Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Jenna Buss
Date:	02/10/2024
Application number:	PL/2023/11125
Proposal:	Engineering works associated with the creation of a replacement of a breeding plot
Site address:	Land North of A303, Winterbourne Stoke, Salisbury, SP3 4ET
Case officer:	Adam Madge

Recommendations:

	No Comment
	Support
	No objection
x	Condition (no objection subject to conditions)
	Objection - further information required
	Objection in principle
x	HRA completed

An Appropriate Assessment for impacts on Salisbury Plain SPA and SAC is required. The application must not be approved until NE have endorsed the AA.

Matters Considered:

Thank you for consulting Ecology, I have reviewed the information submitted in support of this application against OS Maps and aerial photography of the site and surrounding area, together with GIS layers of statutory and non-statutory sites and existing records of protected species.

The following information has been submitted in support of the application and includes;

- Replacement Stone Curlew Breeding Plot Creation Method Statement. November 2023. Costain/Mott Macdonald;
- Proposed Site Plan. December 2023. Costain/Mott Macdonald;
- Construction Environment Management Plan. December 2023. Costain/Mott Macdonald and;
- Replacement Stone Curlew Breeding Plot Creation Ecological Impact Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment. December 2023. Costain/Mott Macdonald
- Marsh Fritillary Habitat Quality Assessment- Technical Note. June 2024. National Highways

We note the proposal to create a replacement stone curlew breeding plot to compensate for one that will be lost due to the proposed A303 works. Ecology surveys submitted found no evidence of breeding birds within the proposed 2ha receptor site which sits within Parsonage Down SSSI, Salisbury Plain SAC, Salisbury Plain 6.4km buffer for the SPA and the River Avon Hampshire Catchment. The proposed receptor site is located approximately 1km from an existing stone

curlew plot. The proposals will involve the modification of existing habitat and will include the relocation of topsoil materials to a suitable receptor site. In the original field surveys, devils bit scabious was identified within the plot location which may have led to impacts upon the Marsh Fritillary butterfly, a feature of the SAC.

However, additional surveys undertaken in June 2024 identified an absence of devils bit scabious within the plot. The plot was assessed as '*potential habitat which is not typically included in habitat considered to be 'available for marsh fritillary…..It is unlikely to support anything more than the occasional larval webb without management…Accordingly the plot is considered unlikely to support populations of marsh fritillary.'*

Habitat Regulations Assessment - Salisbury Plain SPA and Salisbury Plain SAC.
The works proposed will occur within Salisbury Plain SPA and SAC within Parsonage Down SSSI. The application therefore has potential to result in significant adverse impact either alone or in combination with other projects on the statutorily designated sites. As required by the Habitats Regulations an Appropriate Assessment has been completed by the LPA with a favourable conclusion. The AA has been sent to Natural England and the application must not be approved until they have agreed with the LPAs conclusion.

Hampshire River Avon Catchment
This development falls within the catchment of the River Avon SAC and has potential to cause adverse effects alone or in combination with other developments through discharge of phosphorus in wastewater. A test of likely significance has been carried out by the relevant Competent Authority (Wiltshire Council) as required by Regulation 63 Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended EU Exit) Regulations 2019. This concluded that due to the nature and size of the proposals and the location of the proposed site, there is no mechanism for adverse effect through phosphorus discharge and operational impacts would be de-minimis.

Conditions:

1. The development will be carried out in strict accordance with the following documents:
    - Replacement Stone Curlew Breeding Plot Creation Method Statement. November 20203. Costain/Mott Macdonald;
    - Proposed Site Plan. December 2023. Costain/Mott Macdonald;
    - Construction Environment Management Plan. December 2023. Costain/Mott Macdonald and;
    - Replacement Stone Curlew Breeding Plot Creation Ecological Impact Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment. December 20023. Costain/Mott Macdonald

    REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and for the protection, mitigation and enhancement of biodiversity.

Informatives:

Breeding Birds
The adults, young, eggs and nests of all species of birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) while they are breeding. Please be advised that works should not take place that will harm nesting birds from March to August inclusive. All British birds, their nests and eggs are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 while birds are nesting, building nests and sitting on eggs. The applicant is advised to check any structure or vegetation capable of supporting breeding birds and delay removing or altering such features until after young birds

have fledged. Damage to extensive areas that could contain nests/breeding birds should be undertaken outside the breeding season. This season is usually taken to be the period between 1st March and 31st August but some species are known to breed outside these limits.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist Jenna Buss	Date 02/10/2024