



NEW FOREST
NATIONAL PARK

Richard Buxton
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6 June 2014

By email only

Dear Mr Buxton,

Latchmore Brook Restoration Project

I write further to our recent letter of 20 May 2014 (addressed to your associate, Ms Lisa Foster) and your earlier letter of 2 April 2014 concerning the need for an Appropriate Assessment in respect of the above Latchmore Brook Restoration Project ('the project').

As the competent authority in this case, our position to date can be summarised as follows.

- The project seeks to improve the condition of the SSSI units and the New Forest SAC and is in line with the New Forest Wetland Management Plan 2006 – 2016 which seeks to *"ensure the continued long term sustainability and integrated management of water-courses and wetland habitats"* which *"will prevent further decline of SAC habitats and bring them into favourable condition"*.
- The Forestry Commission's letter of 27 November 2012 to the New Forest National Park Authority confirms that the works are required to improve the SSSI units of Latchmore Shade, Latchmore Mire, Thompson's Castle and Watergreen Bottom which *"are in unfavourable declining condition due to the effects of artificial drainage, which is causing increased erosion within the mire systems, degradation of wet heath and grassland habitats, and limited seasonal inundation of the surrounding ground habitats."*
- Natural England have confirmed to the New Forest National Park Authority that there will be no detrimental likely significant effects arising from the project on any other qualifying European features either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. Furthermore, that the project under consideration is directly connected with and necessary for the management of some of the qualifying European features.

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- On this basis, we concluded that an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive and Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2010 was not required.

The Forestry Commission are preparing an Environmental Statement to accompany their planning application which will set out in further detail the evidential base and the works required to improve the condition of the SSSI units. We will consider the planning application in accordance with the Regulations and the formal views of Natural England will be sought as part of the consultation process.

I note that the questions and issues directed in your letter to Natural England have been responded to in Natural England's letter to you dated 21 May 2014.

In the meantime, both we and the Forestry Commission remain engaged in a continuing dialogue with the Friends of Latchmore.

Yours sincerely,



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Executive Director (Strategy and Planning)

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