

Development Management
Southampton City Council
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9th March 2011

Dear Sir,

**Planning Application Number 11/00204/FUL
Area Housing Office, Youth Centre and Car Park Site, Parkville Road, Swaythling,
Southampton
Ecology**

I object to the above planning application on the grounds that the Ecology report prepared for the above Application is not sufficiently developed for the submitted planning application.

Reptiles

The report makes no reference to the potential for protected species such as slow worms, for which potential habitat exists beneath trees on the Eastern fringes of the site. This omission should be corrected and methods for how disturbance is to be avoided included.

Birds

Records exist within the locality of nesting Hare Sparrows and Starlings, currently listed on the RSPB red list as being in significant decline. The ecology report does not mention this.

The development would result in loss of habitat for these species such that these species could not continue to nest within the site and would be displaced. It is considered that the impact of this should be assessed and included within the

application. Reference to restrictions on any construction activity to avoid disturbance should also be made.

Surveys to undertaken the presence of other species with similar or higher levels of protection have not been made since the site surveys were made at the wrong time of year. For the ecology report to be valid, these surveys ought to be undertaken at the correct time of year to fully assess the impact of the proposed development.

Bats

The report mentions no potential for commuting bats. A recent legal case (V Morge vs Hampshire County Council) showed that bats use transport corridors as commuting routes where vegetation exists on the longitudinal boundaries and this could easily be the case here. The development would provide a physical block to the existing corridor that exists and thus cause disturbance to any bats using this corridor. Surveys should be carried out to confirm whether such existing commuting activity by bats takes place. All British bats are European Protected Species and therefore receive protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. It is therefore an offence to limit their ability to migrate.

Trees

The site will destroy lines of existing semi-mature trees and replace them with a much reduced number of specimen trees around the site. Whilst this may provide some visual softening of the landscape, it will remove the long term improved biodiversity which would result from retaining the current layout. The mitigation measures elsewhere in the development are likely to be insufficient to counter this loss of continuous habitat. For example, no proposals exist for maintenance of the bat and bird boxes, meaning their usefulness would be temporary.

Yours faithfully,

D.W.J Hopgood

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