

20/06/2014

WSCC Ecological Response to...

APPLICATION No.: WSCC/083/13/KD

PROPOSAL: Land south of Boxal Bridge, Northup Field, Wisborough Green, West Sussex, RH14 0DD

SITE: The installation of a well and associated infrastructure, including access road and soil bunds, for the drilling of a vertical borehole and contingent horizontal borehole from the same well for the exploration, testing and evaluation of hydrocarbons for a temporary period of three years

GRID REF: 503706 126696

Additional information has now been submitted to satisfy the previously identified concerns from WSCC and Natural England.

I am satisfied that the bat data submitted is compliant with the Bat Conservation Trust (2012) guidelines (ref: 7.15) and Natural England Standing Advice. The proposed lighting and boundary treatments are such that there is not expected to be any appreciable light spillage from the immediate site compound. The outer limits of the site compound are predicted to be 0.1lux. This is well below what is considered to be the start of 'dark' for barbastelle bats. Consequently, the level of light spill into the immediate surroundings would be negligible.

The drainage report is largely satisfactory subject to a condition to secure the final details of the proposed boundary ditch system and Class 2 Interceptor. I note that the Environment Agency has recommended a pre-commencement condition to this effect and I support that approach.

I am satisfied that there are unlikely to be any detrimental impacts on neighbouring badgers.

Recommended Conditions

Drainage:

Refer to the Environment Agency response.

Lighting & bats

Within 7 days of the installation the site's lighting regime, the site and immediate environs will be re-assessed by a suitably qualified ecological consultant. Measurements using a light meter will be taken of the surrounding vegetation at night. Immediate remedial action will be taken should light spill onto nearby vegetation be above 1 lux. A report detailing the re-assessment and any remedial action taken shall be submitted to the LPA for approval and will include appropriate images of the site and light meter readings proving that light spill onto adjacent vegetation is less than 1 lux.

Reason: In accordance with NPPF (118).

Bat monitoring

Within 12 months of the start of operation and during the appropriate active season (May to August) bat activity will be assessed again by suitably licenced ecologists, following recognised best practice and utilising a comparable methodology to the baseline surveys. A report shall be produced and submitted to the LPA for approval.

Reason: In accordance with NPPF (118).

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