

Arun District Council, Civic Centre, Maltravers Rd, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5LF

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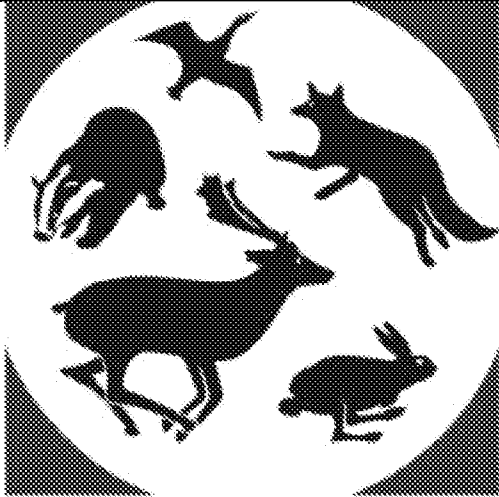
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From: Graham Donaldson
Sent: 05 April 2022 20:24
To: Planning <Planning@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: Proposed housing Bognor Golf Course

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West Sussex Wildlife Protection
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**WEST SUSSEX
WILDLIFE
PROTECTION**

Arun Planning
Arun DC, Littlehampton

05/04/2022

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I wish to object to the proposed housing development on Bognor Golf Course, Felpham and new clubhouse and course at Middleton. FP/274/21/OUT and M/16/22/PL

The Lidsey Rife is a wildlife opportunity area recognised by Sussex Wildlife Trust. The former LEC Airfield to the west of the golf course and owned by Sime Derby had a 50 page ecological report created eight years ago, and all the protected species identified were destroyed without mitigation by the ecologically ruthless development of the glider club.

The planning department at Arun failed the ecology then, and should not let us down now. Because the golf course east of the rife is Level 3 flood zone there are proposals to include balancing ponds. These dry out in summer and are not good for wildlife year round. But in winter they will attract waterfowl. However, there will be huge numbers of dogs, so any winter benefit is destroyed. The waterfowl in the river will be disturbed by dogs and we have a regular nesting pair of swans on the rife by the golf course which will be at risk. Swans do not do well in urban settings, and half the swans at the new Bersted Park estate end up injured, isolated or attacked by dogs – as we get called to rescue them – so we

know! Deer are often on the course and at times live in the wood to the south. A single badger has been resident since being displaced by the relief road construction, and has been in the hedge adjoining the conservation area to the south. Water Voles are spotted from time to time.

Andrew Smithen a local ornithologist has supplied us with bird counts for area including the grant aided conservation area immediately to the south west of the course and that has become the best bird habitat in Bognor, partly because it has a 100 year old tree line avenue contemporary with the golf course. We have been placing bird counts on the footpath by Downview School for several years. The high-density housing adjoining this area would lead to much disturbance with children making dens, lighting fires and general disturbance. The incredibly rare firecrest has been seen in this wood, there are two species of woodpecker, and at night the Tawney and Little Owl are heard.

The club was constructed 100 years ago, so the trees are only now becoming great habitat for birds nesting in holes.

I have asked ornithologist Andrew Smithen to explain a bit about the **BIRDS OF BOGNOR REGIS GOLF COURSE:**

This is a brief outline of the various bird species which use the golf course.

The hedge which runs along the NE side of the course (close to the relief road) is important both for resident birds and those on migration. Yellowhammers feed in the field and then fly into the hedge when disturbed. Blue, Great and Long-tailed tits use it as do Chaffinch and Greenfinch. The area which I think is used for grass dumping, can be good for migrating birds such as Blackcap, Chiffchaff Whitethroat and Spotted Flycatcher. There are Sedge warbler and Redstart further up the hedge towards the viaduct.

The rife has breeding populations of Sedge, Reed and Cetti's warbler. Moorhen and Mute swan also breed here. Little grebe and Gadwall can also be seen here.

Both Green and Great spotted woodpeckers can be found in the golf course itself. Redwing and Fieldfare feed on the fairways during winter. Jays, Stock dove and Coal tit can also be seen.

There is usually a Moorhen in the pond in front of I think the 2nd green.

The hedges either side of the public footpath are used by a number of birds. Blackbird, Long-tailed, Great and Blue tit, Chiffchaff, Goldcrest, Treecreeper, Chaffinch, Goldfinch and Spotted Flycatcher have all been seen along them.

The expensively created Green Infrastructure Master Plan was much vaunted by Arun three years ago but has never gone to consultation. This praised the "green capital" of the area, and the unique route to the countryside offered by the local gap. This should be respected and that plan not buried.

M/16/22/PL Object: Proposed new course north of Ancton Lane. This area has two very important rows of trees which have a great canopy and depth and where we have previously erected bird boxes. Badgers are occasionally knocked down crossing the A259 to the north and have been seen in the woodland strips. While the golf club claim there will be a net gain to biodiversity, we have approached the golf course at Bognor more than once about stripping ivy from trees and damaging habitat. The problem with this golf course is that they over manicure trees, and any planted will take 75 years to become good habitat. The loss of

important farmland should be resisted as a matter of national policy unless used for green projects such as solar.

Graham Donaldson

On behalf of West Sussex Wildlife Protection