



Cranborne Chase National Landscape

An area of outstanding natural beauty



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Kate Clements
Wiltshire Development Management

By email: Kate.Clements@wiltshire.gov.uk

29th October 2025

Dear Kate

pa 2025/07191 Knoll Farm, Norton Ferris

This application has been brought to the attention of this National Landscape team. I can confirm that neither the applicant nor the agent have sought pre-application advice from the NL team.

The application appears to be for a change of use for waste processing proposes involving an existing agricultural barn and works in the associated farmyard.

The Partnership has the following comments on this application.

1. The Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs NL (formerly AONB) has been established under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act to conserve and enhance the outstanding natural beauty of this area which straddles one County, three county scale Unitary, and one District Council. It is clear from the Act, subsequent government sponsored reports, and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 that natural beauty includes wildlife, scientific, and cultural heritage.
2. It is also recognised that in relation to their landscape characteristics and quality, National Parks and National Landscapes are equally important aspects of the nation's heritage assets and environmental capital.
3. This [NL/AONB's Management Plan](#) 2019-24 (extended to 2025) is a statutory document that is approved by the Secretary of State and is adopted by the constituent councils. It sets out the Local Authorities' policies for the management of this nationally important area and the carrying out of their functions in relation to it, as required by section 89 (2) of the CRow Act. The National Planning Practice

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty 1981 International Dark Sky Reserve 2019

Guidance [Natural Environment paragraph 040 (21.07.2019)] confirms that the NL and its Management Plan are material considerations in planning.

4. The National Planning Policy Framework (February 2025) states (paragraph 187) that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, which include NLs, commensurate with their statutory status. Furthermore, it should be recognised that the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' does not automatically apply within NLs, as confirmed by paragraph 11 and footnote 7, due to other policies protecting NLs elsewhere within the Framework.
5. For decision making the application of NPPF policies that protect a NL 'provides a clear reason for refusing development proposals' (paragraph 11[d]). Furthermore paragraph 11(b) explains that, for plan making, being in a NL provides 'a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area'.
6. It also states (paragraph 189) that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in NLs, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in these areas. This paragraph is also clear that the scale and extent of development within all the designated areas of NLs and National Parks should be limited. Furthermore, development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise impacts on the designated areas.
7. Paragraph 190 is explicit that when considering applications for development planning permission should be refused for major development, other than in exceptional, public interest, circumstances. Footnote 67 also provides for the decision maker to regard development less than the threshold defined in the NPPF glossary as 'major' in the context of a NL or National Park.
8. The National Planning Practice Guidance [Natural environment - GOV.UK](#) paragraph 042 highlights the importance of NL and National Park settings, their contributions to natural beauty, and the harm that can be done by poorly located or designed development especially where long views from or to the NL are identified. Paragraph 041 is clear that NPPF policies for protecting NLs may mean that it is not possible to meet objectively assessed needs for development, and any development in a NL will need to be located and designed in a way that reflects its status as a landscape of the highest quality.
9. The NPPG explains [Natural Environment paragraph 039, (29.01.2025)] the statutory duty in section 85 of the CRoW Act, and confirms it applies to the setting of a NL. The duty applies to Local Government (including planning authorities), Ministers of the Crown, individual councillors, any public body, statutory undertakers and holders of public office. The recent change in s.85(1A) of CRoW Act 2000 applies equally across the Local Authority functions. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 s.245 amended and strengthened s.85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 whereby a 'relevant authority', when carrying out any functions that may affect land in a NL, must seek to further the

purposes of designation [namely, conserving and enhancing natural beauty]. The Council, its Councillors, and statutory undertakers all fall within the definition of 'relevant authority', as does the LPA and Planning Inspectorate. Government has provided guidance on this matter [Guidance for relevant authorities on seeking to further the purposes of Protected Landscapes - GOV.UK](#) as has the National Landscapes Association [CRoW-s.85-duty-guidance-for-LPAs_NLA-Briefing-Nov-24.pdf](#) on how relevant authorities demonstrate how they have sought to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the designated area.

10. More detailed information in connection with NL matters can be found on our NL [website](#) where there is not only the adopted NL/AONB Management Plan but also Position Statements and Good Practice Notes ([Planning Related Publications](#)). In particular when considering construction within the NL attention is drawn to our [Good Practice Note on Colour in the Countryside](#).
11. This NL is, as I expect you know, in one of the darkest parts of Southern England and hence the visibility of stars and, in particular, the Milky Way, is a key attribute of this NL. On the 18th October 2019 this NL/AONB was designated the 14th International Dark Sky Reserve in the world. Elements of a development that could contribute to light pollution, and hence impact adversely on those dark night skies, have to be designed out or modified so that such impacts are eliminated.
12. This NL is, therefore, concerned about light pollution. Within the NL or on its periphery any external lighting should be explicitly approved by the Local Planning Authority and comply with the [NL/AONB's Position Statement on Light Pollution](#) and the more recent [Good Practice Notes on Good External Lighting](#) and [Paper by Bob Mizon on Light Fittings](#). In this location that means all lighting complying with Environmental Lighting Zone E0 as defined by the Institute of Lighting Professionals 2021.
13. On the 30th May 2022 the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Board endorsed a Position Statement on Biodiversity Gain ([Position-Statement-12-Biodiversity-Net-Gain.pdf](#)), and the Board looks to that guidance having immediate effect. That means that each home, or comparable sized development, should have at least one bird box, one bat box, and one bee brick incorporated into the structure. That level of provision is, nevertheless, fairly basic but it is our Board's position that this National Landscape should, without delay, make a contribution to environmental net gain whenever and wherever there is development approved, at whatever scale, within this NL. The Board has confidence that you will take this guidance on board if you are minded to consider an approval, even if the proposed development is below the threshold for a formal BNG assessment.
14. The site is in the Kilmington Greensand Terrace landscape character area of the Greensand Terrace landscape character type of the NL's landscape character assessment. Greater details of the landscape, buildings and settlement characteristics can be found in Sustaining Landscape Character 2025, the Landscape Character Assessment 2024, and Cranborne Chase and Chalke Valley LCA 2018 [Planning Resources - Cranborne Chase National Landscape](#). Those, and other relevant documents can be viewed on our [website](#).

15. The proposal appears to be for waste management processing and back in 2016 our Partnership Board [it was called 'Panel' then] considered waste treatment proposals and *'The Panel endorsed the **principle** that the nation's finest landscapes, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty, are not places for the importation of waste for treatment, processing, or disposal'*.
16. There is nothing in the statement from the agent to demonstrate awareness of the site being within this National Landscape and therefore the importance of complying with the adopted Management Plan and Wiltshire Core Strategy Policy 51.
17. Clearly Chapter 15 of NPPF applies, particularly 187, 189 and 190. I have not found any justification why a waste management facility is required within this NL and at this location.
18. The submitted details do not demonstrate awareness of CCNL guidance on planning matters that is readily available on our web site.
19. There appears to be a PRoW in close proximity to the site so public awareness of the proposed use seems to be a matter to consider.
20. There does not appear to be any consideration of the need to avoid light pollution or the need to ensure external lighting complies with our Good Lighting guidelines and IDSR criteria.
21. On the basis of the information available this NL partnership cannot support the application as submitted.

I hope those comments are helpful to you and I would, of course, be happy to consider any further information you may receive.

Yours sincerely

Richard Burden

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For and on behalf of Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership Board

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