



ARBOR VITAE

ECOLOGY • FORESTRY • LAND USE

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29th November 2023

To:

Richard Corbett
Roger Parry and Partners LLP

P2023/0001 Oak Lodge, Corkscrew Lane

I write with reference to the above planning consent and in response to comments received on the application from Sharon Holman on behalf of the Planning Ecologist.

Comments received on 25th May 2023 are as follows:

“Perimeter vegetation around the SAC is essential to allow the priority species to move between sites safely. Whilst I support the re-planting of a roadside hedge on the verge, there is clearly insufficient room for either a hedge or native species rich verge to grow to full potential and not become a highway safety issue. The new fence should be relocated a minimum of 1.5m further back from its existing location to enable room for a hedge to grow which will not interfere with the highway, visibility splays or the safety of pedestrians. Enhancements should be tailored to species and habitats directly or indirectly impacted by a development and in every case build ecosystem resilience within the site and wider area. Until the fencing is relocated I cannot support this development as it does not deliver a net benefit for biodiversity & ecosystem resilience from a baseline state (prior to the retrospective work)”.

An amended Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was submitted on 22nd September 2023 which included the following measures:

“In order to provide habitat mitigation, it is recommended that a new roadside hedge is planted along the inside of the fence which has been installed...All hedge planting will take place during the first available dormant season and all planting will be protected/supported with appropriate spiral guards and canes.

A gap of at least 10cm will be made at the base of the existing fence to ensure that amphibians and other small animals can pass beneath the fence to use the hedgerow base for foraging and shelter.”.

Further comments were received on 13th November 2023, as follows:

“We do not accept that providing a hedge inside the constructed fence line is sufficient mitigation for the loss of foraging and commuting routes from the adjacent SAC. Planting inside would be isolated from



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surrounding habitats and adequate space has not be demonstrated, or that it will be maintained in perpetuity.

We maintain that the boundary fence should be removed under a RAM scheme a new hedge planted in its place, and if desired the fenced replaced behind”.

Further recommendations are therefore given below:

As stated above, the existing fence line will be modified to allow for a 10cm gap at ground level along its length. This will allow small animals to move between the adjacent SAC and the site, should they wish.

The planting of a native species-rich hedgerow on the inside of the fence line would, in practice, provide the same level of habitat as if it were on the outside. As long as the gap at the base is installed, GCN and other animals will be able to use this habitat feature for foraging, resting and possibly brumation.

In order to facilitate movement of small animals between the SAC and the hedgerow at the boundary of the site, the existing roadside verge will be laid with a wildflower turf. Further details are given in Appendix 1.

The hedgerow will be retained in perpetuity, as will the wildflower turf verges.

Yours sincerely,

Phillipa Stirling BSc Hons MSc ACIEEM

Ecologist

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Appendix 1.

Hedgerow planting

Native, species-rich hedgerow will be planted along the inside of the fence line as per Figure 3 of the PEA.

The hedge will include a mixture of native species of local provenance, including: Hawthorn *Crateagus monogyna*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, Wild privet *Ligustrum vulagre*, Grey willow *Salix cincerea*, Purple willow *Salix daphnoides*, Guelder rose *Viburnum opulus* and dog rose *Rosa canina*.

The hedge will be planted in a double, staggered row with 6 plants per m/2. All plants will be fitted with appropriate cane and spiral guard. Any losses within the first 5 years will be replaced. Hedgerow planting will take place between November and March when plants are dormant and ground moisture levels are high.

Hedge planting densities.	
Species	Density
Hawthorn	40%
Hazel	15%
Wild privet	10%
Grey willow	10%
Purple willow	10%
Guelder rose	10%
Dog rose	5%

The base of all hedgerow and tree planting will be covered with bark mulch in order to suppress the growth of competing vegetation.

All hedgerow should be maintained in good condition for the lifetime of the development, based on the following criteria:

Hedgerow height to be maintained at 2m minimum and preferably 3m+.

Width of the hedge will be encouraged to reach a minimum of 2m.

Gap between the ground and the canopy of the hedge to be no more than 0.5m.

No gaps in the length of the hedge of more than 1m.

Undesirable species along the base of the hedge to cover no more than 10% of the total ground flora. E.g. common nettle, creeping thistle, cleavers, broad leaved dock.

Wildflower turf

The turf to be used will contain a UK wildflower and grass seed. There are a range of wildflower turfs available, the one selected will: include a mixture of native wildflowers and grasses, be peat-free and be grown in the UK. Recommended wildflower turf includes:

- Meadowmat birds & bees <https://www.turfonline.co.uk/product/birds-and-bees/>
- Native Enriched <https://wildflowerturf.co.uk/products/wildflower-turf/native-enriched/>
- Native Enriched Wildflower Turf <https://www.wildflower.co.uk/products/wildflower-plugs-and-plants/wildflower-turf/native-enriched-wildflower-turfr.html>



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The turf must be shade and drought tolerant and will require one or two cuts per year. Other similar approved wildflower turf is also available. Installation will be carried out as per the manufacturer's instructions.

The following preparation and maintenance will be observed:

Preparation

- Remove all vegetation from the area to be laid to turf
- Rotovate the soil to a minimum depth of 10cm to create a fine tilth
- Leave the area bare for 1-2 weeks and remove any additional vegetation which develops

Installation

- Thoroughly water the area to received turf
- Ensure good soil-to-root contact is engaged
- Match up the ends of each turf roll with no overlapping or gaps
- Water the turf immediately after laying it and water thoroughly for at least 1 week
- Avoid walking on or compacting the turf for 2-3 weeks after laying

Maintenance

- Ensure the turf is thoroughly watered for the first 4 months after laying. Check this by lifting a corner of turf to check the soil beneath is damp
- Water the turf during prolonged periods of drought
- Do not apply fertiliser to the turf
- Remove fallen leaves and vegetation from the top layer of turf
- Cut the turf once a year in the autumn using either a lawn mower or strimmer, at a height of 5cm

The wildflower turf will be maintained in good condition with very little management intervention. The turf includes mostly perennial plants which will survive through drought and shaded conditions. If any areas of turf fail at any point, they will be replaced.