

Newsletter 3 – 12 October 2020

- Clearbell Capital LLP in Mayfair are retained by Eton College to manage their property portfolio which includes the Donkey Field.
- It was apparently Clearbell who we are told recently commissioned a bat-survey of the 150-years-old recently felled oak tree NW corner of the field.
- The trees lay directly behind 51 Solent View Road which had been recently purchased by a company in Sandown. There is no known connection between that company and Eton nor Clearbell.
- Since the felling of that tree we have been successful in getting a blanket tree protection order (TPO) covering any and all remaining trees on the field and efforts are in hand to try to get similar protection across the football field and the field lying between the two.
- Even though there was no TPO covering the oak, we believe it was of such a size (>5 Cu Mt) that a licence would have been required from the Forestry Commission prior to felling it. We have enquiries in hand with the Forestry Commission as to the status of any such licence.
- Our similar enquiry of Eton solicited a response which said – “.....***the two trees were felled as part of the College’s long-term management of the site, and to assist with a planning application which the College hopes to submit in the coming months.***”
- Having read the County Press 18th September feature on housing targets, we wrote, on 29th September to our MP, Bob Seely. Our letter pointed to the possible development of the Donkey Field being one result of the government’s new algorithmic directives on new housing targets and we indicated that we supported Bob Seely’s objective of granting the Island an exceptional status whereby, hopefully, a fully adequate supply of new housing can be achieved by developing only brown-field sites and those with permissions already granted. Bob Seely thanked us for our letter and asked if he could write to Eton College on the matter. We agreed to this.
- Bob Seely recently led a debate in the House of Commons on a motion (unenforceable at this stage) to have these directives amended or removed. Teresa May and several other backbench MP’s spoke in the debate and we will follow developments in this initiative with interest.
- Clearbell Capital have apparently instructed Eagle-Eye Environmental Services of Wroxall to undertake a land drainage survey.