

Date: 18 August 2016
Our ref: 193722
Your ref:



FAO: Aude Pantel,
Wycombe District Council,
Queen Victoria Road,
High Wycombe
HP11 1BB

Customer Services
Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

BY EMAIL ONLY

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Aude,

Planning consultation: Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan – Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Draft Screening Opinion.
Location: Bledlow-cum-Saunderton.

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 17 August 2016.

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.

**The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (As amended)
Wildlife And Countryside Act 1981 (As amended)**

Bledlow-cum-Saunderton HRA Screening opinion

Many thanks for sending through this draft screening opinion for the Bledlow-cum-Saunderton neighbourhood plan. Having taken account of the location and given the allocations in the plan (namely the Molins site) along with our previous response to that sites planning application, Natural England would have the following comments to make.

The level of detail set out within the screening assessment appears to be in line with what would be expected, covering the relevant legislation and the sites that are present locally and covered by that legislation. The Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) named as component parts of the two Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) identified locally are all correct and Natural England would agree that for the scale that this HRA is covering these are appropriate.

It would be worth, for completeness, including the component SSSI for the Aston Rowant SAC, namely Aston Rowant SSSI. Having spoken with the site officer for the Bradenham Woods, Park Wood & the Coppice SSSI with regard to recreational pressure issues they were of the opinion that this wouldn't likely be an issue in this instance given the area is well sign posted which means people do tend to stick to designated routes. The National Trust, which owns the SSSI land is also very active in managing visitors on site through wardening.

The wider area around the development at the Molins site would also act to soak up visitor pressures locally given that the site is surrounded by the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The fact the application is at appeal currently means there could be a different number of houses finally permitted on site hence the impact could be lessened from the original 212 proposed dwellings; which Natural England submitted a no objection response to.



As such it can be agreed that in the case of this particular Neighbourhood plan there **would be no requirement for a full Appropriate Assessment** under the Habitats Regulations.

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 Piotr Behnke on 0208 026 3893. 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 sincerely,

Piotr Behnke
Sustainable Development and Regulation
Thames Valley Team