the wild. Contractors removing any of these plants must be aware that they could be invasive and dispose of them appropriately.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist