

Summary Transcript from Issue Specific Hearing 5 Environmental Matters & Highways

18 February 2021

The following items are referenced to the agenda items for the hearing.

3. EIA and ES

3.2 The WCC Landscape Architect made the following contribution:

These were, as you know, additional viewpoints added at the request of the SDNP. I confirm I have seen them and that these additional images have been noted but that I do not think that they add anything significant to the existing representative viewpoint analysis already carried out by the Applicant.

The only thing I *had not appreciated* was that one of the SDNP's requested VP's (Rep 063: Fig 15 61 B and C **VP3**) was to try and illustrate the visual impact that the *new site access* would have at the junction with Day's Lane. Nothing to do with the Converter Station itself. The CS would not be visible from this point.

However, I cannot really comment on this as I have seen no indication of what form the new access might take. I am anticipating this would be part of the detail submission.

Postscript: The latter observation on VP3 relates to a situation outside the Winchester City Council area as the impact is limited to around the proposed access point.

5 Onshore ecology

5.1 The Council acknowledged that it had raised questions over the establishment of the grassland at Lovedean. Discussions had taken place with the applicant over several meetings that had clarified the situation and the Council was content that either a calcareous chalk grassland or a species rich neutral grassland would be created. The critical aspect centred on whether the resultant grassland still achieved the biodiversity enhancement net positive gain as set out in the Biodiversity Metric. The applicant was indicating that there was sufficient tolerance in the existing calculation to allow for either grassland type to be created and for the net gain to still come out as a positive figure. The Council relied on Natural England to interpret this assessment previously and was doing so again. Accordingly, its acceptance of the species rich neutral grassland was subject to Natural England signing off this matter.

- 5.2 On the subject of Denmead Meadows, the council has held several meeting with the applicant on the impacts on that section of the SINC to be crossed by the access road and the cable circuits. A solution to minimise impactst has been identified. The remaining concern relates to the restoration of the ground. Whilst the applicant is proposing to monitor the condition of the land at three times during a 5 year programme (years 1, 3 & 5) it is not proposed to enter into an agreement with the landowner to control or influence how the land will be used. Consequently, the restoration work risks being undone if an excessive number of livestock are brought onto the land or it is over grazed. The lack of some influence over the management is a fundamental concern to the LPA.

Regarding the point on foot access across the Meadow, the Council had raised the matter with the applicant as it was noted the Land Plan showed new access rights along a corridor north-south. The definition of new access rights covers a wide range of activities and given the sensitivity of the ground access should be limited to pedestrians only. It was noted a similar request had been put forward at the Milton allotment so the precedent was set.

6. Socio-Economic

- 6.3 The Council welcomes the submission of the Employment and Skills Strategy as a positive response by the applicant.

9. Any Other Relevant Issues

- 9.1 (site inspections)The Council confirmed it had nothing more to add to the submission it had already made and which has been published in the Examination Library.

1 March 2021

End

