



30th July 2023

Bron Curtis
Babergh District Council
Endeavour House
8 Russell Road
Ipswich, IP1 2BX

By email only

Thank you for requesting advice on this application from Place Services' ecological advice service. This service provides advice to planning officers to inform Babergh District Council planning decisions with regard to potential ecological impacts from development. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer who will seek further advice from us where appropriate and necessary.

Application: DC/23/05656
Location: Land At Grove Farm And Land East Of The Railway Line, Bentley
Proposal: Full Planning Application - Construction of a solar farm (up to 40MW export capacity) with ancillary infrastructure and cabling, DNO substation, customer substation and construction of new and altered vehicular accesses.

Dear Bron,

Thank you for re-consulting Place Services on the above application.

No objection subject to securing ecological mitigation and enhancement measures

Summary

We have reviewed the further submitted documents for this application since our comment on 29th January 2024, which includes the Applicants response following consultation (Axis Ltd, July 2024).

We have also re-assessed the Ecological Assessment Report (Avian Ecology Ltd, September 2023), the Breeding Bird Survey Report (Avian Ecology Ltd, September 2023), the Wintering Bird Survey Report (Avian Ecology Ltd, September 2023) and the biodiversity metrics 4.0 – calculation tool.

We are still satisfied that sufficient ecological information is available for determination of this application, as the Applicants response following consultation (Axis Ltd, July 2024) does not raise any further ecology consideration.

We acknowledge that the Woodland Trust has objected to this application due to potential serious deterioration of an ancient Alder tree (T31). However, we note that Arboricultural Impact Assessment (ADAS Ltd, November 2023) indicates that Horizontal Direction Drilling will be undertaken at a depth beneath the soil rhizosphere of this tree, with the launch and reception pits shall be outside of any RPAs. Therefore, whilst we have no objection of this proposal in principle, we recommend that this is



considered by the council's Arboricultural Consultant to confirm whether this is appropriate to avoid impacts upon this irreplaceable habitat.

As a result, we recommend that ecology comments provided on the 29th January 2024 by Place Services should still be followed for this application.

Please contact us with any queries.

Yours sincerely,

Hamish Jackson ACIEEM BSc (Hons)

Senior Ecological Consultant

placeservicesecology@essex.gov.uk

Place Services provide ecological advice on behalf of Babergh District Council

Please note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.