

Ecology response 17/9/24 for O/23/96432 Land to the west of Cobbett Way (Land Off Cobbett Way, Botley

Outline application for residential development of up to 34 dwellings and associated infrastructure (access only to be considered).

Summer Sharpe (has left) /Rachael Morris on appeal

17/9/24

The layout for the access road shown in the Drainage Technical Note is very different from the layout shown in the Landscape and Visual Hearing Statement. Which layout is being considered in this appeal?

Ecology

I have reviewed the Ecological Support Summary (Appendix 1 for appeal) by Ecosa (August 2024).

Reason 2 for refusal in March 2024 was *There is insufficient information to determine if the access road can be achieved without causing harm to the adjacent priority habitat (Lowland mixed deciduous woodland) during construction and operation, contrary to Policy DM11 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036), and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.*

The report states: *None of the woodland habitats to the south of the site are proposed to be removed as part of the proposals and will be retained on site. A suitable buffer of at least three metres from the trunk of the nearest tree will be established between the retained woodland habitats to the south of the site and the proposed roadway entering the site from the south-east.*

The trunk of the nearest tree is not clear, is this meant to be the tree nearest to the road or nearest to the woodland? This does not consider the root protection zone of these trees, which can extend more than 3 m and depends on the size of the canopy. A dust guard on the fencing and dampening of the roads during dry periods are proposed to minimise the impact of dust on the vegetation. Ecological supervision of vegetation clearance works to create the access road with checks by an ecologist every three months are proposed.

I am still not satisfied that the construction or operation of the access road can be achieved without causing harm to the woodland. An arboricultural report would be required to address the tree protection issues. A plan showing the individual trees along the northern edge of the woodland, their root protection zones and any woodland edge vegetation would be required to demonstrate that a 3 m buffer is achievable along the entire access road.

The woodland edge would need to be a dark corridor, and it is not clear that this can be achieved when the access road is so close to the woodland.

Surface Water Drainage

Reason 3 for refusal was *Insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that the sustainable drainage can provide three forms of natural filtration, and mitigate all pollution hazards, which is necessary to maintain the quality of runoff water entering the Solent and Southampton Water Special Protection Area and Ramsar Site and Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation. The application is therefore contrary to the requirements of Policies S1, DM5, DM6, DM10 and DM11 of the Local Plan, the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended).*

I have reviewed the Drainage Strategy Technical Note by Jubb (rev P1, August 2024). This now shows three forms of filtration for all surface water drainage. These are permeable paving, a conveyance swale and a pond. The LLFA comments have been addressed with an updated drainage strategy document. This includes recalculation of greenfield runoff rates, defining two catchments, one for each drainage basin, and flood exceedance routes have been added to the drawing.

The drawing shows two indicative ponds/detention basins, but the text boxes for the ponds call them swales rather than ponds.

The path of the water collected on domestic roofs is not very clear. Section 7.1.3 states that *All roof water downpipes will be sealed against pollutants entering the system from polluted surface runoff, effluent disposal or other forms of discharge, and will discharge to a catchpit manhole upstream of any proposed attenuation tanks to ensure all sediment and silts are removed upstream of discharging to the watercourse system.* Rainwater harvesting using water butts is proposed, but since attenuation tanks are not part of this system, it is not clear whether the rainwater will enter the permeable paving/swale/attenuation basin system or be treated differently.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist

16/2/24

Ecology

The proposed location of the entrance road to this development is too close to the lowland mixed deciduous woodland priority habitat. A suitable buffer between the road and the woodland edge is required.

I have reviewed the updated Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Reptile Survey Report by MM Ecology (January 2024).

The requirement for reptile population monitoring has been extended to five years after first occupation of the dwellings on site, as requested. I am now satisfied that the reptile mitigation proposals specified in the January 2024 report can be accepted.

The PEA has been amended to include each dwelling to have an integrated bird feature (mixture of sparrow terraces and swift bricks) and an integrated bat feature (bat bricks) in its external walls.

Bat bricks/boxes and swift bricks: As noted in the consultation response by Hampshire Swifts, at least one swift brick per home on average is requested, since they can also be used by other bird species (house sparrows, tits and starlings).

The following information can be used to determine the placements of these features as each house will have a slightly different orientation and bats and swifts need different elevations to get the right temperature conditions and clearances for entry and exit. A variety of conditions may be needed within one season and bats move around to different roost site.

