

Date: 05 July 2019  
Our ref: 286890  
Your ref: **TR050005 ExQ2**



West Midlands Interchange Case Team

**BY EMAIL ONLY**

Customer Services  
Hornbeam House  
Crewe Business Park  
Electra Way  
Crewe  
Cheshire  
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Sir

### **West Midlands Interchange NSIP – 2<sup>nd</sup> Written Questions and requests for information**

Thank you for the written questions and request for information issued on 19 June 2019 .

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.

Natural England offers the following responses to the questions seeking input from us:

#### **2.9.1 FEMMP**

**A revised version of the Framework Ecological Mitigation and Management Plan (FEMMP) has been submitted [AS-036] . Do NE/SCC and other IPs who have made representations on ecological mitigation and management issues have any comments that they wish to make on the amendments/ additions made in the revised FEMMP?**

Natural England welcomes the amendments and additions for the extra detail and clarity they provide supporting subsequent phase by phase EMMPs. We have no specific, additional comments to make on the amendments.

#### **2.9.12**

**Some IPs have referred to the recent report from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee that indicates that the UK is likely to miss almost all of the 2020 Nature Targets that it signed up to at the 2010 Global Convention on Biological Diversity.**

**Can the parties comment on this report and what implications, if any, its conclusions may have with regard to the potential effects of the proposed development on ecology and nature conservation?**

The report offers very high level biodiversity context for land use planning in the UK including the West Midlands Interchange NSIP. Natural England provided data and information to help compile the JNCC report. Its assessment underlines the need for increased efforts to recover nature. In terms of relevant policy instruments the NSIP has been drawn up with reference to relevant National Policy Statement material. The statement of common ground agreed between Four Ashes Limited and Natural England refers to a range of biodiversity issues which reflect national policy with regard to species, habitat and protected site conservation and enhancement. We note the statement that '*the*

*UK is likely to miss almost all of the 202 Nature Targets that it signed up to at the 2010 Global convention on biological diversity* and have appended the JNCC summary regarding progress against targets for reference accordingly.

### **2.15.1**

**The revised draft DCO [REP3-003] includes additional detailed provisions in respect of the draft Requirement 5 which are set out in Part 2 of Schedule 2 to the DCO. These seek to provide an increased level of commitment to the provision and use of the rail infrastructure.**

- (i) Do of the statutory bodies and IPs have any detailed comments that they wish to make in respect of the wording of these provisions?**

Natural England has no comments to make on draft requirement 5.

- (ii) Should any additional provisions be added?**

We have no comments to make regarding additional provisions.

For any queries relating to this letter please contact me on 020 802 60939. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk).

Yours sincerely

Antony Muller  
Lead Adviser - West Midlands Planning for a Better Environment Team

## Annex A

### JNCC summary regarding Aichi targets - United Kingdom's 6th National

#### Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity

##### UK progress towards the Aichi Targets

- Overall, the UK has made a lot of good progress towards the Aichi Targets and some targets are, or will be, achieved (see Figure 1). However, it is fair to note that there is still more progress required in other areas.
- The targets on mainstreaming (#2), protected areas (#11), implementation of the Nagoya Protocol (#16), National biodiversity strategy (#17), and mobilisation of information and research (#19) are assessed as on track to achieve the target.
- For most of the other targets, there is evidence that progress is being made, but it is being counteracted by, for example, continuing pressures. Some targets have proved particularly challenging despite the positive progress that has been made (e.g. #8 on pollution, #10 on vulnerable ecosystems, #12 on conservation status of species, and #15 on restoring degraded ecosystems).

##### The report identifies areas where progress is being made:

- Expanding the area of our protected sites network. Protected sites, including National Parks currently cover 28% of UK land area and 24% of our seas.
- Ecosystem restoration, particularly for peat. Each of the four countries is investing significantly in the restoration of peat ecosystems as a contribution to climate change mitigation.
- Integration of biodiversity into other sectors of the economy. A number of major infrastructure project such as Crossrail and Thameslink operating a biodiversity net-gain approach.
- Ex-situ management of plant genetic diversity. The UK holds world renowned facilities including Kew's Millennium Seed Bank which contains 75% of the UK's total native and ancient non-native plant species.
- Funding for international biodiversity conservation. The UK's contribution has increased from a baseline of £77.4m per annum between 2006 and 2010 to over £180m in 2015.

In addition, the report identifies other areas where there is significant work to be done:

- There is an overall picture of ongoing species decline, although perhaps not at the rate seen in previous decades. There are some species or species groups where there has been progress and there have been a number of promising reintroduction schemes.
- Despite some progress in improving the condition of protected sites, a significant proportion of the best wildlife habitats inside and outside protected sites remains unfavourable.
- There are ongoing pressures on biodiversity. For example, despite good work to identify introduction pathways and rapid and early response to some detections such as Asian hornet, the prevalence of invasive species continues to increase across the UK.
- There has been a short-term fall in Government funding for biodiversity in the UK, although as biodiversity has increasingly been integrated into other funding streams such as green growth, the data has become increasingly difficult to assess.

*Excerpt ends*