

Ecology response for DC/25/99887 32A QUEENS VIEW, NETLEY ABBEY

Discharge of Conditions. Condition 10 (Materials), Condition 11 (Boundary Treatment), Condition 14 (Biodiversity Enhancement & Management), Condition 15 (Lighting), Condition 18 (Landscaping) and Condition 19 (Landscape Management Plan) of planning permission ref. F/23/96224 for the construction of 18 flats and a retail unit.

Rebecca Altman

8/9/25

Condition 11 Boundary Treatment

I do not see any documents relating to this condition. Openings in the fences must have at least two gaps (15 x 15 cm minimum) to allow the free passage of hedgehogs and other small mammals through the site.

Condition 14 Biodiversity Enhancement & Management

The BEMP by Ecosupport (June 2025) is satisfactory and condition 14 can now be discharged.

Condition 15 Lighting

I have reviewed the lighting design by DW Windsor (rev B, July 2025).

The lighting plan must show the proposed locations of bat boxes on the building and in the garden to ensure that these areas are kept sufficiently dark (1 lux or below). Bats forage on the vegetation, so the trees must also be dark enough. Light spill from windows must also be taken into account.

Condition 18 Landscaping

The condition states that the landscaping plan *shall incorporate sufficient flowering species to support wildlife*. Condition 19 states that the landscape management plan is *to include management of hedgerows and plant species to ensure year-round supply of flowers, fruits and seeds*. This can only be achieved with a diverse mix of species which flower at slightly different times.

I have reviewed the Planting Plan by Deacon Design (rev E, June 2025).

There are a few anomalies in the planting plan which should be explained:

Species rich grassland has been recommended in the BEMP, however this is not shown on the planting plan. On p 18 of the BEMP it states: *The areas of species rich grassland on site are to be established through the sowing of a wildflower mixture such as Emorsgate EM4 – Meadow Mixture for Clay Soils or Emorsgate EM6 – Meadow Mixture for Chalk and Limestone Soils*.

I only see strong lawn grass mixture specified in the public areas and proposed private lawns to rear gardens with no grass mixture specified.

If the private garden areas are to be sown with a wildflower grassland mixture, this should be written on the plan. However, this cannot be relied upon, as the owners could change the grass species composition, cover them with fake grass, or mow them at inappropriate times. As also requested by the Landscape Officer, *Areas of strong lawn grass mixture internal to the site should be replaced with species rich lawn turf (as per Ecology comments at full application stage). Frontage to Queens View can be left as strong lawn grass (specify either turf or seeded).*

The mixed native hedge is listed at the top of the diagram four separate species in roughly equal amounts (*Carpinus betulus*, *Cornus sanguinea*, *Corylus avellana* and *Viburnum opulus*) but in the other locations around the property the mixed native hedge is only comprised of three species: *Carpinus betulus*, *Cornus sanguinea*, and *Viburnum opulus* (listed twice and becoming the main species in the hedge). To satisfy conditions 18 and 19 the mixed native hedgerow should contain at least 4 species, if not more.

I understand that the intent of the landscape architect is to avoid thorny species such as holly or hawthorn, but field maple could be introduced as an additional native hedgerow plant.

Vinca minor is listed under the shrubs section, but is a ground cover plant, not a shrub.

Luzula sylvatica is a woodrush, not a grass.

Condition 19 Landscape Management Plan

I have reviewed the Soft Landscape Management Plan by Deacon Design (rev A, June 2025).

Soil testing is recommended before planting to ensure that the plant species can thrive in these soil conditions. What is the procedure to be followed to ensure that the soil test results and the plant species list is reviewed by the ecologist and landscape architect?

The condition also specifies: *to include management of hedgerows and plant species to ensure year-round supply of flowers, fruits and seeds.* The boundary hedge mix planting section (p 14) specifies *To suit species – Three-year rotation and alternate sides should be cut in the first three years with the top cut within the third season*, however it does not explain that this is to ensure a year-round supply of flowers, fruits and seeds and that pruning must be done only after flowering has finished, preferably in the autumn.

The hedge trimming regime section from the BEMP section 4.3.4 should be copied into the Landscape management plan.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist