



Dean Moor Solar Farm

Environmental Statement: Appendix 8.9 –Stakeholder Engagement on behalf of **FVS Dean Moor Limited**

March 2025
Prepared by: Stantec UK Ltd
PINS Ref: EN010155
Document Ref: 6.3
Revision: 1



Firma Energy

 **ib vogt**

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: ONT Meeting - Dean Moor CNS and Consultation
Date: 30 April 2024 10:54:00
Attachments: [imageQQ2.P-A](#)

Hi [REDACTED],

I just wanted to confirm we are still ok to meet with yourself on a Teams call on 2nd May at 1.30pm? It will be myself, the PM Jonathan Legg and Senior Environmental Planner, Neil Slattery from Stantec; and the Client, Rachel Jacobsen from 18 Vogt.

As per my previous emails we are keen to work with CWT to develop our plans for the County Wildlife Site and talk through ecological enhancements which would be appropriate to enhance the sites biodiversity. Further to that, there is an ongoing statutory consultation which Jonathan will provide some background on, and which has been granted an extension to the 16th May for some consultees. The layout proposals which we are consulting on do not reflect our final layout for the Site and during our meeting we can update you on the next stage.

We would appreciate if you have any initial views on the project, and in particular our current plans for the County Wildlife Site, so that we can develop our plans further.

If you need anything else from me in the interim then just come back to me when you have a moment.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Senior Associate Ecologist

[REDACTED]

Edinburgh

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Dean Moor Solar - Habitat Classification for BNG assessments
Date: 26 November 2024 17:07:00
Attachments: [iroa001.png](#)
[iroa004.png](#)
[iroa005.png](#)

Hi [REDACTED],

Many thanks for clarifying, very useful.

Hopefully we will be in touch soon to discuss Dean Moor - just finalising reports prior to submission so it's a bit of a manic time.

Kind regards,

Iain

[REDACTED]
Senior Associate Ecologist
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 November 2024 14:19
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Dean Moor Solar - Habitat Classification for BNG assessments

Hi [REDACTED]

If I go back to the notes from the last County Wildlife Site survey in 1999 the acid grassland was identified as *Festuca ovina*-*Agrostis capillaris* *Galium saxatile* (U4) National Vegetation Classification (NVC) grassland plant communities. This would therefore come under Lowland Acid Grassland in the UK BAP Priority Habitat Classifications.

Best wishes

[REDACTED]
Cumbria Wildlife Trust
Plumgarths
Crook Road
Kendal
LA8 8LX
[REDACTED]

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[Trust](#)

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From: [Redacted]

Sent: 18 November 2024 13:05

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]

[Redacted]

Subject: Dean Moor Solar - Habitat Classification for BNG assessments

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Hi [Redacted]

I hope you are well.

You may recall we caught up a number of months ago on the solar development at Dean Moor and impact on Dean Moor County Wildlife Site. We are pulling together a number of documents prior to submission so it is all systems go at the moment. I will hopefully be able to have a more detailed conversation with you on the grazing management plan we discussed and how best we might restore the CWS, but for now I am focussed on establishing the BNG baseline and post development habitats. To that end I wonder if you can assist with a small query.

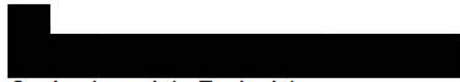
We identified much of the grassland across the site as modified grassland but around Thief's Gill it was lowland acid grassland based on species composition. So that we are in agreement with our habitat classifications, I wanted to confirm you also consider this as lowland and not upland acid grassland as this will have an impact on the distinctiveness score when we run the BNG metric. As the CWS is designated for its moorland communities, and is in an upland area, there is scope for confusion.

Following on from that, and our proposals to restore Dean Moor CWS, we would then consider it also be lowland acid grassland (albeit restored to a better condition) and not upland acid grassland. If there are other habitat codes you wish for us to consider when Dean Moor CWS is restored then please let me know. Given you may have site knowledge and experience of Dean Moor I thought you would be best placed to assist now, rather than submit a report with details which are potentially

disagreeable.

Happy to have a call and discuss on Teams if that would work for you?

Kind regards,



Senior Associate Ecologist



Edinburgh

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Contact details for *ONT* response to Dean Moor consultation.
Date: 22 May 2024 10:46:00
Attachments: [image006.png](#)
[image009.png](#)
[image010.png](#)
[image011.png](#)

Hi [REDACTED],

That's great, many thanks.

I'll catch up with Jonathan on how we proceed with this. I think we still have to agree costs with the Client for this element so I shall catch up with Tanya in due course.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Senior Associate Ecologist

[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 10:40 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Contact details for CWT response to Dean Moor consultation.

Hi [REDACTED],

I sent [REDACTED] the CWT contacts and costs last week. Your point of contact for the GMP will be [REDACTED]

Best wishes

[REDACTED]

Cumbria Wildlife Trust
Plumgarths
Crook Road
Kendal
LAB 8LX

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 22 May 2024 09:35
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED].m>
Subject: RE: Contact details for CWT response to Dean Moor consultation.

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Hi_,

I hope you are well.

Just thought I would follow up and see if you had a contact in CWT who I could chat with about grazing management plans, or perhaps in the first instance you have some in the public domain which you could share? That way I could read through and I can discuss how they could be tailored to suit our plans at Dean Moor.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]
Senior Associate Ecologist
[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 14, 2024 11:05 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Contact details for CWT response to Dean Moor consultation.

Hi [REDACTED]

I've emailed [REDACTED] asking whom Cumbria Wildlife Trust's official response to the Dean Moor consultation should be addressed to but I've not heard back. Please can you let me know so I can pull something together before the 16th.

Best wishes

[REDACTED]

Cumbria Wildlife Trust
Plumgarths
Crook Road
Kendal
LA8 8LX

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: CNV Meeting - Dean Moor CNS and Consultation
Date: 30 April 2024 15:17:31
Attachments: [image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)
[image009.png](#)

Hi [REDACTED]

I'm still fine for Thursday. See you then.

Best wishes

[REDACTED]

Cumbria Wildlife Trust
Plumgarths
Crook Road
Kendal
LA8 8LX

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 April 2024 10:54
To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: CWT Meeting - Dean Moor CWS and Consultation

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Hi_,

I just wanted to confirm we are still ok to meet with yourself on a Teams call on 2nd May at 1.30pm? It will be myself, the PM [REDACTED] and Senior Environmental Planner, [REDACTED] from Stantec; and the Client, [REDACTED] from 18 Vogt.

As per my previous emails we are keen to work with CWT to develop our plans for the County Wildlife Site and talk through ecological enhancements which would be appropriate to enhance the sites biodiversity. Further to that, there is an ongoing statutory consultation which -- [REDACTED] will provide some background on, and which has been granted an extension to the 16th June 2020. The layout proposals which we are consulting on do not reflect our final layout for the Site and during our meeting we can update you on the next stage.

We would appreciate if you have any initial views on the project, and in particular our current plans for the County Wildlife Site, so that we can develop our plans further.

If you need anything else from me in the interim then just come back to me when you have a moment.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Senior Associate Ecologist

[REDACTED]

Edinburgh

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Dean Moor ONS and Dean Moor Solar Farm
Date: 20 March 2024 11:12:00
Attachments: [iroaae001.png](#)
[iroage004.png](#)
[iroaae00s.png](#)
[iroage006.png](#)

Hi [REDACTED],

I previously sent an email with all attachments relating to ecology at Dean Moor Solar Farm however the file was too large so it bounced back. I shall send them in parts now - grateful if you can confirm receipt. The hen harrier and wintering bird surveys have just been completed and reports will follow once drafted and approved by the Client Team.

You will receive:

1. The Biodiversity chapter for the PEIR
2. PEA and GCN Report
3. Bat Survey Report
4. Breeding Bird Survey Report
5. NVC Survey Report
6. Otter and Water vole survey Report

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Senior Associate Ecologist

[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 2:17 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Dean Moor CWS and Dean Moor Solar Farm

Hi [REDACTED],

Thanks for getting in touch, I have some availability in the weeks beginning the 15th and 22nd of April if that suits, particularly on the following dates - 18th, 19th, 22, and 25th. Let me know if any of these are feasible. Were you proposing meeting on site or just on Teams?

Before we meet are you able to send us copies of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, GCN, Breeding Bird Survey etc that are referenced in the Scoping Opinion document from the Cumberland Planning Portal. The Scoping Opinion document also references

further survey work required, has this been completed yet?

