

Date: 29 November 2023
Our ref: 458294
Your ref: 3/2023/0632



Will Hopcroft
Ribbles Valley Borough Council

BY EMAIL ONLY

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Dear Will Hopcroft

Planning consultation: 3/2023/0632 - Proposed earth banked slurry lagoon 50m x 50m
Location: Land off Preston Road Longridge PR3 3BL

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 24 November 2023 which included the PDF input and outputs arising from the Simple Calculation of Atmospheric Impact Limits (SCAIL) assessment for the proposed slurry store.

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.

SUMMARY OF NATURAL ENGLAND'S ADVICE

In summary, Natural England advise further information is required to determine impacts on designated sites, including:

- A Habitats Regulations Assessment
- Resubmission of the SCAIL assessment
- Suitable bird survey evidence

Without this information, Natural England may need to object to the proposal.

Please re-consult Natural England once this information has been obtained

Internationally and Nationally Designated Sites

The proposal is within 8.6km of Bowland Fells Special Protection Area (SPA) and Bowland Fells Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It is also within 1.4km of Red Scar and Turn Brook Woods SSSI.

Some of the above listed sites are designated for mobile species that may also rely on areas outside of the site boundary. These supporting habitats (also referred to as functionally linked land/habitat) may be used by SPA populations or some individuals of the population for some or all of the time. These supporting habitats can play an essential role in maintaining designated sites species populations, and proposals affecting them may therefore have the potential to affect the European sites.

In considering the European site interest, Natural England advises that you, as a competent authority under the provisions of the Habitats Regulations, should have regard for any potential

impacts that a plan or project may have. The [Conservation objectives](#) for each European site explain how the site should be restored and/or maintained and may be helpful in assessing what, if any, potential impacts a plan or project may have.

Please see the subsequent sections of this letter for our advice relating to SSSI features.

Further Information Required to Assess Potential Impacts to Bowland Fells SPA

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Despite the proximity of the application to European Sites, the consultation documents provided do not include information to demonstrate that the requirements of regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) have been considered by your authority, i.e. the consultation does not include a [Habitats Regulations Assessment](#).

It is Natural England's advice that the proposal is not directly connected with or necessary for the management of the European site. Your authority should therefore determine whether the proposal is likely to have a significant effect on any European site, proceeding to the Appropriate Assessment stage where significant effects cannot be ruled out. Natural England must be consulted on any appropriate assessment your authority may decide to make.

Natural England advises that there is currently not enough information provided in the application to determine whether the likelihood of significant effects can be ruled out.

We recommend you obtain the following information to help you undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment:

Air Quality

- Natural England notes that the proposed tonnes of fresh manure stored has been stated as zero tonnes as shown on PDF page 6 of the SCAIL Assessment Report. Consequently, SCAIL must be re-run with this field inputted. Please state how the calculations (estimate tonnage/days stored) were calculated. You may wish to refer to [The 4 Point Plan](#) or equivalent
- Please ensure the CSV files are also included when the SCAIL assessment is repeated. Further details on how to obtain these files can be found in our earlier response 447587 (dated 29 August 2023)
- Ensure the SCAIL assessment is run for the existing situation and proposed situation in line with comments made within our earlier response
- Please see **Annex A** for further guidance on air quality resources

Bird Species

- Suitable bird survey evidence will be required for overwintering and passage birds associated with the designated sites. A comprehensive desk study should first be carried out to inform the need for site specific bird surveys. This should obtain site specific information from appropriate bodies such as [local records](#) centres, wildlife trusts and recording societies with any other survey evidence, together with an assessment of the suitability of the site and adjoining fields for SPA birds

Further Information Required to Assess Potential Impacts to Bowland Fells SSSI and Red Scar & Tun Brook Woods SSSI

As submitted, the application does not contain sufficient information to conclude that the proposed development is not likely to damage or destroy the interest features for which the above SSSIs has been notified. Our concerns are set out above.

Please note that if your authority is minded to grant planning permission contrary to the advice in this letter, you are required under Section 281 (6) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to notify Natural England of the permission, the terms on which it is proposed to grant it and how, if at all, your authority has taken account of Natural England's advice. You must also allow a further period of 21 days before the operation can commence.

If you have any queries relating to the advice in this letter, or any additional information or consultation requests, please contact consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Should the applicant wish to discuss the further information required and scope for mitigation with Natural England, we would be happy to provide advice through our [Discretionary Advice Service](#).

Yours sincerely

Zoe Haysted, Sustainable Development Lead Adviser
Wetlands, Water and Woodlands (Cheshire to Lancashire)

Annex A

Signposting Air Quality Resources

Our [Impact Risk Zones](#) (IRZs) can be used to identify if the interest features of any nearby designated sites may be sensitive to impacts from aerial pollutants, such as those that maybe emitted from the proposed development.

Natural England applies a 10km screening distance for designated sites which are vulnerable to air quality changes. This is noted within our previous response under **Joint NE EA External Guidance**.

The following [guidance note](#) has been produced for Local Planning Authorities which have planning applications which refer to Slurry Infrastructure Grants.

We also signpost the [NEA001 guidance](#), whilst the document focuses on road traffic emissions, the same broader principles can be applied to air quality related casework within a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

Natural England's Catchment Sensitive Farming Team have also produced the Useful Information for Consultants Assessing Ammonia Impacts from Agricultural Sources pdf and the following videos: [Ammonia Management Part 1: What You Need To Know - YouTube](#) and [Ammonia Management Part 2: Undertaking a SCAIL Assessment - YouTube](#).



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