

Dear David,

As per previous consultations on this application, Natural England has no comment. In line with our published standards for how we meet our duties as a statutory consultee, we only provide detailed advice on applications that pose a risk to nationally designated sites and landscapes. None of our Impact Risk Zones are triggered in this case. That is not to say the issues you highlight are unimportant in their own right or to local residents, but they are not within the remit of Natural England's planning advice and I trust you will receive advice from bodies with the appropriate expertise.

Kind regards
Simon

Simon Stonehouse
Senior Planning Adviser
Wessex team
Natural England

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From: David Kenyon <david.kenyon@somerset.gov.uk>
Sent: 13 June 2023 15:16
To: SM-NE-Consultations (NE) <consultations@naturalengland.org.uk>; Stonehouse, Simon <Simon.Stonehouse@naturalengland.org.uk>; Cockings, Amelia <Amelia.Cockings@naturalengland.org.uk>
Subject: FW: 22/03560/OUT. land OS 6975, South of Bowden Road, Templecombe

Simon / Amelia

I refer to my consultation email on 1st June below. My previous email has requested informed comments from Natural England in response to the submitted Phase 2 Geo-environmental and Geotechnical Site Investigation report, whilst also having due regard to concerns and objections raised by local residents relating to previous alleged use of the site for foot and mouth burials. Similar requests have been made of the Council's Environmental Protection team and the Environment Agency.

In addition, third parties have been notified of receipt of the submitted Phase 2 Geo-environmental and Geotechnical Site Investigation report. Two detailed representations have been submitted which I have attached for your perusal. Mr Carter questions the findings and conclusions of the report and that large areas of the application site have not been tested. He raises concerns about potable water supplies, high concentrations of mercury which need to be addressed, unsuitability of the land for soakaways and

disposal of surface water discharge. Interestingly he asks whether the Council would serve an FOI request on DEFRA to supply requested information about pollutants buried on the land from the 1950's to the present day and he concludes that further ground investigations are necessary.

Natural England's comments have been requested by 22nd June. Mindful of the public interest that this application has generated, I would appreciate the Natural England's comments being as comprehensive, thorough and detailed as possible together with its recommendation setting out whether Natural England is content with the submitted information or whether such information that has been submitted is unacceptable and/or insufficient. I would ask that Natural England's comments also take into account the expressed concerns from local residents, an example of which has been provided by Mr Carter and Mr Vyse.

Similar email requests have been made of the Council's Environmental Protection team and the Environment Agency.

Regards
Dave

David Kenyon

Development Management Specialist

Somerset Council

+44 (0) 300 123 2224

Please note that my email address has now changed to david.kenyon@somerset.gov.uk



From: David Kenyon <david.kenyon@somerset.gov.uk>

Sent: 01 June 2023 14:21

To: SM-NE-Consultations (NE) <consultations@naturalengland.org.uk>;

Simon.Stonehouse@naturalengland.org.uk; amelia.cockings@naturalengland.org.uk

Subject: RE: 22/03560/OUT. land OS 6975, South of Bowden Road, Templecombe

Simon / Amelia

Further to my email below, as advised, the applicant Gleeson Land has instructed RSK to undertake further ground investigations following concerns raised from local residents. The survey objectives are to identify any land contamination and/or geotechnical constraints of the site; and to identify the need for any additional investigation or remediation works.

In summary, the survey found that:

- Ground Model: no significant visual or olfactory evidence of soil contamination was observed during the course of intrusive investigation; and
- Geo-environmental Assessment: the site investigation and GQRA confirmed the absence of elevated contaminant concentrations within the soil profile across the site. It also found that the site is not located within an area that requires radon protective measures. Notwithstanding this, the report recommends that vigilance should be maintained during development for any undiscovered adverse ground conditions. A watching brief should be implemented during any

development works at the site, with a strategy to address any unforeseen ground conditions that may affect the identifies sensitive receptors.

Reference has also been made to a residents' concerns with regard to the grid positioning used and, as you'll see from the attached, the site investigation report includes an investigation strategy and methodology section containing objectives, selection of investigation methods and the adopted investigation strategy (targeted and non-targeted boreholes and trial pits). Appendix A (page 97) provides a detailed overview and justification of the process which should provide clarification sought by the resident.