Best wishes

[Redacted]

Cumbria Wildlife Trust
Plumgarths
Crook Road
Kendal
LA8 8LX

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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From: [Redacted]

Sent: 19 March 2024 12:25

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]

Subject: Dean Moor CWS and Dean Moor Solar Farm

You don't often get email [Redacted]

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Hi_,

I hope you are well.

I'll be picking up the delivery of ecology works associated with Dean Moor Solar Farm from my colleague Duncan McLaughlin who contacted CWT earlier this year to discuss Dean Moor CWS and how it will interact with the project. Would you have some time for a meeting soon after Easter to talk through ecology receptors, enhancements and grazing management?

I'll drop you a line on your mobile today to introduce myself as I am on leave from the end of this week.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]
Senior Associate Ecologist
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Edinburgh

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Dean Moor Solar (DCO EN010155) sHRA for Comment
Date: 10 March 2025 13:44:42
Attachments: [iroaQeQQ2.PDQ](#)
[iroaQeQQS.PDQ](#)

Hi [REDACTED],

I hope you are well.

Thought I would follow up on my email below before we finalise our consultation section - just want to confirm the ornithologists had no comment.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Senior Associate Ecologist

[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 February 2025 11:44
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Dean Moor Solar (DCO EN010155) sHRA for Comment

Hi [REDACTED]

No problem, busy times!

Just to confirm on the 'no comment' does that mean they are satisfied with the report findings, or have they not responded with anything, potentially as they have not read it? I know they were under pressure, so just want to be clear.

Just asking, as I know the PM will ask the same questions and we would want to be accurate in our consultation section of the Biodiversity chapter.

Appreciate if you can confirm.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Senior Associate Ecologist

[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 05 February 2025 10:33

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Dean Moor Solar (DCO EN010155) sHRA for Comment

Hi [REDACTED]

Sorry for the delay in replying. No, nothing extra in terms of bird advice in addition to the sHRA comments we sent through, but if you have any questions let me know.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sustainable Development Higher Officer
Cumbria Area Team

[REDACTED]

<http://www.gov.uk/natural-england>



From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 30 January 2025 16:39

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Dean Moor Solar (DCO EN010155) sHRA for Comment

Hi [REDACTED],

Just wondering if there was any comment on the wintering bird report from your ornithologist?

I received a response regarding the sHRA, but wondered if there was any specific comment on the bird results.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Senior Associate Ecologist
[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 23 January 2025 18:51
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Dean Moor Solar (DCO EN010155) sHRA for Comment

Good Evening [REDACTED]

Thank you for sending the Draft sHRA and Wintering Bird Survey Report and associated flock data documents through, and apologies for the delay in responding.

Solway Firth SPA

For assessing significance, the first step is to assess the peak numbers recorded during the survey period against the 5-year peak mean for that species for the SPA, rather than assessing the % against the citation population figure. This can be searched for by site or species on the BTO website [here](#).

The current 5 year peak mean for herring gull (HG) for the Solway Firth SPA is 2700. The peak count of 200 during the wintering surveys in January therefore represents about 7% of the Solway SPA HG population. An indication of significant functional linkage is if 1% or more of the SPA population is using a site. Therefore, a likely significant effect cannot be ruled out for this project. Further analysis should be undertaken during the Appropriate Assessment stage with regards to the behaviour of the species and the site conditions.

There is a significant rooftop colony of HG that feed at the Lillyhall site, which is directly west of the proposed development area. However, these generally then roost further south at the Sellafeld site, so are actually functionally linked to the Morecambe Bay & Duddon Estuary SPA.

As the majority of the survey counts (including the 200 peak flock count) for HG were favouring the fields as a loafing area, rather than feeding, the actual ecological dependence on the fields is likely to be low. The requirements for loafing are very broad and, as stated in the draft sHRA, the availability of alternative land for this purpose in the area is considerable. It is therefore likely that, although there is some indication that these gulls could be part of the core population of the SPA, this

proposal will not have an adverse effect on site integrity alone when taken through to the Appropriate Assessment stage.

If a proposal is LSE alone and the Appropriate Assessment has concluded no adverse effect on site integrity, but there is some residual effect remaining, then there is a need to further consider the impact of this residual effect in-combination. It would therefore be advisable to assess any in-combination impacts with the neighbouring Lostrigg solar proposal, if they also find a significant number of gulls on site to ascertain LSE, but alone no impact on site integrity. This will ascertain whether in combination they may have a cumulative effect on the population.

In addition for the other SPA species recorded during the surveys, the sHRA (Table 4.4, page 26) should assess peak species counts against the 5year peak mean, as stated above. It is unlikely that this will indicate any significant linkage but will provide a more robust conclusion and will determine whether an in-combination assessment with the neighbouring Lostrigg development may be necessary.

River Derwent & Bassenthwaite Lake SAC

We note that the Environmental Statement states: *4.7.6 - Further survey is recommended to assess the value / use of watercourse habitats to otter and confirm the presence / absence of resting places. This will inform the assessment of likelihood of an impact arising and the need for particular mitigation or design measures.*

Otter activity is subject to seasonal variation. Consequently, survey effort may require several surveys throughout the year, as appropriate to the scale of the development and likelihood of impacts, in order to determine the scale of the impact(s) and any necessary mitigation requirements.

Otters are highly territorial animals with large home ranges. The length of a home range along rivers averages 35km for a male otter and 20km for females, depending on the quality of the habitat and availability of food. Given their large territories, otters will continue to try and use 'known routes' if alternative options are not incorporated into a mitigation strategy. The mitigation needs to ensure:

- no net loss of habitat
- the maintaining of habitat links
- long-term management of the site for benefit of otters

We note that no nighttime working will be carried out, but in areas where presence of otter has been found this may also need to be extended until 2 hours after sunrise and 2 hours before sunset.

The adherence to a robust Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and the on-site presence of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) will be appropriate measures to minimise any water quality impacts on the downstream SAC.

There is also some guidance [here](#) that might also be helpful in terms undertaking HRA's for NSIP projects.

Kind Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sustainable Development Higher Officer
Cumbria Area Team

[REDACTED]

<http://www.gov.uk/natural-england>



From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 18 December 2024 17:32

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Subject: Dean Moor Solar (DCO EN010155) sHRA for Comment

Hi [REDACTED],

Further to our meeting on 2nd December I have attached a draft copy of the shadow HRA for Dean Moor Solar. The wintering bird survey report and flock data I sent previously informs the part of the assessment relating to the Solway Firth SPA.

Perhaps we can arrange a catch up sometime in January when you and the NE ornithologist has had a chance to review? I am on leave now till the 7th January so will be in touch shortly thereafter.

Wishing you a happy Christmas when it comes and enjoy your festive break!

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]
Senior Associate Ecologist

[REDACTED]
Edinburgh

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Dean Moor Solar NSIP
Date: 10 April 2024 15:08:55
Attachments: [iroaae002.png](#)
[iroage004.png](#)
[iroaae00s.jpg](#)
[Letter to NSIP customers April 24.pdf](#)

Good Afternoon [REDACTED]

I hope you're well.

I am contacting you to let you know that due to certain provisions in the new Levelling Up & Regeneration Act (2023) there will be a change in how statutory consultees charge for both statutory and non-statutory advice for NSIP schemes, and therefore this affects the Dean Moor Solar Project. I have attached a letter with more detail.

Kind Regards

[REDACTED]

- **Development Lead Adviser**
Cumbria **Area Team**

[REDACTED]

<http://www.gov.uk/natural-england>



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, November 9, 2023 1:30 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: DAS - Dean Moor Solar - Hen Harrier Surveys

Thanks for the speedy response -
I shall inform our Client accordingly ♦
Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Senior Associate Ecologist



From: [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, November 9, 2023 1:27 PM
To: [Redacted]
Subject: RE: DAS - Dean Moor Solar - Hen Harrier Surveys
Hi [Redacted]

One of our ornithologists has reviewed the scope you provided and advises this methodology will be sufficient subject to the ground truthing of the VP locations to ensure they are optimal.

