

Gwent Levels Farmers' Community Solar Scheme - Ecology

Address of NRW/RSPB Comments and Table of Changes to Ecological Reports

December 2019.

NRW Ref CAS-105277-R8Y7

Comment	Nature of Change
Condition 17 LEMP use of the word 'Broadly'.	Happy to remove the word broadly.
1/ Advice on extent & locations of hedgerow removal H9 & H10.	LEMP Appendix 3, Table 3.1 and Plan LM0.1 amended to include H9, H10 as requested.
2/ Hedgerow removal & management specification.	LEMP Sections 5.1.1 and 6.4.4, have been amended to state that if Ecoplugs/weed sticks are not successful in implementing hedgerow removal alongside watercourses then mechanical removal will be undertaken in liaison with NRW.
3/ Proposal description change to 100MW & hedgerow removal covering wider site.	If any consented fields not in the current layout are built out at any time in the future, then proportionate hedgerow removal will take place in those fields consistent with those in the original proposal.
Condition 14 Regarding casting rotation and discrepancies between the two reports.	This has been changed to 7 years as requested and has been amended to confirm inspection and casting will take place at the start of the project, then on a 7-year cycle in the Monitoring and Contingency Plan Section 2.5.3 & Table 1 and LEMP 6.3.2 & 7.1

Table 1

RSPB Ref RECON 19/0828

Comment	Nature of Change
Condition 11 Lapwing Management Plan	Acknowledges RSPBs previous comments have been addressed satisfactory: Enabling works, stocking rates, rush management, tree, hedge and scrub removal.
5/ Land secured for lapwing compensation.	No change. We feel that the land we have secured is proportionate to the current layout of the scheme which includes the removal of the main field which has been shown to be used by breeding lapwing. This is included in an overall 37ha reduction in land take to the original layout. Further positive measure for enhancement in the current lapwing compensation fields has been secured to include a fox proof electric fence. This is now included in the lapwing management plan to be installed after vegetation/hedgerow removal has taken place in these fields (see predator control below). Also considering the other ecological benefits from the scheme including the enhancement of the SSSIs we are making some really positive actions to benefit wildlife on the levels.
Lapwing Plan Section 5.	We can confirm that the 37 ha does <u>not</u> include the lapwing compensation fields.
Funding.	Lease agreements with landowners, management and monitoring will be secured by condition and sufficient funds will be available.
5.1 Baseline Condition Summary.	We now have baseline water level information from NRW which was not available by the deadline for the last Lapwing Management plan. This has now been included in the plan in Section 7.1.2. Regarding protected species and further information, this was discussed at our meeting with NRW on 14/11/19 and NRW confirmed that they did not require any more information regarding these fields.
Predator Control.	We have now secured a permanent electric predator fence as mentioned above which will be included in the Lapwing Management plan and LEMP Section 6.6.5 and Lapwing Management Plan Section 6. This will be erected once initial hedgerow removal works

	have been undertaken.
7 Water Management.	We now have information from NRW which is included in the Lapwing Management Plan in Section 7.1.2.
Condition 15 Common Crane.	Acknowledges that most of RSPB advice has now been applied.
4/ Enabling and Construction Mitigation.	We have put in the proviso to delay works if cranes are still present as requested. In Section 4. Para. 4 However, the delivery of the transformer is scheduled for August delivery, this is a less than one day scenario where it will be craned off a lorry into position and will not cause any lasting disturbance. Although this will be monitored during delivery by the ecologist.
4.1 New Enhancement grassland for cranes. Regarding wording of cutting regime.	We have changed the wording in the plan (Section 4.1) to secure the late-September date as advised, also changed in Table 1.
Additional Information provided by applicant.	We have now included this information relating to the dimensions of the acoustic barrier in the Crane mitigation Plan (in Section 4 para. 4).

RSPB Ref RECON 18/1201

Comment	Nature of Change
Condition 3.	
Condition 17 LEMP use of word 'Broadly'.	As with NRW comment happy for this to be removed.