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RADLETT STRATEGIC RAIL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE

REBUTTAL NOTE IN RESPECT OF THE WRITTEN STATEMENT PRODUCED BY MARTIN HICKS OF HBRC ON BEHALF OF ST ALBANS CITY COUNCIL

BY TIM GOODWIN

Introduction

The main purpose of this rebuttal note is to address those points raised within the written statement (Ecological Issues) produced by Martin Hicks in relation to the proposed Rail Freight Interchange at the former Aerodrome, North Orbital Road, Upper Colne Valley, Hertfordshire. In addition, this note addresses further documentation submitted by HBRC to the Ratification Group of the Wildlife Sites Project in relation to the proposed designation of parts of the site as a County Wildlife Site (CWS) (see Appendix 1) and also the letter (dated 3rd November 2009) received from Martin Hicks (see Appendix 2) which was written in response to my letter of 19th October detailing Ecology Solutions views on the bird interest at the site.

Those points raised by John Hargreaves in his proof of evidence do not raise any additional issues to those contained within Mr Hicks' statement and so these are not addressed specifically in this note.

This document should be read in conjunction with my own written statement which is before the Inquiry. It should be noted that my written statement addresses all of those issues raised within that of Mr Hicks and as such this document serves to highlight those points I have already made and draws reference to them where appropriate.

Mr Hicks' written statement focuses on the following key issues:

- The acceptability of translocation as a means of mitigating adverse effects on the acid grassland;
- The proposed designation of areas of acid grassland as a CWS;
- The butterfly interest at the site and increased conservation status; and
- Impacts on birds, including increased conservation status of Lapwing, the appropriateness of proposed mitigation and the proposed designation of the site as a CWS for its bird interest.

I deal with each of these topics in turn with reference to my own written statement and that of Mr Hicks where appropriate and use the same clause notation as within

these documents for clarity. Finally I deal specifically with points raised within Mr Hicks' letter of 3rd November 2009.

Translocation as a means of mitigating adverse effects on the acid grassland

Section 2 of Mr Hicks' statement deals with the issue of the acceptability of grassland translocation. This issue was considered in detail at the previous Inquiry by the Inspector and is dealt with at paragraphs 3.22 – 3.25 of my statement.

As stated at paragraph 3.23 of my statement, Mr Hicks having conceded in cross examination, both the Inspector and the Secretary of State agreed at the last Inquiry that a translocation of this grassland was an acceptable means of mitigating any significant adverse effects on this habitat. I see no reason why the new Inspector should conclude differently.

Designation of areas of acid grassland as a County Wildlife Site

Section 3 of Martin Hicks' statement sets out his views on why some of the grassland within the Appeal Site would meet the criteria for designation as a CWS. This grassland has since been designated as a CWS.

The value of the acid grassland is not disputed by the Appellant and appropriate mitigation has been put forward. The mitigation has been agreed in principal by an Inspector and the Secretary of State at the last Inquiry. It should be noted that the Inspector at the previous Inquiry considered the proposals in the light of the grassland being of local designation quality and came to his conclusions with such a designation in mind.

The butterfly interest at the site and increased conservation status

Section 4 of Mr Hicks' statement deals with the recent increased conservation status of the Small Heath butterfly and also the Small Copper butterfly, a declining species. Martin Hicks considers this to be a "material change in status" (paragraph 4.2 of his statement) since the last Inquiry.

I do not consider this change in status to be material to the Inquiry since the presence of the Small Heath butterfly on site has been made clear at both Inquiries and appropriate mitigation put forward. Its presence has already been considered as part of the requirements under PPS9 and a change in status does not confer any necessary change to the proposed (and indeed agreed) mitigation. The butterfly is of course a mobile creature. The translocation of the acid grassland, together with the creation of new and enhanced grassland areas, as contained within the Appeal Proposals, will ensure there is no net loss of optimal habitat for this and other butterfly species.

Impacts on birds

Increased conservation status of Lapwing

The list of Habitats and Species of Principal Importance in England, published in accordance with the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, includes Lapwing. This conveys a provision for the Secretary of State to consider effects on those listed species, in this case Lapwing, in the light of their conservation status, however as part of the requirements under PPS9 there is a general provision to consider effects on such species in any event. As such, there has been a change

in conservation status of Lapwing, but this is not a material change in respect of the Inquiry and there is no reason why the new Inspector would reach a different conclusion to that of the previous Inspector.

Regardless of the increased conservation status now associated with this species, the site is not currently considered to be of any significant importance to this, or indeed any other bird species as set out within paragraphs 3.6 – 3.19 of my statement.

In any event, appropriate mitigation has been put forward in respect of the bird interest at the site, which aims to restore suitable breeding bird habitat to a more favourable status than that currently present within the Appeal Site.

Appropriateness of proposed mitigation

Section 5.1 of Mr Hicks' statement sets out his view that the proposed County Park is not fit for purpose while Section 5.3 details the past value of the Appeal Site to birds. It is accepted by both parties that the bird interest has diminished and his views are based around the previous higher value to bird species as stated at paragraphs 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 within Mr Hicks' statement.