Kind regards

I [Redacted]

[Redacted] Development Lead Adviser
Cumbria Area Team

[Redacted]
<http://www.gov.uk/natural-eoglaod>



From: [Redacted]
Sent: 06 November 2023 15:07
To: [Redacted]
Subject: RE: DAS - Dean Moor Solar - Hen Harrier Surveys

Hi -
That would be great - thanks.
Come back to me when you have a moment.
Kind regards,

[Redacted]
Senior Associate Ecologist



From: [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, November 6, 2023 2:33 PM
To: [Redacted]
Subject: RE: DAS - Dean Moor Solar - Hen Harrier Surveys
Hi [Redacted]

I'll run this past one of our ornithologists and will be in touch as soon as possible

Kind Regards

I [Redacted]

[Redacted] Development Lead Adviser
Cumbria Area Team

<http://www.gov.uk/natural-england>



From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 01 November 2023 13:15

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: DAS - Dean Moor Solar - Hen Harrier Surveys

Hi [REDACTED]

We have taken the advice you provided on board and have sought a fee proposal for one of our sub-consultants to undertake a hen harrier survey. Further, we have received comment back from NE as part of PINS Consultation which has requested we undertake a desk study and decide on a suitable approach thereafter, and if needed.

To that end, and in line with our request for comment on our passage and migrant waterfowl survey methodology, we would be wondering if your ornithologist would be happy to comment on our hen harrier survey methodology? If they are, would this fall within the charged advice service, or as per below, it would just be a statement that would agree with what we are proposing.

Great if you can advise or perhaps put me in touch with your ornithologist who may be able to take a quick look at it? Given the importance of the project I want to be certain that NE are content with our approach prior to surveys commencing.

The methodology is presented here:

"The most suitable and efficient form of survey in this instance is Vantage Point (VP). This survey involves a three hour watch using binoculars and spotting scope from a suitable location (based upon local topography), to observe birds flying over and utilising the site for foraging or roosting. Based on an assessment of the site (and subject to ground truthing), two vantage point locations, one in the south close to Thief's Gill and Pica road (looking north) and one to the north of the Site based along Branthwaite Road (looking south), are likely to be sufficient to effectively cover the site.

In accordance with recommendations provided by Natural England and our professional opinion, each vantage point should be visited twice per calendar month at roughly fortnightly intervals. In order to effectively survey for potential hen harrier roost sites as well as general commuting and foraging behaviour of raptors including hen harrier, the proposed times for the surveys are around dusk and dawn. Dusk surveys will be undertaken from approximately two hours prior to sunset until one hour after, or it becomes too dark to continue the survey. Dawn surveys will be undertaken from around one hour prior to sun rise until two hours after. Where possible these surveys will be undertaken back to back and alternated between dusk and dawn on subsequent visits to effectively cover the survey period.

Having missed the month of October only five months of survey effort are included within this proposal (November to March inclusive; two surveys per month). The vantage point surveys are proposed in addition to the currently commissioned winter bird walk over surveys. Based on the current dataset and level of raptor presence on site recorded to date, we feel that this level of survey effort will be sufficient to provide a robust dataset to support the development application. If, during the course of the surveys outlined here, higher than anticipated levels of raptor activity are recorded on site. In particular if a hen harrier roost site is located then additional surveyed effort is likely to be required."

Please do not hesitate to come back to me if you have any questions.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Senior Associate Ecologist
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]


From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, September 29, 2023 12:07 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: DAS - Dean Moor Solar

Hi [REDACTED]

Apologies for missing the methodology on the form! Thanks for sending through. I've spoken to one of our ornithologist who has provided the following advice:

The methodology proposed for passage and wintering birds is suitable for the majority of bird species however a more specific survey will be required to assess the hen harrier usage of the area, as well as by other raptors. Ideally these surveys should be vantage point surveys every 2 weeks across the full winter season. Dusk surveys will be required usually commencing 45 minutes before sunset until it is dark and should be sited where there is suitable habitat to provide shelter, protection, and food. Bog or wet pastures with scattered scrub and rush are often favoured by hen harrier.

The above advice is outside of our charged advice, however if you require further advice going forward this would need to be under a charged advice contract.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]
Sustainable Development Lead Adviser
Cumbria Area Team
[REDACTED]

<http://www.gov.uk/natural-england>



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 September 2023 16:19
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: DAS - Dean Moor Solar

You don't often get email from jain.adderton@stantec.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi [REDACTED],

Thanks for getting back to me so promptly on this.

I'm not sure if the DAS form allowed you to view the methodology which was summarised in one of the pro-forma boxes – I know some forms like this are prone to glitches. I have extracted the text and pasted into this email below. If you need more information like transect routes, dates, times then I would need to go back to our sub-consultant ornithologist who is more familiar with the Site.

"To determine whether the Site is functionally linked to the Solway Firth SPA, it is intended to undertake a suite of passage and wintering bird surveys. Passage migrants will be surveyed twice in September 2023 and during a single visit in October 2023, while wintering bird surveys will commence in October 2023, with one survey being carried out each month until March 2024. Survey methodology will rely on two transects covering

the northern and southern halves of the site and all target birds will be recorded on each visit. Target species will be SPA qualifying species and include flocks of geese (pink-footed and greylag), waders (golden plover, curlew and snipe), raptors (barn owl, short-eared owl and hen harrier) and flocks of gulls and large flocks of farmland passerines. The purpose of submitting this DAS is to confirm that NE see this as sufficient survey effort to determine if the land is functionally linked to the Solway Firth SPA/ Ramsar and which can be used to inform a sHRA."

Feel free to pass on my details to your ornithologists as I am happy to discuss directly with them if it helps.

Kind regards,

[Redacted]

Senior Associate Ecologist

[Redacted]



From: [Redacted]

Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2023 4:19 PM

To: [Redacted]

Subject: RE: DAS - Dean Moor Solar

Dear [Redacted]

Thank you for your email. Please could you send through your scoping methodology and I will ask one of our ornithologists to have a look for you? Depending on how long the review and advice takes this may not require a DAS contract.

Kind regards

[Redacted]

[Redacted] Development Lead Adviser

[Redacted]

<http://www.gov.uk/natural-england>



From: [Redacted]

Sent: 13 September 2023 09:34

To: SM-NE-Consultations (NE) <consultations@naturalengland.org.uk>

Cc: [Redacted]

Subject: DAS: Dean Moor Solar - Wintering Bird Survey Scope Confirmation.

You don't often get email from [Redacted]

Dear Natural England,

Please find attached a DAS form relating to the development of a solar farm on Dean Moor, Cumbria. Also attached is the indicative development area which also acts as a site location plan. It would be appreciated if we can confirm that our scope for passage and wintering bird surveys is appropriate. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information for you to be able to make your assessment.

Kind regards,

[Redacted]

Senior Associate Ecologist

[REDACTED]
Edjnbugh

Please Note: I do not work friday afternoons.

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Dean Moor Solar: Wintering Bird Flock Sizes
Date: 03 December 2024 17:42:00
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.jpg](#)
[image003.jpg](#)
[image004.jpg](#)

Hi [REDACTED],

Great to finally get to opportunity to chat to you in person earlier this week.

You may recall I mentioned that we have drilled into our winter bird survey data a bit more following the completion of surveys to establish any link to the Solway Firth SPA which lies 5km to the west. Below are the flock counts recorded in each month for the qualifying species – teal are not included here as they were only recorded in a pond off site (a count of 3).

Perhaps you can pass to your ornithologist so they can consider our conclusions presented in the report I sent on 22nd November?

I will also discuss with the project team the possibility of passing over our draft sHRA so that you can see how we have addressed all European Sites, in particular River Derwent and Bassenthwaite Lake SAC and Solway Firth SPA at Screening, and then the former as part of the Appropriate Assessment. I'll get back to you as soon as I can on this.

Any questions then come back to me when you have a moment.

Species	Month	Flock Sizes across both visits per month
Black headed Gull	September	0
	October	0
	November	0
	December	15
	January	0
	February	0
	March	0
Common Gull	September	0
	October	0
	November	2, 7
	December	40, 30
	January	40
	February	0
	March	4, 14
Herring Gull	September	4, 1, 2, 2, 1, 1, 2, 3
	October	1, 2, 6, 3, 1, 2
	November	1, 1, 2, 2, 2, 5, 1, 63, 2, 2, 3, 2, 32, 1, 10, 5, 10, 1, 1, 1, 2,

		2, 2
	December	1, 1, 1, 1, 2, 4, 1, 5, 15, 5, 60, 20, 3, 1, 2, 3, 13, 1, 9, 10
	January	6, 10, 1, 1, 3, 4, 17, 1, 38, 200, 50, 20, 10, 20
	February	1, 1, 3, 1, 3, 2, 8, 10, 20, 5, 2, 5, 10
	March	8, 5, 6, 2, 1, 1, 2, 5, 7, 40, 15, 10, 5
Lapwing	September	0
	October	0
	November	0
	December	0
	January	26
	February	0
	March	0

* All flock sizes are located on site except for herring gull in the month of December a flock of 1 in the north and a flock of 3 in the south were both offsite but not far from the site boundary (no more than 30m). Both records are listed within the table.

