

Our ref: 1006596/AB/022 let WWT

04 October 2024

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Dear Steve,

ORCHARD FARM, PERSHORE – APPROACH TO MITIGATION RE: TIDDESLEY WOOD SSSI

We write following our correspondence of 28 June 2024 (issued 21 August 2024) to seek your feedback on the additional material provided. We would be pleased to arrange a meeting with you to discuss matters.

To further inform our discussion, we enclose here additional material, namely a subsequent update to 'TN07: Summary of Visitor Access Management Options' and a costed funding proposal for visitor access management mitigation measures. We discuss these in turn below.

Visitor Access Management Mitigation Measures

As set out in our prior correspondence of 28 June 2024, any Visitor Access Management Plan, which would be prepared at the reserved matters stage, would specify work in two parts. The first part would be initial capital works to address the pre-existing issues with footfall into the woodland, including enhancement of the path network to create headroom for additional visitors. The second part would be ongoing visitor access management measures, alongside regular monitoring of their effectiveness, in order to track success, and flag any need for adjustments.

We attach updated to 'TN07: Summary of Visitor Access Management Options' (04 October 2024) to show the split of proposed management actions between capital up front works and ongoing management and maintenance activities. This provides a fuller understanding of how visitor access management mitigation options would be deployed.

Costed funding proposal

Our correspondence of 28 June 2024 also discussed the matter of funding. To recap, this set out that it is proposed that the initial capital works would be funded by the developer, while subsequent visitor access management measures would be subject to an ongoing long term funding source.

In order to take forward the measures in TN07, a cost plan has been constructed to assign likely costs to required items. This is split into two parts, namely a) 'capital works' which refers to measures which would be funded by the developer (and secured in the proposed S106 agreement) to address the pre-existing issues at the SSSI and to provide headroom to receive additional visitors; and b) following the

implementation of the capital works, an ongoing annual programme of upkeep alongside surveillance monitoring and the implementation of adaptive management to address any issues that may arise.

The items assigned to each category and calculated costs are set out on the attached draft spreadsheet entitled 'Visitor Access Management Costings' 04 October 2024.

Duration of funding proposal

In order to safeguard the woodland, post the capital works, the developer proposes to ensure long term measures to manage visitor access management are fully funded. In this regard, the developer has offered to commit to long term funding i.e. 30 years in line with BNG legislation, rising to a level of in-perpetuity funding of management if considered needed by the Inspector.

The mechanism for the funding of long-term visitor access management will be set out in the S106 agreement for the scheme. A number of options are available e.g. via a management company or commuted sum, and the developer is currently finalising funding arrangements and we will provide an update at the inquiry (or in advance if possible).

Conclusion

The above provides further detail of the proposals of the visitor access management measures, how they would be implemented, the costs of both capital works and ongoing management and the funding proposal for these. In conclusion, the offer of long-term funding provides full confidence of security of mitigation provision at the woodland.

Next steps

We would be pleased to meet to discuss the above proposals and we would be grateful if you could send across dates as to when you are available.

Yours sincerely



Alistair Baxter



Julian Forbes-Laird

Enclosures

- Technical Note TN07 - Summary of Visitor Access Management Mitigation Options. Updated 04 October 2024
- Draft spreadsheet entitled 'Visitor Access Management Costings' 04 October 2024

Technical Note 07

Project: 1006596 Orchard Farm, Pershore

Planning Ref: W/23/02112/OUT

Date: Updated 04 October 2024

TN07: Tiddesley Woods SSSI: Summary of Visitor Access Management Mitigation Options

