

Ecology response for F/25/98865 MACKOY STADIUM, VT SPORTS GROUND, PORTSMOUTH ROAD, BURSLEDON, SO19 9PW

Change of use to open vehicle storage (Use Class B8) from outdoor sport/recreation (Use Class F2(c)) (Retrospective)

Rachael Morris

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Aerial photos of this site available on Google maps show a closely mown grass field in this area with vegetation around the field boundaries. The vegetation is not shown in the proposed block plan, so it is not clear whether vegetation has been removed from the site or is proposed to be removed to enable more parking/vehicle storage. This would not be acceptable.

The DAS states that the application is to regularise the site for parking, but the application description is for vehicle storage. Further information is required about the length of time that vehicles would remain on site, is this proposal for parking during sports events (as implied) or long-term parking and storage, which would have a different impact on the field.

No ecology information has been submitted. I raise a holding objection until information about the existing vegetation around the site perimeter has been provided.

As a retrospective application it is exempt from the requirement for 10% biodiversity net gain, however at least some net gain is required to comply with Local Plan policy DM 11 and NPPF (December 2024) paragraphs 187d and 192 b. This could be achieved by enhancing the hedgerow around the perimeter of the site with flowering and fruiting native hedgerow plants to fill in any gaps. This would provide cover for small animals, food for birds and nectar for pollinators. The planting specification can be conditioned.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist