

### Email correspondence with Natural England

**From:** Routh, Charles (NE)  
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**Sent:** 08 December 2011 10:24  
**To:** Burrow, Camilla - Environment & Economy -  
Countryside Service  
**Subject:** RE: 2011-12-21 38708 West Oxon DC draft Core  
Strategy - Habitats Regulation Assessment

Dear Camilla,

Further to your email below, I can confirm our response is as follows:

#### **Oxford Meadows:**

All 10 SSSI units forming Oxford Meadows are in Favourable Condition.

The critical load for Oxford Meadows SAC for nitrogen deposition is 20-30kg of Nitrogen /ha/year. The current modelled deposition at this site is approximately 19kg of Nitrogen /ha/year. In line with national Highways Agency guidance Natural England considers 200m is the maximum distance that the local impacts of air pollution (as opposed to long range transport) from a road can accrue . Approximately 17% of the SAC lies within the 200m of an A road. We therefore advise that, in combination with other plans and projects, and on the basis of the information provided, you cannot reasonably conclude that West Oxfordshire Core Strategy will not have a likely significant effect. If the council can show, through traffic modelling, that the Core Strategy will contribute to less than 1% of the critical load (lower limit), our current guidance is that no likely significant effect can be concluded.

The SAC is not vulnerable to any other form of air pollution likely to arise from the Core Strategy.

**Water Quality.** The site is not currently adversely affected by poor water quality. We advise that an uplift of 4,300 dwellings will not have a likely significant effect on this site.

**Water Quantity.** The site is not currently adversely affected by water quantity. The potential sensitivity with respect to water quantity is to do with flooding, rather than typical water levels in the river that might be affected by abstraction. We advise that the proposals in the Core Strategy are very unlikely to affect flooding frequency and magnitude, given that runoff rates from new developments will be regulated by the Environment Agency such that they will be the same as would occur from a greenfield site.

**Recreational pressure.** We understand that Oxford City Council study of this issue on this site is being published on Monday. Once this is available we will be in a better position to advise you.

**Cothill Fen:**

Five of the 6 SSSI units forming Cothill Fen SAC favourable, and one is unfavourable recovering.

**Air pollution.** No major roads lie within 200m of this SAC, so we advise there will be no likely significant effect from Core Strategy.

**Water Quality and Quantity.** The SAC does not appear to be hydrologically connected to West Oxfordshire District, and as such we advise there will be no likely significant effect arising from the plan due to water Quality or Quantity issues.

**Recreational pressure.** We advise that the site is not one which is at risk from damaging recreational pressure from development in West Oxfordshire, due to the nature of the site, and the distance of the site from West Oxfordshire District.

Please get in touch if you need any further information.

Charles Routh  
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