

Application No: 19/00609/FULL Full Application

Site: Camerons Cottage, Franchise Cottage, Telegraph, Redlynch, Salisbury, SP5 2PX

Proposal: Change of use and single storey extension to existing dwelling to create outdoor study centre; porch; solar panels; alterations to fenestration; single storey study centre; sewage treatment plant

Applicant: Ms C Elcoate, The RSPB

Case Officer: Clare Ings

Parish: LANDFORD

1. REASON FOR COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

The Authority has an interest in the site.

2. DEVELOPMENT PLAN DESIGNATION

Site of Special Scientific Interest

3. PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

SP6 The natural environment

SP16 The historic and built environment

SP17 Local distinctiveness

SP42 Business and employment development

SP48 The land-based economy

DP2 General development principles

DP18 Design principles

DP45 Extensions to non-residential buildings and uses

DP49 Re-use of buildings outside the Defined Villages

SP7 Landscape character

4. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

Landford Village Design Statement

5. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Sec 12 - Achieving well-designed places

Sec 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Sec 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

6. MEMBER COMMENTS

None received

7. PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

Redlynch Parish Council: Very supportive of the proposal. Comment:

- It will provide a residential outdoor educational facility for your people allowing them to directly experience the natural world
- It will give them appreciation of the countryside and the importance of maintaining and respecting it for future generations
- Proposed works are appropriate and sympathetic in terms of scale, appearance, form, siting and layout, and will not adversely affect the local distinctiveness
- Compliant with relevant policies

Landford Parish Council: Recommend permission, but would accept the decision reached by the NPNFA.

Comment: A very interesting proposal with all issues well researched and analysed

8. CONSULTEES

- 8.1 Rights of Way (WC): No comments received
- 8.2 Ecologist: Verbal update to be provided
- 8.3 Tree Officer: No objection, subject to conditions
- 8.4 Natural England: Further information is required to determine impact on designated sites, in particular with respect to nitrate neutrality
- 8.5 Planning Policy Officer: Provides an opportunity to promote greater understanding of the special qualities of the New Forest. No objection subject to conditions requiring appropriate contributions towards mitigation measures.
- 8.6 Landscape Officer: No objection, subject to conditions
- 8.7 Wiltshire Council- Dev Control: No comments received.

9. REPRESENTATIONS

- 9.1 28 representations received in support of the proposal. Comments:
- Valuable addition to the work of the RSPC / Cameron Bespolka Trust
 - Wonderful facility for young people to experience nature first hand
 - Inspirational and exciting project
 - Opportunity to work and learn
- 9.2 Friends of the New Forest support the proposal. Comment:

- Meets second purpose for "education and information to increase understanding and appreciation of the Forest's special qualities"

10. RELEVANT HISTORY

10.1 None relevant.

11. ASSESSMENT

11.1 The site lies within a large area of mixed woodland, known as Franchises Wood to the east of the B3078 (Cadnam to Fordingbridge road). It is accessed via a long unmade single-width undulating track and comprises a fairly substantial brick cottage under a slate roof (currently vacant), a small brick outhouse and timber shed. The cottage lies on a level plateau in a clearing within the wood, and the ground then slopes quite steeply down to the north and east. There is an area of gravel hardstanding (circling a Pine tree). The entrance to the site is from the B3078, where there are two dwellings.

11.2 The proposal is to extend the cottage with single storey rear and side extensions, and then to use the extended building for residential accommodation for up to 18 students and 2/3 leaders, together with dining and kitchen facilities. In addition, a separate new single storey building for a study centre is proposed. The study centre would be capable of operating independently. Both the extension and the new building would be faced with Douglas Fir board cladding under a metal (graphite) roof. Photovoltaic panels are also proposed

11.3 The site would be run as a joint facility between the Cameron Bespolka Trust and the RSBP as an outdoor educational enterprise to allow access to 1000 acres of woodland to provide outdoor experiences for young people.

11.4 The key considerations are whether the proposal would:

- Meet the purposes of the National Park
- Comply with relevant policies of the Local Plan
- Be appropriate in terms of scale and design
- Not have any significant impacts on trees or ecology in the area

Given the remote location of the site, there would not be any direct impact on the amenities of other residential development in the area, although there is likely to be some increase in the use of the track adjacent to Little Orchard, one of the dwellings at the entrance to the site, but it is not considered that this activity would adversely harm the amenities of this dwelling.