The Bat Conservation Trust recommends installing a bat brick/box at least 4 m above the ground, away from artificial light sources, sheltered from strong winds and exposed to the sun for part of the day, facing south, south-east or south-west. (<https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/putting-up-your-box>)

Swift nest boxes are best positioned under the eaves or on walls facing north, northeast or north-west out of direct sunlight, five metres above the ground, with clear adjacent airspace so swifts can access them in a high-speed direct flight.

A CEMP can be conditioned to include protection of waterways from pollution including sediment during construction, protection of retained and planned habitat areas, avoidance of illumination of habitat areas, and protection of soil from compaction.

Surface water drainage

I have reviewed the FRA by Jubb (v 4.0, January 2024). Infiltration has been ruled out due to poor ground conditions. The SuDS proposal includes attenuation basins, swales and some permeable paving with a sub-base, and proposed discharge into the watercourse at the western edge of the site and the ditch to the south. Section 7.1.3 mentions attenuation tanks, with catchpit manholes to remove sediment.

Section 7.2 of the FRA shows an example of the simple index approach (pollution hazard indices and mitigation indices) for residential roofs but has not included the roads and car parking areas on site as additional (and greater) sources of pollution hazards. A full analysis of all pollution hazards and mitigation will be required in the detailed SuDS plan. If Cobbett Way is extended into the site as the main road, runoff from this road would enter the watercourse in the woodland to the south which drains into Pudbrook Lake, a tributary of the

River Hamble. Additional water treatment measures would be required to ensure no pollution from roadway runoff during the construction or operational phases is allowed to enter the watercourse.

Section 8.1.3 states that a final confirmed plan will be detailed at the completion of construction, but this is not acceptable. A detailed SuDS plan including construction phase and operational phase SuDS management and maintenance must be submitted and approved by the LPA before the start of any construction.

The SuDS plan must show all catchments on site and include arrows with the drainage and exceedance flows for each catchment. To repeat, the SuDS strategy must conform to DM6 with three above ground forms of naturalised filtration for all surface water on site. The use of swales is strongly preferred to gullies, and any gullies which cannot be avoided must be fitted with small animal escape ramps.

As noted in the consultation response by Natural England (January 2023), additional water quality treatment will be required in relation to discharge to environmentally protected sites, and an additional treatment component will be *required that provides environmental protection in the event of an unexpected pollution event or poor system performance*.

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14/12/23

There are records of grass snakes, common toads and slow worms in the area. The site is within a green impact risk zone for great crested newts. There are also records of bats, hedgehogs, stag beetles, and corky-fruited water dropwort. There is lowland mixed deciduous woodland priority habitat to the south of the site which is connected to Pudbrook Lake SINC. The stream in the north of the site connects to Pudbrook Lake, which is a tributary of the River Hamble. There is also a drain marked on the map which is in the woodland at the south of the site.

I have reviewed the following documents:

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by MM Ecology (November 2023)

Bat Activity Surveys (November 2023)

Reptile Survey and Mitigation Strategy (November 2023)

Landscape Strategy by Green Landscape (Rev A, July 2023)

Nesting birds, foraging and commuting bats, slow worms, and hedgehogs would be affected by this proposal.

Green infrastructure needs to be continuous around all site boundaries exclusive of private gardens. The pre-development site plan shows continuous perimeter scrub habitat, but the post-development land use plan shows residential use extending to the site boundary in several locations on the northern and eastern boundaries. The central green space should be more permeable rather than being enclosed by the residential development as shown on the Landscape Strategy plan.

The reptile mitigation and monitoring plan is acceptable; however monitoring must be extended to five years. This will provide data on whether the management strategy is effective. If management changes need to be made, this would provide time to determine whether any changes were effective ([Reptiles: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/reptiles-advice-for-making-planning-decisions) and [Habitat Management Handbooks | Amphibian and Reptile Conservation \(arc-trust.org\)](https://www.arc-trust.org/habitat-management-handbooks/amphibian-and-reptile-conservation) section 13.4).

Every dwelling (not just 50%) should have either a bat brick or a swift brick/sparrow terrace, depending on the orientation of the building, and lighting conditions. A CEMP will be required and will contain precautionary working methods and pollution controls.

The SuDS strategy must conform to DM6 with three above ground forms of naturalised filtration and use the simple index approach to demonstrate that all pollution hazards are mitigated.

More detailed plans can be reviewed in reserved matters.

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