

APPENDIX 1 - WRITTEN STATEMENT

OBJ/12-CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

DEBORAH AHMAD

ECOLOGY OFFICER

INTRODUCTION

1. I am employed by Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) as the Ecology Officer. I have been in my current position since 2009. Prior to this I was an ecologist for two years at Aspect Ecology, an ecological consultancy firm. Overall I have sixteen years of experience in this sector, commencing with my degree and covering a number of employment roles.
2. I have a Masters of Research in Ecology and Environmental Management (Distinction), a BSc in Zoology and a University Certificate of Biological Recording from the University of Birmingham. I held CIEEM membership and a Great Crested Newt Surveyor Licence from 2009-2016.
3. The planning conditions proposed within NR10 are not sufficient to protect the ecological value of the area. While addressing nesting birds they do not take account of other protected species that reside in County Wildlife Site affected by the intended works. In the absence of any surveys or reporting demonstrating the ecology to be found I therefore requested an additional, more comprehensive condition in the County Council's formal response dated 18th July 2017.
4. I am now on maternity leave and am unable to attend the Public Inquiry. I understand that a proof of evidence will be submitted by my County Council colleague Philip Clark.

IMPORTANCE OF REQUEST AND WHY REQUIRED

5. The Council and Network Rail have a statutory duty under the NERC Act 2011, to ensure that prior to consenting or approving any schemes, it can be demonstrated that works will not disturb or harm any of the Section 41 species or habitats of principal importance listed in the National Planning Policy Framework. Some of these species are also European Protected Species.
6. CCC welcomes the two ecological conditions that have been included within the proposed conditions, but is disappointed that these only relate to (i) breeding birds and (ii) unexpected discovery of a protected species during the works. They do not consider sites, habitats or species that will be affected by the proposals for which mitigation strategy must be developed and agreed prior to commencement of works.
7. An additional condition has been requested to be included to secure the production and implementation of an Ecological Design Strategy (in accordance with British Standard BS42020:2013) to ensure an adequate mitigation scheme for all protected species, priority species/habitats and wildlife sites impacted by the proposal will be agreed prior to commencement of works. This should include additional surveys (as required), long-term monitoring of the scheme and action for remedial works (if required).
8. The County Council requires confirmation that the requested additional condition will be included in the TWAO; that no designs will be finalised or agreed; and that no works, ground conditions surveys or ground clearance will be carried out until the required design strategy has been agreed by the relevant Local Authorities.
9. It is expected that Network Rail or their agents would contact our local Environment Records Centre (CPERC, Wildlife Trust Office, Cambourne) for the latest held records on the presence of any protected species. It is then expected that this would be followed by site surveys to check for the continued presence or not of these species at an appropriate time of year. The resulting information must feed into any required mitigation or compensation for the works being undertaken.

10. The proposed condition, formally suggested in paragraph 3.31 of the County Council's formal responses dated 18th and 28th July 2017 is as follows:

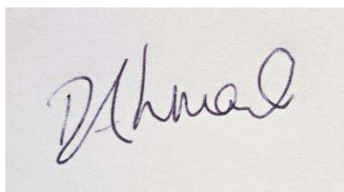
CONDITION: Ecological design strategy (protection, mitigation, compensation & enhancement)

No development shall take place until an ecological design strategy (EDS) addressing mitigation, compensation, enhancements and restoration for wildlife sites (including River Lark and Associated Habitats County Wildlife Site & River Great Ouse County Wildlife Site) , protected species (including Otters, Water Vole and breeding birds) and priority species / habitats and has been submitted to and approved in writing.

The EDS shall include the following.

- a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed works.
- b) Review of site potential and constraints.
- c) Detailed design(s) and/or working method(s) to achieve stated objectives.
- d) Extent and location/area of proposed works on appropriate scale maps and plans.
- e) Type and source of materials to be used where appropriate, e.g. native species of local provenance
- f) Timetable for implementation demonstrating that works are aligned with the proposed phasing of development
- g) Persons responsible for implementing the works, such as Ecological Clerk of Works
- h) Details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (for the duration of the operation of the station).
- i) Details for monitoring and remedial measures.
- j) Details for disposal of any wastes arising from works.

Signed:

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in blue ink. The signature appears to be 'D. Ahmad' written in a cursive style.

Dated: 31/10/2017