National Park purposes

- 11.5 As with all National Parks, the New Forest has two purposes which are set out in primary legislation, and these are:
- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the New Forest; and
 - to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the New Forest by the public

Where there is conflict which cannot be reconciled, then the first purpose should take precedence.

- 11.6 It is considered that the re-use of the existing cottage as an outdoor study centre (to be run by a national conservation charity) could promote the understanding and enjoyment of the New Forest's special qualities, and in principle, the proposal would comply with this purpose. However, the site lies immediately adjacent to the New Forest SSSI, SAC and within 400m of the SPA, and consequently the proposal outlined above relating to the property could have a potential impact on the adjacent designated sites through the increased presence of people at the site.

- 11.7 The activities associated with the facility would be encouraged to take place on the non-designated land, to avoid direct harm to the designated sites, but it is not considered that this would always be possible. Potential impacts cannot therefore be ruled out, but with conditions which would clearly restrict the use of the development to what is being proposed, i.e. a study centre with limited accommodation, so that any alternative use would require planning permission, together with a limit on the number of occupants and users of the study centre at any one time, it is considered that the likely level of harm could be reduced, and in this particular instance, the development would be acceptable. Unrestricted use of the site is likely to be considered contrary to the first purpose.

Compliance with policies

- 11.8 The Local Plan supports development which provides opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the National Park' special qualities - one of the Strategic Objectives. Policy SP46 supports small-scale proposals which provide for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities within the defined villages, or outside of these villages, through the re-use or extension of existing buildings. Policy DP49 further supports this type of activity for the re-use of buildings outside the defined villages, but usually not for residential use. The re-use and extension to the existing cottage as an outdoor study centre (albeit that the study centre element would be contained within an additional building within the same site) could therefore be considered contrary to this policy, but in this case, as the site would be based within a 1000 acre reserve, and would promote

the understanding and enjoyment of New Forest, the development would be considered acceptable as a unique opportunity to manage the woodland and allow a greater understanding of the area. It would, however, be subject to controls in relation to the use of the site and a restriction on visitor numbers.

Appropriateness of the development

- 11.9 The existing cottage on the site is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset and therefore the proposal to retain the cottage is welcomed, and would also be in line with the advice contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in Section 16.
- 11.10 In design terms, the single storey extension to the cottage in contrasting materials (which would also be traditional in the wider area) would be acceptable, being relatively low-key and allowing the existing non-designated heritage asset still to be read. The scale of the extended cottage would be marginally in excess of the 30% allowed for extensions to residential dwellings (approximately 32%), but for the proposed use this is considered acceptable. No additional first floor accommodation is proposed, and the single storey extension would respect the existing dwelling.
- 11.11 The study centre would also be modest in scale providing approximately 56m² of covered floorspace, with only around 20m² forming a separate room; the remainder being open sided. It would also be single storey and of materials similar to those for the extension, thus offering some harmony across the site. However, given the location of the centre, it would have very limited impact outside the site.
- 11.12 The development is keen to rely on the use of renewable energy, and proposes both photovoltaic panels on the cottage and the study centre, and also a biomass installation, making use of the existing outbuildings. Exact details of the renewable energy elements, especially the panels, are required and these would be conditioned to ensure that they would be appropriate in design to the appearance of the non-designated heritage asset (the cottage).
- 11.13 The Landscape Officer has sought some clarification on some aspects, to ensure that the external elements (footpaths, surfaces and lighting) are kept as natural as possible, due to the woodland setting. For example, timber edging would be used for the new pathways within the curtilage, but all existing areas of gravel surfacing would not be affected. The layout of the paths would respect the need for the gradients to be acceptable for all users, and thus their appearance does tend to be more formal. However, this formality has been kept to a minimum between the existing cottage and study centre building only. External lighting

should be kept to a minimum, and further information is sought on this aspect through the imposition of a condition.

