

Mr Hamish Laird
North Dorset District Council
Development Control
Nordon Salisbury Road
Blandford Forum
Dorset
DT11 7LL

Our ref: WX/2018/132250/01-L01
Your ref: 2/2018/1437/FUL
Date: 08 November 2018

Dear Mr Laird

ERECT EXTRA CARE RESIDENTIAL BUILDING COMPRISING 59 RESIDENTIAL UNITS, SHARED COMMUNAL AREAS AND ANCILLARY FACILITIES. MODIFY VEHICULAR ACCESS, FORM PEDESTRIAN ACCESSES, PARKING, SERVICING, COURTYARD & LANDSCAPING, CARRY OUT ASSOCIATED WORKS ST MARTINS, QUEEN STREET, GILLINGHAM, DORSET

Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the above mentioned planning application.

We **object** to the proposed development on flood risk and biodiversity grounds. This objection is discussed below.

Flood Risk

We object to the planning application as currently submitted. With specific reference to the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (WYG, 5th Issue dated 08/10/18) we comment as follows:

In our recent letter (Our Ref: WX/2018/132082/01-L01 dated 10th September 2018) to the LPA relating to the demolition planning application (2/2018/1170/DEM) for this site we stated that:

"..with regards to any future planning application for redevelopment of this site, should the scale and nature of development fall within Major Development and More Vulnerable National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) planning classifications, due to the sensitivity of flood risk in this area we would expect site specific hydraulic modelling as a starting point to refine the Flood Zones including climate change (the NPPF now requires the sequential test and sequential approach to take full account of the future flood zones).

The detailed FRA will therefore need to assess impact of climate change for 30%, 40% and 85% uplift in peak flows across the design events in order to assess the Sequential

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Test and Approach.

Assessment of Flood Zone 3b plus climate change is also a necessity for sequential test/approach purposes.

Once the Flood Zones have been properly assessed on a site specific basis, the Sequential Test and Approach must be duly applied, and accepted by the LPA. Any future FRA would need to include this information, in addition to any associated proposed redevelopment details, mitigation etc.

Please note that we have an existing model (and hydrology) which is available for use for this purpose should the applicant wish to. However the model is a number of years old so the model and all hydrology, topography etc. would all need to be fully updated as part of the site specific FRA process. The applicant would need to contact our Wessex Enquiries Team to obtain our model/hydrology, however he is also at liberty to undertake his own bespoke study. Any FRA and associated modelling would be subject to technical review prior to our acceptance of fitness for purpose...”

We have also been involved in pre-planning discussions with the FRA consultant for the development proposal before us and we have informed him of the above requirements on a number of occasions.

With regards fluvial flood risk the FRA and site designs appear to rely on flood data provided by the EA (Product 4 data request). The FRA does not provide the requested site specific assessment of flood risk. In the absence of an acceptable site specific FRA supported by detailed hydraulic modelling we are unable to support this application at this time.

NOTES

Modelling

It is likely that we will perform further technical review of any updated FRA and supporting hydraulic model submitted under this planning application. We would therefore ask to see all model, hydrology, topography and all other files required to run the model, plus a detailed Model Report/updated FRA. We must reach a position where we consider the modelling study to be 'fit for purpose' for us to accept its findings and any layout or designs reliant upon it. The model and supporting FRA/Model Report will need to assess and demonstrate the refined Flood Zones (3b, 3a and 2) and subsequent sequential approach, flood levels across a full range of events (including the updated climate change allowances), and nil increase in flood risk to the development site or elsewhere as a result of the proposals. There must be no inappropriate development within the Flood Zones.

Flood Risk Environmental Permit

In addition to any other permission(s) that may have already been obtained, e.g. planning permission, an Environmental Permit for flood risk activities may be required to carry out work in, under, over or near (within 8m of) the adjacent main river, on or near (within 8m of) a flood defence on a main river, or in the floodplain of a main river. For further information and to check whether a permit is required please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits> or contact our Permitting Officer, daniel.griffin@environment-agency.gov.uk

NOTE TO

The Surface Water Management aspect of this scheme detailed within the FRA should be referred to the Lead Local Flood Authority.

Biodiversity

The submitted proposals do not include sufficient gains for biodiversity and provide little in the way of green space. Therefore, we consider that there will be a net loss in biodiversity which is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

NPPF recognises that the planning system should conserve and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity. As this contributes to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures

Also the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act which requires Local Authorities to have regard to nature conservation and article 10 of the Habitats Directive which stresses the importance of natural networks of linked corridors to allow movement of species between suitable habitats, and promote the expansion of biodiversity.

Therefore, the proposed development must ensure that the landscape within the site is managed in such a way as to protect and enhance the ecological value of the site, including the River Shreen. We would therefore request further clarification and detail of both protection of the existing features and any new habitat created on site (including recommendations for mitigation and enhancements outlined in the Ecological Appraisal and Phase 2 Survey Report 2018) that would demonstrate net gain.

Water Vole

The River Shreen and its tributaries are an important watercourses for the water vole. Water Voles are a protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act and are listed as a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority species. They require a large uninterrupted river corridor to thrive. It is unclear from the proposed site plan Drawing No: S003 exactly how close the development will be from the watercourse. The plan suggests only a minimum of 5m buffer to protect this species. This would be insufficient to protect the existing water vole population and prevent any expansion in its range.

We would require a 10 metre buffer which is free from built development including lighting, domestic gardens and formal landscaping; as it could form a vital part of green infrastructure provision. We would request plans showing the extent and layout of the buffer zone including:

- details of any proposed planting scheme (for example, native species).
- details demonstrating how the buffer zone will be protected during development and managed/maintained over the longer term including adequate financial provision and named body responsible for management plus production of detailed management plan.
- details of any proposed footpaths, fencing, lighting etc.

Surface Water Outfalls

We note the applicant has proposed a new surface water outfall point that will discharge into the stream (Appendix K – Indicative Drainage Strategy).

Any new outfall designs should utilise bio-engineering techniques where feasible and take into account best practice outlined in the Fluvial Design Guide and SEPA guidance (see links below).

The Fluvial Design Guide (Chapter 8.5) outlines best practice for outfalls:

<http://evidence.environmentagency.gov.uk/FCERM/en/FluvialDesignGuide/Chapter8.aspx?pagenum=5>

Link to SEPA River Crossing Guide: <https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/151036/wat-sg-25.pdf>

If your Authority are satisfied with the information that has been submitted on this matter then please advise us accordingly, as we would wish to recommend conditions to control the potential impacts .

We would also wish to offer conditions in regards to contaminated land.

If you are minded to approve the application contrary to our objection please re-consult us.

Please send us a copy of the decision notice issued for this application for our records.

Please contact us if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

MICHAEL HOLM
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cc WYG Planning & Environment