

Your ref:
Our ref: HB/1044

18 November 2013

Ms Sarah Westwood
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
Clitheroe
Lancashire
BB7 2RA

Dear Sarah,

**MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT AT KIRK MILL, CHIPPING: EIA SCREENING REQUEST
(RVBC Ref: 3/2013/0905/P)**

I write further to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Request in respect of the above site submitted to Ribble Valley Borough Council (RVBC) on the 28th October 2013 and your email dated 15th November 2013. As set out in your email, it is RVBC's intentions to consult Natural England on the Screening Request due to the presence of the Bowland Fells Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)/Special Protection Area (SPA) located 1.7km north west of the proposed development site.

I enclose the Ecological Assessment for the proposed development undertaken by Ecology Solutions Ltd; this is submitted in accordance with Regulation 5(4) of the EIA Regulations to provide additional information to RVBC to allow a Screening Opinion to be adopted.

The SSSI/SPA is separated from the proposed development site by minor roads, existing residential development, agricultural land and open countryside. The SSSI/SPA contains suitable habitat for many upland breeding birds, three species of which (Hen Harrier, Merlin and Peregrine) are afforded special protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Annex 1 of the EC Wild Birds Directive. Hen Harrier, Merlin and Peregrine were not recorded within the proposed development site during surveys undertaken by Ecology Solutions Ltd, and the proposed development site does not offer any suitable breeding opportunities for these species. Nor is the proposed development of a scale that would be a threat to the SSSI/SPA through increased visitor numbers.

As detailed in the Screening Request Report (HOW October 2013) submitted with the EIA Screening Request, given the distance between the SSSI/SPA and the proposed development site it is not considered that there will be any significant adverse effects (direct or indirect) on the SSSI/SPA as a result of the proposed development. Accordingly we consider that an EIA of the proposals would not be required.

In light of RVBC's intention to consult Natural England, RVBC have requested an extension of time to reach a decision on the Screening Request; I understand RVBC provide Natural England 21 days to comment.

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Accordingly a revised date for the Screening Opinion to be issued by RVBC is, at the latest, 9th December 2013. As discussed I would appreciate that you stress to Natural England the importance of a quick response given the date of the original Screening Request.

I trust that the information provided is sufficient for you to provide a response but should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hilary Brett', with a stylized, cursive script.

HILARY BRETT
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Enc. Ecological Assessment (Ecology Solutions Ltd 2013)