DRAFT

1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Sylvan is advising in relation to the current planning application for proposed development of land at Orchard Farm, Pershore (hereafter known as the 'site'), which includes proposals for up to 300 residential units in addition to an extensive area of public open space and associated landscape planting.
- 1.1.2 Tiddesley Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located to the west of the proposals and is included in the ancient woodland inventory. So as to ensure that potential deterioration of the SSSI is avoided from any additional footfall that may arise into the woodland as a result of the proposals, a range of mitigation is proposed.
- 1.1.3 The development of the mitigation options has been informed by a detailed understanding of the woodland and in particular the results of a) woodland botanical surveys to define the value and sensitivity of the ground flora and b) a Woodland Path Serviceability Assessment which has recorded the condition of the existing path network. This latter work has identified a significant pre-existing issue at the woodland, in terms of visitor footfall leading to poor path condition across large areas and deterioration of the woodland.
- 1.1.4 An opportunity is therefore available for intervention to reduce existing path wear. If implemented, these recommendations would have the effect of substantially increasing the carrying capacity of the path network, such that the existing significant issues would be remedied whilst also facilitating additional visitors to be readily accommodated, without additional deterioration arising to the woodland.
- 1.1.5 The mitigation falls broadly into two categories, namely:
 - Embedded mitigation within the scheme which is largely located on site;
 - Additional mitigation including measures which could be delivered including within Tiddesley Wood itself
- 1.1.6 The purpose of this Technical Note is to summarise the mitigation proposals and options in respect of Tiddesley Wood SSSI.

2 Embedded mitigation within the scheme

2.1.1 An Ecological Appraisal report (Aspect Ecology September 2023) informs the Outline Planning Application which includes the following mitigation proposals:

- a) Significant buffer zones, that far exceed (in some cases by an order of magnitude) the minimum recommendation of 15m¹, including a section of 'inner buffer' to be fenced off from public access
- b) Public Open Space (15.9 ha / 60% of site area) intended to provide local opportunities for informal recreation, and absorb potential recreational pressure that might otherwise be put on Tiddesley Wood (embedded mitigation);
- c) Provision of an all weather on site circular walk of 2.3km to attract users from the woodland;
- d) Links to offsite PROWs and associated circular walking routes;
- e) Creation of a range of semi-natural habitat, designed to be complementary to the woodland, including new woodland planting extending Tiddesley Woods to the east, species-rich grassland, a traditional community orchard, allotments and wildlife ponds (embedded mitigation/enhancement);
- f) Measures within the Landscape Strategy for the POS, to assist with diverting public pressure away from Tiddesley Wood – signage, interpretation boards, dog waste bins etc;

3 Additional mitigation including measures which could be delivered including within Tiddesley Wood itself

3.1.1 Additional mitigation options, including dynamic visitor access management measures, include:

Capital/Up-front Measures

- a) Provision of a Home Owners Pack to explain the special nature of Tiddesley Wood and its sensitives and the alternative greenspace options and walking routes available in the area;
- b) Information/interpretation boards (to augment to small number already provided);
- c) Increased way-marking;
- d) Installation of knee rails or log edging to encourage visitors to stay on paths;
- e) Temporary /permanent signage to direct visitors away from sensitive areas;
- f) Upgrading of unmade paths where found to be vulnerable;
- g) Provision of boardwalks in key locations;

¹ an extensive buffer zone is provided, varying in width between 80m and 165m. This exceeds the buffer depth recommended by Standing Advice by a factor of between 5.3 to 11 times

- h) Treatment of Millenium Way PROW and the entry point from the site, to improve and delineate pathway to avoid adverse effects from widening;
- i) Installation of ditches, if required, to discourage formation of other pathways and maintain a drier nature to existing paths;
- j) Dog-bins, with their locations marked on site maps, and limited to periphery / entry points (emptying of dog bins on the site/ woodland entry points would be the responsibility of the management company);

