

# **Manor Farm, Manor Road, Hayling Island**

## **Wader Habitat Enhancement Plan**

Prepared on behalf of Adams Hendry Consulting Ltd

November 2014

# **Manor Farm, Hayling Island**

**Ecology 7270**

**Issue 01**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 PV Ecology was commissioned in October 2014 to carry out an ecological assessment of an area of land off Manor Road, Hayling Island (grid reference SU 71992 01006). This assessment will contribute to a planning application submitted by the client to Havant Borough Council for a solar array on the land.
  - 1.2 The field where the solar array is proposed has been identified as H49E within the Solent Wader and Brent Goose Strategy, for which it has 'uncertain potential for waders and Brent geese'. The field directly to the north of the site has been identified as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), a non-statutory designated site. The site is situated less than 700m to the east of the coast line which has been designated as Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar, in part because of the populations of geese and waders.
  - 1.3 No birds were recorded on site during the survey. A range of farmland birds, geese and waders have been recorded locally within 1km of the site although none were present during the site visit. The Brent geese and wader records were reviewed for the site and area within the vicinity and no records were found for the site itself although there were records for Brent geese to the south of the site.
  - 1.4 The proposals will result in the loss of a small section (3750m<sup>2</sup>) of field that has some limited potential for waders, most notably lapwings although it is possible that other species of waders may use the field irregularly and probably in low numbers or single figures, if present. The field is unsuitable for Brent Geese due to the habitat, lack of openness and fences which compartmentalise it. Additionally the composting facility adjacent to the field, to the south, produces a considerable amount of noise disturbance irregularly which is not conducive to foraging or roosting birds.
  - 1.5 The proposals are of a relatively small scale and are unlikely to impact directly or indirectly upon the designated coastal areas. The proposals however will result in the loss of habitat that has been identified as supporting habitat for the SPA and in the absence of survey information to identify the importance of the habitat to the birds, it has been recommended that the land owner enhances a similar area of the site to that which will be lost to the solar array. This land will need to be made available to waders during the winter period (November – February inclusive).
  - 1.6 Details of the habitat enhancement measures are outlined below along with a timetable of works. These enhancement measures will cover the life span of the solar array, thought to be 25 years, and will only be amended if it can be shown that birds associated with the SPA are not using the area, by appropriate bird surveys of the site.
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## ***2.0 Habitat protection and enhancement***

### ***Scrape creation and management***

- 2.1 Three wader scrapes approximately 30m<sup>2</sup> each are to be created in the field, adjacent to the proposed solar array. These will benefit waders and other wildlife locally.
- 2.2 The scrapes will need to be located away from the tree lined western boundary of the field as waders and wildfowl prefer to use more open habitats that are not enclosed. Ideally the scrapes will avoid being located too close to the solar array also.
- 2.3 The scrapes should be shallow in depth being no more than 50cm deep (below the surrounding ground level) at the centre and should be graduated to the edge. A digger or excavator can be used to remove the soil. The depth should not be uniform and can vary in places in order to increase the number of niches available to animals and plants. Spoil from the excavation should not be piled next to the new scrapes but moved away from the area or scattered evenly over the field.
- 2.4 The edges of the scrapes should not be composed of linear straight lines but should be scalloped in order to increase the area of edge habitats (see photographs below).
- 2.5 The scrapes will be fenced off with wire electric fencing between 1st November and 28th February. This will prevent birds from being disturbed by livestock, if present in adjacent fields. The operation of machinery or vehicles in the field should be kept to a minimum in order to prevent unnecessary disturbance to birds during the winter months, especially during periods of very cold weather.
- 2.6 Livestock can graze the area containing the scrapes between 1st March and 31st October, poaching of the scrape edges will help to increase the number of microhabitats available to invertebrates and birds.
- 2.7 If the scrapes dry up during periods of low rainfall this is not a problem as this will prevent larger invertebrate predators from becoming established and reducing overall invertebrate numbers available for birds to feed on.
- 2.8 Each scrape will need to be re-excavated on a rotational basis every 3-5 years to maintain them and prevent them filling in and scrubbing over.

