

Conclusion.

These proposals have been the result of significant negotiation between the Agents and Environment Agency and English Nature. Much of the project submission submitted as part of the District Council's own Appropriate Assessment is therefore informed by best practice and comprehensive in terms of issues and impacts addressed. Issues relating to construction methodology can be controlled by the Highways Agency as determining authority and may be highlighted by the district Council in response to such proposals.

To date however the advisory agency recommends that inadequate work has been undertaken relating to the potential impacts of the tunnel option in terms of both quality and quantity of analysis relating to the tunnel dewatering system and potential impacts upon groundwater.

Outcome.

This assessment relates to two projects linked to the Stonehenge Visitor Centre / World Heritage Site programme. The Countess Road junction works and the undergrounding of the A.303.

1. Countess Road.

The assessment of the Countess Road works has identified no adverse impact upon the interests of the River Avon. Controls over construction and surface run off can be applied to the detailed submissions.

Based upon advice received during this Appropriate Assessment therefore, the proposals to upgrade the Countess Road junction are not considered to "alone or in combination" represent an adverse effect upon the designation interests of the cSAC River Avon.

2. Undergrounding proposals.

At this time, however and based upon the submissions made to the District Council as a part of its Appropriate Assessment the proposals for the undergrounding of the A.303 are considered to be deficient in information to satisfy the Council and its advisory agencies that the implications of the tunnel option for groundwater will not harm the designated interests of the cSAC River Avon.

It now lies with the Highways Agency, which is also a Competent Authority in respect of the A.303 proposals, to undertake its own Appropriate Assessment of this proposal and to include within it sufficient information to address the outstanding concerns relating to the tunnel proposals' impact upon the cSAC.

8.7 Wylve Valley Relief Road.

Relevant impacts

Construction runoff / ground water pollution
Impact upon habitat at any crossing points
Impact upon floodplain from structures / crossings
Loss of habitat.

Assessment.

The Wylie Valley proposals are currently looking to narrow down a range of options, which could variously impact upon the rivers Till, Wylie and possibly Nadder within the River Avon catchment.

As no preferred route has been selected it is not possible to identify the potential impacts upon the Avon system and therefore the scope to design out impacts or mitigate through management of construction, treatment and enhancement of habitat or design of drainage, attenuation and floodplain.

Outcome.

The Wylie Valley proposals are at too early a stage to be considered with any relevance within this Appropriate Assessment. A separate Assessment should be undertaken by the County Council as Highway Authority once a route design and mitigation proposals has been developed.

8.8 Brunel link and Harnham Relief Road.

Relevant impacts

- Surface run off during construction
- Pollution of groundwater during construction
- Operational surface run off
- Impact upon habitat through shadowing / intervention into habitat
- Impact upon floodplain

Assessment.

Wiltshire County Council as determining Planning Authority is consulting Salisbury District Council upon its planning application, accompanied by an Environmental Statement (E.S.) for the Harnham Relief Road and Brunel Link.

The scheme is likely to impact upon the catchment, habitat and floodplain to the Rivers Nadder and Avon and, to a lesser extent, the Bourne.

The E.S. identifies the following potential impacts:

- Loss of habitat through land take,
- Severance of habitat
- Disruption to local hydrology
- Pollution, including light pollution
- Increased disturbance following increased levels of activity. (N.T.S. 5.5)

The E.S. suggests that loss of floating vegetation (*Ranunculus*) as a result of the construction process and consequent shading is likely, although local cover is sparse.

There is likely to be loss of habitat for Desmoulin's whorl snail through loss of habitat and vegetation following bridge construction although no sign of the snail has been identified within the vicinity of the proposed bridge works.

The E.S. identifies potential adverse effects on important species / habitat and river flow as well as pollution of water, particularly during construction.

The impact of bridge construction (particularly piers) may also detract from water and habitat quality. This may impact upon important fish species, particularly if the bridge supports were to be piled.

The E.S. proposes that mitigation measures could be designed to address possible pollution arising from road accidents, impact upon species through phasing of construction relative to breeding seasons, the development of a construction management programme, design of lighting scheme.

