

Lynne Baldwin

From: Charlotte Watkins
Sent: 28 December 2023 14:52
To: Rebekah Morgan
Cc: Planning
Subject: RE: Application 22/03873/F: Land north and adjacent Mill Lane, Statton Audley - outstanding consultation request

With regard to the above application I have the following comments:

Great crested newts

Great crested newts could not be ruled out on site and therefore it was recommended in their GCN surveys that they should join the District licence scheme. I could not find any evidence of acceptance onto the scheme however. If they wish to be covered under the district licence then they need to submit a certificate and impact map from Nature Space **before** determination. This is because we need to include very specific conditions referring to these documents on any permission to ensure we are able to authorise the licence use. If they are planning on using the traditional licensing route then they need to submit full mitigation plans for GCN so we can assess whether they are likely to obtain one.

The BIA metric

The biodiversity impact assessment metric has not been submitted. It is important that we receive the actual metric for assessment so we can check the multipliers used and conditions proposed. It is mentioned in appendix 4 of the Biodiversity report however I could not find it within the submissions.

Grassland seed mix

I would concur with BBOWT that the grassland mix proposed for the majority of the site could be improved in order to maximise biodiversity opportunities on site, but appreciate that the current proposed grazing mix would still constitute an improvement for wildlife over the current arable usage.

Mammal mitigation

If the site has to be fenced it would be better to have the fence raised such that smaller mammals (badgers hare etc..) could use the site unimpeded. Gates run the risk of malfunctioning and animals being trapped. The fence could be raised a sufficient height to allow free access underneath for smaller mammals whilst preventing access by deer.

Impacts on adjacent ancient woodland and species

The site is adjacent to ancient woodland which is likely to support a range of protected species. There should be no lighting on site either during construction or operation to avoid impacts on nocturnal species. As large a buffer between operational panels and the woodland as possible should be designed into the layout. BBOWTs suggestion of the field bordering the woodland being leased as the primary site for wildlife enhancement would be a desirable set up for ecology but any increase in the 15m buffer would be beneficial. Measures to reduce potential impacts of polarising light from panels on birds, bats and invertebrates should be conditioned if not already included in the specifications.

When the additional required information on GCN and the metric are sent on I will be happy to comment further if needed.

Kind regards
Charlotte

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Communities Directorate