Kind regards,

[Redacted Signature]

Senior Associate Ecologist

[Redacted Name]



From: [Redacted]

Sent: 28 November 2024 16:19

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]

Subject: RE: Dean Moor Wintering Bird Flock Sizes: Detail request for SPA qualifying SPP

Hi [Redacted]

Have you had a chance to double check if we can use the same PO for invoicing?

Best,

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Ecologist

BSG Ecology

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 27 November 2024 16:52

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Dean Moor Wintering Bird Flock Sizes: Detail request for SPA qualifying SPP

Hi [REDACTED],

Just had confirmation we are good to proceed with this.

I'll double check if we can use same PO number for Invoicing.

Talk soon.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Senior Associate Ecologist

[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 25 November 2024 17:02

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Dean Moor Wintering Bird Flock Sizes: Detail request for SPA qualifying SPP

Hi [REDACTED],

Just following up on our phone conversation this afternoon. You would like all flocks for each SPA species in the table you provided per month. This will provide you with the total number of each species observed during each month. Instead of a peak count which provides the largest flock observed of each species during the survey season.

Also discussed survey season/ survey no./ survey visit hierarchy as follows: survey season (1 season); survey no. (9 total survey nos.); and survey visit {18 survey visits as 2 visits (one for the north and one for the south) needed for each of the 9 survey nos. throughout the whole survey season). Hopefully that makes sense!

As this is additional work requested, we will bill it on an hourly rate of £105/hour. Please let me know if you agree to our fees by email as soon as possible. I am not sure how long it will take but believe it will be around 3 hours. We will provide it to you this week as soon as

nd

we are able to in time for your December 2 meeting.

Hopefully, I have understood what you are after. If not please let me know as soon as possible.

All the best,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Ecologist

BSG Ecology

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 22 November 2024 11:43

To: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Subject: Dean Moor Wintering Bird Flock Sizes: Detail request for SPA qualifying SPP

Morning [REDACTED];

I hope you are all well.

I have just pulled together the sHRA for Dean Moor and could probably do with a bit of information on the SPA qualifying features so that I can close out the risk of the Site being suggested as Functionally Linked Land. We have a meeting with NE on 2nd December so if there is scope to have the info by then it would be appreciated. Also, if you need to submit an invoice for it, then please let me know.

All I need is the ground-based flock sizes, per month, recorded across the entire site for each of the four species. Admittedly I got a bit confused when reading the detail as it mentioned Peak Count, which could either be the largest single flock, or the sum total of all small flocks recorded on the same day. Also for example, in common gull it mentions that they were recorded on seven occasions in November so not sure if this is one flock of 7 birds, 7 individual birds, or 7 flocks of various sizes. Is peak count of 40 in December and January – 40 birds in each month, or 40 in total and does it comprise one flock or several smaller flocks?

Appreciate as a non-birder and not familiar with the methodology, I may be reading too much into this and getting myself in knots. As such a flock break down should aid my understanding. Essentially the info I need can be added to the table below, individual flocks recorded each month across the two visits can be separated by a comma. Don't worry about teal – they are off site so no detail needed.

Any questions then please do not hesitate to give me a ring.

Species	Month	Flock Sizes across both visits per month
Black headed Gull	September	0
	October	0
	November	0
	December	15
	January	0
	February	0
	March	0
Common Gull		
	September	

	October	
	November	
	December	
	January	
	February	
	March	
Herring Gull	September	
	October	
	November	
	December	
	January	
	February	
	March	
Lapwing	September	
	October	
	November	
	December	
	January	
	February	
	March	

Many thanks,

Kind regards,

[Redacted Signature]

Senior Associate Ecologist

[Redacted Name]

Edinburgh

Please Note: I do not work friday afternoons,

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Dean Moor Solar DCO EN01055: Wintering Bird/HH Survey report
Date: 21 January 2025 17:12:26
Attachments: [~WRD1000.jpg](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.jpg](#)

Hi [REDACTED]

Apologies for the delay in responding to the documents. The bird survey results have been reviewed by our ornithology team now so I will send a response to that and the draft HRA by COP Thursday.

I have asked our Protected Species Team regarding data for dormice and GCN but Natural England unfortunately don't hold any local data for these species. Please contact the [Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre](#).

Thank you for sending through the draft template for the SoCG.

Thank you also for the minutes from the meeting. I have no amendments to make. Our Commercial Services Team have now provided the contracts for both the Statutory and Non-Statutory advice for this project.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sustainable Development Higher Officer
Cumbria Area Team

[REDACTED]

<http://www.gov.uk/natural-england>



From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 21 January 2025 10:22

To: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Dean Moor Solar DCO EN01055: Wintering Bird/HH Survey report

Hi [REDACTED],

Thanks again for your time spent reviewing these reports and for meeting with us last year.

As per Iain's email below, please could you provide an update on when we will receive these reports?

I have attached the minutes and slides (please note that the layouts are still in draft form and should not be considered as the final versions) from our meeting in December. Appreciate this was a while ago, but it would be helpful if you could confirm the minute or make any necessary amendments. Please also find attached the Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) template which the Applicant will seek to agree with Natural England during examination. Closer to submission, the SoCG will be re-shared by the Applicant with a summary of the matters anticipated to be agreed / under discussion.

Please let us know if a further call to discuss the reports shared would be useful,

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Graduate Infrastructure and Environmental Planner

[REDACTED]

Stantec
7 Soho Square
London W1 D 3QB



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From: [REDACTED] >

Sent: 09 January 2025 18:33

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Dean Moor Solar DCO EN01055: Wintering Bird/HH Survey report

Hi [REDACTED]

Happy New Year to you ... I hope you had a good holiday.

I just thought I would follow up on the reports we submitted last year, noting one was in late December so is unlikely to have been read yet, to see if there would be a data we can expect a response. We are hoping to finalise our reports in advance of a page turn in February so any comments/discussion in advance would be welcome.

Perhaps we can arrange a call in the coming weeks?

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Senior Associate Ecologist

[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 November 2024 13:55
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Dean Moor Solar DCO EN01055: Wintering Bird/HH Survey report

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks for your email and apologies for the delay in responding.
Thank you for sending through the bird survey results. I will forward this through to our Ornithology team.
I think we may have a meeting planned for next Monday but I am just awaiting confirmation from Sean at Stantec.

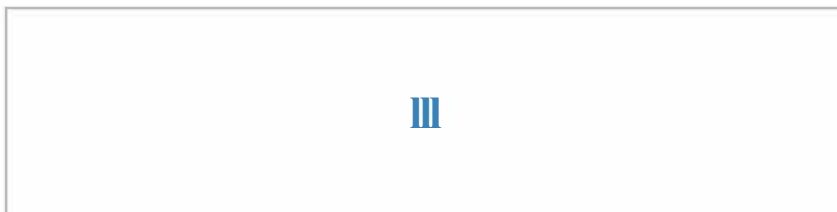
Kind regards

[REDACTED]

- Development Higher Officer
Cumbria Area Team

[REDACTED]

<http://www.gov.uk/natural-environment>



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 22 November 2024 11:54
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: Dean Moor Solar DCO EN01055: Wintering Bird/HH Survey report

Hi [REDACTED],

I hope you are well.

You may recall we were in contact a number of months back on the scope of our wintering bird and hen harrier surveys for the Dean Moor Solar Project near Gilgarran. All our surveys are now complete, and I attach the survey report. No hen harriers were observed, but we did record a few other raptors passing over the Site.

I note in the statutory consultation response that NE were happy to review the results and provide advice. You may also wish to make comment on the results with respect to the sHRA and impacts to the Solway Coast SPA. I am in the process of writing the sHRA so happy to have a discussion in the next week or two if that would be useful, or we can pick that up at our meeting which I believe is currently being arranged.