The E.S. proposes that:

"the impact on the River Nadder and on the cSAC is considered to be slight adverse given the mitigation measures in place". (N.T.S. 5.39)

The River Nadder is not separate from the cSAC. The mitigation regime is identified in terms or areas that need to be addressed, but does not go into the detail necessary to identify what level of adverse effect will result.

The E.S. does address impacts upon the floodplain arising from these proposals, but not in terms of its impacts upon the conservation interests leading to the designation of the cSAC.

Conclusion.

The proposal currently lacks adequate detailing within its mitigation proposals to allow for a confident assessment of the degree of adverse impact upon the cSAC arising from the scheme. Further work needs to be undertaken to identify how design and management solutions could deliver appropriate prevention of harm and mitigation.

Outcome.

On the basis of the information available to the District Council at this time the Harnham Relief road and Brunel Link are demonstrated to have an adverse effect upon the conservation interests of the River Avon cSAC. On this basis the proposal cannot be considered acceptable within the terms of the Appropriate Assessment.

Further work needs to be undertaken to determine the extent of adverse impact and the demonstrable benefits that may arise from mitigation programmes.

It will then be for Wiltshire County Council as determining Competent Authority to consider whether they need to take account of issues of "overriding public interest" in determining both the Appropriate Assessment and planning application.

8.9 The Maltings Salisbury City re-development.

Relevant impacts.

- Increases in water demand, (operational)
- Increased discharge of effluent, (operational)
- Surface run off during construction
- Impact upon surface drainage / attenuation and flooding patterns

Assessment.

Given the proximity of the scheme to watercourses within the River Avon cSAC catchment the most important impacts are likely to arise during the construction process where accidents of

flooding could result in pollution of the nearby watercourses. A method statement for avoiding the potential incidence is required but has not been drafted.

There is an opportunity for the development to improve upon existing surface water drainage solutions with Sustainable Urban Drainage designs, attenuation and rainwater recycling. Whilst the development refers to SUDS, it does not address sufficiently comprehensively the scope / impact that a water management / re-use regime could have upon the discharge patterns and flood implications.

The increase in retailing space is likely to impact upon water demand and foul discharge, however the changes will be minor in comparison to other schemes within this Assessment.

Conclusion.

This scheme may offer a positive impact upon the cSAC through improved water management compared to the existing retail units and car park designs. It may be that the Maltings proposal, as an operational issue has no impact upon the River Avon cSAC. This issue is not however properly addressed.

The delivery of a comprehensive construction management programme (as yet undrafted) represents the most important potential impact upon the Avon arising from this scheme.

Outcome.

The Council needs to consider detailed construction management proposals, addressing proximity of materials and potential incidents to the cSAC. It may be possible to remove the requirement for an Appropriate Assessment as the remaining impacts upon the Avon will vary between insignificant (increased water demand and effluent discharge) to beneficial (improved surface flow rates and more efficient use of rainwater)

8.10 Town Centre re-development, Ringwood, New Forest.

Relevant impacts.

- Increases in water demand, (operational)
- Increased discharge of effluent, (operational)
- Surface run off during construction
- Impact upon surface drainage / attenuation and flooding patterns

Assessment.

This proposal mirrors the Maltings scheme in Salisbury in that it is a central intensification of a retailing and parking area close to the River Avon catchment.

Whilst outside Salisbury District, the requirements of the Appropriate Assessment are to look at impacts upon the entire cSAC "in combination". This assessment therefore records the current application to redevelop superstore retailing and ancillary shopping facilities and improve car parking to the north west of Ringwood centre some 40 metres from the river Avon.

As with the Maltings, the increases in demand and foul water volumes arising from a larger retailing proposal will be relatively minor.

The key implications will relate to the adequacy of the construction management methodology.

The opportunities to introduce permeable surfacing into the parking areas as a part of wider Sustainable Urban Drainage Solutions may offer positive solutions to surface water flow rate attenuation.

To date, no construction methodology has been submitted. The scheme indicates the use of sustainable drainage, but without detail.

Conclusion.

As with the Mallings, this scheme may offer a positive impact upon the cSAC through improved water management compared to the existing retail units and car park designs. It may be that the Ringwood proposal, as an operational issue has no impact upon the River Avon cSAC.

The delivery of a comprehensive construction management programme represents the most important potential impact upon the Avon arising from this scheme.

Outcome.

