

Ruaridh O'Donoghue
Wiltshire Council
Development Control
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN

Our ref: WX/2026/139635/01-L01
Your ref: PL/2025/09780

Date: 27 February 2026

Dear Ruaridh

OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF 295 HOMES; PUBLIC OPEN SPACE INCLUDING FORMAL PLAY SPACE AND ALLOTMENTS; SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE; A 100 PLACE NURSERY AND ACCESS POINTS FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS. ALL MATTERS ARE RESERVED EXCEPT FOR ACCESS, THE PRINCIPAL POINT OF ACCESS IS TO BE PROVIDED FROM A NEW NORTHERN ARM ONTO AN IMPROVED ARRANGEMENT OF THE EASTERN WAY/A3102 ROUNDABOUT JUNCTION AND AN EMERGENCY ACCESS ONTO THE A3102.

LAND TO THE NORTH OF THE A3102, MELKSHAM, WILTSHIRE

Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the above application.

Environment Agency Position

We **object** to the planning application as currently we have insufficient information to adequately assess the flood risks posed by the development.

Reason

The Flood Risk Assessment (NPPF: Flood Risk Assessment and Outline Drainage Strategy, Ref SHF.102.003.HY.R.002.B, written by Enzygo, dated Oct 2025) references modelling that has been carried out. However, this modelling does not appear to have been included with the application. Also, the release of the new NaFRA2 changed flood risk understanding on this site. We therefore need to see the model report (which should support the modelling) and model files to understand the flood risk implications before we can provide an in-depth review of the flood risk assessment.

Overcoming our objection

The applicant must submit a modelling report/files for review or which have been deemed 'fit for purpose' by the Environment Agency that clarifies the potential flood risk implications.

Note to LPA

We are unable to undertake a full and accurate assessment of the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) at this time, as the modelling submitted by the applicant is currently subject to review. Until the modelling has been confirmed as fit for purpose, we are not in a position to provide detailed comments on the FRA.

However, we wish to highlight that the proposed site access/ egress intersects with land identified within the flood zones. Should any ground raising be proposed in this location, appropriate and demonstrable floodplain compensation will be required to ensure that there is no net loss of flood storage capacity.

Advice to LPA - Sequential test

What is the sequential test and does it apply to this application?

Environment Agency, Rivers House (Sunrise Business Park) Higher Shaftesbury Road, Blandford Forum, Dorset, DT11 8ST. Customer services line: 03708 506 506 www.gov.uk/environment-agency

Cont/d..

In accordance with the NPPF (paragraphs 175-177 (inc. footnote 62)), development in flood risk areas should not be permitted if there are reasonably available alternative sites, appropriate for the proposed development, in areas with a lower risk of flooding. The sequential test establishes if this is the case.

Development is in a flood risk area if it is in Flood Zone 2 or 3, or it is within Flood Zone 1 and your strategic flood risk assessment shows it to be at future flood risk or at risk from other sources of flooding such as surface water or groundwater.

The only developments exempt from the sequential test in flood risk areas are:

- Householder developments such as residential extensions, conservatories or loft conversions
- Small non-residential extensions with a footprint of less than 250sqm
- Changes of use (except changes of use to a caravan, camping or chalet site, or to a mobile home or park home site)
- Applications for development on sites allocated in the development plan through the sequential test and:
 - the proposed development is consistent with the use for which the site was allocated; and
 - there have been no significant changes to the known level of flood risk to the site, now or in the future, which would have affected the outcome of the test
- Developments where no built development within the site boundary, including access or escape routes, land raising or other potentially vulnerable elements, would be located on an area that would be at risk of flooding from any source, now and in the future

Avoiding flood risk through the sequential test is the most effective way of addressing flood risk because it places the least reliance on measures such as flood defences, flood warnings and property level resilience.

Who undertakes the sequential test?

It is for you, as the LPA, to determine an appropriate area of search and to decide whether the sequential test has been passed, with reference to the information you hold on land availability. You may also ask the applicant to identify any other 'reasonably available' sites which are on the open market and to check on the current status of identified sites to determine if they can be considered 'reasonably available'. Further guidance on the area of search can be found in paragraphs 027-030 of the planning practice guidance [here](#).

Advice to Applicant - Flood Zone Incompatibility

Once the sequential test has been passed and the modelling is considered fit for purpose if there is flood risk identified on the site we advise that a sequential approach should be taken when designing the layout.

The layout should ensure that areas at little or no risk of flooding from any source are developed in preference to areas at higher risk. This means avoiding, so far as possible, development in current and future medium and high flood risk areas considering all sources of flooding including areas at risk of surface water flooding.

The NPPF [Annex 3: Flood risk vulnerability classification](#) classifies development types according to their vulnerability to flood risk. PPG [Table 2: Flood risk vulnerability and flood zone 'incompatibility'](#) provides guidance on which developments are incompatible with certain Flood Zones this needs to also be considered when proposing a layout.

Note to LPA/Applicant - Culverting

It is our understanding that all matters are reserved except access however, the planning statement and environmental statement both refer to culverting on the main river. We wish to point out, however, that as part of the full application (PL/2024/10345) it was agreed that clear span crossings would be used.

The 'Drainage Layout' documents refer to the two road crossings as having 'Proposed clear span portal bridge with 4.0m span – refer to Bloor Drawing SW164-EN-501-A'. This drawing

does not appear in the submitted documents, nor is there a drawing detailing the design for the pedestrian bridge over the main watercourse. We assume this has not been submitted as this is an outline application. However it must be noted that **we would object to any culverts over the main river and are not acceptable**. Therefore, if the culverting is part of the consideration for this application then please reconsult us.

Note to Applicant – Otters and other species

Under the Biodiversity chapter (page 97) of the Environmental Statement, section Riparian Mammals 8.112 that 'otter are considered absent...and have been scoped out'. Otter are still potentially using the watercourse for commuting and therefore should be considered in any Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) as a species that has the potential to be disturbed by construction, in particular it should be ensured that no open excavations are left unattended and there is no on site lighting after dusk. These measures would be standard for inclusion in the CEMP as they have benefits for other species not just otters.

Note to Applicant – Water Framework Directive (WFD)

It is to be noted that a Water Framework Directive (WFD) assessment will be required for this development.

Note to LPA

If you are minded to approve this application for major development contrary to our objection, we request that you contact us to allow further discussion and/or representations from us in line with the [Town and Country Planning \(Consultation\) \(England\) Direction 2021](#).

This circular prevents you from issuing planning permission without first referring the application to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (via the Planning Casework Unit) to give them the opportunity to call-in the application for their own determination. This process must be followed unless we are able to withdraw our objection to you in writing. A failure to follow this statutory process could render any decision unlawful, and the resultant permission vulnerable to legal challenge.

Yours sincerely

Ms Lindsay Fello
Sustainable Places - Planning Advisor

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