

Pippa

From: Pippa
Sent: 30 May 2024 11:17
To: Pippa
Subject: FW: Normanton Larches - Comments from Natural England and Notts WT

From: ted@windrushecolgy.com <ted@windrushecolgy.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 10:47 AM
To: 'James Wallwork' <james.wallwork@oneplanet.ltd>
Cc: Pippa <pippa@auroraplanning.co.uk>
Subject: RE: Normanton Larches - Comments from Natural England and Notts WT

Dear James

Following our recent discussion, I am writing with a formal response to Natural England's request for further information regarding the potential for construction and operational impacts of the proposed solar farm on Clumber Park SSSI and its ecological receptors.

By way of background, *Clumber Park SSSI is one of the largest areas of mixed habitat in Nottinghamshire, Clumber Park supports extensive areas of lowland acid grassland, heath and mature deciduous woodland characteristic of the English North Midlands. An exceptionally rich beetle fauna is associated with mature timber and dead wood habitats and the park is notable for its breeding bird communities.*

Two areas of the SSSI are located in relatively close proximity to the western edge of the proposed solar farm, approximately 100m and 150m at the closest points. The operation of a solar farm outside of the SSSI is not listed as one of the "operations likely to damage the special interest" of the SSSI, and the proposed solar farm is located downstream from the River Poulter (which forms part of the SSSI), and so there are no foreseeable hydrological impacts of the construction or operation of the solar farm on the running freshwater habitat of the SSSI.

The SSSI is primarily designated for the lowland acid grassland, heath and mature deciduous woodland that it supports. There will be no foreseeable direct or indirect impacts on these habitats as a result of the construction or operation of the solar farm, as the solar farm will not result in any loss or degradation of these habitat types. The site of the solar farm is currently cultivated arable land, which is not a habitat that is contributing to the value of the SSSI. Other interest features of the SSSI are invertebrates (particularly of dead wood) and breeding birds (particularly of woodland, heathland and wetland habitats). The cultivated arable land offers no suitable habitat to rare or uncommon invertebrates, and is not suitable habitat for breeding birds of heathland, woodland or wetland. Construction and operation of the solar farm will therefore have no foreseeable impacts on invertebrates or birds for which the SSSI is designated.

Construction impacts (such as noise and ground disturbance) will affect the site but not the SSSI, and would be for a limited time (6 months). Noise is unlikely to have any foreseeable impact on the SSSI, given that fact that the edge of the SSSI is 100m or more from the proposed solar farm, and is separated from the proposed solar farm by areas of woodland. In addition, the SSSI is located to the west side of the Blyth Road (A614) which is a busy main road. Noise from the road is likely to exceed any noise from the construction of the solar farm. During operation, there will be no significant noise from the solar farm.

Operation of the solar farm is likely to have a positive effect with regard to ecology in general, through the following:

- 1) Provision of more grassland and scrub habitat.
- 2) Cessation of chemical pesticides and fertilisers reducing impact on soil organisms.
- 3) Cessation of ploughing the land.
- 4) Cessation of agricultural activity meaning the site will be less disturbed by human/agricultural activity that happens throughout the year..

This is likely to have a positive effect on the ecology and biodiversity of habitats surrounding the solar farm, including habitats and species within the SSSI, and for which the SSSI is designated.

So, in conclusion, there are no foreseeable ecological impacts on the Clumber Park SSSI during the construction or operation of the proposed solar farm.

Regards,

Ted

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