Kind regards,

[Redacted signature]

Senior Associate Ecologist

[Redacted name]



From: [Redacted]
Sent: 09 November 2023 13:27
To: [Redacted]
Subject: RE: DAS - Dean Moor Solar - Hen Harrier Surveys

Hi [Redacted]

One of our ornithologists has reviewed the scope you provided and advises this methodology will be sufficient subject to the ground truthing of the VP locations to ensure they are optimal.

Kind regards

[Redacted]

- Development Lead Adviser
Cumbria Area Team

[Redacted]

<http://www.gov.uk/natural-environment>

H

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 November 2023 15:07
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: DAS - Dean Moor Solar - Hen Harrier Surveys

Hi [REDACTED],

That would be great - thanks.

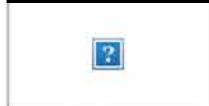
Come back to me when you have a moment.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Senior Associate Ecologist

[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 6, 2023 2:33 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: DAS - Dean Moor Solar - Hen Harrier Surveys

Hi [REDACTED]

I'll run this past one of our ornithologists and will be in touch as soon as possible

Kind Regards

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED] Development Lead Adviser
Cumbria Area Team

[REDACTED]

<http://www.gov.uk/natural-england>

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 November 2023 13:15
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: DAS - Dean Moor Solar - Hen Harrier Surveys

Hi [REDACTED]

We have taken the advice you provided on board and have sought a fee proposal for one of our sub-consultants to undertake a hen harrier survey. Further, we have received comment back from NE as part of PINS Consultation which has requested we undertake a desk study and decide on a suitable approach thereafter, and if needed.

To that end, and in line with our request for comment on our passage and migrant waterfowl survey methodology, we would be wondering if your ornithologist would be happy to comment on our hen harrier survey methodology? If they are, would this fall within the charged advice service, or as per below, it would just be a statement that would agree with what we are proposing.

Great if you can advise or perhaps put me in touch with your ornithologist who may be able to take a quick look at it? Given the importance of the project I want to be certain that NE are content with our approach prior to surveys commencing.

The methodology is presented here:

"The most suitable and efficient form of survey in this instance is Vantage Point (VP). This survey involves a three hour watch using binoculars and spotting scope from a suitable location (based upon local topography), to observe birds flying over and utilising the site for foraging or roosting. Based on an assessment of the site (and subject to ground truthing), two vantage point locations, one in the south close to Thief's Gill and Pica road (looking north) and one to the north of the Site based along Branthwaite Road (looking south), are likely to be sufficient to effectively cover the site.

In accordance with recommendations provided by Natural England and our professional opinion, each vantage point should be visited twice per calendar month at roughly fortnightly intervals. In order to effectively survey for potential hen harrier roost sites as well as general commuting and foraging behaviour of raptors including hen harrier, the proposed times for the surveys are around dusk and dawn. Dusk surveys will be undertaken from approximately two hours prior to sunset until one hour after, or it becomes too dark to continue the survey. Dawn surveys will be undertaken from around one hour prior to sun rise until two hours after. Where possible these surveys will be undertaken back to back and alternated between dusk and dawn on subsequent visits to effectively cover the survey period.

Having missed the month of October only five months of survey effort are included within this proposal (November to March inclusive; two surveys per month). The vantage point surveys are

proposed in addition to the currently commissioned winter bird walk over surveys. Based on the current dataset and level of raptor presence on site recorded to date, we feel that this level of survey effort will be sufficient to provide a robust dataset to support the development application. If, during the course of the surveys outlined here, higher than anticipated levels of raptor activity are recorded on site. In particular if a hen harrier roost site is located then additional surveyed effort is likely to be required."

Please do not hesitate to come back to me if you have any questions.

Kind regards,

[Redacted Signature]

Senior Associate Ecologist

[Redacted Name]



From: [Redacted]

Sent: Friday, September 29, 2023 12:07 PM

To: [Redacted]

Subject: RE: DAS - Dean Moor Solar

Hi [Redacted]

Apologies for missing the methodology on the form! Thanks for sending through. I've spoken to one of our ornithologist who has provided the following advice:

The methodology proposed for passage and wintering birds is suitable for the majority of bird species however a more specific survey will be required to assess the hen harrier usage of the area, as well as by other raptors. Ideally these surveys should be vantage point surveys every 2 weeks across the full winter season. Dusk surveys will be required usually commencing 45 minutes before sunset until it is dark and should be sited where there is suitable habitat to provide shelter, protection, and food. Bog or wet pastures with scattered scrub and rush are often favoured by hen harrier.

The above advice is outside of our charged advice, however if you require further advice going forward this would need to be under a charged advice contract.

Kind regards

[Redacted Signature]

- Development Lead Adviser
Cumbria Area Team

[REDACTED]

<http://www.gov.uk/natural-england>



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 September 2023 16:19
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: DAS - Dean Moor Solar

You don't often get email from jain.adderton@stantec.com. [Learn why this is important](#).

Hi.,

Thanks for getting back to me so promptly on this.

I'm not sure if the DAS form allowed you to view the methodology which was summarised in one of the pro-forma boxes - I know some forms like this are prone to glitches. I have extracted the text and pasted into this email below. If you need more information like transect routes, dates, times then I would need to go back to our sub-consultant ornithologist who is more familiar with the Site.

*"To determine whether the Site is functionally linked to the Solway Firth ~~SPA~~, it is intended to undertake a suite of passage and wintering bird surveys. Passage migrants will be surveyed twice in September 2023 and during a single visit in October 2023, while wintering bird surveys will commence in October 2023, with one survey being carried out each month until March 2024. Survey methodology will rely on two transects covering the northern and southern halves of the site and all target birds will be recorded on each visit. Target species will be ~~SPA~~ qualifying species and include flocks of geese (pink-footed and greylag), waders (golden plover, curlew and snipe), raptors (barn owl, short-eared owl and hen harrier) and flocks of gulls and large flocks of farmland passerines. The purpose of submitting this **DAS** is to confirm that NE see this as sufficient survey effort to determine if the land is functionally linked to the Solway Firth ~~SPA~~/ Ramsar and which can be used to inform a sHRA."*

Feel free to pass on my details to your ornithologists as I am happy to discuss directly with them if it helps.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]
Senior Associate Ecologist

[REDACTED]

B

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2023 4:19 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: DAS - Dean Moor Solar

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email. Please could you send through your scoping methodology and I will ask one of our ornithologists to have a look for you? Depending on how long the review and advice takes this may not require a DAS contract.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED] Development Lead Adviser
Cumbria Area Team

[REDACTED]

<http://www.gov.uk/naturalengland>



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 September 2023 09:34
To: SM-NE-Consultations (NE) <consultations@naturalengland.org.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: DAS: Dean Moor Solar - Wintering Bird Survey Scope Confirmation.

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]
Dear Natural England,

Please find attached a DAS form relating to the development of a solar farm on Dean Moor, Cumbria. Also attached is the indicative development area which also acts as a site location plan. It would be appreciated if we can confirm that our scope for passage and wintering bird surveys is appropriate.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information for you to be able to make your assessment.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Senior Associate Ecologist



Edinburgh

Please Note: I do not work Friday afternoons.

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Dean Moor Solar Natural England Update Meeting

Project/File: 3461
 Date/Time: 2 December 2024 / 12pm
 Location: MS Teams
 Attendees: Natural England (NE): (KB);
 IB Vogt (IBV): (RJ);
 Stantec: (JL), (NS), (IA); (SC).

Dean Moor Solar Natural England Update Meeting		
Agenda		Action
Project Update (Stantec) (JL)		
1.	Programme Update The layout of the Proposed Development has been refined in response to feedback received during the statutory consultation period. The Environmental Statement is currently being prepared for submission in late February 2025.	
2.	Statutory Consultation Overview Engagement is ongoing with the following consultees: include: Cumberland Council; the Lake District National Park Authority; the Environment Agency; Historic England; Natural England; Cumbria Wildlife Trust; Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service; Dean and Distington Parish Councils; and the Coal Authority. Matters raised and the Applicant's response will be logged in the Environmental Statement and in an appendix to the Consultation Report.	
Natural England Statutory Consultation Response (Stantec) (IA)		
3.	Natural England raised the following matters (selected as key points for discussion from the Section 42 Response): <u>Shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment</u> NE recommended a Shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment (SHRA) (and surveys needed to support) is prepared as the Site is 6km upstream of the River Marron (part of the River Derwent and Bassenthwaite Lake SAC), and may also need to assess impacts on Solway Firth SPA birds, depending on surveys, as well as impacts to otters (as designated features of the SAC).	

