

Date: 27 November 2015
Our ref: 170479
Your ref: 15/00455/DISC



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BY EMAIL ONLY

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Dear Linda

Planning consultation: 15/00455/DISC Discharge of condition 16 (Item ii) of 10/00023/TWA.
Location: Oxford To Bicester Rail Link, Buckingham Road, Bicester, OX2 8HA.

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 02 November 2015 which was received by Natural England on the same day.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Wildlife And Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

Further information required

This application is in close proximity to Wendlebury Meads and Mansmoor Closes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Natural England does not support the discharge of this condition at this stage on the grounds that the application, as submitted, is likely to damage or destroy the interest features for which Wendlebury Meads and Mansmoor Closes SSSI has been notified. Our concerns are set out below.

Surface and Groundwater Quality

Figure 2 provided in the Wallingford Hydrosolutions Report, is not of sufficient detail to be able to definitively conclude that surface water runoff would not reach the SSSI, particularly as the proposed barn and access track are so close to the SSSI in this location. As groundwater flow is predicted to be dictated by surface topography, this is the same for groundwater flows.

Therefore, as any surface/groundwater has the potential to reach the SSSI, mitigation measures are required to ensure that water quality will not be impacted, particularly due to the nature of agricultural runoff. Paragraph 4.1.1 of the Wallingford Hydrosolutions report states that: *Any surface runoff from the hardstanding and overflow from the rainwater harvesting tank should be designed to discharge away from the SSSI.* However, some detailed design of the proposed drainage is needed to justify this statement.

Should the application change, or if the applicant submits further information relating to the impact of this proposal on the SSSI aimed at reducing the damage likely to be caused, Natural England will be happy to consider it, and amend our position as appropriate.

If your Authority is minded to grant consent for this application contrary to the advice relating to Wendlebury Meads and Mansmoor Closes SSSI contained in this letter, we refer you to Section 281 (6) of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended), specifically the duty placed upon your authority, requiring that your Authority;

- Provide notice to Natural England of the permission, and of its terms, the notice to include a statement of how (if at all) your authority has taken account of Natural England's advice, and
- Shall not grant a permission which would allow the operations to start before the end of a period of 21 days beginning with the date of that notice.

We would be happy to comment further should the need arise but if in the meantime you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please contact Elise Batelaan on 07879 800864 or elise.batelaan@naturalengland.org.uk. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

We really value your feedback to help us improve the service we offer. We have attached a feedback form to this letter and welcome any comments you might have about our service.

Yours faithfully

Charlotte Frizzell
Thames Valley Team
Sustainable Development and Regulation