***Photographs of scrapes and their creation***



Scalloped sides



Graduating the edge with a digger



Open areas surrounding the scrapes make them more likely to be used by birds

### **3.0 Timetable and schedule of works**

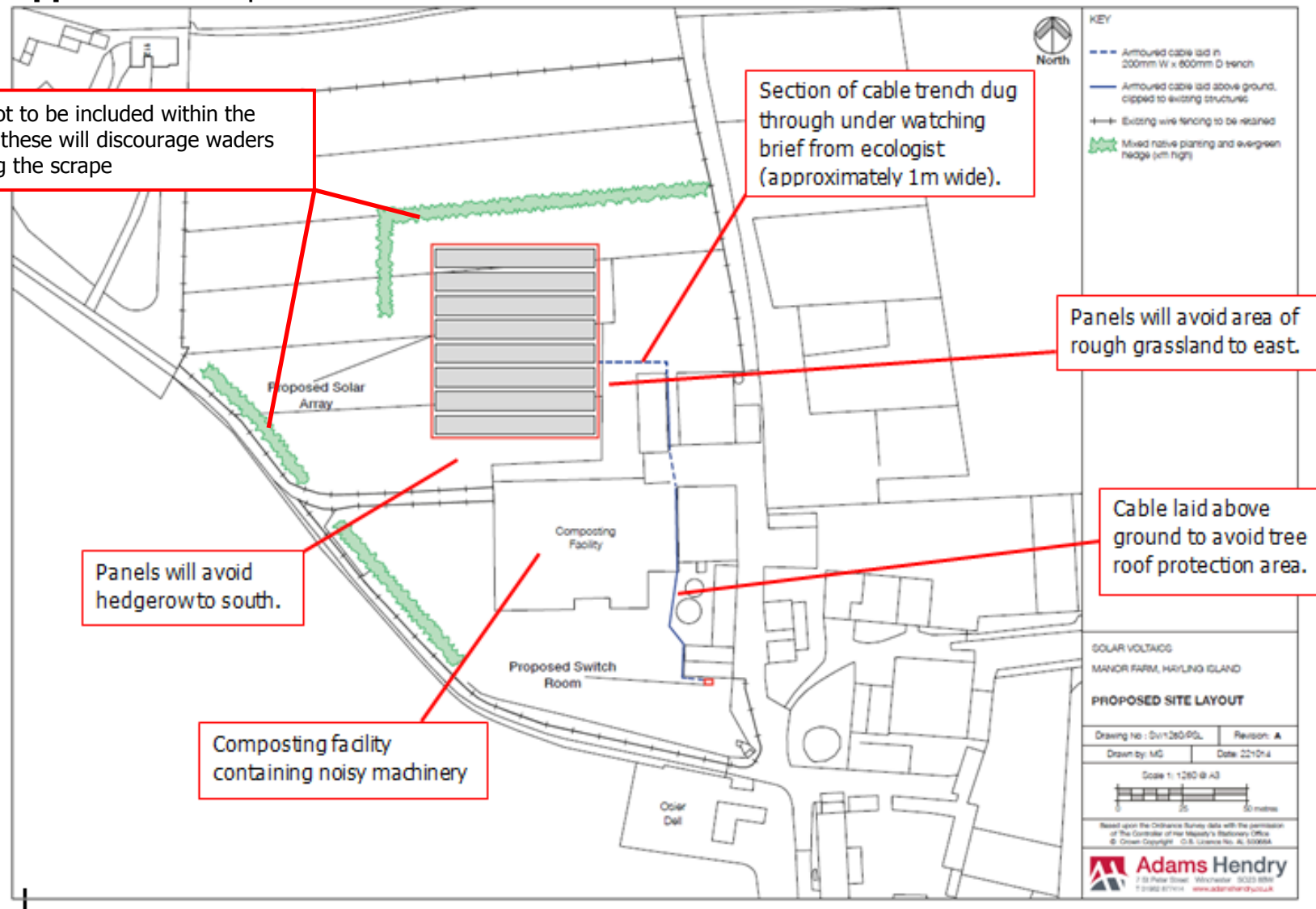
| <b>Timing</b>                                     | <b>Activity</b>                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Year 0 – prior to the erection of the solar array | The scrapes will be created according to management plan recommendations                    |
| Year 0 – 1 <sup>st</sup> November                 | Install electric fencing to segment off the scrape area                                     |
| Year 1 – 28 <sup>th</sup> February                | Remove electric fencing and the scrape                                                      |
| Year 1 – March – end of October                   | Undertake management of 1 out of 3 scrapes and re-scrape other scrapes in consecutive years |
| Year 1 – Year 25                                  | Continue with electric fencing and removal and management of scrapes as set out above       |

### **4.0 References**

- Natural England Technical Information Note TIN079 First edition 12 November 2010 [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk) Illustrated guide to ponds and scrapes.
- RSPB Farming for Wildlife: Scrape creation for wildlife

## **Appendices**

## Appendix A: Proposals



## Appendix B: Habitat Enhancement Plan

Electric fence in place between 1<sup>st</sup> Nov-28<sup>th</sup> Feb and no access to people or animals during this time. The fence can be removed for spring/summer months

Scrapes approximately 30m<sup>2</sup> each

Proposed solar array

Area of similar dimensions to the proposed solar array