The bird interest at the Appeal Site was taken into account at the last Inquiry and it is considered that this interest has diminished in the intervening period, as set out within my statement at paragraphs 3.6 – 3.14. I consider that the proposed mitigation / compensation measures are more than adequate in respect of the previous higher value of the Appeal Site to birds as recorded in surveys between 2004 - 2007, notwithstanding the current diminished value.

Designation of the site as a County Wildlife site for its wetland bird interest

The appeal site has recently been designated as a CWS for its bird interest (see Appendix 3). I have set out within my statement why I do not consider the site to merit designation as a CWS on account of its wetland bird interest at paragraphs 3.6 – 3.15. In summary this is due to a diminished breeding bird assemblage brought about at least in part by changes in the management of habitats within the Appeal Site.

I have studied further documentation submitted by HBRC to the Ratification Group of the Wildlife Sites Project in respect of the designation of part of the Appeal Site on account of its bird interest. The key issue, as is stated in the HBRC report to the Ratification Group, is as follows:

“species are included in the final score if they have been recorded as probably breeding in a majority of recent years, **provided information is available to support this statement**. Species **regularly using a site for essential activities** (such as feeding) whilst breeding, also may be included even if they nest outside the site.”

In the absence of any qualification for “a majority of recent years” the designation criteria would clearly be open to misapplication. Under the second criterion for designation of a site for its bird interest “regularly” is defined as qualifying in 4 out of the last 5 years and it follows that this would apply to “regularly” as included above. This definition rightly qualifies that it is the most recent data which is of significance in determining the value of a site. It would also follow that this definition of “regularly” should equally be applied when qualifying “a majority of recent years”.

It is noted that the basis of the designation is reliant upon data from 2004 and 2005, with reference also made to 2007 data (where bird numbers were generally seen to decline). It is stated within the HBRC report (see Appendix 1) that the 2004 and 2005 data is the only data available that can be used to inform the decision as to whether the site meets the criteria for designation. The burden of data provision clearly lies with the person / persons proposing the site for qualification and HBRC are reliant upon old, out of date data, providing no current information themselves and choosing to dismiss the more up to date information provided by the Appellant for 2007 and 2009. On the basis that the site would need to meet the criterion in four out of the last five years the site clearly could not be designated since HBRC have dismissed the information provided for 2007 and 2009 and so by their own admission have no appropriate data set which could be applied to the designation criteria. The information provided by Ecology Solutions for 2009 shows that the site would not meet the designation criteria and given the decline noted in 2007 there is a strong likelihood that any information for 2008 would show the site well below the threshold necessary to meet the criterion. Therefore, on balance, even in the event that data for 2004 – 2009 were applied to the criterion, the site would only meet the criterion in two out of five years.

The table below is based upon that produced within HBRCs report to the Ratification Group. The table has been reproduced to show all of the data available for the period 2004 – 2009.

Open water and Margins												
	2004	NoW	2005	NoW	2006	NoW	2007	NoW	2008	NoW	2009	NoW
Breeding	21.5	12.5	25.5	16.6	ND	ND	2	ND	ND	ND	NoWP	N/A
Foraging	5	5	8	6	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	1	1
Roosting	6	6	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	N/A	N/A
(B+F)	26.5	17.5	33.5	22.5	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	1	1
Threshold	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
Met	Yes	No	Yes	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	No
Red List	7	4	7	3	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Threshold	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Met	Yes	No	Yes	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

NoW = No waders scenario used from data

ND = No data other than for 2007 map of waders during breeding season

NoWP = no waders present

Table 1 Possible qualification of site for years 2004 – 2009 under Open Water and Margins criteria

	Wet Grassland											
	2004	NoW	2005	NoW	2006	NoW	2007	NoW	2008	NoW	2009	NoW
Breeding	9	6	12	11	ND	ND	1	ND	ND	ND	NoWP	N/A
Foraging	2	2	5	3	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	1	1
Roosting	6	6	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	N/A	N/A
(B+F)	11	8	17	14	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	1	1
Threshold	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Met	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	No
Red List	4	2	5	3	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Threshold	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Met	Yes	No	Yes	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

NoW = No waders scenario used from data

ND = No data other than for 2007 map of waders during breeding season

NoWP = no waders present

Table 2 Possible qualification of site for years 2004 – 2009 under Wet Grassland criteria

It is generally accepted by ecologists that data from the last two years can be regarded as being sufficiently recent to allow proper analysis, for example for use within an Environmental Impact Assessment. Data older than two years is considered by Natural England and through appeal by the Secretary of State to be out of date and in instances where this is the only data relied upon for assessment, further information is requested to be submitted to planning authorities, or the Secretary of State by means of a Regulation 19 submission in order that impacts can be properly assessed. In this instance the data relied upon is at least four years old. It is considered right and proper to adopt an approach whereby, if data is not appropriate for assessment purposes, then it would also not be acceptable for designation purposes. On this basis a designation of the Appeal Site for its bird interest which is reliant upon data from at least four years ago should be considered out of step with accepted principals and national guidance.

