

From: Miles Young <milesyoung@westbournes.uk>
Sent: 07 March 2025 14:09:42 UTC+00:00
To: "Joanne Fisher" <Joanne.Fisher@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/24/3051 HIGHFIELDS - ECOLOGY RESPONSE
Attachments: Highfields - PEA Assurance Letter.pdf

Hi Joanne,

I called earlier to discuss several matters, including the ecology response but wanted to ensure that Place Services are aware of the PEA Assurance Letter of 5th December 2024, as this was not referred to in the schedule of material in their consultation response.

As you know, the previous application was found satisfactory in relation to habitats, subject to conditions relating to the protection and encouragement of wildlife.

The principle of consistency in decision-making should mean that the same decision is reached for any similar subsequent development unless there has been a change of circumstance (e.g., new policy or material consideration). We are not aware of any change of policy. Furthermore, the applicant's ecologist visited the site and undertook a further walk-over survey to ensure the conclusions of the earlier survey remained robust (noting the recommendation for this in the 18-36 month category in the CIEEM Advice Note: The Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys).

The applicant's ecologist advised that there had been no material change of circumstances on the site. This was confirmed in the 'PEA Assurance Letter' submitted with the application. I've attach a copy for ease.

In relation to target species, two updated reports were submitted regarding bats and badgers. There is a suggestion that further survey work is required in respect of the former, specifically three trees with bat roost potential which are proposed to be removed.

Whilst the ecological officer is correct that the current application is now submitted in detail (rather than outline), this has no bearing on the three trees.

The previous Preliminary Tree Roost Assessment identified two trees T1813 (Sycamore) and T1841 (Scots Pine) with bat roost potential that were proposed to be removed. The updated Tree Roost Assessment now identifies two trees with roost potential for removal, and one for pollarding. These include one of the earlier trees, T1841 (Sycamore - remove) and two new trees, T1931 (Sycamore - pollard) and T1814 (Scots Pine - remove).

Notwithstanding this is now a detailed planning application, none of the trees to be removed/pollarded are result of the detailed design of the development itself; rather, health and safety reasons, or as a matter of good arboricultural/landscape practice.

As such, the justification for removing the trees hasn't changed and thus no further pre-decision surveys are required, subject to imposing a modified version of condition 9 of the Committee Report of 22nd June 2023.

I trust you agree and can confirm the same.

Kind regards,
Miles

Miles Young
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