Ongoing Management/Maintenance

- k) Regular surveillance, through effective wardening, to provide early warning of emerging problems;
- l) An organised system of response to enable swift intervention where required i.e. adaptive mitigation;
- m) Installation of temporary signage to direct visitors away from sensitive areas;
- n) Installation of path edging (e.g. log edging, knee rails or low hurdle edging loops) to encourage keeping to paths;
- o) Path diversion around wet-lying areas; and/or
- p) Temporary or permanent path closure (using fencing or brash piles); and/or,
- q) Attention to path surfacing;
- r) The closure of car parking on a number of days / temporary basis;
- s) Funding to provide tools and machinery to facilitate management of the woodland by volunteers from the new development, which in turn would foster a sense of ownership and custodianship for the woodland;
- t) Ongoing public engagement through wardening on site.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1.1 The proper test of an adverse effect on a nature conservation site, in this case including deterioration of ancient woodland, is whether the site would be in better condition after development, compared to before. An updated list of mitigation measures is set out above, the aim of which is to ensure that no such adverse outcome would occur and provide a net positive effect from the proposals, with the existing deterioration being replaced by enhancement.
- 4.1.2 Preliminary costs have been developed for the mitigation measures set out in Section 3 above, which are appended to this document. It is intended that this package is finalised through consultation with Worcestershire Wildlife Trust.

TIDDLESLEY WOODS - VISITOR ACCESS MANAGEMENT COSTINGS

04 October 2024

Please Note: Assumptions have been used for estimation of various items including:
Capital costs of pathway creation and associated infrastructure.
Assumptions are stated where applicable

