Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DISC/25/0101
Land North of Huddlestone Farm, Horsham Road, Steyning, West Sussex,

DESCRIPTION:
Approval of details reserved by conditions 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 11 to approved application DC/22/0100.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/22/0100	Installation of a solar farm with associated infrastructure.	Application Permitted on 20.10.2022

PLANNING ASSESSMENT
Planning Application dc/22/0100 was granted consent on 19/10/2022. This Permission was for the following:
Installation of a solar farm with associated infrastructure

Consent is sought to discharge the details reserved by conditions 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 11.

Condition 4:
Pre-Commencement Condition: A construction environmental management plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall include the following;
a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones".
c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).
d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority

Reason: To conserve protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

The Council's Ecological consultant has reviewed the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (Avian Ecology, February 2025), and is satisfied that the submitted information includes the detail required by this condition. The requirements of the condition have therefore been satisfied.

Condition 5:

Pre-Commencement Condition: A Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy for protected and Priority species shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.
The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy shall include the following:
a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;
b) Detailed designs to achieve stated objectives;
c) Locations of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans;
d) Timetable for implementation;
e) Persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures;
f) Details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant).
The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to occupation and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: To conserve and enhance protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006
(Priority habitats & species) and Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

The Council's Ecological consultant has reviewed the Landscape & Ecological Management Plan (Rappor Landscape Planning (February 2025), the Landscape & Ecological Management Plan (Avian Ecology, February 2025) and the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy (Avian Ecology, February 2025). In terms of ecology, the submitted details within the LEMP are appropriate in order to discharge these conditions. Additionally, it is assumed the fence will be accessible to species such as Hedgehog, given the recommendation of boxes. It is advised that the two submitted LEMP's and the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy be read in conjunction with one another, as all three cover related matters.

The requirements of the condition have been satisfied.

Condition 6:
Pre-Commencement Condition: Prior to the commencement of development a Skylark Mitigation Strategy shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority to compensate the loss or displacement of any Skylark territories identified as lost or displaced.
The content of the Skylark Mitigation Strategy shall include the following:
a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed compensation measure e.g. Skylark nest plots;
b) Detailed methodology for the compensation measures e.g. Skylark plots must follow Agri-Environment Scheme option: 'AB4 Skylark Plots';
c) Locations of the compensation measures by appropriate maps and/or plans;
d) Persons responsible for implementing the compensation measure.

The Skylark Mitigation Strategy shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and all features shall be retained for a minimum period of 10 years.

Reason: To conserve and enhance protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006
(Priority habitats & species) and Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

The Skylark Mitigation Strategy (Avian Ecology, February 2025) has been reviewed by the Council's Ecological consultant, concluding that the detail contained in the strategy is appropriate and includes reference to suitable mitigation methods. As such the submitted information is sufficient in order to discharge Condition 6. The requirements of the condition have been satisfied.

Condition 7:
Pre-Commencement Condition: No development shall take place until a landscape and ecological management plan, including long-term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscaped areas, has been submitted to,
and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The landscape and ecological management plan shall be carried out as approved and any subsequent variations shall be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include the following elements:

- details of maintenance regimes;
- details of any new habitat created on-site;
- details of treatment of site boundaries;
- details of management responsibilities;
- details of proposed enhancements to include: 10 of each- bird boxes, bat roost boxes, log piles/hibernacula & insect hotels; and
- details of the proposed 2km of new hedgerow planting, plus additional woodland planting.

Reason: As these matters are fundamental to safeguard the ecology and biodiversity of the area in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), and to enhance Protected and Priority Species/habitats and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species), and in accordance with Para 174 and 180 of the NPPF (2021).

The Council's Ecological consultant has reviewed the Landscape & Ecological Management Plan (Rappor Landscape Planning (February 2025), the Landscape & Ecological Management Plan (Avian Ecology, February 2025) and the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy (Avian Ecology, February 2025). In terms of ecology, the submitted details within the LEMP are appropriate in order to discharge these conditions. Additionally, it is assumed the fence will be accessible to species such as Hedgehog, given the recommendation of boxes. It is advised that the two submitted LEMP's and the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy be read in conjunction with one another, as all three cover related matters.

The requirements of the condition have been satisfied.

Condition 8:
Pre-Commencement Condition: No development shall take place until a scheme for the provision and management of a minimum 5 metre wide buffer zone alongside the watercourse/wetland has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme. Any subsequent variations shall be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in which case the development shall be carried out in accordance with the amended scheme. The buffer zone scheme shall be free from built development including lighting, formal landscaping, solar panels and associated infrastructure. The scheme shall include:
- plans showing the extent and layout of the buffer zone;
- details of any proposed planting scheme (for example, native species);
- details demonstrating how the buffer zone will be protected during development and managed over the longer term; and
- details of any proposed footpaths, fencing, lighting, etc.

Reason: As these matters are fundamental to safeguard the ecology and biodiversity of the area in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), and to enhance Protected and Priority Species/habitats and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species), and in accordance with Para 174 and 180 of the NPPF (2021).

The Council's Ecological consultant has reviewed the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (Avian Ecology, February 2025) and the Watercourse Offset Plan (Enso Energy, January 2025) and is satisfied that the submitted information includes the detail required by this condition. It is noted that the document shows how the buffer zone will be protected on the submitted Watercourse Offset Plan (Enso Energy, January 2025).

The requirements of the condition have been satisfied.

Condition 11:

Pre-Occupation / Use Condition: A Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to, and be approved in writing by, the local planning authority prior to commencement of the development. The content of the LEMP shall include the following:
a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed.
b) Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management.
c) Aims and objectives of management.
d) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives.
e) Prescriptions for management actions.
f) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled over a five-year period).
g) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan.
h) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.

The LEMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery. The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme. The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To conserve and enhance protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006
(Priority habitats & species) and Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

The Council's Ecological consultant has reviewed the Landscape & Ecological Management Plan (Rappor Landscape Planning (February 2025), the Landscape & Ecological Management Plan (Avian Ecology, February 2025) and the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy (Avian Ecology, February 2025). In terms of ecology, the submitted details within the LEMP are appropriate in order to discharge these conditions. Additionally, it is assumed the fence will be accessible to species such as Hedgehog, given the recommendation of boxes. It is advised that the two submitted LEMP's and the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy be read in conjunction with one another, as all three cover related matters.

The requirements of the condition have been satisfied.

Recommendation: Application Permitted

NOTE TO APPLICANT
It is advised that the two submitted LEMP's and the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy be read in conjunction with one another, as all three cover related matters.

POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT
Statement pursuant to Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received, in order to be able to, where possible, grant permission.

Plans list for: DISC/25/0101
(The approved plans will form Condition 1 on the Decision Notice of all Permitted applications)

Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received

			Date
Plans	Watercourse Offset	BY-01-P25	26.03.2025
Supporting Docs	Landscape & Ecological Management Plan	250131-RAP-XX-XX-R-9501	26.03.2025
Supporting Docs	Cover Letter	NONE	26.03.2025
Supporting Docs	Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)	EnsoE-517-3276	26.03.2025
Supporting Docs	Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy	EnsoE-517-003643	26.03.2025
Supporting Docs	Skylark Mitigation Strategy	EnsoE-517-3276	26.03.2025
Supporting Docs	Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)	EnsoE-517-003643	26.03.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Nicola Pettifer Date: 02.05.2025

Authorising Officer sign/initial Adrian Smith Date: 02/05/2025