

Kneen, Peter

From: Miri, Maral <Maral.Miri@hants.gov.uk>
Sent: 08 March 2022 16:35
To: Kneen, Peter
Subject: P/22/0165/OA - Land East of Newgate Lane

Dear Peter,

P/22/0165/OA - Land East of Newgate Lane East Fareham - Outline Application With All Matters Reserved (Except Access) For Residential Development Of Up To 375 Dwellings, Access From Newgate Lane East, Landscaping And Other Associated Infrastructure Works

Thank you for consulting me on this planning application. Overall, I have a number of concerns and recommend that permission is not granted until further information is submitted. My detailed comments are set out below:

Badgers

The confidential badger report confirms that two setts have been recorded on or immediately adjacent to the site and are located at least 20m away from the proposed residential areas. The provision of 5m wide green buffers along the boundaries, along with the mitigation measures detailed within Section 4.2 of the report are deemed to be acceptable.

National Site Network (formerly known as Natura 2000 sites)

There are two SPA supportive habitats located within the application site; F23 Secondary Support Area and F15 Low Use site. Both of these functionally linked habitats will be lost as a result of the proposals. It is understood that F23 Secondary Support Area is approximately 4.67ha in size. To compensate for the loss of F23, it is proposed to create an on-site Winter Bird Mitigation Area approximately 2.0 ha in size. This will be located at the western extent of the site (a field compartment which is currently part of F15). Whilst it may be acceptable to compensate for loss of Secondary Support Areas by creating smaller but higher quality habitats, I am not satisfied that this field will be of such higher value to wintering birds. My first concern is that it is proposed to plant a hedge along the northern and southern boundaries, along with occasional hedgerow trees. This field already supports a hedge along the eastern and western boundaries. This will affect the clear sight lines that these birds require, particularly species such as black-tailed godwit. I also note that a ditch is proposed outside the northern boundary of the Bird Mitigation Area. This feature could enhance the value of the site and it is not clear why it has been located outside the Mitigation Area. Most importantly, whilst creation of shallow scrapes will enhance the value of the site for waders, a single large basin which is likely to be a requirement as part of the drainage strategy for the site and not a well-considered enhancement feature designed for the birds, has been located in this field. No information has been provided in relation to the levels/depths of this feature (other than it will be 0.8m deep) to ensure that it will be suitable for wintering birds recorded on and adjacent to the site.

F15 Low use site is approximately 9.92ha. To compensate for the loss of F15, it is proposed that a Winter Bird Mitigation Area measuring 5.0 ha is created at Old Street, Stubbington. It is understood that it was agreed with Natural England that the proposed area was capable of mitigating the loss of F15 associated with three sites (Newgate Lane East, Land at Newgate Lane (South) and Land at Newgate Lane (North)). This combined loss was estimated as 11.84 ha. Following the unsuccessful appeals at the latter two sites, it is now proposed that the strategy is secured to mitigate the loss of F15 for Newgate Lane East and the Proposed Development. This combined loss is estimated as 13.8 ha. The same Bird Mitigation Area at Old Street is now

compensating for the loss of an extra area of 2ha. No justification has been provided as to how this Mitigation Area is still suitable. Has this been agreed by Natural England?

Based on the above, I am unable to support the conclusions of the submitted 'REPORT TO INFORM HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT' and request that further information is submitted.

Reptiles

A good population of slow-worm and a low population of grass snake has been confirmed on site. No definite receptor area has been secured on site; however, I acknowledge that there will be scope on site for reptile receptor areas in the form of green corridors and bird refuge areas. Provided that a reptile mitigation strategy with necessary updated surveys (no older than 2 years old) is secured via a planning condition, I raise no major concerns.

Nesting birds

The open arable fields may have suitability for ground nesting birds such as skylark. It has been stated that detailed breeding bird surveys have yet to be undertaken. These surveys are required prior to a decision being made as the impact on nesting birds and mitigation required is currently unknown.

Bats

There are limitations in relation to the surveys carried out on site, as the largest part of the site (to the south of Copse Field) was surveyed much later than the northern section of the site and therefore the overall assessment of impacts is not considered to be robust enough. This limitation has however been acknowledged and it has been stated that "*Five additional surveys are scheduled to be undertaken in 2022 between April and July 2022*". The results of these surveys are required.

The report notes maintaining dark corridors across key areas of suitable foraging and commuting habitat. To ensure that this is possible and there will be no conflict with lighting requirements for health and safety, I request that the location of these dark corridors is shown on a plan (on completion of the survey work) so it can be secured via a planning condition.

It has also been stated that a minimum of 10% of new buildings across the site will be fitted with Vivara Pro Build bat features. Considering the scale of the development I request that this is changed to 20%.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any additional information.

Kind regards,
Maral

Coronavirus (Covid-19)

Hampshire County Council's response to the Covid-19 is available here (<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/coronavirus>).

In line with Government advice to reduce non-essential travel and work from home where possible, Ecology officers are now working remotely. Whilst we will endeavour to conduct our services in a timely manner and to meet statutory timescales where we can, there may be some impact to the services we deliver. We will ensure that we keep all applicants / interested parties informed of any further impacts to our services should they arise. The Council's response also means that no non-essential site visits or face to face meetings will be undertaken until further notice. Essential and contractual surveys may continue take place where there is no risk to the surveyor or the public, and in line with Government advice. This will be reviewed on an on-going basis.

Maral Miri (MSc, CEnv, MCIEEM)

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