[illegible]

Dean Moor Solar Natural England Update Meeting		
Agenda		Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Outline Soil Management Plan is being submitted with the application. Before decommissioning, a final SMP will sit under a Decommissioning Management Plan to be secured by DCO Requirement and would include an appropriate reinstatement scheme. A peat survey has been conducted and potential locations for peat identified. These have been avoided within the design of the layout of the Proposed Development through defined buffers. A Peat Survey Report will be submitted with the application. Appropriate measures controlling works in proximity to peat will be included in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). <p>Discussion of timetable for review of documents such as the Soil Management Plan.</p> <p>KB: Confirmed review of documents on submission is acceptable and that the update has been useful.</p>	
Updates to the Proposed Development following Statutory Consultation		
4.	<p>The Parameter Plan has been developed following statutory consultation and aligns with the Works Plans which controls where development can take place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor adjustments to Order Limits Removal of the Battery Energy Storage System; Updated area defined for Grid Connection Infrastructure; Identified potential locations of Construction Compounds; Expanded areas for landscape screening and ecological enhancement and updated detail on buffer zones; and Further detail on perimeter fencing and mammal gaps. <p>The outline Landscape Ecological Management Plan (OLEMP) is being developed and will be updated into a detailed LEMP as a DCO Requirement. An updated Landscape Strategy Plan has been produced with additional detail about ecological / landscape enhancements. An Outline Operational Management</p>	<p>Stantec to share a comparison of the current and previous iterations of the layout.</p>

Dean Moor Solar Natural England Update Meeting		
Agenda		Action
	<p>Plan will be submitted which will set out measures to manage Sustainable Drainage Measures and repairs / maintenance works.</p> <p>Discussion of the layout of the Parameter Plan shown on screen, which shows the absolute worst-case extent of solar arrays. The final arrangement of solar arrays and spacing between rows will be confirmed at the detailed design stage. The management plans allow for any gaps to be enhanced through vegetation planting.</p> <p>There are existing watercourse crossing points which may be utilised for improving the culverts on-site, such as de-silting (subject to Ordinary Watercourse Consent).</p>	
Survey Results and Assessment Overview		
5.	<p><u>Phase 2 Surveys</u> Great Crested Newt – eDNA and traditional surveys have been undertaken on two ponds within the Site. Request for any further information on other ponds from Natural England if available.</p> <p>Static bat detector surveys – The surveys were conducted over five months. Six species of bat were recorded on the Site. No buildings suitable for bat roosts are located within the Site. Trees which may be used were located along the edge of Gilgarran Road – no trees with bat roost potential were within the Site.</p> <p><u>Wintering Birds</u> 67 species of wintering birds are recorded within the Site, three of these being Schedule 1 species. SPA species have been recorded within the Site but not in great numbers. Most abundant SPA species was herring gull.</p> <p><u>Hen Harrier</u> – No hen harriers have been observed.</p> <p><u>Shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment</u> The SHRA is being drafted.</p> <p>KB: The local ecologist could provide more specific advice on general protected species.</p>	<p>NE to provide further information on GCN, if available.</p> <p>sHRA to be sent to NE once draft completed.</p>
Mitigation and Enhancement (Stantec) (JL/IA) (Landscape Strategy Plan shared on screen)		
6.	<p>Green infrastructure and ecological enhancement areas have been expanded across the Site. The OLEMP will maintain existing features.</p>	


Dean Moor Solar Natural England Update Meeting		
Agenda		Action
	<p>Engagement is ongoing with Cumbria Wildlife Trust and their ecologist about enhancements to Dean Moor County Wildlife Site. The majority of the CWS (designated for purple moor grass and rush pastures) is reserved for ecological improvements.</p> <p>The Applicant intends to improve woodland on the escarpment within the south of the Site. Other areas of woodland are proposed in the Site for wildlife corridors.</p> <p>Some areas are reserved solely for green infrastructure improvements, other areas will include green infrastructure as well as solar arrays. Grazing will be retained for maintenance purposes and will be led by a requirement to meet the BNG commitments. Grazing is being used for land management, as opposed to agriculture, as informed by NE's guidance on carbon sequestration in soil.</p> <p>The LEMP will be regularly updated to define objectives for the next five years. Monitoring will be related back to livestock units and whether grazing needs to be increased or decreased. An ecologist will be involved to advise where / when sheep graze.</p> <p><u>Lostrigg Solar DCO</u> The Applicant has met regularly with Lostrigg Solar DCO (adjacent to north of Site). There may be some cumulative benefit if they are also proposing watercourse improvements.</p> <p>KB raised that if Lostrigg Solar have a significant number of gulls on the Site it might tip the HRA over the edge.</p> <p>IA: The qualifying feature of the SPA was dropped out at screening so wouldn't go into Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p><u>Biodiversity Net Gain</u> The Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment is based on the worst case layout in the Parameter Plan / Works Plans and assumes the species diversity under solar array is all poor quality.</p> <p>The main statutory Defra BNG calculator will be used.</p> <p>Existing hedgerows will also be enhanced. There won't be any severance of hedgerows but may be widening existing gaps for access.</p>	<p>IA to engage further with Lostrigg Solar DCO on the wintering bird surveys.</p>

Dean Moor Solar Natural England Update Meeting		
Agenda		Action
	<p>KB: Raised that anything that needs to be reinstated such as construction compounds does not need to be considered in the BNG metric.</p> <p><u>Information boards</u> Permissive paths are proposed as well as information boards / signage covering renewable energy and ecology / biodiversity.</p>	
Statement of Common Ground		
7.	<p>The Applicant proposes to prepare a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) with Natural England which would be a live document updated during the Examination period.</p> <p>The SoCG will outline the matters which have been agreed and any which are still under discussion.</p> <p>Agreed that there is unlikely to be any need for further non-statutory engagement prior to submission other than the further information regarding dormice discussed.</p> <p>These meeting minutes may be used to inform the SoCGs during the examination phase. Regular meetings will be set up with NE during examination.</p> <p>KB: There does not seem to be major issues and there are lots of options for enhancements.</p>	<p>The Applicant and Natural England to prepare a SoCG after submission during the examination phase.</p> <p>Applicant to share SoCG template with NE.</p> <p>NE to send contracts for statutory engagement to Applicant.</p>
AOB		
8.		Applicant to share presentation slides with NE.

Dean Moor Solar Farm – Cumbria Wildlife Trust Meeting

Date/Time: 02 May 2024 / 13:30 – 14:30
 Location: MS Teams
 Attendees: Stantec: JL (Planning), IA (Ecology)
 IBV: RJ (Client)
 Cumbria Wildlife Trust: GJP, ES-R

Dean Moor Solar Cumbria Wildlife Trust Meeting		
Agenda		Action
Stantec (JL)		
1.	Introduction to the Project and the DCO Programme. The Statutory consultation on Dean Moor Solar Farm is ongoing. The Project involves an application for a Development Consent Order, which is determined by the Secretary of State, rather than by the Local Planning Authority. The Project overlaps Dean Moor County Wildlife Site (CWS), and for this reason CWT will be key stakeholders within the application determination process. The Project is looking to make significant BNG improvements, well in excess of 10%, and is focussing much of these within the CWS. <u>Consultation Documents</u> The consultation documents are available on the project's website: Documents — Dean Moor Solar Farm	
2.	CWT's role within the consultation The Statutory consultation formally concluded on the 26 th April. However, the project is providing targeted extensions to the 16 th May for some consultees. The Project is very keen to involve CWT in its plans, and would appreciate a response to the consultation before this date. Once the consultation has concluded we will be working towards submission of our application to the Planning Inspectorate towards the end of 2024. And the Examination would take place	CWT to respond to Statutory consultation by the 16 th of May. When CWT presents its response to the Statutory consultation, it would be appreciated if these are based on the proposals which are presented within the PEIR, rather than the next stage of our design which was shared during this meeting.