Detailed construction management proposals, addressing proximity of materials and potential incidents to the cSAC need to be provided to New Forest District Council. It may then be possible to remove the requirement for an Appropriate Assessment as the remaining impacts upon the Avon will vary between insignificant (increased water demand and effluent discharge) to beneficial (improved surface flow rates and more efficient use of rainwater)

For the purpose of this Appropriate Assessment This Council should advise NFDC that a construction methodology needs to be delivered. This can be controlled by condition. On this basis the Ringwood scheme is not considered to adversely impact upon the River Avon cSAC.

9. Summary.

The In Combination Assessment has identified a number of schemes which can be assessed on their basis without an Appropriate Assessment of the "in combination" assessment:

Project Allenby (and impact upon the Plain cCAC)

This scheme can be considered on its own merits as having no adverse impacts upon the River Avon's abstraction or effluent levels. The impacts upon usage can be controlled by condition. The impact upon plain management is unlikely to be impacted by Allenby, subject to habitat mitigation measures.

Solstice Business Park.

An outline consent exists for employment uses. Any proposals outside the consented schemes may well require consideration of impact and possible Appropriate Assessment if they raise issues of water management and capacity not otherwise addressed.

Housing development.

This raises issues of site management, abstraction and effluent treatment. The developers can address construction management, Sustainable Urban Drainage and efficient use of water within dwellings. The abstraction and foul treatment requires a wider assessment.

Stonehenge Visitors Centre.

This scheme will result in 800,000 visitors per year. The proposers can address construction and floodplain issues. The impact upon abstraction and effluent treatment require wider assessment.

Road schemes (A.303, Wylve & Brunel link)

Each of these schemes requires additional assessment to consider impacts upon the cSAC habitat.

None of these projects has achieved a degree of certainty and information that would allow an Appropriate Assessment to accept the road proposals would have no adverse impact upon the Conservation Interests of the cSAC.

Town Centre re-development proposals.

The schemes proposed for Salisbury and Ringwood equally require robust construction phasing methodologies to ensure a nil impact upon the cSAC. Outside the construction issues, these schemes can offer improvements to surface drainage and water efficiency, subject to planning decisions. Further work is required to determine whether these redevelopments will require an appropriate assessment on their own basis.

10. In combination Assessment.

This wide ranging Appropriate Assessment has examined a series of development proposals which have the capacity to impact upon the qualities and habitat within the cSAC River Avon.

Many of the schemes thus far assessed raise issues that can be ring fenced via construction methodologies. (Allenby & Possibly city / town centre redevelopments)

Some schemes will require further work to inform and assessment of the potential adverse impact and mitigation / controls. (Roads schemes)

Some of the schemes assessed will require further information before any judgement regarding the "in combination" assessment can be made. (Stonehenge Visitors Centre and housing proposals)

This assessment must however address the impacts that the "in combination" impacts may have upon the environment and habitat management regime of the cSAC River Avon where schemes will impact upon abstraction and effluent management.

Based upon Wessex Water assessments informed by this review undertaken in association with the District Council, Environment Agency and English Nature in March 2003, the current levels of demand against licensed abstraction will be:

Abstraction.

Housing proposals	0.25 MI/d
Employment proposals	0.40 MI/d
Stonehenge Visitors Centre	0.12 MI/d
Outstanding housing completions (Amesbury)	0.02 MI/d
Total	0.79 MI/d

This represents a 0.71 Ml/d surplus (unused licensed abstraction) over current licensed abstraction levels.

The extrapolation of the housing and employment demand beyond 2011 the expiry of the Replacement Local Plan review will equate to a 0.35 Ml/d deficit. This represents a need for additional abstraction over currently licensed levels.

Foul sewerage.

Additional demand at Ratfyn STW to 2011	11%
Additional demand at Amesbury STW to 2011	24%

The Appropriate Assessment of the identified major projects must therefore consider whether the levels of abstraction proposed, and the impact upon the cSAC arising from additional sewerage treatment will represent an adverse impact upon the River Avon cSAC.

Within the overall water supply and foul drainage management regime there are controls other than planning consents which impact upon abstraction and sewerage.

The Environment Agency administers levels of abstraction and sewerage outflow treatment through the Water Resources Act 1991. These control regimes govern the management of impacts upon the River Avon based upon the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

The proposals identified within the overall Appropriate Assessment are likely to require an assessment of abstraction levels and foul drainage to be reviewed by the Environment Agency within this (WRA 1991) consent regime.

