From: Bill Gover <Boatybill@hotmail.com>
Sent: 10 January 2025 13:40:51 UTC+00:00
To: "Halima.Chowdhury" <Halima.Chowdhury@horsham.gov.uk>
Cc: "Lucy" <lucycave19@hotmail.com>
Subject: Fwd: DC/24/1697, Springvale Fields, Woodland Lane, Colgate

Dear Halima,

I have just received a reply from my ecologist in response to your email yesterday, copy attached below.

With regards to the discrepancy with the PEA submitted by Arbtech, I can confirm Verdant Ecology carried out their own PEA and included their findings (where they disagreed with Arbtech), within their Bat Emergence Report.

I would appreciate it if you could confirm whether the reply below from Verdant Ecology is satisfactory. If you do have any queries, I am more than happy to get them answered.
I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards
Bill Gover

07748 964448

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** Jonathan Bradley <info@verdantecology.co.uk>
> **Date:** 10 January 2025 at 13:11:17 GMT
> **To:** Bill Gover <Boatybill@hotmail.com>
> **Subject: Re: Fwd: DC/24/1697, Springvale Fields, Woodland Lane, Colgate**
>
> Hello Bill.
>
> If you have any concerns, queries or suggestions for changes, let me know.
> Otherwise, free to forward this email to the local authority.
>
> Dear Halima,
>
> This is my response to your email to Bill Gover of the 9th January 2025 re:
> DC/24/1967.

Yes, there is a discrepancy between our assessment of the main grassland type and that of Arbtechs. Ours is correct, their's is not. The reason we re-did the PEA is because Arbtech's was riddled with oversights, inaccuracies and misinformation.

The use of the grassland as grazing for horses, means it is heavily-damaged. This and the species composition and structure makes it 'modified'. UKHabs describes modified grassland as that on neutral soils, subject to intensive agricultural use, including grazing.

UkHabs says 'other neutral grassland' cannot be that dominated by rye-grass and trifolium (which is the case here) and/or with high input (which is an inevitable result of manure deposits from horses, poaching and the occasional addition of lime).

Therefore it fits 'modified' better than 'other neutral'.

This was established by our June 2024 visit, and, as you say, photographic evidence was provided in our report.

The evidence for the potential for creation of 'acid lowland grassland' is available on Defra's MAGIC website which designates the soils as 'slightly acidic'.

Note that the 'slightly acidic' designation is a broad 'brush stroke' and does not refer to individual habitat parcels where there is evidence that another habitat designation is more appropriate. Note too that UKHabs allows habitat designations to conflict/coexist when close to each other in soil character (for example, they refer to the possibility that 'other calcareous grassland' can be created on modified grassland, even though elsewhere they say that 'modified' is a designation for neutral soils).

Unlike the main grazing fields, the area selected (the verge) has not been modified by grazing or the addition of manure or lime and supports a variety of grasses other than rye-grass. This can be seen in photographs of the verge.

Using the verge for tree planting is unlikely to prevent the establishment of 'acid lowland grassland' because this is determined first by the soils and second by the proposed management which demands the removal of arisings to prevent the build-up of nutrients.

Regarding the condition assessment for 'rural tree', your question is not relevant. A condition of 'good' is achieved by being able to satisfy at least 5 of the 6 conditions. If the other 5 are achieved, then condition E would not need to be. Their condition in the future cannot be predicted with any precision but the best way to achieve 'good' is decent establishment, protection and management and this has already been proposed/described. If future condition assessments show that 'good' is not being, or is unlikely to be achieved, recommendations will be made at that time to make sure 'good' can be achieved.

Any questions or concerns, please let us know.

Thanks and all the best.

Jonathan Bradley

BSc, MSc, TechCertArb, MArborA

Ecologist, Arborist and Land Manager

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<3af16cd8.jpeg>
www.verdantecology.co.uk

Verdant Ecology, Home Farm, Broadmoor, Abinger Common, Dorking, Surrey. RH5 6JY.

From: "Halima.Chowdhury" <Halima.Chowdhury@horsham.gov.uk>
Date: 9 January 2025 at 16:52:25 GMT
To: Boatybill@hotmail.com
Subject: FW: DC/24/1697, Springvale Fields, Woodland Lane, Colgate

Dear Bill,

DC/24/1697,

Springvale Fields, Woodland Lane, Colgate,

Demolition of temporary dwelling and erection of permanent two storey rural workers dwelling. Construction of an all weather equestrian sand school.

Further to my email below, I have now received feedback from the Council's Ecologist in respect to the Biodiversity Net (BNG) Gain queries which is set out below.

It is considered that in this instance it would not be necessary to change the habitat strategic significance. However, there is discrepancy with the information relating to the habitat baseline. The submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), Appendix 1 shows the grassland areas to be 'other neutral grassland', whereas the submitted BNG metric calculation tool and the 'BNG habitats before impacts map' classifies this as modified grassland. If the former were to be the correct classification, then this changes the metric calculation and results in approx. -35% (a net loss). It is noted that the PEA habitat survey was undertaken in May 2024, and whilst the photograph does

appear to be modified grassland it is unclear whether further survey has been undertaken to confirm this.

This point also relates to the proposed creation of other lowland acid grassland along the verge (which has also been previously recorded as other neutral grassland) and there are concerns with the likelihood of it being achieved. The draft Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) states "the soils allow us to be confident of being able to create 'other lowland acid grassland'". Please kindly confirm where this information is provided. Furthermore, please confirm will the addition of 12 x trees planted along the verge result in this grassland thriving in this location long-term?

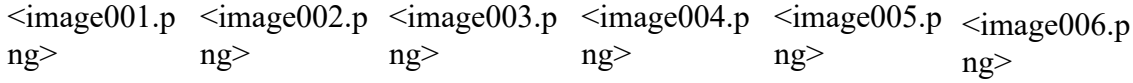
Please provide details on how the proposed rural trees in good condition will be achieved with regards to Condition E. Will there be active management to create this if not present by year 29, for example?

I would be grateful if the requested information could be provided by 16th January 2025.

Kind regards

Halima Chowdhury
Planning Officer

Telephone: 01403 215059
Email: Halima.Chowdhury@horsham.gov.uk



Horsham District Council, Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 1RL
Telephone: 01403 215100 (calls may be recorded) www.horsham.gov.uk Chief Executive: Jane Eaton

The Council will only accept service of documents by email if they are sent to legal@horsham.gov.uk. Any documents sent to individual email addresses will not in any circumstances be accepted.
Please contact us in advance if your email, including any attachments, is going to exceed 30MB.