Dean Moor Solar Cumbria Wildlife Trust Meeting		
Agenda		Action
	<p>next year, with a decision expected in late in 2025. The earliest the project would commence construction would be 2026/7.</p>  <p>The Statutory consultation is on Concept Layout, and Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR), which is effectively a draft EIA. Iain Adderton has shared a copy of the PEIR with CWT and is keen for CWT to contribute to the Project's proposals which will be developed further before submission. The Project team are keen to get CWTs input on our plans for biodiversity enhancements within the Site. The full extent of these plans has not been presented within the PEIR.</p> <p>The version of the design which we are consulting on is a preliminary design, and has maximised the solar development area within the layout (including overlapping areas of the CWS). This approach is to draw out feedback from key stakeholders within the process to inform the next stage of design. In CWTs case, we are interested in whether it would be possible to use some areas of the CWS for solar arrays, while making enhancements to other areas of the CWS as part of the Biodiversity Net Gain enhancements which are proposed. The Concept Layout indicates solar arrays could be sited in two areas to the north of the escarpment on site. At the northern extent of the Dean Moor CWS.</p>	

Dean Moor Solar Cumbria Wildlife Trust Meeting		
Agenda		Action
Cumbria Wildlife Trust (CWT) GJP		
3.	PEIR Survey results Discussed the ecological survey results reported within the Preliminary Environmental Information Report.	
4.	CWT's role Keen that Project assess and explain the construction and decommissioning effects on the County Wildlife Site. CWT would expect to provide input to the development of the CEMP and DEMP which will describe these arrangements.	The Project will be looking to consult CWT to inform the development of these plans.
5.	Status and designation of CWS Likely that Dean Moor CWS (reference A-NY02-13) was designated in 1980s following Phase 1 habitat survey. The boundary of the CWS is considerably larger than the areas of purple moor grass and mire identified via the NVC surveys as part of the PEIR. The vast majority of the site is currently intensively grazed sheep pasture. The Phase 1 habitat survey identified purple moor grass and mire habitat within the CWS over a wider area however, it is possible there may have been changes to the management regime since the 1980s which have affected the presence of purple moor grass and other more valuable habitats within the site.	
6.	Potential siting of solar arrays within CWS CWT is considering the proposals to locate solar arrays within the CWS. The mitigation hierarchy would, as a first step, indicate that impacts on the CWS from development should be avoided, including during the construction and decommissioning phases of the development. However, subject to a more detailed consideration of the proposals, CWT acknowledge that development within the CWT, coupled with other BNG enhancements may enable improvements to the CWS relative to the current use of the land (intensively grazed).	
7.	CWT's general aspirations for the CWS CWT is looking at the Project as an opportunity for delivering enhancement within the CWS. CWT would be interested in seeing a reduction in grazing within the site, and improvements to the diversity of grassland, freshwater and wetland habitats within the Site.	This is something which the project is absolutely in alignment with CWT on.

Dean Moor Solar Cumbria Wildlife Trust Meeting		
Agenda		Action
Stantec – Iain Adderton – Summary of PEIR proposals		
8.	<p>Summary of proposals presented within the PEIR</p> <p>Iain described the general proposals for the Site as presented within the Concept Layout, but also referencing the internal landscape plans which are being prepared (and are not part of the consultation).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retaining existing areas of plantation woodland, creating new blocks of woodland; • Enhancement to existing hedgerows and establishing new hedgerows; • Removing gorse; • Planting (reeds/ enhanced tree and shrub planting) within the Thief Gill Gully; • Avoiding sheep and solar arrays (and construction within the watercourses and gullies (which are too steep in any case); • Reduced grazing across the Site; • Improving species mix in grassland. Possible scarification to improve conditions prior to seeding; • Establishing and improving existing ponds, particularly pond adjacent to the existing wind turbines; • Improving existing east / west wildlife corridors featuring woodland and scrub along steep escarpment in area C (south of Site, within CWS) linking with existing woodland outside the Site; • Establishing new north south corridors along existing watercourses in Area C (including the Thief Gill). • Avoiding existing areas of peat (to be informed by survey). We discussed potential restoration of this area. This is not going to be pursued at present but CWT stressed the importance of understanding the full extent of and limiting damage to peat soils during this project. Cumbria Peat Partnership can be consulted for further advice if required. 	<p>Project to share outline Grazing Management Plan with CWT prior to the submission of the DCO application in the winter of 2024.</p> <p>A full Grazing Management Plan would then be agreed and produced as a Requirement prior to construction.</p>
9.	<p>Grazing Management Arrangements</p> <p>The Project are preparing a Grazing Management Plan, and will be considering how to enhance purple moor grass within (and possibly outside of) the CWS, subject to suitable conditions being present.</p>	

Dean Moor Solar Cumbria Wildlife Trust Meeting		
Agenda		Action
10.	CWT Cattle grazing may be preferred to sheep grazing, in terms of managing the grassland within the solar farm and CWS.	
11.	IBV – RJ We acknowledge that Cattle Grazing has advantages, relative to sheep, in terms of improving grassland. However, it does not work with the solar panels (cows can't graze underneath solar arrays, unlike sheep). Cattle grazing is an option which we are considering outside of the areas where solar panels would be present, including within the CWS, but it is not at the forefront of the project plan at present. We would be controlling sheep grazing within the CWS. The priority would be BNG. This would be purely for maintenance purposes, and sheep would not be on there for any extended periods, and would avoid certain times of the year.	
CWT's Role in the Process		
12.	CWT Interested in what CWT's role in the proposals would be going forward. CWT have experience of grassland restoration schemes elsewhere in Cumbria and could provide advice to the project. CWT would provide their rates for this service.	Project to consider engaging CWTs service when preparing and implementing grassland restoration arrangement post consent
13.	Stantec We would consider engaging with such a service. It may be more appropriate to discuss the practical arrangements post consent, where the detailed arrangements are being worked out prior to construction. The Project would be required (by a DCO Requirement) to submit a final Grazing Management Plan and Landscape and Environmental Management Plan (LEMP) prior to commencing construction. CWT may be a named party for Cumberland Council to consult with approving these documents.	
Water Quality Improvements		
14.	Stantec We are considering water quality impacts from the Project, as it is something Cumberland Council have identified as a policy objective. Although the project is not causing water quality	

Dean Moor Solar Cumbria Wildlife Trust Meeting		
Agenda		Action
	<p>issues, it will result in an improvement in water quality due to a decrease in the intensity of sheep farming within the Site.</p> <p>The Project does not anticipate that any improvements to water quality through reduced grazing or intercepting nutrients within the Site would be significant at a county or regional level, but is something the project is exploring in conjunction with other BNG improvements it is making on site.</p>	
15.	<p>CWT</p> <p>CWT advise that you engage with The West Cumbria Rivers Trust who would be able to advise on suitable enhancements on Site. They will also be able to advise on effective monitoring of water quality. This would need to be initially collected pre-construction phase to create an accurate baseline and systematically for a period as advised by WCRT. Collecting this data would provide evidence of water quality change.</p>	
Community Benefits Fund		
16.	<p>Community Benefits Fund: IBV (Jonathan on Rachel's behalf)</p> <p>The Project is establishing a community benefit fund and is keen to work with local partner organisations to deliver off site enhancements which align with the project and company values, particularly in the ecological space. If there are such projects which CWT wish to discuss, we would appreciate further engagement with CWT on this going forward.</p> <p>For clarity, any offsite enhancements would not be taken into consideration as part of the application for the Project.</p>	Project to engage with CWT on other opportunities.

