



THE AMESBURY SOCIETY AS

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The Amesbury Society
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SP4 7BA

Planning Department

Rec. 24 NOV 2009

Acknowledged

Copy to

Action

22 Nov 2009

Head of Development Services
Wiltshire Council
61 Wyndham Road
Salisbury

Reference
Planning applications S/2009/1527/FULL and S/2009/1528/LBC

Dear Sir /Madam

Further to the reference planning applications, may I on behalf of the Amesbury Society make the following observations.

Firstly, due to the magnitude of the application for the construction of the latest proposed Visitors Centre and the ridiculously short time allowed for any meaningful study of the proposal it has not been possible for our Society to comment. This has been in part compounded by ongoing medical problems by myself which has not helped. So any comment made will be confined to the bat and breeding bird survey supplement despite much that could be said on the main proposal.

The very proposal to build a large Visitors' Centre on a green field site on chalk, agricultural downland completely isolated from any other buildings must have a devastating effect on the flora and fauna of the area extending a long way from the boundaries of that site. This must have an equally devastating effect on the habitat of the birds listed, all too many of which are "red listed" and in serious decline. Also and not mentioned are species such as the English native Grey Partridge (*Perdix Perdix*). This is now I understand on the critically threatened list and as a downland bird would doubtless nest in areas such as this if their population were high enough.

The construction of this Centre will also have an adverse effect on the Lapwing (*Vanellus Vanellus*). This is or was a typically downland ground nesting species, but the native population has all but died out and the only ones now commonly seen are winter visitors. The winter feeding grounds for Fieldfare, Redwings and overwintering Starlings will be locally impaired and all in all it will have a seriously detrimental effect on a wide range of birds, this in turn must have a knock on effect on predator species in year round nesting and feeding patterns.

Not much is known by me of bats and their needs but it would be safe to assume that their hunting areas would be seriously impaired and it would lead to, at least, a decrease of the local population of these animals.

It could also be assumed that with the loss of predator bird species this would be accompanied by an increase in the population of vermin, rats and foxes etc. in and around the Visitors' Centre and the predations they would make on ground breeding and feeding birds and their young would further reduce any local populations of these all too scarce species.

So while the proposal is at least an improvement on the original Countess offering it is still a long way from ideal being sited so far from the henge and from the ecological point of view at least should be refused. But doubtless in the haste to appease English Heritage (hence the too short consultation period?) and their need to have a means of commercially exploiting the expected rush of visitors in 2012 what do a few birds and bats matter, after all they cannot complain.

Yours faithfully

Roland Ware

Secretary