

James Kirkham

From: Daniel Widdowson <Daniel.Widdowson@rspb.org.uk>
Sent: 29 July 2022 17:27
To: James Kirkham
Cc: Martin Randall; David Wilding; Nigel Symes; Andrew Dodd
Subject: Planning Ref 22/01682/F - Solar Development at Noke
Attachments: ManortFarmNokeConsultationResponse.pdf

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Hi James,

Thanks for your email.

We've done a similar literature review and have studied the attached paper. To summarise, the risk is mainly around polarised light pollution attracting birds and insects that may mistake the panels for water and have the potential to cause mortality, either from direct impact to the structure, disrupting bird migration routes or from the inability of the birds to take off from the panels or site once landed. Having reviewed the detail, there appears to be a general lack of evidence on how birds will be affected by a solar farm of this nature, either in a UK or a more local Otmoor context in terms of the species present at the reserve, and therefore we don't consider the detail reviewed to provide a basis for an objection to the application. In our experience, we've noted that, for example, passerines, seem only to use the panels as perches or to nest under. They don't appear, as such, to be attracted and we have never found a collision victim of any species on a solar farm. We do, however, take the observations in the attached paper and in other reviewed literature seriously and have, therefore, taken a precautionary approach and requested measures to further reduce polarised light pollution as part of a planning condition, in an attempt to ameliorate this potential risk, whilst proposing measures to further enhance the sites biodiversity value. The applicant will need to consider if these measures are practicable. Where the applicants are unable to do what's requested, we may need to revisit our position.

RE the review, it may be worth the BSG ecologists, (who have done previous research on this issue), to review the attached paper and assess the likely impact of the solar development on Site fauna in their ecological assessment. The ecological assessment does not currently consider the impact of reflected light on resident / migratory bird species and other fauna. This assessment would be useful to help reduce any concerns in this regard.

I hope this clarifies our position.

Many thanks,

Dan

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