Impact on trees

- 11.14 The Authority's Tree Officer has no objection to the proposal. The tree protection measures proposed within the submitted arboricultural information are considered to be suitable to protect the most significant trees on the site. Those trees marked for removal are justified as part of either safety management or because they are non-native species where no objection is raised. Other trees were noted to have failed and further safety work is likely, but this should form part of a woodland management plan or a felling licence, and advice should be sought from the Forestry Commission.

Impact on ecology

- 11.15 The proposed development would not directly affect the designated sites, but it does lie in very close proximity to them. As stated above, there is reference within the submitted ecological survey that the activities associated with the facility would be encouraged to take place on non-designated land, but it is not considered that this would always be possible, and that potential impacts cannot therefore be ruled out. That being the case, a financial contribution towards mitigation measures would be justified based on the likely occupancy rates of the centre over and above what might be expected from its occupation as a conventional dwelling, and this would be sought by condition (with the agreement of the applicant).
- 11.16 To the west of the site, the woodland is classified on the Ancient Woodland inventory. However, it not considered that the development would adversely harm this area - there are no objections from the Tree officer on this aspect.
- 11.17 Bats, including a rare Greater Horseshoe bat, have been using the cottage as a feeding, night and day roost, and consideration, under the Habitats Regulations, has to be given as to whether the proposed development would adversely harm (or destroy) the roost. Local authorities should consider the three tests of a European Protected Species (EPS) Licence prior to granting planning permission. Failing to do so would be in breach of Regulation 9(5) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) which requires all public bodies to have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive in the exercise of their functions. The tests include compliance with the development plan, whether alternatives have been considered (including doing nothing), and whether the maintenance and favourable conservation status of the species would be ensured. The submitted Assessment of Ecological Impact includes details of mitigation and enhancement measures (to be carried out under

an ESP licence) to ensure that the roost would not be harmed, and Members will be updated on the suitability of these measures. A condition that works should be carried out in accordance with the information is therefore recommended.

- 11.18 Natural England have recently advised that there is uncertainty as to whether future housing and visitor accommodation development will adversely impact the protected habitats of the Solent due to increased levels of nitrates entering the system. In accordance with Natural England's recent advice to local planning authorities along the Solent coast, the potential impacts from nitrates have been considered in assessing this application and a condition is included to address the issue. This is consistent with the approach adopted by other planning authorities in the Solent to address the issue and ensures the Authority's obligations as a 'competent authority' under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) are met.

Conclusion

- 11.19 In conclusion, it is considered that this is an exceptional project which would provide a unique opportunity to promote greater understanding of the special qualities of the New Forest National Park without adversely harming those qualities which make it special. The scale, design and layout of the development would be acceptable and would not directly harm the adjacent designated areas. Mitigation measures can be secured through contributions (by condition). Permission is therefore recommended subject to stringent conditions restricting the use and numbers of visitors.

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12. RECOMMENDATION

Grant Subject to Conditions

Condition(s)

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 Development shall only be carried out in accordance with:

Drawing Nos: CC EX 00 Rev P1, CC 01 Rev P1, CC 06 Rev P2, CC H 10 Rev P1, CC H 11 Rev P1, CC H 12 Rev P1, CC H 20 Rev P1, CC H 21 Rev P1, CC S 10 Rev P1, CC S 20 Rev P1, CC S 21 Rev P1.

No alterations to the approved development shall be made unless

otherwise agreed in writing by the New Forest National Park Authority.

Reason: To ensure an acceptable appearance of the building in accordance with Policies SP16, SP17, DP18 and DP2 of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016- 2036 (August 2019).

- 3 No development shall take place above slab level until samples or exact details of the facing and roofing materials have been submitted to and approved in writing by the New Forest National Park Authority.

Development shall only be carried out in accordance with the details approved.

Reason: To ensure an acceptable appearance of the building in accordance with Policy DP2 of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016- 2036 (August 2019).

- 4 The trees/hedges on the site which are shown to be retained on the approved plans shall be protected during all site clearance, demolition and building works in accordance with the measures set out in the submitted Arboricultural Method Statement dated 19 June 2019 ref: 011/AS/FRA and the Tree and Site Protection Plan dated 16.07.19 ref: CC06 together with the recommendations as set out in BS5837:2012.

