Wiltshire Council

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name: Jenna Buss
Date: **10/10/2023**
Application No: PL/2023/06978
Proposal: Discharge of Conditions 10 - Construction Environmental Management Plan and Condition 12 of planning application 20/06840/FUL - Monitoring Strategy (Construction of a solar farm and battery storage facility together with all associated works, equipment and necessary infrastructure).
Site Address: Land North of Melksham Substation, Near Melksham, Wiltshire
Case Officer: Jemma Foster

Condition No.	Further information required by condition	**Satisfactorily addressed (Document & Date)**
10	No development shall commence on site (including ground works and vegetation clearance) until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall explain how the construction works will be managed to avoid impacts on biodiversity and how compliance with the Site Layout and Planting Plan (drawing no. P20-0137_09 Rev I) will be achieved on site, and shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following: a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities b) Identification of 'biodiversity protection zones', including LWS, ancient woodland, trees, hedges, ditches., and provision for protection of all wildlife identified as present or likely to be present within a zone of influence c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements) d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features e) Update of surveys as required prior to start of works, especially for badgers f) No dig construction methods where construction within 15m of ancient woodland is unavoidable. g) Use of	**Yes** **10/10/23** **REF: Construction Environment and Management Plan, August 23, Avian Ecology** **Site Layout and Planting Drawing P20-0137_09 Rev J** **Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan P20-0137-19 Rev C**

	protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs h) Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) for Dormice and Great Crested Newts i) Identify all timing constraints on works e.g. in relation to breeding birds, hedgerow removal. j) If construction lighting is required, a strategy must be included in the CEMP which clearly demonstrates no impacts on sensitive, retained habitat features. k) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person(s) l) The times during construction when specialists' ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works m) Responsible persons and lines of communication n) Ongoing monitoring, including compliance checks by a competent person(s) during construction and immediately post-completion of construction works. The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details. A report prepared by a competent person(s), certifying that the required mitigation and/or compensation measures identified in the CEMP have been completed to their satisfaction, shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within 3 months of the date of substantial completion of the development or at the end of the next available planting season, whichever is the sooner. REASON: To ensure adequate protection, mitigation and compensation for protected species, priority species and priority habitats.	
12	No development shall commence on site until a Monitoring Strategy focused on the key aspects of the Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan and Biodiversity Management Plan / Landscape and Ecological Management Plan has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The Monitoring Strategy shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following information: a) Commitment to undertake surveys immediately following completion to a) establish how effectively the CEMP was followed and b) to fix the baseline for future monitoring. b) Identification of the key features to be monitored and methodology to be used. c) Monitoring targets with specific measurable thresholds for success for each key feature with remediation	**Yes** **10/10/23** **Ref: Monitoring Strategy, August 23, Avian Ecology** **Site Layout and Planting Drawing P20-0137_09 Rev J** **Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan P20-0137-19 Rev C**

	measures incorporated where necessary. d) Commitment to continue monitoring for the operational lifetime of the installation in years 1, 3, 5, 10, 25 and 40. and the 5-year aftercare plan following completion of restoration. e) Commitment to prepare a report after each monitoring exercise, relating findings to those of previous years and the intended targets. The report will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within 6 months of each monitoring visit. f) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the Monitoring Strategy. The Monitoring Strategy shall be implemented in full in accordance with the approved details for the entire operational lifetime of the installation and the 5 year aftercare plan following completion of restoration. REASON: The matter is required to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority in order that the development is undertaken in an acceptable manner, to ensure adequate protection, mitigation and compensation for protected species, priority species and priority habitats	

We welcome the Reports submitted in support of the discharge of conditions 10 and 12 which included;

- Construction Environment Management Plan, August 23 by Avian Ecology and;
- Monitoring Strategy, August 23 by Avian Ecology.

In our previous response we highlighted concerns with regards to the required 15m buffer from woodland boundaries to ensure root protection zones. We welcome section 5.5.5 of the CEMP which states that a minimum of 15m will be installed and maintained between the LWS's and the Site.

Assuming works are carried out as stated within the submitted reports we would not object to the discharge of conditions 10 and 12.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist	Date
Jenna Buss	**10/10/23**