

# *Friends of Latchmore*

Press Release (8 September 2012)

## Natural England says Latchmore project will require an Environmental Assessment

At a high-level meeting in London with the Executive Director for Science, Evidence and Advice of Natural England on 7 September, the Friends of Latchmore were given categorical assurances that an environmental impact assessment of the Latchmore project will now be carried out, and that it will be “comprehensive, thorough and robust”. The whole of the Latchmore catchment will be considered, and additional surveys and monitoring of the ecosystem prior to any further work are likely to be required.

Professor John Shepherd, chair of the Friends of Latchmore, said “This is a major step forward, as Natural England have now decided to support our position that an environmental assessment is necessary. As “statutory consultees” when the application for planning permission for the project is considered, Natural England are in a unique position to ensure that this is done. This means that the benefits claimed for the project will have to be weighed against the damage done and the cost of the engineering work involved, and that it will not be approved unless a net benefit can be demonstrated.”

The Forestry Commission (the lead agency for the project) agreed last month that it would apply for planning permission for the project, and undertake no further work until the planning process is complete. Organisations and members of the public with an interest in the project will be able to submit their views as part of the public consultation on the planning application.

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### **More Information**

For more information visit our website at [www.friendsoflatchmore.org](http://www.friendsoflatchmore.org)