I trust the attached report provides further clarification surrounding the ground conditions of the site. This report has been uploaded onto the website, together with the email from the agent accompanying the report. Your comments in response to the report would be appreciated within the next 21 days, having regard also to the concerns that have been expressed by third parties.

I will arrange for a formal consultation to be sent in the usual manner.

Regards
Dave

David Kenyon

Development Management Specialist

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From: David Kenyon <david.kenyon@somerset.gov.uk>

Sent: 21 April 2023 15:16

To: SM-NE-Consultations (NE) <consultations@naturalengland.org.uk>;

Simon.Stonehouse@naturalengland.org.uk; amelia.cockings@naturalengland.org.uk

Subject: 22/03560/OUT. land OS 6975, South of Bowden Road, Templecombe

Simon / Amelia

With reference to the above application 'Outline planning permission with all matters reserved except for access, for up to 140 dwellings (use class C3), public open space, landscape planting and biodiversity enhancements, vehicular access from Bowden Road, community use (flexible use class E, F1 and/or F2), and associated infrastructure works'

Natural England was consulted about this email on 19th January 2023 but, to date, no formal consultation response appears to have been received.

Meanwhile, several representations have been received from local residents stating that there are contaminated land issues with this site because there is "compelling anecdotal evidence" that within the four fields forming the proposed development that circa 1967, during the then outbreak of 'foot and

mouth disease', part of the land was used as a burial site for slaughtered animals and their carcasses interred therein. So strong is this claim that residents are stating that this must be thoroughly investigated. It is understood DEFRA (Department for Environment and Rural Affairs) would require strict controls over any disturbance and use of such land.

This Council's Environmental Health Officer has been advised about these concerns and he has replied as follows:

"The strict control on disturbance of DEFRA sites for Foot and Mouth relates to the last outbreak whereby carcasses were buried. It is my understanding that from the last outbreak, no animals were buried that had a positive test result, only culled animals as part of a preventative spread policy and had a negative result were buried. DEFRA's own research shows that this risk of Foot and Mouth being present is after 20+ years is very low. Consultation should be sort before disturbance of sites from the last outbreak.

The risks from earlier outbreaks of the 1950s and 1960s still being present is negligible.

The contaminated land condition requested should take into account the potential for the site to be a burial site of animals from whatever Foot and Mouth outbreak and include the correct consultations with government depts such as DEFRA, and investigations, including the relevant and necessary sampling and soil description. The first part of the condition includes a desk study which should incorporate the consultation with DEFRA. Environmental Health will review any submissions of contaminated land reports when submitted as part of a planning condition discharge request as is normal. The contaminated land condition is a pre commencement condition. As long as the investigation is carried out in accordance with industry best practice and British Standards, there should be no risk to members of the public or investigation personnel."

I have now received an email from the applicant's agent making me aware of the recent site investigations undertaken at the application site. From review of the public comments received, the applicant/agents understand that many residents have expressed concern that the land south of Bowden Road was formerly used as a burial site during the foot and mouth breakout. Whilst initial site investigation showed no evidence that the site was used a burial ground, Gleeson Land have instructed further investigations in order to provide absolute clarity on the matter. I am now informed that, following the site investigations, the agents have received a call from their ground investigations team who were on the site and they have confirmed that they did not find any evidence of the site being used as a burial site. They are in the process of preparing a full report which should be available in the next 1-2 weeks which will be sent onto me accordingly. Upon receipt of such a report I will upload it onto the website and will get notifications sent to the Parish Councils and third parties informing them of receipt of the report. I will also send copies of the report directly to Natural England, and also to the Council's EHO and the EA inviting comments.

Probably not surprisingly, I have received a couple of emails from local residents who have noted the investigations being carried out on the site. Those emails have been uploaded onto the website and you will note various concerns raised.

In particular the comment that *"The grid system plotted by GPS should be at the minimum of 10 meter centres. This would then define geological hazards, soft alluvial materials, contamination and*

groundwater. The applicants are aware of the contaminated areas consequently the large grid system is being used to avoid these areas.”

I have advised the agent that it would be useful to have the ground investigation team’s response to this within the report or in an accompanying letter.

Regards

Dave

David Kenyon

Development Management Specialist

Somerset Council

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