Reason: To safeguard trees and natural features which are important to the visual amenities of the area, in accordance with Policies DP2 and SP6 of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016- 2036 (August 2019).

- 5 No development, demolition or site clearance shall take place until a woodland management plan and, where appropriate, a felling licence, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The agreed arrangements shall be carried-out in full prior to any activity taking place and shall remain in-situ for the duration of the development.

Reason: To safeguard trees and natural features which are important to the visual amenities of the area, in accordance with Policies DP2 and SP6 of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016- 2036 (August 2019).

- 6 The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until:
- a) A water efficiency calculation in accordance with the Government's National Calculation Methodology for assessing water efficiency in new dwellings has been undertaken which

demonstrates that no more than 110 litres of water per person per day shall be consumed within the development, and this calculation has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority;

b) A mitigation package addressing the additional nutrient input arising from the development has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Such mitigation package shall address all of the additional nutrient load imposed on protected European Sites by the development when fully occupied and shall allow the Local Planning Authority to ascertain on the basis of the best available scientific evidence that such additional nutrient loading will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the protected European Sites, having regard to the conservation objectives for those sites; and

c) All measures forming part of that mitigation package have been provided to the Local Planning Authority.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with and subject to the above details.

Reason: There is existing evidence of high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus in the water environment with evidence of eutrophication at some European designated nature conservation sites in the Solent catchment. To ensure that the proposal may proceed as sustainable development, there is a duty upon the Local Planning Authority to ensure that sufficient mitigation is provided against any impacts which might arise upon the designated sites. In coming to this decision, the Authority has had regard to Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and Policy DP8 of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016- 2036 (August 2019).

- 7 Prior to the commencement of development ecological mitigation for the New Forest Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and/or Ramsar sites shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the New Forest National Park Authority. The ecological mitigation may take the form of a planning obligation which secures financial contributions in accordance with the Authority's adopted Development Standards (SPD).

Reason: To safeguard sites of international ecological importance in accordance with Policies SP5 and SP6 of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016- 2036 (August 2019), Development Standards SPD.

- 8 No development shall take place until a scheme of landscaping of the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the New Forest National Park Authority. This scheme shall include:

(a) the existing trees which have been agreed to be

retained;

- (b) a specification for new planting (species, size, spacing and location);
- (c) areas for hard surfacing and the materials to be used;
- (d) an external lighting plan; and
- (e) a method and programme for its implementation and the means to provide for its future maintenance.

No development shall take place unless these details have been approved and then only in accordance with those details.

Reason: To safeguard trees and natural features and to ensure that the development takes place in an appropriate way and to comply with Policy DP2 of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016- 2036 (August 2019).

- 9 All materials, machinery and any resultant waste materials or spoil shall be stored within the red line application site unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the New Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest in accordance with Policy SP6 of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016- 2036 (August 2019).

- 10 The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the arrangements for parking and turning within the site boundary have been implemented.

These areas shall be kept available for their intended purposes at all times.

Reason: To ensure adequate parking provision is made in the interest of highway safety and to comply with Policy DP2 of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016- 2036 (August 2019) and Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 11 The proposed use of the site shall be as described on the application form as an outdoor study centre (sui generis) and for no other purpose whatsoever. Overnight occupation of Camerons Cottage shall be restricted to no more than 18 people at any one time unless otherwise agreed in writing with the National Park Authority.

Reason: The proposed use has been considered acceptable in meeting the purposes of National Parks, and to prevent any unsuitable increase in activity at the site, in accordance with Strategic Objective No 8 of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016- 2036 (August 2019).

- 12 Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the National Park Authority,

development shall only take place in accordance with the recommendations for ecological mitigation and enhancement which are set out in the ecological report (Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA)) hereby approved. The specified measures shall be implemented and retained at the site in perpetuity.

Reason: To safeguard protected species in accordance with Policies DP2 and SP6 of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016- 2036 (August 2019).

