



Ministry of Defence

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Defence Infrastructure Organisation

Safeguarding Department
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15 August 2022

Your reference: MW.0115/21
Our reference: DIO/10043458_Rev7/2022

Dear Mary

MOD Safeguarding –RAF Benson

Proposal: Amendments to restoration scheme; detailed revisions have been made to restoration scheme, whilst maintaining the overall concept of restoring the eastern sector of the site to nature conservation and the western sector to agriculture. These revisions, and associated information in relation to habitat establishment and biodiversity metric calculations, have been assembled in response to the Reg 25 consultation responses received from the MoD (Defence Infrastructure Organisation) and Oxfordshire CC Biodiversity Officer.

Location: Land at White Cross Farm, Wallingford, Oxfordshire

Grid Ref's: E 460459 N 187611-Central Response point
E 460406 N 187985
E 460787 N 188059
E 460787 N 187421
E 460592 N 187480

Thank you for consulting the Ministry of Defence (MOD) on the above proposed development which was received by this office on the 25/07/2022

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 following new documents have been submitted: Revised application, phasing plans and updated information on need, landscape, transport, ecology, flooding, water supplies, drainage and climate change.

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. We note that the Bird Hazard Management Plan will be amended at a future date and the MOD will be re-consulted.

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 information detailed above in the email titled Planning application MW.0115/21 - amended details for comment sourced from Oxfordshire County Council dated 25/07/2022. 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 would be grateful if you could confirm receipt of this letter.

It is important that the conditions requested in this response are included in any planning permission granted. As per Planning Circular 01/03: Safeguarding Aerodromes, Technical Sites and Military Explosives Storage Areas, if Oxfordshire County Council decides to grant planning permission contrary to our advice, then we must be notified 28 days prior to a decision being made.

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

Yours sincerely

C Waldron

Mr Chris Waldron
DIO Assistant Safeguarding Manager