

CLERK'S NOTE OF SITE MEETING WITH WCC ARBORICULTURAL AND ECOLOGICAL OFFICERS

This note represents the Clerk's understanding of the matters discussed at the site meeting and is intended solely as a briefing note to Council. It does not constitute an agreed record of Winchester City Council's views or formal advice.

DATE: 13 July 26

WRITTEN BY: The Clerk

AGENDA ITEM: 31

The Parish Council met with Winchester City Council's Arboricultural and Ecological Officers at Longwood Sports Ground last week to discuss the trees on site and to better understand the surveys, reports and information that may be required as part of any future planning application. The Officers outlined the information they would expect to accompany any future planning application relating to the proposed sports facilities and associated tree works. They advised that the Parish Council should commission the following reports, if not already undertaken:

- BS5837 Tree Survey and Report
- Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement

The Officers also discussed the position regarding Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). They advised that they did not intend to place TPOs on the site at this stage, noting that the Parish Council had paused any tree works pending the outcome of the planning process and would not undertake any felling until the necessary surveys, reports and planning considerations had been completed. The Officers further explained that, if TPOs were subsequently made and planning permission were later granted for the current proposals, the planning permission could authorise the removal of protected trees where such works formed part of the approved development. The Parish Council advised that a pre-planning application had already been submitted to the South Downs National Park Authority. The Officers recommended that any tree-related reports be submitted alongside the Pre-Application to enable them to provide informed comments.

The Officers explained that they could not provide advice on the merits of the Council's proposals, or make recommendations regarding the trees, as doing so could give rise to a conflict of interest in their role as statutory consultees. The Officers provided a general overview of Biodiversity Net Gain requirements and discussed examples of the types of planting and habitat enhancements that may be considered as part of a future planning application. No advice or recommendation was given regarding the measures that may ultimately be required for the site.

A discussion took place regarding bats on the site. The Parish Council confirmed that it was in the process of obtaining quotations for a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) for all trees proposed for removal. Should the PRA identify the need for further survey work, the Council would arrange any additional surveys required, including emergence and re-entry surveys, together with any supporting reports necessary for a future planning application. The Officers noted the Parish Council's proposed approach.