

Date: 11 March 2026
Our ref: 531622
Your ref: PL/2023/03359



Wiltshire Council
Ruaridh O'Donoghue

Hornbeam House
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BY EMAIL ONLY

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Ruaridh O'Donoghue

Planning consultation: Amended Plans/Additional information - Construction and operation of anaerobic digestion facility, ancillary infrastructure and construction of new access from Ashton Road

Location: Land West of Ashton Road, Ashton Keynes, Wilts, SN6 6QT

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 22 October 2025 which was received by Natural England on the same day.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

SUMMARY OF NATURAL ENGLAND'S ADVICE

NO OBJECTION - SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATE MITIGATION BEING SECURED

Natural England considers that without appropriate mitigation the application would:

- damage or destroy the interest features for which Cotswold Water Park Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) has been notified.

In order to mitigate these adverse effects and make the development acceptable, the following mitigation measures are required / or the following mitigation options should be secured:

- Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Site drainage infrastructure that ensures there are no adverse water quality impacts on the Cotswold Water Park SSSI
- Measures to protect SSSI in the event of a fire, explosion, or other environmental incident on site

We advise that an appropriate planning condition or obligation is attached to any planning permission to secure these measures.

A lack of objection does not mean that there are no significant environmental impacts. Natural England advises that all environmental impacts and opportunities are fully considered and relevant local bodies are consulted.

Natural England's further advice on designated sites/landscapes and advice on other natural environment issues is set out below.

Further advice on mitigation

Construction Environmental Management Plan

Without best practice working methods and mitigation there is risk, during the construction phase of the development, that pollution from machinery, equipment or materials may enter into the water. Natural England recommends that a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) is produced prior to the start of the works and submitted and approved in writing by your authority. This should be secured by an appropriate planning condition or obligation. The CEMP should include, but not limited to, the following:

- A list of defined potential impacts on the SSSI
- Details of methods for pollution control to ensure that no pollution (such as debris from dust or surface run off) is able to enter the water.
- Details on the storage and disposal of waste on site
- Details on how sediment/concrete/other debris that may be accidentally released during construction will be captured to prevent entering the water
- Details of Biosecurity to ensure that all equipment brought onto site does not bring any contaminants such as invasive species onto the site and into the waters.

The approved CEMP should be adhered to at all times, unless otherwise first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Site drainage infrastructure that ensures there are no adverse water quality impacts on the Cotswold Water Park SSSI

Design and delivery of site drainage infrastructure that ensures there are no adverse water quality impacts on the Cotswold Water Park SSSI. The approved drainage surface water works shall be completed in accordance with guidelines set by the CIRIA SuDS Manual (2023) C753F. The expectation is that the level of provision will be as described for the highest level of environmental protection outlined within the guidance. Given the circumstance and the level of protection afforded by the SSSI designation the 'high' waterbody sensitivity should be selected.

Measures to protect SSSI in the event of a fire, explosion, or other environmental incident on site

The measures as set out in the Acorn Bioenergy letter, *Response to Natural England's Information Request – 23 May 2025*, to ensure that no water quality impacts arise in the event of a fire, explosion, or other environmental incident on site.

Please note that if your authority is minded to grant planning permission contrary to the advice in this letter, you are required under Section 281 (6) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to notify Natural England of the permission, the terms on which it is proposed to grant it and how, if at all, your authority has taken account of Natural England's advice. You must also allow a further period of 21 days before the operation can commence.

Other advice

Further general advice on consideration of protected species and other natural environment issues is provided at Annex A.

If you have any queries relating to the advice in this letter please contact me on consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

We would not expect to provide further advice on the discharge of planning conditions or obligations attached to any planning permission.

Should the proposal change, please consult us again.

Yours sincerely

Yana Burlachka
Sustainable Development – West Midlands