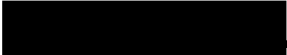


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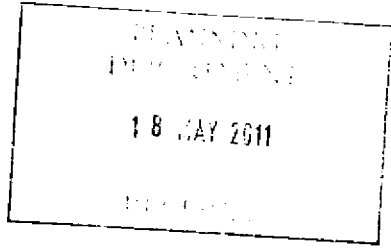
Ack



From: Sarah Smith
Sent: 17 May 2011 12:47
To: Planning
Subject: FW: Splashlands
Attachments: Splashlands, Stanborough Rd, WGC SPECIES SURVEYS.doc

From: Graham Goodall [Redacted]
Sent: 17 May 2011 12:44
To: Sarah Smith
Subject: Splashlands

Graham Goodall. BSc (Hons). CEnv. MIEEM.
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Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre
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HERTFORDSHIRE BIOLOGICAL RECORDS CENTRE

Environment, County Hall, Hertford, Herts, SG13 8DN

Mrs S. Smith
Planning Officer
Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
The Campus Welwyn Garden City
AL8 6AE

Pl. ask for :- Graham Goodall
Our Ref :-
Your Ref :- N6/2010/3120/DC3
Telephone :- 01992 556155

Date :- 17/05/2011

Dear Mrs Smith

Planning application: N6/2010/3120/DC3; Splashlands, Stanborough Road, WGC. Redevelopment of site to provide a wet play area, adventure play areas, an educational play area, high ropes attraction, changing huts, education room, café and toilet facilities. Alterations to Stanborough Road and car park on site.

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Report. Middlemarch Environmental Ltd. October 2010.

A site survey was conducted on 16th September 2010. The report states:

Initial Badger Survey.

A survey was undertaken on 13th January 2011. No evidence of badgers was recorded.

Recommendations:

- Excavations should not be left uncovered at night; pits and trenches should be fitted with suitable mammal ramps.
- The badger survey should be repeated if development does not start for 12 months; eg. January 2012.

Initial Bat Survey.

A survey was undertaken on 13th January 2011. The inspection of the one building (lido toilets-changing rooms) recorded no evidence of bats or a roost site. One tree (No: 330) to be felled was identified as having potential roost sites (cracks, fissures). Other trees with bat-potential will be retained.

Bat Mitigation Strategy.

Recommendations:

- The building should be sealed before the end of February 2011 to prevent colonisation by bats.
- All trees with potential bat features should be checked by an ecologist prior to felling.
- Twelve bat boxes (6 x 2F; 3 x 2F-DFP) should be erected on mature trees around the site.
- Six bat bricks should be incorporated into the new Visitors Centre.
- Lighting: this section (page 9) of the report does NOT relate to the development site.
- Timetable of Works; Table E.1 refers to "Conversion of barn", which does NOT relate to the development site.

Reptile Survey.

A reptile survey was conducted during April-May 2011. No reptiles were recorded, although habitat around the lido and along the river remain suitable.

Reptile Mitigation Strategy.

- Pre-development works; all vegetation should be cut to a height of c100mm above ground level.
- All trees and shrubs to be cut and removed by hand.
- Create brush-piles as reptile refugia.
- If any reptiles are found, they will be translocated to an area of retained habitat in the south of the site.
- A series (number not specified) of reptile hibernacula will be created on the site.
- Three basking areas (5m²) will be created on the site.
- A wildflower sward is proposed (species-mix not specified).
- Created habitats should link with suitable reptile habitats off-site.

Water Vole Survey.

A survey was conducted on 30th April 2011. No Water Voles or evidence of WV was found.

Water Vole Mitigation Strategy.

- Suitable habitat exists for Water Voles along the River Lea.
- We do NOT agree with the proposed "*Habitat manipulation to discourage water voles from colonising.*"

Ecological Protection Plan.

This document gives generic proposals for the protection of habitats and species during construction phases.

Biodiversity Enhancement Scheme.

This document proposes several generic objectives to benefit the local area and biodiversity in general. It also proposes habitat creation and enhancement in the form of:

- Short turf with flowers.
- Wildflower-rich swards.
- Ruderal vegetation.
- Native planting; trees and shrubs.
- Dead-wood habitat.
- Pond.
- River Lea embankments.
- Native hedgerows.
- Species lists are given for wildflowers, trees and shrubs, but **not** for aquatic native plants.
- Bird boxes are proposed, but design and type are not given.
- Limited (generic) site management options are listed.

