



Thursday 15th February 2018

Dear Mr Dodes,

RE: 17/08735/FUL Land at Church Place, Lydiard Millicent

I write in response to comments received from the local planning authority (LPA) ecologist (Emma Fisher) in regard to this proposal. Unfortunately, the planning officer has obstructed contact with the LPA ecologist and therefore I am unable to discuss these comments further with her.

Comment 1 – Three trees are proposed for removal to enable site access

It is considered that the removal of these trees would not have a significant impact in terms of ecology. The trees were not noted to contain potential features for bat roosts during the preliminary ecological appraisal. Also, similar access gaps are already present in this potential commuting line for bats, with access for the Parish Hall along Church Place and a residential property along The Street. The proposed access road will not create a larger gap in the tree line than is already present, with the proposed access being approximately 4.5 m. In addition, I would propose that shrub planting is undertaken right up to the access road (where visibility allows) to minimise any gap created by removal of the trees. Details of planting for ecology could perhaps be controlled by a condition.

Comment 2 – A 10 m wildlife buffer along the northern and eastern tree lines is not incorporated within the masterplan

Although a 10 m wildlife buffer is not incorporated, an ecology zone of native tree planting and long grasses is proposed adjacent to the eastern tree line. The access road distance from the existing eastern tree line varies between 0.5 to 6 m. It is proposed that planting will be undertaken in this area to buffer the existing tree line. Although not shown on the masterplan there is also scope for additional planting on the western side of the new access road to provide a 10 m area of planting overall.

Regarding the northern tree line, the path is to be located between 1.6 and 2.4 m from the tree line, this area again will be planted to buffer the existing tree line. Areas around the play park will also be planted with native tree and shrub species and meadow mixtures. Details of planting for ecology could perhaps be controlled by a condition.

Also, I would note that no lighting is proposed along the access road, path or play area and therefore these proposals shouldn't significantly impact upon nocturnal wildlife using the tree line.

Comment 3 – Provision of a wildlife pond

A specification for a wildlife pond was detailed in the initial preliminary ecological appraisal and this has now been incorporated into the current masterplan.

Conclusion

Although, the recommendations regarding tree retention and a wildlife buffer, detailed in the preliminary ecological appraisal, have not been exactly replicated within the masterplan I believe there is scope for a significant amount of native species planting across the site which will benefit the biodiversity of the site.

Yours sincerely,



Rachel Barber

Director and Ecologist

