

From: [Philip Sheldrake](#)
To: [A303 Stonehenge](#)
Subject: Examining Authority's second written questions (ExQ2) - Deadline 6
Date: 25 July 2019 15:04:21

Dear Sir / Madam

Re: Examining Authority's second written questions (ExQ2) 5th July 2019. RSPB response to questions EC.2.1 & EC.2.3.

The RSPB refers the Examining Authority (ExA) to its Written Representation dated 15 April 2019 to provide context to its answer to the above questions. The RSPB's main concern at the Normanton Down Nature Reserve is the known sensitivity of stone-curlews to disturbance in the landscape. We consider there is an increased risk of such disturbance arising from the A303 scheme which could result in Normanton Down becoming unsuitable for this species.

Our preferred mechanism to mitigate against the risk of increased disturbance making Normanton Down unsuitable as a breeding site for stone-curlews is the securing and provision of suitably located additional nesting plots elsewhere within the 5-km buffer around the SPA. Ideally, such plots would be sited as close as practicable to Normanton Down. The RSPB's support for the enhanced fencing proposal at the Normanton Down Nature Reserve was on the basis that it provided for increased security against illegal trespass.

The risk of increased disturbance in the landscape leading to cessation of utilization of the nesting plots at the Normanton Down Reserve has been identified and accepted by Highways England (ES Appx. 8.25 HRA Statement to inform Appropriate Assessment para 3.3.3). We welcome Highways England's commitment to provide two additional nesting plots for inclusion in the DCO to provide mitigation such that an adverse effect is avoided beyond reasonable scientific doubt for the potential impact at Normanton Down. To meet this standard, the RSPB would expect the provision of the two plots to be secured and described as such in the DCO i.e. the necessary ecological, legal and financial requirements to deliver and maintain the plots is secured via the DCO and accompanying technical documents before the Examination closes.

Regards
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