Dean Moor Solar Farm – Cumbria Wildlife Trust Project Update Meeting

Date/Time: 31 January 2025 / 9:00 – 10:00
 Location: MS Teams
 Attendees: Stantec: JL (Planning), IA (Ecology), SC (Planning)
 Cumbria Wildlife Trust (CWT): GJP, ES-R

Dean Moor Solar Cumbria Wildlife Trust Meeting		
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Programme Update (Stantec)		
1.	Introduction to the Project and the DCO Programme. Application submission expected in late March. The application is being refined for submission.	
CWT Statutory Consultation Response (Stantec)		
2.	The CWT raised the following matters within the statutory consultation response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential for the Proposed Development to lead to negative impacts on the designation of features of the Dean Moor CWS during construction and decommissioning. • Requested the CWS being clearly marked and appropriate stand-off distances applied. • Requested best practice measures near watercourses during construction and decommissioning to mitigate pollution, particularly from high rainfall. • Stated preference for the CWS to not be utilised for solar arrays, and that areas used are restricted to those currently grazed as intensive pasture, and that high value habitats are significantly buffered from the development. • Highlighted the avoidance of peat as a necessary measure • The CWT expressed support for the intention to use the CWS for biodiversity net gain; • Further supported the review of land management practices for the CWS including the existing grazing regime to deliver 	

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	<p>biodiversity benefits. CWT would be happy to input into restoration / grazing management plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requested the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retention of existing areas of woodland and scrub and creation of new woodland and scrub wherever possible. Enhancement to existing hedgerows and establishing new hedgerows. Planting (reeds/enhanced tree and shrub planting) within the Thief Gill Gully. Avoiding sheep and solar arrays and construction within the watercourses and gullies. Appropriate grazing across the Site to increase species-richness of existing grassland. Establishing and improving existing ponds. Increasing connectivity of habitats across the Site with those outside the Site to create habitat corridors. 	
The Proposed Development and Biodiversity Proposals (Stantec)		
3.	<p>The Proposed Development (with reference to Figure 3.4 – Parameter Plan shown on screen)</p> <p>JL: Key changes to the Proposed Development from the statutory consultation period include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The removal of the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS); Updated area of Grid Connection Infrastructure; Identified locations of construction compounds (none of which are in proximity to the CWS); Expanded areas of landscape screening / ecological enhancements. <p>As a DCO application, the principle is to outline the ‘Work Areas’ which infrastructure can be located within, but not outside of, and not details of exact locations / layout, which will be done at the detailed design stage.</p>	
4.	<p>Discussion of the County Wildlife Site in relation to the Parameter Plan</p> <p>IA: Solar panels are located within two areas within the north of the County Wildlife Site (CWS). The majority of the CWS will be dedicated to biodiversity enhancement. Acid grassland surrounding Thief Gill will be retained.</p>	

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	<p>Discussion of the watercourse crossings, which are marked on the Parameter Plan as they will potentially be upgraded to ensure access across the Site, with a 10m buffer from these works and Ordinary Watercourse Consent (OWC) submitted to the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).</p> <p>Discussion of the fact that the existing access to the south of Area C will not be utilised. CWT raised whether existing internal access tracks will be upgraded. The DCO will provide the option of works to access tracks within the CWS with permeable surfacing for maintenance reasons, which will be reviewed by the Council's ecologist.</p> <p>Watercourse crossings will not be fenced off to ensure species movement is not limited along the corridor that will be created. Riparian planting will be included, with vegetation along Thief Gill currently very limited.</p> <p>GJP: From anecdotal evidence, management has led to the deterioration of the quality of the CWS.</p>	
5.	<p>Biodiversity Net Gain Proposals across the Site (Stantec)</p> <p>The following biodiversity enhancements are proposed:</p> <p>The BNG has been calculated in a conservative way which what can realistically be delivered. AI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hedgerows will be retained, with the intention to enhance all to a 'good' state, with some currently poor and moderate. Buffers will ensure sheep are kept away from hedgerow. Fencing placement will be confirmed at detailed design and reviewed to achieve the BNG targets. An outline Grazing Management Plan will be included at submission. GJP raised that electric fencing is preferred as opposed to double fencing and supports the use of grazing for grassland management. The pond on-site will be maintained and screened by the willow. Mixed woodland planting and improvements to existing broadleaved woodland. The existing coniferous forest will be retained but not improved as it is a plantation currently used by the landowner for biomass; Species-rich grassland planting as an improvement from the current modified grassland; 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main habitat ONG (to reflect lowlands) • Single step in enhancement (poor>moderate; moderate>good). 	
6.	<p>Biodiversity Net Gain Proposals within the CWS (Stantec)</p> <p>IA: There will be a focus on reverting back to purple moorgrass / rush pasture communities within the CWS, with the ambition of restoring the features that it is designated for.</p> <p>The only acid grassland seems to be along Thief Gill. The soil chemistry may have changed which might make acid grassland hard to achieve. There is a potential opportunity to create lowland acid grassland in along streams.</p>	
7.	<p>Biodiversity Net Gain Calculation (Stantec)</p> <p>IA: The anticipated BNG score is 116% for habitats, 130% for hedgerows.</p> <p>Engineering works on watercourses are not proposed. A 10m buffer from the centre of the watercourse to account for the steep gullies on their boundaries, which should also cover 8m from the edges of the watercourse. However, the BNG metric does not allow for any percentage uplift for watercourses, although there will be planting. IA requests advice from the CWT on achieving watercourse BNG uplift.</p> <p>GJP – Pragmatically, the best thing to do is to have a buffer with controlled sheep grazing to manage the habitat and ensure planting isn't wasted through over-grazing.</p>	CWT to consider watercourse uplift.
8.	<p>Discussion of Wet Acid Grassland Creation and Drainage</p> <p>GJP: A possible cause of the decreasing quality of the CWS is the change in drainage. The Applicant might consider re-wetting the Site which could make it easier to establish rush pasture.</p> <p>ESR: There is a possibility that Sitka Spruce will encroach onto wet acid grassland if it is a wet Site, so this may need to be considered.</p> <p>IA: To summarise, the existing conifers seem to be ok to keep, with the main consideration being drainage and choosing a suitable seed mix.</p> <p>GJP: It would be useful to understand the historic location of acid grassland within the Site, and a species list if available. Pragmatically, if there is anything that can be done to improve</p>	CWT to check their records of old maps of the CWS and where acid grassland has historically been located to share with Stantec subject to checking for GDPR considerations.

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	species richness and soils within the CWS and move towards less intensive management, this will be beneficial.	
9.	Discussion of Decommissioning JL: Development consent is sought for a 40-year period, and there will be a legal requirement to decommission at the end of this period. The BNG has been calculated in a conservative way which what can realistically be delivered. IA: We have considered the management of biodiversity within a 30-year period. GJP: Agree that the focus is what is realistically achievable within 40 years. ESR: It makes sense the methodology for submission is to focus on areas of the Site which are realistic, rather than finding out that the soils / drainage are not fit for the BNG proposals. Species-rich acid grassland is rare so CWT support the opportunity for its creation, recognising that this is potentially impractical depending on the soil condition.	
Status of the CWS		
10.	County Wildlife Site GJP: When the CWS is next surveyed, it could be potentially de-selected if its quality has significantly deteriorated. The Proposed Development represents an opportunity for improvement, even if perfect acid grassland may not be achievable. JL: The Applicant is absolutely committed to maintaining the status of the CWS.	
Maintenance and Monitoring		
11.	Maintenance and Monitoring ESR: It is encouraging that there will be ongoing monitoring. It would be good for any data to be shared with the CWT in terms of understanding the status of the CWS. JL: Understood, the Applicant sees this as an ongoing relationship.	
Permissive Paths		
12.	JL: Two permissive paths are proposed. One provides access into the CWS and the Stone Circle and Round Cairn. Signage is	

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	<p>being considered next to this Scheduled Monument. There could be an opportunity to explain the significance of the CWS.</p> <p>GWT: This could be a good opportunity to discuss why the CWS has been designated.</p>	
Peat		
13.	<p>The CWT raise potential impacts on peat. No solar or buildings are proposed in areas of peat and buffer areas have been established from identified locations of peat from the Peat Survey.</p> <p>GJP: As long as peat stays in the ground and there is no extracting / handling then this is acceptable.</p> <p>ESR: Given that it looks like there is peat within the CWS, we recommend re-wetting the land and would welcome any outline of a methodology for this work</p>	Stantec to consider drainage / re-wetting methodology for CWS.
Statement of Common Ground		
14.	<p>The Applicant intends to prepare a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) with the CWT during the Examination period (once the application has been submitted).</p> <p>The document will be live and updated throughout Examination as necessary.</p> <p>A potential item of disagreement is the placement of panels within the CWS.</p> <p>GJP: The CWT are prepared to adopt a pragmatic approach to this, as it is not the case that panels are proposed in high-quality habitat. The Proposed Development represents an opportunity for the majority of the CWS to be improved in biodiversity quality.</p>	
Review of documents		
15.	<p>Given the tight timescales prior to submission, it is unlikely that the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan and Biodiversity Net Gain Report can be shared with sufficient time for the Applicant to review feedback. These documents will be submitted for the CWT to review. Once consent has been secured, there will be more certainty to have further discussions with the landowner regarding drainage, etc.</p>	