CAPITAL WORKS

Capital Works:	Notes:	No.	Unit	Rate/Cost per Unit	Prior to Inflation Rate where applied	Estimated Total Cost	Source
Site-Wide. Up Front Design/Planning/Consents/Site Set-up (All Year 1)							
Description:							
SSSI CONSENTS, PROW APPLICATIONS	Allowance for Consultant	1	no.	£3,000.00		£3,000.00	Estimate
Site-Wide. Capital Works							
HOMEOWNER PACK/LEAFLET							
	Explaining the special nature of Tiddesley Wood, its sensitivities and alternative greenspace options and walking routes						
	Leaflet Design	1	no.	£1,000.00		£1,000.00	Estimate
	Leaflet Printing	500	no.	£1.50		£750.00	Estimate
PATH IMPROVEMENTS							
Refer to FLAC Path Remediation/Mitigation Options Table for details of treatment prescription per path							
Path 1A							
280m in poor condition. PROW. 80% (224m) mud							
	70m boardwalk (25% of muddy length). 105m2 (based on 1.2m wide)	84	m2	£91.00	£7,644.00	£10,242.96	Paths for All, Estimating price guide for path projects (2014).34% Inflation Applied
	210m Hoggin/embedded gravel path (remaining sections). 315m2 (based on 1.5m wide)	315	m2	£18.21	£5,736.15	£7,686.44	Paths for All, Estimating price guide for path projects (2014).34% Inflation Applied
	420m Timber path edge boards (both sides)	117	3.6m board	£4.50	n/a	£526.50	Typical on-line supplier
Path 2B							
240m in very poor condition							
	192m boardwalk (80% of total length). 230.4m2. (based on 1.2m wide)	230	m2	£91.00	£20,966.40	£28,094.98	Paths for All, Estimating price guide for path projects (2014). Inflation Applied
	48m Hoggin/embedded gravel path (remaining sections). 72m2	72	m2	£18.21	£1,311.12	£1,756.90	Paths for All, Estimating price guide for path projects (2014).34% Inflation Applied
	96m Timber path edge boards (both sides)	27	3.6m board	£4.50	n/a	£121.50	Typical on-line supplier
Path 3A							
145m in poor condition. Bridleway							
	145m woodchip horse path (3m wide, 100mm depth). 435m2. 43.5m3	44	m3	£72.00	n/a	£3,132.00	Spons External Works and Landscape Price Book, 2024
	145m Hoggin/embedded gravel path, as parallel path for other users (100%). 145m2 (1m wide)	145	m2	£18.21	£2,640.45	£3,538.20	Paths for All, Estimating price guide for path projects (2014).34% Inflation Applied
	145m Separation Rail (Kneerail)	145	m	£12.00	n/a	£1,740.00	Estimate
	435m Timber path edge boards (either side and central)	121	3.6m board	£4.50	n/a	£543.74	Typical on-line supplier
Path 3B							
245m in poor condition. Bridleway							
	245m woodchip horse path (3m wide,100mm depth). 735m2. 73.5m3	74	m3	£72.00	n/a	£5,292.00	Spons External Works and Landscape Price Book, 2024
	245m Hoggin/embedded gravel, as parallel path for other users (100%). 245m2 (1m wide)	245	m2	£18.21	£4,461.45	£5,978.34	Paths for All, Estimating price guide for path projects (2014).34% Inflation Applied
	245m Separation Rail (Kneerail)	245	m	£12.00	n/a	£2,940.00	Estimate
	735m Timber path edge boards (either side and central)	204	3.6m board	£4.50	n/a	£918.77	Typical on-line supplier
Path 3C							
205m in poor to very poor condition, Bridleway							
	205m woodchip horse path (3m wide, 100mm depth). 615m2. 61.5m3	62	m3	£72.00	n/a	£4,428.00	Spons External Works and Landscape Price Book, 2024
	205m Hoggin/embedded gravel, as parallel path for other users (100%). 205m2 (1m wide)	205	m2	£18.21	£3,733.05	£5,002.29	Paths for All, Estimating price guide for path projects (2014).34% Inflation Applied
	205m Separation Rail (Kneerail)	205	m	£12.00	n/a	£2,460.00	Estimate
	615m Timber path edge boards (either side and central)	171	3.6m board	£4.50	n/a	£768.74	Typical on-line supplier
Path 5A							
200m in poor condition. PROW							
	100m boardwalk (50% of length). 120m2 (1.2m wide)	120	m2	£91.00	£10,920.00	£14,632.80	Paths for All, Estimating price guide for path projects (2014). Inflation Applied
	100m Hoggin/embedded gravel path (50% of length). 150m2	150	m2	£18.21	£2,731.50	£3,660.21	Spons External Works and Landscape Price Book, 2024
	200m Timber edge path boards (both sides)	56	3.6m board	£4.50	n/a	£250.02	Typical on-line supplier
Path 5C							
210m in poor to very poor condition. PROW							
	105m boardwalk (50% of length). 126m2 (1.2m wide)	126	m2	£91.00	£11,466.00	£15,364.44	Paths for All, Estimating price guide for path projects (2014). Inflation Applied
	105m Hoggin/embedded gravel path (50% of length). 157.5m2	158	m2	£18.21	£2,868.08	£3,843.22	Paths for All, Estimating price guide for path projects (2014). Inflation Applied
	210m Timber edge path boards (both sides)	58	3.6m board	£4.50	n/a	£262.49	Typical on-line supplier
Path 6B							
135m in poor condition. PROW							
	33.75m boardwalk (25% of mud length). 41m2 (1.2m wide)	41	m2	£91.00	£3,685.50	£4,938.57	Paths for All, Estimating price guide for path projects (2014). Inflation Applied
	101.25m Hoggin/embedded gravel path (remaining sections)	152	m2	£18.21	£2,765.64	£3,705.96	Paths for All, Estimating price guide for path projects (2014). Inflation Applied
	202.5m Timber edge path boards (both sides)	56	3.6m board	£4.50	n/a	£253.13	Typical on-line supplier
Path 9A							
190m in poor condition							
	190m Hoggin/embedded gravel path (100% of total length). 285m2	285	m2	£18.21	£5,189.85	£6,954.40	Paths for All, Estimating price guide for path projects (2014). Inflation Applied
	202.5m Timber edge path boards (both sides)	53	3.6m board	£4.50	n/a	£237.47	Typical on-line supplier
Path 9C							
160m in moderate to poor condition							

