



effect upon the associated woodland flora and fauna. Therefore, in order to support the supposition that any impacts arising from mineral operations upon dormice (if present) would fall below a threshold considered likely to require derogation licence, I believe that appropriate mitigation measures to control effects of mineral working to acceptable levels of impact will be required.

Proposed mitigation pertinent to the woodland areas includes a 10m fenced stand off area (subject to recent discussions), phased operations including restoration of adjacent habitat in an early developmental phase, minimising material drop heights, and a number of other minor measures intended to suppress fugitive dust emission at origin, transport and on handling of materials, together with a dust monitoring programme. The development of a proposed Dust Mitigation Strategy (DMS) will give the Minerals Planning Authority assurance these measures will be implemented.

These measures, including the 10m stand off zone protecting woodland, are broadly acceptable, albeit a narrower stand off would be secured in comparison to that required to protect ancient woodland. I therefore strongly encourage that the DMS also ensures that fencing protecting stand off zones around Wolverley Lodge and Reservoir Wood incorporate a semi permeable barrier, such as fine gauge netting, as a further best practice measure to reduce or eliminate fugitive dust deposition on both the two woodlands and their grassy stand off zones.

Doing so would provide several benefits: it will contribute in protecting the ecological functionality of the 10m grassy buffer zone, rather than compromising condition of this habitat as a 'sacrificial' buffer zone; dust netting would also contribute in the interception of light and to a lesser degree noise on the woodland's edge; and by doing so will provide the MPA with sufficient confidence that adverse effects of flora and fauna within the woodland will be minimised to acceptable and non significant levels. The regular monitoring programmes proposed should include Reservoir Wood and Wolverley Lodge as monitored ecological receptors, and provide clear thresholds for intervention measures if further control of fugitive dust, noise and/or light pollution is subsequently identified as being required. Given the ten year period of site operation and restoration it may also be prudent to undertake periodic ecological update surveys for mobile species both within the site boundaries and also within Reservoir Wood and Wolverley Lodge.

If the applicant is content, these measures could be amongst those specified through the forthcoming DMS, and the success of these measures evaluated through ongoing site monitoring, to be programmed through the DMS and/or Ecological Management Strategy, implementation of which can be secured