

Surrey Wildlife Trust Responses DCO Deadline 10

	Question to:	Question:	Response
4.4.2	NE and Surrey Wildlife Trust (SWT)	<p>Please comment on: a) how dependent the breeding populations of Dartford warbler, European nightjar and Woodlark (the SPA's qualifying features) are on the invertebrate assemblage present in the woodland adjacent to the M25 and A3 and which forms part of the SPA. Do these qualifying features require particular species as part of their diet? Are they specialist or generalist in their dietary requirements? b) whether there is any notable difference in the nature of the invertebrate assemblage found in the woodland and heathland areas of this part of the SPA, and if there is a notable difference what form does that take? c) what is the sensitivity of the invertebrate assemblage present in this part of the SPA to the level of Nitrogen deposition? d) having regard to the predicted air quality levels within the various proposed SPA Enhancement Areas and Compensation Land areas, how confident are you that they will be able to function so as to offset any potential loss in carrying capacity and/or food resource as a result of the Proposed Development?</p>	<p>a) The <u>Dartford Warbler</u> is not dependent on the adjacent woodland. They are dependent on the presence of sufficient low scrub (dwarf shrubs and gorse). They feed on a broad range of invertebrates found in this dwarf shrub and on the ground within it. <u>Nightjars</u> nest on heathland and recently cleared conifer plantations. They primarily forage over heathland but will seek out other invertebrate-rich habitats such as wetlands, grasslands and native deciduous woodland. At certain times, they may use pine woodland margins but not the woodland itself. <u>Woodlarks</u> are restricted to heathland and temporary clearings in forestry plantations. They nest in a grass tussock or heather bush. They forage on a broad range of invertebrates as well as plant material found on bare ground and in low, sparse heather and grasses. As such these three species are not tied to the invertebrate assemblage of the pine woodland. b) There are notable differences in the invertebrate species found in woodland and heathland areas, although there will be some species that can use both habitats. As detailed above the invertebrate assemblage is not critical to the SPA bird population; what is far more important is the collective abundance of the total invertebrate assemblage than its components. c) The global decline in invertebrate diversity and its bio-abundance is likely caused by a range of factors including climate change, pesticide use, atmospheric and light pollution, either impacting directly or indirectly via habitat changes. The invertebrate species found within the pine woodland are generally non-specialist and therefore less threatened (due to pine woodland being a sub-optimal, non-native habitat in Surrey) and we concentrate our management on the rare and more highly-specialised species of the open heathland. d) We are confident that the habitat that is being created will offset any potential loss of food resource. It may be considered therefore that the habitat being created is of far greater value to the SPA qualifying bird species than the pine woodland that is being cleared.</p>
4.4.3	NE and SWT	<p>NE and SWT Please submit a copy of the 2010-2020 Wisley and Ockham Management Plan, as referred to in paragraph 7.2.12 of the Applicant's 'Habitats Regulations Assessment: Stage 2: Statement to inform appropriate assessment' [REP4-018]. Only one copy of this document need be submitted and NE and SWT should decide between themselves as to which organisation is best placed to submit it.</p>	<p>Available but a large file size. We will submit but please let us know if it is not received.</p>
4.4.4	NE and SWT	<p>Are the management prescriptions for the Ockham and Wisley Commons SSSI component of the SPA the same as for the other parts of the SPA or are they component specific? If the management prescriptions are different for the Ockham and Wisley Commons SSSI component of the SPA, please give examples of how they differ from the management prescriptions for other parts of the SPA.</p>	<p>The areas on this site are managed for their habitat. Therefore heathland areas across the site (whether they are "just" SSSI or both SSSI/SPA) are managed in the same way. Woodland areas are managed according to a woodland plan.</p>
4.4.5	SWT	<p>Please provide a plan or plans showing the locations where woodland clearance has already taken place since 2010 or is planned to be undertaken within the SPA, pursuant to the implementation of the 2010- 2020 Wisley and Ockham Management Plan.</p>	<p>There are two plans within the Management Plan 1) <u>Figure 8</u> Heathland on site 1948-2011. This shows heathland on site as it declined and was then restored. 2) <u>Figure 9</u> The felling plan map. The works were not phased over five years but were instead completed in three. This was completed before 2010.</p>
4.4.6	SWT	<p>In your response [REP5-044] to the ExA's second written question 2.4.7 [PD-010] at your item f) you have commented 'An increase in heathland area has been shown on this site to increase the SPA bird population'. Can you please advise whether your comment refers to an increased number of the SPA's qualifying features of European nightjar, Woodlark and Dartford warbler and, if so, provide any documentary evidence you have available substantiating that.</p>	<p>The works undertaken over the last 20 years have substantially increased the heathland area for the three heathland specialists to use. We have attached a spreadsheet showing the recorded numbers between 2006 and 2018 by SWT. 2019 and 2020 figures are available from HE/Atkins. There is a brief commentary on that document.</p>