

# HILPERTON PARISH COUNCIL RESPONSE TO PLANNING APPLICATION PL/2021/03061 - AGRICULTURAL FIELDS WEST OF WHADDON FARM

1. Hilpertont Parish Council objects to Application PL/2021/03061 unless the application is amended to include proposals to meet the conditions set out below. These conditions are to be considered as enduring requirements for the duration of the installation.

## Proposed conditions

2. **Issue one – Application landscape and visual impact assessment (ALVIA).** The claims set out in the Applicants ALVIA (pages 15 - 34), which are used to support the application, would be cumulatively critical to any granting of the application.

**Condition:** Each individual claim must form a condition of any grant of planning permission.

3. **Issue two – Maintenance/ management of hedgerows.** On page 7, section 3.21 of the ALVIA, reference is made to 'low hedges'. The information presented is incorrect, especially when viewed over time. To maximise ecological value and landscape enhancement, hedgerows should be only trimmed, if cut at all, in January / February, and then on a three year cycle. This is the traditional cycle of local hedge management for the subject area, where many hedges still bear the evidence of hedge-laying. In recent years the practice of cutting back hedges lower than is necessary with mechanical flails, usually in September, has become commonplace. This has severe, long-term impact on both the landscape and the. Low cut hedges will not meet the claims set out in the ALVIA for landscape impact mitigation and this failure to meet mitigations will be further exacerbated by seasonality.

**Condition:** A condition should be placed on any planning consent to the affect that all hedges must be maintained, for the full duration of any installation, on the following basis:

- a. All hedges must be planted, replanted or gapped-up in double rows to meet DEFRA ELMS requirements,
- b. be maintained to have a minimum Winter-months height of two metres,
- c. have a minimum Winter-months width of two metres, and,
- d. be cut in January to February only and no more than once every three years.

4. **Issue three – New plantings.** In order to mitigate impact on the landscape in the short and medium term, along with the need to maximise environmental benefits, far greater use should be made of planting broad-leaved woodland around the periphery of any proposed development. This would meet the strategic objectives under LCA 81 and LCA C2 of 'expanding the area and number of small broadleaved woodlands' and maintaining the 'overall rural nature of the area'.

**Condition:** A condition should be placed on the current planning consent that requires habitat enhancement and landscape impact mitigation through the planting of broadleaf native woodland strips with a minimum of 25 metres depth, that is to be maintained as woodland for the duration of the installation, along the entirety of the

Northern, Eastern and Southern sides of the installation.

**5. Issue four – Access via Whaddon Lane and increased risk to road users.**

Whaddon Lane is a single-track road with no segregation of foot and vehicular traffic. There are numerous hazards throughout the length of the road and the increase resulting from site traffic, especially heavy goods vehicles during the construction phases, will pose a further significant threat to road users, both pedestrian and vehicular. Currently, there is no proposed mitigation of this risk. Regular users of Whaddon Lane are already concerned about this risk, particularly to pedestrians, cyclists, horses and their riders, and the potential for a serious accident. An area of real concern is the double blind bend immediately to the South of the proposed access point, which presents a notable hazard.

6. A permanent solution to this risk would be for the hedge on both sides of the road, through the double blind-bend, to be relocated back from the road, leaving a clear line of sight through the double blind-bend without loss of hedgerow cover; this would require cooperation from landowners. Given the proposed timescale for the installation, it is unlikely that these measures could be completed in time for the Development installation works and, therefore, appropriate traffic management procedures should be employed to ensure the safety of all road users.

**Conditions:** To mitigate the risk to road users from site traffic along Whaddon Lane, the following conditions must be met:

- a. Prior to any approval of the application, the applicant is required to produce a proposal for the enhancement of lines of sight through the double blind bend which, at the same time, will detail how any removal of hedging is to be mitigated, i.e., by the planting of new hedging back from the road thereby enhancing the environmental and visual appearance of the double-bend, and increasing safety for road users through clear lines of sight,
- b. if such proposal is acceptable and approval of the application is granted, a condition should be placed on the planning consent requiring the full implementation of the proposal within 12 months from the start of the Development works.