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13th July 2022

Ref: DF/BHS/SW/EW01a

Dear Emma,

RE: LAND WEST OF WORTHING ROAD, SOUTHWATER - PHASE 5 ECOLOGY

Further to our recent conversation, I can confirm I completed an ecological walkover update survey of the above site today to assess whether the habitats have changed significantly since the previous surveys completed in 2019 to inform the '*Land West of Worthing Road, Southwater Phase 5: Ecological Assessment*' (Derek Finnie Associates, Report Ref: DFA19080V2) submitted in support of planning application DC/19/2464.

The Site was found to comprise a former agricultural field which has been left fallow throughout the current farming year. The southern section of the Site is bordered by a hedge line with numerous semi-mature trees; an outgrown hedge forms the north-eastern boundary, whilst the northern site boundary is partially formed by a second hedge line with numerous tree; the western section of the northern boundary is open onto another arable field. Towards the north of the western boundary is an area that forms part of the ecological mitigation area for the wider Southwater Phases 1 – 2.

The habitats present are consistent with the previous surveys undertaken in 2019, and by extension those completed in 2015 submitted into respect the of the outline Application for the wider development.

The only exception to this is within the northeast corner of the Site, which has been formed into a Works' Compound to service Phases 3.2 and 4; these works were undertaken in early 2022. This area now comprises hardstanding on land which was formerly arable field.

Hence, overall, there has been no significant changes to the habitats within the Site, beyond the creation of the Works' Compound.



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As the habitats within the Site have largely remained unchanged, it is reasonable to assume the associated faunal communities present are also consistent with those identified in 2019. A total of five species of bat have previously been recorded, with common pipistrelle being by far the most frequently encountered. The majority of the bats were associated with the boundary features, which are unchanged and will largely be retained throughout the development.

Three species of reptiles were encountered within the Site, namely grass snake, slow worm and common lizard. All were noted at relatively low densities. The Site is currently the subject of a reptile mitigation strategy which aims to exclude reptiles from the majority of the Site, after a capture and translocation exercise, to allow the land to be used for temporary soil storage as part of the earthworks strategy as part of the approved Phases 3.2 and 4. Further details of the reptile mitigation strategy are presented in '*Southwater Phase 5: Reptile Mitigation Strategy*', July 2022 (Derek Finnie Associates, Report Ref: DFA22032). The current reptile mitigation strategy follows the same principles that would be implemented prior to the commencement of Phase 5 construction and site clearance works.

As the Site has been assessed to have not changed significantly since the 2019 surveys, the impact assessment and proposed mitigation and enhancement strategy presented within the *Land West of Worthing Road, Southwater Phase 5: Ecological Assessment* are still valid. Hence, additional surveys are not required.

I hope you find this useful, but if you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,



Derek Finnie CEnv MCIEEM
Director

