
Sent:

17 February 2026 12:04

To:

Planning

Subject:

DC/25/2114

Categories:

Comments Received

DC/25/2114

Dear Mr. Holmes

I wish to strongly emphasise what I believe is a fundamental issue within this application.

The applicant's own ecological assessment acknowledges the sensitivity and ecological importance of the site and surrounding habitats.

It states that a Construction Environmental Management Plan will be necessary to outline measures to prevent damage or pollution to the River Adur Water Meadows & Wyckham Wood Local Wildlife Site and nearby priority habitats, and that best working practices **must be adopted during construction**.

The report also recognises the need for protective buffering during the operational phase, including habitat buffers and native hedgerow planting to protect woodland and compensate for habitat loss.

While these measures demonstrate long-term ecological intentions, **they do not show how the sensitive habitat will be fully protected in practice during construction**, nor is there a publicly available document demonstrating how construction-phase runoff, sediment, or pollutants will be controlled.

Newly planted hedgerows and buffer strips **cannot prevent sediment, runoff, or construction pollutants from reaching downslope habitats**.

Young vegetation has shallow roots, minimal filtration capacity, and on a sloping site, gravity **will carry runoff directly into the ecologically sensitive area**.

Construction-phase risks, including sediment, concrete washout, and fuel spills, cannot be mitigated by young planting alone; engineered controls such as silt fencing, settlement basins, and controlled drainage are required.

This is a particular concern for bats, including the Barbastelle bat, which forage extensively over the site and rely on insects as their primary food source.

Scientific evidence shows that bats can ingest contaminants indirectly through insects, a process known as bioaccumulation, meaning that pollutants entering the habitat can directly harm these highly protected species.

Given the sloping nature of the site, the presence of Barbastelle bats, and the acknowledged ecological sensitivity of the adjoining habitats and the stream below that is a tributary of a Chalk Stream....it is not realistically possible to **guarantee** protection from construction impacts.

In the absence of a detailed, publicly available Construction Environmental Management Plan or equivalent safeguards, there are no proposed guarantees that can be relied upon to fully protect the identified sensitive ecosystem, and it remains unclear how the authority can be satisfied that the habitat and protected species will be adequately or to safeguarded prior to any planning decision.

It is important to note that the site is both sloped and underlain by highly permeable chalk soils. This combination makes it physically impossible to guarantee that sediment, runoff, or other construction-related pollutants could be fully prevented from entering the adjacent ecologically sensitive habitats.

The risk of contamination reaching the protected habitat is high and unavoidable presenting a real and material ecological concern.

Very many thanks for taking time to consider this

[REDACTED]
Oxcroft
Church Farm Walk
Upper Beeding
BN44 3HD

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad