

[REDACTED]
Sent: 11 May 2026 11:03

To: Nicola.Pettifer [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: DC/26/0530 Land at Hornbrook Farm. - VOLES

FORMAL OBJECTION: Material Consideration regarding Protected Species (Water Vole) and Ecological Impact

I am writing to formally object to the proposed development of 180 dwellings at Hornbrook Farm. This objection is raised on specific ecological grounds concerning the presence of protected species and the potential loss of a unique, ancient historic environment.

1. Discovery of Protected Species Evidence

I wish to bring to the Council's immediate attention video / photographic evidence of active burrows located along the riverbank at [Insert Specific Location/Grid Ref]. These burrows measure approximately 1 to 2 inches in diameter and are situated at the water's edge. These are diagnostic indicators of the Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibius*).

Evidence Submitted: [Attached Still Image from Video Evidence].

The video captured active use of these burrows, confirming the site is a functional habitat and not merely an abandoned earthwork.



2. Statutory Obligations and Legal Framework

The presence of Water Voles is a significant material consideration. The Council must adhere to the following legal requirements before any determination is made.

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended): It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy, or obstruct access to any structure or place which Water Voles use for shelter or protection.

The NERC Act 2006 (Section 40): Public bodies, including Local Planning Authorities, have a statutory duty to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. •

The Precautionary Principle: Where there is a suspected presence of a protected species, the burden of proof lies with the developer to demonstrate absence through rigorous, season-appropriate surveying.

3. Concerns Regarding Ancient Environment

The site in question represents a unique historic and ecological environment. The introduction of 180 residential units and the associated human pressure, domestic pet predation, and light pollution will irrevocably compromise this habitat. Any existing Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) that has failed to identify these riverbank burrows must be considered insufficient and fundamentally flawed.

4. Formal Request for Action

I formally request that the Planning Authority mandates a full, independent Water Vole survey conducted by a qualified ecologist during the current optimal survey window. Until such a survey is completed and the results are made public for consultation, this application should not be determined.

Kind Regards



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Submitted as a formal representation during the public consultation phase.