



Defence Infrastructure Organisation

Adam Scott

Ministry of Defence
Safeguarding Department
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Your reference: MW.0115/21

Our reference: 10043458

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Mary Hudson
Principal Planning Officer
Oxfordshire County Council
Environment and Place
County Hall
New Road
Oxford
OX1 1ND

18 July 2024

Dear Mary,

MOD Safeguarding- RAF Benson

Proposal: Extraction and processing of sand and gravel including the construction of new site access roads, landscaping and screening bunds, minerals washing plant and other associated infrastructure with restoration to agriculture and nature conservation areas, using inert fill.

Location: White Cross Farm, Reading Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire

Grid Ref's: 460459, 187611

Thank you for consulting the Ministry of Defence (MOD) on the above proposed development.

The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) Safeguarding Team represents the Ministry of Defence (MOD) as a consultee in UK planning and energy consenting systems to ensure that development does not compromise or degrade the operation of defence sites such as aerodromes, explosives storage sites, air weapon ranges, and technical sites or training resources such as the Military Low Flying System.

The applicant is seeking approval for a proposed sand and gravel extraction and processing with restoration to farmland and nature conservation. The application area comprises mainly agricultural land that has been used for arable and livestock grazing. Further information has been submitted relating to the above application.

The application site is approximately 3.8 km from the centre of the runway at RAF Benson and occupies the statutory Aerodrome Height and Birdstrike statutory safeguarding consultation zones surrounding the aerodrome.

Aerodrome Height Safeguarding Zone

The Aerodrome Height Safeguarding Zone defines zones around aerodromes to regulate the height of structures to prevent the obstruction of the critical air space encompassing the aerodrome in which the principal take-off, landing and circuiting procedures are contained.

Having reviewed the proposals, I can confirm the MOD has no concerns with regards to the height of the proposed development.

Birdstrike Safeguarding Zone

Within this zone, the principal concern of the MOD is that the creation of new habitats may attract and support populations of large and, or flocking birds close to the aerodrome.

On review of the plans, the MOD welcome that the proposed scrapes have been removed. This restoration should not result in exploitable habitats for larger hazardous bird species, such as gulls, geese or large flocks of waders, as long as there is a goose proof fence adjacent to the Thames, and a commitment to fence the area of reed and wet woodland to prevent damage by livestock and ensure good plant coverage.

In summary, the MOD does not object to this application, subject to the above design requirements being included as part of any planning permission granted.

The MOD must emphasise that the advice provided within this letter is in response to the data and information detailed in the developer's documents provided in support of application MW.0115/21 for which the MOD were consulted by Oxfordshire County Council on 21 May 2024. Any variation of the parameters (which include the location, dimensions, form, and finishing materials) detailed may significantly alter how the development relates to MOD safeguarding requirements and cause adverse impacts to safeguarded defence assets or capabilities. In the event that any amendment, whether considered material or not by the determining authority, is submitted for approval, the MOD should be consulted and provided with adequate time to carry out assessments and provide a formal response.

I trust this is clear however should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. Scott". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Adam Scott
Assistant Safeguarding Manager
DIO Safeguarding