

Planning Inspectorate
M42 Junction 6



BY EMAIL ONLY:

M42Junction6@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

11th October 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: M42 Junction 6 Improvement Scheme
Response from Warwickshire Wildlife Trust to the Examiners Third Written Questions**

Thank you for consulting Warwickshire Wildlife Trust (WKWT) as an owner of land affected by the proposed scheme and as an organisation with interest in land affected by the proposed scheme. Thank you for an opportunity to comment on this third round of written questions.

WKWT, Solihull MBC and Natural England have sought to collaborate as much as possible in our response to examiners questions thus far and we have a considerable amount of common ground. However, we have not formally collaborated on this particular round of questions.

Agenda for Issue Specific Hearing 6 on 2nd October: Environmental Matters

It is important to note for the Inspectors' Panel that the Agenda for the Issue Specific Hearing on 2nd October was not sent out to participants, as would normally be the case. It was within this Agenda document that participation from Interested Parties was requested at the Examination hearing, including a list of specific participants such as Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and various other non-government organisations. This may explain why WWT was one of the few attendees at the hearing from this list.

Action Points from Issue Specific Hearing 6 on 2nd October: Environmental Matters

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust is pleased to note that as a result of issues raised during the hearing, further detail has been requested in Action Point 1 in relation to treatment of surface water within the catchment of Bickenhill Meadows SSSI.

We also support Action Point 2, the need for a draft Maintenance and Management Plan for the SSSI which allows for the monitoring of the condition of the MG5 grassland in addition to MG4 grassland.

Chair
Michael Bunney
Vice Chairs
Alistair Lorimer
Chief Executive
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Warwickshire Wildlife Trust

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We would like to emphasise the importance of this MG5 grassland to be included, as it is within the same site and part of the overall varied and complex wetland mosaic. In addition to this, it is likely to be impacted by too much water just as other areas of the site may be impacted by too little. This site is a seed donor site for other MG4/5 unimproved wet meadow grassland in the sub-region and this greatly increases its intrinsic value and significance.

In the view of the Wildlife Trust, these two issues are “absolutely necessary” rather than “if necessary” as described in the Action Points 1 and 2.

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust does not have any further comments on the Bat Survey Report, as specified in Action Point 3.

We are also pleased to note that our request for evidence of ancient woodland soil translocation and its monitoring for success, including appropriate planting ratios has been encapsulated within Action Point 5. We look forward to evaluating this evidence when it has been provided by the applicant and are grateful to the Planning Inspectorate for following through on evidence-based decision making.

Relevant examiners questions 3.5 Biodiversity

ExQ3 3.5.1.

The panel would welcome an indication of when the “biodiversity off-setting report” (referred to in REP2-033) and the Fungi surveys will be made available to the Examination. In addition, is any further comment required in relation to the Lichen Survey [REP4-003] or the GCN survey [REP4-005]?

We have not received the Biodiversity Offsetting report or Fungi surveys. If this is available, we would be grateful for the opportunity to comment on this.

We have no comment to make on the Lichen Survey or the GCN Survey.

ExQ3 3.5.2.

Are measures required in the OEMP to ensure the protection of the white-clawed crayfish in the Shadow Brook catchment located to the east of the proposed scheme?

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust has no comment to make on this question.

ExQ3 3.5.3.

Are there any outstanding concerns raised by the Applicant’s responses set out in section 5.2 of REP3-011 in connection with the effects of the scheme on the SSSI at Coleshill and Bannerly Pools and the ecological connectivity of the area?

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust has no further comments in addition to those already made at Examiners Questions Round 2.

ExQ3 3.5.4.

The ExA would welcome the Applicant's response to the comments from Natural England [REP4-017] regarding the "Bickenhill Meadows SE Unit Draft Position Statement".

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust has no additional comments at this stage on this. Please refer to our detailed comments at Examiners Questions Round 2, in collaboration with Natural England and Solihull MBC.

ExQ3 3.5.5.

The ExA would welcome comments from Natural England, The Woodland Trust and SMBC on the Applicant's Soil Survey Report [REP4-007] submitted at Deadline 4.

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust has reviewed the Soil Survey Report. We note that this surveys the soil characteristics of nutrient, texture and drainage for topsoil and upper subsoil on the donor and receptor sites.

Whilst we acknowledge that the survey conclusion is that the soil characteristics are suitable at these proposed donor and reception sites for translocation, clearly there are other considerations which will determine successful translocation in the long-term. We would repeat our request for details of previous successful projects carried out by the Highways Agency and wider details on the methodologies proposed and long-term management. We maintain our objection to the translocation of ancient woodland, this should be avoided as it is an irreplaceable habitat.

Other outstanding issues

It has come to our attention that the survey position for otters has been identified as a pre-check prior to works commencing. If presence of this species is assumed throughout the route, as indicated by their presence at desk study stage, then this species should be fully scoped in for presence/absence survey using standard best practice methods.

Since our attendance at the Issue Specific Hearing on 2nd October, we have still not received the "draft circulating" Maintenance and Management Plan for the SE parcel of the SSSI in Wildlife Trust ownership and management. It was requested by the Examination Panel that this should be shared with Interested Parties and I would repeat this request.

In addition to this, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust has not received any further correspondence from the applicant from a "landowners" perspective regarding access, compulsory purchase or any other related matters. The contact for this remains Karl Curtis, Director of Reserve and Community Engagement Karl.Curtis@wkwat.org.uk and we await further correspondence.

Please contact me if you have any queries regarding this response.

Yours sincerely

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