

Oliver, Lewis

From: Norton, Tristan <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 09 November 2020 12:58
To: Weaver, Louise; Oliver, Lewis; Jones, Rachel
Cc: Havant CIL; 'Ballam, Rachel'
Subject: RE: *EXTERNAL: RE: Forty Acre Farm, Bedhampton - CIL APP/18/00450

Dear Louise and Lewis,

Forty Acre Farm, Bedhampton. Site visit to inspect Wintering Bird Mitigation

As agreed, I visited the Forty Acre Farm site on the morning of Friday 6 November 2020 alongside David West of WYG. The purpose of this visit was to inspect the wintering bird mitigation measures carried out to date.

I was able to observe that the entire Wintering Bird Mitigation Area has been securely fenced with an acoustic barrier. The mitigation area has been seeded with a grass ley mix, stated as containing a mix of perennial ryegrass and a high proportion of white clover. This was seeded in September and therefore there is some fresh growth visible, but the site is essentially bare soil at this stage. A number of brent goose decoys have been installed in the centre of the site – these are suitable, although David and I did discuss the fact that the decoys' legs needed to be coloured dark rather than their current orange – this is a minor point and I don't expect that this would deter wild geese from landing at the site.

Overall, the mitigation area is in as good a condition as we can expect at this current stage, and acknowledging the amended timeframe for delivery of the area. I can see no obvious reason why wild geese and other bird species would not utilise it in its current condition, albeit that there is minimal forage available. Wintering mitigation sites are as important as resting areas as they are feeding areas. From my own observations elsewhere in the Solent, geese are not universally using inland sites just yet: one would expect usage to increase over the peak winter season, by which time there may be additional grass/clover forage available here.

David stated that freshwater scrapes will be created after this winter season.

David and I discussed the management of the field immediately to the west of the mitigation area. David asked whether the grass in the southern section (i.e. the land which will eventually be incorporated into greenspace) would benefit from cutting now and I agreed that this would provide an additional benefit. This field is large and the cutting of grassland to a height suitable for geese and other species would be of benefit now, especially given the early stages of growth of the seeded grass/clover.

In summary, the visit confirmed that the site is suitable in principle. The key measures (fencing, grass/clover mix, decoys) are in place and the site is available for use by wintering birds. I expect that by the start of the 2021 wintering season the site will be in optimal condition.

I trust that this is useful – if you have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Tristan

Tristan Norton

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