SPECIFICATIONS//ASSUMPTIONS

BOARDWALKS

1.2m wide, without handrail

Decking boards - 1600 x 150 x 50mm
Beams – 2200mm x 100mm square Support posts - 100mm square
Set in 600mm well-rammed stone and earth
Deck-level edging rails - 75mm square
Including labour costs for installation

Timber path edging boards

3.6m x 0.1m x 22mm

Knee Rails

0.9m high bird's mouth post, top rail, straps and nails

TIDDESLEY WOODS - VISITOR ACCESS MANAGEMENT COSTINGS

Please Note: Assumptions have been used for estimation of various items including:
Capital costs of pathway creation and associated infrastructure.
Assumptions and Sources are stated where applicable

ANNUAL BUDGET COSTS

Annual Management Costs							Source
ITEM 1 - Rangers/Wardens							
Description: Staffing							
Based on 0.2 FTE Warden (1 day per week)							
	Quantity/Freq.	No.	Unit			Estimated Annual Rate	
Salaries	£25,000.00	0.2	FTE			£5,000.00	Estimate
Training	£500.00	0.2	FTE			£100.00	Estimate
Pension						£0.00	
Running Costs							
Equipment	£500.00	1				£500.00	Estimate
First Aid Equipment	£200.00	1				£200.00	Estimate
Protective Clothing	£100.00	1				£100.00	Estimate
Consultant Costs	£1,000.00	1				£1,000.00	Estimate
Central Office Costs	IT Support, Customer Services, Finance, Printing, Office Accomodation					£0.00	
Vehicles							
Vehicle Lease Costs	£360.00	12	monthly			£4,320.00	Assumed typical lease cost from internet provider
Vehicle Running Costs	Incl. in Lease costs					£0.00	
						SUBTOTAL	£11,220.00
ITEM 2 - General Items							
Description: General service needs							
Maintenance: Notes							
	Area / Quantity	No. of Visits per Year	Annual Rate (m ² or lin m / year)	Flat Rate		Estimated Annual Maintenance Cost	
Waste collection	Additional to contract	4	104.0	£ 2,000.00		£ 2,000.00	Estimate
Repairs and Maintenance	Gen items		-	£ 500.00		£ 500.00	Estimate
Rates	N/A						
Equipment Tools and Materials	Gen misc		-	£ 1,000.00		£ 1,000.00	Estimate
Fuel	Tools and transport		-	£ 500.00		£ 500.00	Estimate
						SUBTOTAL	£ 4,000.00
ITEM 3 - PATH and FURNITURE MAINTENANCE							
Description: Notes							
	Area / Quantity	No. of Visits per Year	Annual Rate (m ² or lin m / year)	Flat Rate		Estimated Annual Maintenance Cost	
Footpath Surface maintenance	Top up bark chippings,. (20% of path network per year) - Materials	52.86 m3	1	£ 72.00		£ 3,805.92	Spons External Works and Landscape Price Book, 2024
	Top up bark chippings. Labour	52.86 m3	1	£ 75.00		£ 3,964.50	Estimate
Adaptive Management' measures	e.g. Increased way-marking, use of knee rails or log edging to encourage visitors to stay on paths, use of temporary /permanent signage to direct visitors away from sensitive areas, temporary or permanent path closure (using fencing or brush piles), path diversion around wet-lying areas, public engagement through warden presence on site	1 no.		£ 5,000.00		£ 5,000.00	Allowance
						SUBTOTAL	£ 12,770.42
ITEM 4 - FENCING							
Description: Notes							
	Area / Quantity	No. of Visits per Year	Annual Rate (m ² or lin m / year)	Flat Rate		Estimated Annual Maintenance Cost	
Post and rail	Replace every 10 years (10% per annum). Boundary fence, plus local path closures. Post and rail fencing, with dog mesh	93 m		£ 72.00		£ 6,696.00	Spons External Works and Landscape Price Book, 2024
						SUBTOTAL	£ 6,696.00
						TOTAL	£34,686.42

GRAND TOTAL £34,686.42