

APPLICATION NO: 19/3036M

**LOCATION: MERE GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB, CHESTER ROAD,
MERE, WA16 6LJ**

PROPOSAL: Proposed alteration and extension to provide additional bedrooms, conferencing and clubhouse floorspace, extension of the Stable Block (Spa) to provide additional leisure and spa facilities, creation of a tennis hut and golf starter hut and other ancillary buildings, alteration and rationalisation of the wider site and car park to provide more parking spaces and additional landscaping and re-development of existing ground store

CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Natural England - No objection subject to appropriate mitigation being secured. In summary, Natural England agrees with the overall conclusions of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) subject to appropriate mitigation being secured through the planning permission. We advise that the impacts on the designated sites can be appropriately mitigated with the measures outlined within the letter from Avison Young (dated 2 July 2020) and with additional information to be provided as highlighted in our advice below.

OFFICER APPRAISAL

The proposal is approximately 61m from The Mere, Mere Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 Ramsar Site. As such Natural England are a statutory consultee. Natural England is a non-departmental public body whose statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Natural England had initially raised concerns regarding the level of information submitted with the application in order to gauge the level of impact on the designated sites and the scope for mitigation. As set out on page 56 of the committee agenda, the recommendation was made subject to further consultation with Natural England.

The applicant has submitted the required Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and Natural England have confirmed that they are now satisfied with the conclusions of the HRA. Natural England do not object to the proposed development subject to appropriate mitigation being secured through condition of the planning permission. The conditions required are:

1. Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP)

A detailed Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) should be produced and agreed prior to commencement of any works on site. The CEMP should detail the mitigation measures that will be put in place during the construction period to avoid, reduce or offset any adverse impacts on the designated sites. The nearby designated sites are sensitive to changes in water quality and measures to prevent pollution of the sites via runoff from vehicles (during the construction and operation phases), dust and waste should be included.

2. Geo-environmental / Geotechnical investigations

Submission of Phase II ground investigation report and development of Remediation Strategy, if required, agreed prior to development.

3. Drainage strategy

Production of an overall drainage strategy for surface water drainage, which includes measure to prevent foul water entering the designated sites during flooding, storms and during maintenance of the drainage system should be agreed prior to commencement of works.

4. Control of invasive non-native species

In reference to the HRA (section 5.9.8) a habitat management strategy for the removal of Japanese knotweed, *Fallopia japonica*, and Himalayan balsam, *Impatiens glandulifera*, should be provided and approved prior to commencement of works. This should include a detailed methodology and timescales and should be agreed with Natural England. For awareness any use of herbicides could pose an additional risk to water quality of the designated sites if they are allowed to seep into the watercourse.

Conditions 2, 3 & 4 specified above are already captured by the conditions recommended on pages 56 & 57 of the committee agenda (conditions 16, 19, 23, 24, 25 & 26).

Condition 1 specified above, for a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP), is not captured within the existing conditions proposed and therefore this should be added to the recommendation.

Should planning permission be granted, Natural England have requested to be consulted on the information submitted to discharge these conditions in the future. It is recommended that this would be undertaken with a 21-day consultation period and should be highlighted to the developer in the Decision Notice if planning permission is granted.

Other Matters

The committee report notes that United Utilities (“UU”) raised concerns with the proposed drainage strategy. Amended plans have since been submitted and UU have been consulted. No further comments have been received. UU recommended conditions if planning permission were granted, namely a drainage strategy and a condition for foul and surface water to be drained on separate systems. These conditions are proposed as part of the

recommendation and there is not considered to be a reason to withhold planning permission based on the comments received from UU.

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE subject to the conditions set out on pages 56-57 of the Agenda Reports Pack (following referral to the Secretary of State) with the following additional condition:

27. Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP)

A detailed Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) should be produced and agreed prior to commencement of any works on site. The CEMP should detail the mitigation measures that will be put in place during the construction period to avoid, reduce or offset any adverse impacts on the designated sites. The nearby designated sites are sensitive to changes in water quality and measures to prevent pollution of the sites via runoff from vehicles (during the construction and operation phases), dust and waste should be included.