

Savills Wins Prestigious Regional Planning Award For Silverlake Sustainable Holiday Development In Dorset

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Savills managed the planning process for Habitat First, delivering a unique phased development of 1,000 holiday units and leisure facilities on 230ha of former quarry workings near Dorchester.

The project is an innovative sustainable leisure development transforming a major former quarry into a mosaic of habitats, managed for wildlife and biodiversity. Silverlake has been announced as the winner of the category Excellence in Other Planning Work. An awards ceremony is due to take place in January.

The scheme will generate 123 local jobs, a range of community benefits and public access, diversifying year-round tourism and boosting the local economy.

The first 60 units and leisure facilities are complete, with another 30 under construction, within 100ha of managed habitat. Silverlake was also recently awarded 'Excellent' status in the Building with Nature Accreditation.

Richard Shaw of Savills planning team in Wimborne said: 'We were delighted to be involved in the Silverlake project. Our input began with initial appraisal of the site and the unique opportunity it presented, advising Habitat First prior to acquisition. We then promoted the scheme through the planning and environmental impact assessment stages, obtaining a series of planning consents and advising on detailed implementation. Silverlake is bringing inward investment to this part of Dorset, diversifying the tourism offer, delivering local jobs and habitat creation / biodiversity across a large despoiled landscape. The project is also generating local community benefits and public access, even in the early stages.

Local political support has reflected the benefits delivered. The project provides an interesting template for sustainable tourism development that we are promoting elsewhere across the country, indeed we've since obtained approval for a similar scheme for Habitat First in North Devon.'

The RTPI represents 25,000 planning professionals worldwide and promotes spatial planning, shapes policy and raises professional standards. The Awards for Planning Excellence have been run by the RTPI South West for over 30 years to recognise planning excellence across the region.

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