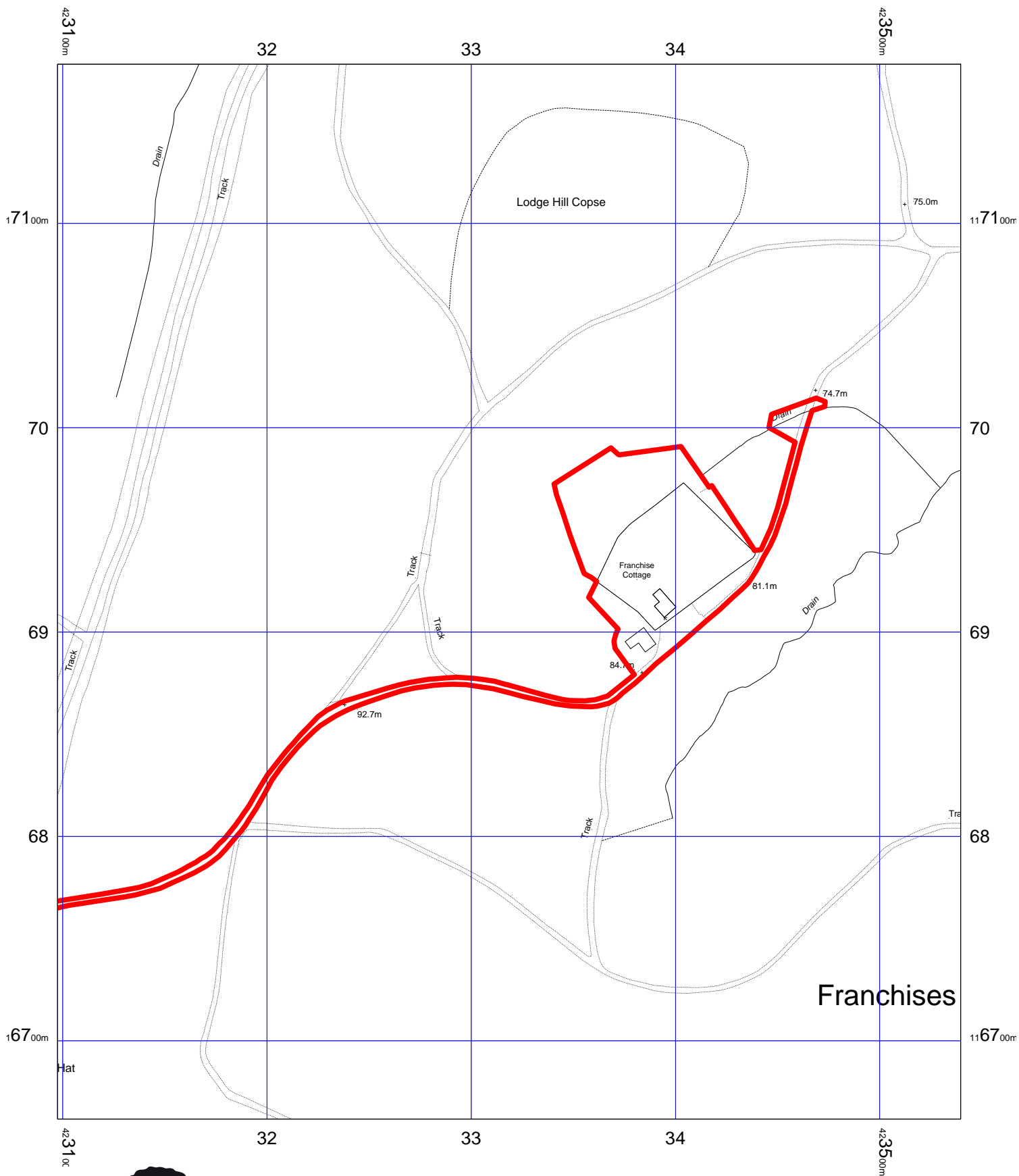
- 13 No development shall take place above slab level until samples or exact details of the photovoltaic panels and other renewable, including the biomass installation, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the New Forest National Park Authority.

Development shall only be carried out in accordance with the details approved.

Reason: To ensure an acceptable appearance of the building in accordance with Policies DP2 and SP14 of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016- 2036 (August 2019).

- 14 Prior to the commencement of development, a Construction Environment Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the National Park Authority.

Reason: To safeguard sites of international ecological importance in accordance with Policies SP5 and SP6 of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016- 2036 (August 2019), Development Standards SPD.



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