

Date: 10 January 2025
Our ref: 498457



Emma Betteridge
Principle Planning Officer
Winchester City Council

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BY EMAIL ONLY - [REDACTED]

Dear Emma,

Planning consultation: Winchester District Local Plan – Regulation 19 – Air Quality Assessment

Air Quality Assessment

Thank you for your consultation on the Winchester Local Plan Air Quality Assessment dated 6th December 2024. This letter provides an update on Natural England's formal consultation and should be read in conjunction with our representation dated 11th October 2024 (Our Ref: 487013).

At the time of preparing our representation to the Local Plan the results of the air quality assessment were not available and as a result Natural England could not agree with the conclusion of the Habitats Regulations Assessment.

We thank Winchester City Council (WCC) for producing the Air Quality Assessment to support the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Addendum. Following receipt of the Air Quality Assessment Natural England can confirm that the reasons for which we advised the Local Plan would not pass the tests of soundness have been resolved.

Next Steps

Within our formal representation dated 11th October 2024 we recommended some amendments within the supporting HRA to ensure completeness, clarity, and inclusivity for users of the plan. We note that WCC are preparing an updated HRA Addendum to be submitted alongside the Local Plan to address the outstanding comments raised associated with the assessment of compensatory habitats.

On receipt of the updated HRA Addendum Natural England will continue to work with WCC to produce an updated Statement of Common Ground which will set out how strategic issues have been resolved. Please note that the updated SoCG will supersede the interim SoCG (dated September 2024).

We look forward to continued engagement with WCC throughout the Local Plan process.

Yours faithfully,

Ellen Satchwell
Sustainable Development – Senior Officer
Thames Solent Team