

12/10/2021

App: AL/113/21/OUT

Proposal: Outline application for 69 dwellings with access.

Address: Land at Bayards, Level Mare Lane, Aldingbourne

Bats

Our records support the bat surveys undertaken as part of the EIA (Aug 2021). The mature woodland corridor on the eastern boundary of the proposed development site is part of an important bat corridor and foraging area, particularly for Barbastelles (Annexe II species). The site also falls within the 12km Zone of Influence for the Cocking and Singleton Tunnels SAC (see the 'Sussex Bat Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) – Planning and Landscape Scale Enhancement Protocol'). Within the 12km zone significant impacts or severance to flight lines should be considered. This includes physical severance of flight lines and severance via impacts such as disturbance which would effectively render it severed if no longer suitable for use by bats, for example, due to lighting impacts. This applies to the species for which the SAC is designated (Bechstein's and Barbastelle bats).

We note that the eastern boundary is to be shared with another development (BN/50/20/PL). When considering this and the cumulative impact of light spill and habitat removal, we will require an HRA Screening Matrix /Appropriate Assessment for Bats to be completed by Arun DC as the competent authority. Natural England Consulted on the findings.

With the removal of a small amount of hedgerow to create the access road, 'hop over' points must be provided to reduce the gap created in the wildlife corridor so bats and birds can still cross. We are pleased to see this has been considered and the use of planting trees to create an aerial bridge with overhanging branches to the mature trees being retained is going to be implemented. Any gaps should also be filled in using native tree species to improve connectivity. The effectiveness of this mitigation measure should be assessed as part of the HRA process referred to above. Conditions should be used to ensure this.

Reptiles

To ensure the site remains unsuitable for reptiles, continued management of the site must take place to ensure reptile habitat does not develop onsite. If this is not possible then a precautionary approach should be taken within the site with regards to reptiles. This involves any removal of scrub, grassland or ruderal vegetation to be done sensitively and done with a two phased cut.

Nesting Birds

Any works to the trees or vegetation clearance on the site should only be undertaken outside of the bird breeding season which takes place between 1st March – 1st October. If works are required within this time an ecologist will need to check the site before any works take place (within 24 hours of any work).

We would like a bird boxes to be installed on the new properties.

Hedgehogs

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Any brush piles, compost and debris piles on site could provide shelter areas and hibernation potential for hedgehogs. These piles must be removed outside of the hibernation period mid-October to mid-March inclusive. The piles must undergo soft demolition. A hedgehog nesting box should be installed within the site to provide future nesting areas for hedgehogs.

CEMP and LEMP

Full details on how the habitats and enhancements onsite will be managed during the construction phase and post construction will need to be included within the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and Landscape and Management Plan (LEMP) as part of a reserve matters application.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Though some biodiversity enhancements have been recommended within the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report (August 2021) further information is required demonstrating what will be included within the scheme. We would like to see included:

- Any trees removed should be replaced at a ratio of 2:1
 - Wildflower meadow planting used
 - Bat bricks / tiles are integrated into the buildings onsite facing south/south westerly positioned 3-5m above ground.
 - Bird box to be installed on the buildings / and or tree within the garden of the properties.
 - Grassland areas managed to benefit reptiles.
 - Log piles onsite.
- We require that gaps are included at the bottom of the fences to allow movement of small mammals across the site.

Kind Regards

Jen



Jennifer Pollitt
Environment Officer
Environment
Chichester District Council



<http://www.chichester.gov.uk>