

Planning Inspectorate
National Infrastructure Planning
Temple Quay House (2 The Square)
Temple Quay
Bristol
Avon
BS1 6PN

Our ref: AE/2018/123658/01-L01
Your ref: TR010023
Date: 08 January 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

**APPLICATION BY SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL FOR AN ORDER GRANTING
DEVELOPMENT CONSENT FOR LAKE LOTHING THIRD CROSSING.
THE EXAMINING AUTHORITY'S WRITTEN QUESTIONS AND REQUESTS FOR
INFORMATION (EXQ1)**

This response relates to the Examining Authority's first set of written questions dated 17 December 2018, in relation to the proposed development for a crossing at Lake Lothing. This letter contains responses to the questions directed to the Environment Agency only. As advised in your letter and due our responses being limited to a small number of questions, we have chosen to respond by letter rather than tabulated format.

Question 2.41:

In respect of ES Chapter 17 Road Drainage and the Water Environment (APP- 136)

- i. Does the Environment Agency agree with this assertion made by the Applicant in relation to Leathes Ham and Oulton Broad?**

Environment Agency answer:

In paragraph 17.4.8 the applicant states that Leathes Ham has not been considered further in the assessment because it is a freshwater body that is not hydraulically with flow from Lake Lothing.

The fact that the waterbody is a freshwater lake suggests that it is not in direct hydraulic continuity with Lake Lothing. If it is, and it is groundwater fed, it would suggest that a freshwater gradient is maintained from the aquifer to Lake Lothing and therefore saline water does not enter Leathes Ham.

Leathes Ham is located in an area of alluvium (clay, silt sand & gravel) which suggests that hydraulic separation from the underlying Crag aquifer is likely.

There is a sand & gravel aquifer up-gradient of the site which could provide seepage flow to the lake; works in Lake Lothing would not impact on Leathes Ham if this were to be the case.

Internet searches indicate that the lake was created after an area dug for peat was flooded. This suggests that flood waters may inundate the site, but it is not indicative of a hydraulic connection in terms of the local aquifers.

The balance of the information available suggests that the conclusion drawn in S17.4.8 of the ES is reasonable.

- ii. **The Environment Agency has expressed concerns over the completeness of evidence in respect of sediment transportation. Please can you provide further details about the nature of these concerns, including identifying the data that you consider is required? (The Sediment Transport Assessment [APP-201] is indicated as being updated for Examination Deadline 3).**

Environment Agency answer:

The Sediment Transport Assessment [APP-201] report discusses the long-term effects of sediment transport with the bridge in place, but not any sediment aspects of building it. Although we have specific comments about the appropriateness of the assessment (regarding the structure once in place), we believe that the long-term risk is low. The Applicant has been in discussion with us regarding revisions to the assessment.

Our concern relates to sediment that may be released during construction. Appropriate low-impact construction techniques are available, but we have not seen a methodology statement for the bridge construction, and so have no reassurance that they will be used. (Processes such as placing and removing sheet piles can disturb sediment from the bed.)

The principal data required is a statement of the proposed construction method, supported by estimates of the sediment size and quantity re-suspended by the various processes. It is noted that the Interim Code of Construction Practice makes brief reference to sediment-laden water at paragraph 8.1.2 but this information should be expanded either in the Sediment Transport Assessment or in the detailed Code of Construction Practice.

Question 2.45:

Impacts on groundwater quality are anticipated to be of minor magnitude, resulting in an effect of slight adverse significance, based on the findings of the Piling Risk Assessment [APP- 193] and as set out in ES Chapter 12 [APP- 136].

Can the Environment Agency and the Marine Management Organisation confirm that they agree with the outcome of the assessment?

Environment Agency answer:

We confirm that we agree with the outcome of the risk assessment for the piling works at Lake Lothing.

Question 2.75:

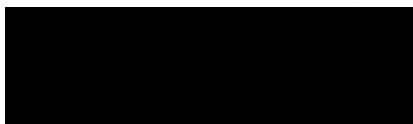
Can the Environment Agency explain the extent to which there is agreement between the Applicant and themselves on the approach and findings of the updated version of the HRA Report [AS- 003] submitted by the Applicant?

Environment Agency answer:

The Environment Agency is not the lead Competent Authority for Habitats Regulations Assessment. This responsibility rests with Natural England and it is our practice to defer to their advice. In respect of this application there are no overriding factors that suggest we should deviate from this position.

We trust that these responses are of assistance.

Yours faithfully



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