The need to abstract over the current licensed levels set out above, and requirement to treat foul effluent levels at such levels are therefore capable of consideration within the requirements of this regime.

The Environment Agency may decide not to increase abstraction from the Avon cSAC. In this instance Wessex Water will need to address alternative water sources as occurs elsewhere. An increase in demand for water above current license levels can be resolved without adverse impact upon the River Avons' conservation interests.

Wessex Water have programmed phosphate stripping improvements at both Ratfyn and Amesbury STWs.

Should the current range of developments exceed the current sewerage treatment works capacities, both Wessex Water and the Environment Agency operate within a control framework which allows further water quality improvements to the STW's to be required by the Agency and constructed by Wessex Water. These improvements are likely to include nutrients treatment, storm outflows and improvements to water quality.

Any such proposals would require the approval of the Environment Agency within the Habitats Regulations, as a Competent Authority as a part of its overall management of the River Avon.

The Environment Agency's conclusion upon this "In Combination" assessment of River Avon projects is that further improvements to the local sewerage system may be required, however these requirements and their implications for the conservation interests within the River Avon cSAC are capable of being addressed within the Habitat Regulation Regime for which they have control.

The additional water and foul sewerage implications arising from the housing proposal and new visitors centre can be accommodated without adverse impact upon the River Avon. Controls are available to the Environment Agency to address abstraction levels and improvements to sewerage capacity and outflow quality.

10. Conclusion.

The conclusions of the Salisbury District Council Appropriate Assessment are set out below:

Scheme	Assessment	Need for Appropriate Assessment or "In Combination" assessment
Allenby	Neutral impact, possible enhancements to abstraction and run off management	Not necessary as construction impacts can be ring fenced.
Solstice Business Park	Outline consent informs wider assessment	Only if proposals fall outside outline consent.
Housing proposals	Comprehensive water management and drainage proposals	In combination assessment controls construction pollution issues. Run off management schemes included. Abstraction and discharge require consideration within wider picture
Stonehenge Visitors Centre	Scheme for surface water treatment and usage limitation	Construction pollution issues controllable through management programme. Surface run off to be attenuated to greenfield rate. Requirement for additional abstraction / effluent treatment
A.303 & Folly Bottom	Impact upon runoff, construction and floodplain	Insufficient information regarding tunnel impact upon hydrology. In combination assessment may still be necessary once additional information is provided.
Wylve Valley Relief	Impact upon construction, habitat and floodplain	Insufficient information regarding impacts. In combination assessment likely once a route is defined.
Brunel Link & Harnham Relief Road	Impact upon construction, habitat and floodplain	Insufficient information regarding mitigation to determine that there will be no adverse impact.
Maltings redevelopment	Impact upon central drainage & construction methodology	No details regarding construction protection and mitigation. Submission of such details may demonstrate that In combination assessment is no longer necessary
Ringwood central redevelopment	Impact upon central drainage & construction methodology	No details regarding construction protection and mitigation. Submission of such details may demonstrate that In combination assessment is no longer necessary

11. Recommendations.

That the outcome of the District Council's Appropriate Assessment of a series of projects identified in Section 6 of this report, as set out at Sections 9 and 10 is approved and the relevant developers and other competent authorities informed of the District Council's decision and the

controls which the District Council considers necessary within any planning or other consent subsequently issued.

12. Background Papers:

The Conservation (Natural Habitats & c) Regulations 1994
PPG 9
Environmental Statements for:
Residential Development proposals on land south of Boscombe Down,
Harnham Relief Road and Brunel Link
Project Allenby

13. Implications:

- **Financial:** Fees for Counsel advice during assessment. No ongoing costs.
- **Legal:** Interpretation of the Regulations and ongoing application to individual development proposals.
- **Personnel:** None.
- **Community Safety:** None.
- **Council's Core Values:** Strategy supports SDC Core Values relating to protection of the environment and partnership working.
- **Ward(s) Affected:** Numerous within all committee Areas
- **Consultation Undertaken:** Counsels' advice, ongoing consultation with English Nature, Environment Agency, Wessex Water, and Wiltshire County Council.