HBRC COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

There are no European Protected Species present on the site. Therefore, the LPA do **not** have to consider the 3 tests, as set out in the Habitat Regulations 2010.

Green Infrastructure: the proposals have the potential to benefit Green Infrastructure, particularly in maintaining and enhancing the 'green river corridor' between Welwyn

Garden City and Hatfield, along the River Lea, where it is 'squeezed' between the A1 motorway and the urban edge of WGC. It forms a living landscape between the open, wooded landscape north of St Albans and the River Mimram valley into Hertford.

Aquatic Plants; ponds and river margins.

Ensure that species are native and ecologically acceptable. The species that are introduced will have a great effect on the wildlife that they are able to support. Generally speaking, it is not the mixture of species that is important, but their structure. Plant in small clumps of the same species, which will improve the variety of the habitat.

Species	Emergent	Marginal wetland
Angelica (<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>)		♣
Amphibious bistort (<i>Polygonum amphibium</i>)		♣
Arrowhead (<i>Sagittaria sagittifolia</i>)	♣	
Bog Bean (<i>Menyanthes trifoliata</i>)	♣	♣
Brooklime (<i>Veronica beccabunga</i>)		♣
Cuckoo flower (<i>Cardamine pratense</i>)	♣	♣
Flowering rush (<i>Butomus umbellatus</i>)	♣	
Gipsywort (<i>Lycopus europaeus</i>)		♣
Greater spearwort (<i>Ranunculus lingua</i>)	♣	♣
Hemp agrimony (<i>Eupatorium cannabinum</i>)		♣
Marsh marigold (<i>Caltha palustris</i>)		♣
Meadowsweet (<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>)		♣
Purple loosestrife (<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>)		♣
Ragged robin (<i>Lychnis flos-cuculi</i>)		♣
Royal fern (<i>Osmunda regalis</i>)		♣
Water avens (<i>Geum rivale</i>)		♣
Water forget-me-not (<i>Myosotis scorpiodes</i>)		♣
Water mint (<i>Mentha aquatica</i>)		♣
Water plantain (<i>Alisma plantago-aquatic</i>)	♣	
Water violet (<i>Hottonia palustris</i>)	♣	
Yellow flag iris (<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>)	♣	♣
Yellow loosestrife (<i>Lysimachia vulgaris</i>)		♣

Wild Flower seed mixes.

We recommend that Emorsgate Wild Seeds Meadow Mixes are used that suit local soil conditions.

Management Plan.

We recommend that the **Ecological Protection Plan** and the **Biodiversity Enhancement Scheme** are amalgamated into a comprehensive Management Plan that covers the following:

- development of the site,
- landscaping; a detailed scheme will be required,
- biodiversity enhancement,
- habitat management,
- habitat and species monitoring post-development.

Planning issues.

Some works have the potential to disturb or harm species; therefore, the following should be conditioned.

Conditions:

- Excavations will not be left uncovered at night; pits and all trenches will be fitted with suitable mammal ramps.
- The badger survey will be repeated if development does not start for 12 months; eg. January 2012.
- The existing building will be sealed to prevent colonisation by bats.
- All trees with potential bat features will be checked by an ecologist prior to felling.
- Twelve bat boxes (6 x 2F; 3 x 2F-DFP) will be erected on mature trees around the site.
- Six bat bricks will be incorporated into the new Visitors Centre.
- Lighting: proposed lighting of the site will not impact on potential bat flight-lines.
- Pre-development works; all vegetation will be cut to a height of 100mm above ground level.
- All trees and shrubs will be cut and removed by hand.
- Brush-piles will be created as reptile refugia.
- If any reptiles are found, they will be translocated to an area of retained habitat in the south of the site.
- A series (3-5) of reptile hibernacula will be created on the site.
- Three basking areas (5m²) will be created on the site.
- A wildflower sward (Emorsgate Meadow Mix to suit local soils) will be created.
- Created habitats will link with suitable reptile habitats off-site.
- Suitable habitats for Water Voles will be retained and enhanced along the River Lea. A 2-3 metre-wide strip (riparian buffer) will be specifically created and maintained along the margins of the River Lea. Consideration will be given to planting the aquatic margins of the river with suitable, native plant species.

Yours sincerely,

Graham Goodall. CEnv. MIEEM.
Senior Ecologist