

24/08/2017

WSCC Ecological Response to...

Application Number: WSCC/029/17/WC

Proposal: Amendment of condition no. 2 of planning permission WSCC/052/12/WC to allow for a further 12 months of continued operations to enable the completion of phase 3 testing and phase 4 restoration or retention

Location: Woodbarn Farm, Adversane Lane, Broadford Bridge, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH149ED

Grid Ref: 509017 121725

There is no ecological objection to the proposed application to amend condition 2.

I note that there is a reduction in lighting associated with the latter phases of this development thus any potential impacts are reduced. The proposed testing phase will occur outside of the bird breeding season and would be, in any case, unlikely to have an impact during the breeding season. Similarly for bats, the existing permission allows the activities to occur to this point and the new permission represents a reduction in potential impacts i.e. arising from lighting. The site lighting is directional and light-spill outside the site is minimal. The drill rig is now no longer in operation. The rig was lit at height for safety reasons and the lighting was kept directional and 'cowled' to minimise light spill. The drilling rig will shortly be removed thus any potential residual lighting impact is now further reduced.

There is no reasonable expectation of harm occurring on designated sites within the wider area and I note that the relevant statutory bodies have not raised any significant issues with the proposal to extend activities.

With regard to potential sources of pollution the Environment Agency raise no objection and I note in their consultation response that they state:

"The applicant has the necessary Environmental Permits and technical procedures and measures in place to prevent pollution to the environment. The Environment Agency is in constant contact with the applicant and their consultants and have undertaken a number of site visits as part of the permit compliance procedures. The time extension does not change any of the requirements within the permits as the technical procedures and pollution control measures are sufficient."

There is no reasonable expectation of harm to local biodiversity, thus requesting repeat-ecological surveys at this stage would not be proportionate to the risk of harm.

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