It is quite clear from the designation criteria that evidence must be produced to demonstrate that the site meets the criteria and that this evidence should be available not only for recent years but for the majority of recent years. As can clearly be seen from the tables above, the site would only meet the criteria for designation for either category (Open Water and Margins / Wet Grassland) in 2004 and 2005. Based on the information gathered during 2009, I consider that the site would not merit designation. By HBRCs own admission the information available for the years 2006 – 2009 would not provide a sufficient basis to support the CWS designation.

At paragraph 5.4.3 of his statement Mr Hicks draws on the survey work conducted by Ecology Solutions during 2009. For clarity, I wish to make the point that the surveys were principally to facilitate an assessment of the relative importance of the habitats to wetland birds and that whilst a breeding bird survey *per se* was not carried out, the surveys were conducted at such a time of year that had wading / wetland birds have bred this year, any dependant young would still have been recorded. Given the recorded decline in bird interest at the Appeal Site and the decline in habitat suitability over the past few years, which is not disputed, I disagree with Mr Hicks that longer-term data is required to justify this position. I fail to see how, without

intervention, such as the proposed mitigation / compensation / enhancement measures any different conclusion would be reached.

As I have stated the bird interest at the Appeal Site was taken into account at the last Inquiry, when the interest was greater and I consider that the mitigation proposed is more than appropriate to off-set any perceived adverse impacts on birds in any event.

Consideration of Mr Hicks' letter of 3rd November 2009

Mr Hicks concurs with my own view that the Appeal Proposals confer no new considerations of any significance. He states, in relation to ecological considerations:

“most if not all of which were placed before the Inspector at the previous Public Inquiry.”

Mr Hicks also draws attention to the Inspectors report on the last Inquiry. This report concluded that any harm to the underlying ecological interest would not be significant. I concur with the view of the previous Inspector and as I have previously stated, see no reason why the new Inspector would differ from the conclusions reached by the last Inspector.

With respect to the request for additional bird data for the site, Ecology Solutions have provided Mr Hicks with data for 2009 which is both relevant and up to date. I am not aware of any other recent surveys undertaken by HBRC or other third parties; indeed it is clear from Mr Hicks' written statement and documentation submitted to the Ratification Group that no additional data other than that supplied by Ecology Solutions exists.

As discussed above, the “comprehensive breeding bird survey information” relied upon by HBRC in applying the Hertfordshire Wildlife Site Criteria is out of date and does not reflect the current status of the Appeal Site, which clearly now has a diminished bird interest and would not I believe meet the criteria for designation. To designate a site in circumstances such as these on the basis of old data, which does not reflect the current status of the site looks contrived and opportunistic and devalues the whole process of designation.

I note from the third paragraph of Mr Hicks' letter that representations on a decision to accept or object to the proposed designation of a site can be made either when information is submitted to the Ratification Group for consideration (either at the submission stage or following this), or once the landowner has been informed of the new status of the site. For clarity, the Appellants have already submitted information to the Ratification Group / HBRC which demonstrates why the site should not be designated for its bird interest. I find it incomprehensible that representations could be made following designation. To advocate a process whereby a designation could be overturned immediately following ratification seriously devalues the designation process. The status of the site should be properly assessed, using up to date information before ratification. Where there is sufficient doubt over the value of the site (as in this case) especially when considering the most up to date position, a site simply should not be designated and to do so offering the opportunity to appeal / object to the decision brings into question the validity of the designation in the first instance and is simply not acceptable. However, on the basis that representations / objections can be lodged

following designation, the Appellants will be lodging a strong objection to the Ratification Group in due course.

Conclusions

The written statement submitted by Mr Hicks raises no issues which have not been dealt with in my written statement in respect of ecology in relation to the proposed Rail Freight Interchange at the former Aerodrome, North Orbital Road, Upper Colne Valley, Hertfordshire.

The reasons for designation of the Appeal Site in relation to the sites bird interest as set out within the report and information submitted to the Ratification Group by HBRC are considered to be fundamentally flawed and it is considered incomprehensible that the site could be ratified as a CWS. An objection to this designation will be lodged with the Ratification Group in due course.

Mr Hicks' letter of 3rd November 2009 confirms that the Appeal Proposals confer no new considerations of any significance and confirms that only old data is relied upon for the purpose of designation.

I believe that the information provided within the ES and my written statement show that the Appeal Proposal accord with relevant nature conservation objectives and are in step with relevant national, regional and local planning policy with regard to nature conservation. It can therefore be concluded that there are no justifiable reasons for dismissing the Appeal or rejecting the Appeal Proposals on the grounds of ecology and nature conservation.

The evidence which I have prepared and provide for this appeal reference: APP/B1930/A/09/2109433/NWF in this Rebuttal Statement and in my original statement is true and has been prepared and given in accordance with the guidance of my professional institution and I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Documentation submitted by HBRC to the Ratification Group

**Bird criteria issues to be considered by the Ratification Group of the
Hertfordshire Wildlife Sites Project**

Site of former quarry at Radlett aerodrome. (no. 77/082)

Bird survey data for the above site has been assessed against the current Selection Criteria for Local Wildlife Sites in Hertfordshire (4th version; reviewed 2009).

The breeding bird's data for 2004 and 2005 was assessed against Criteria 3 for Lowland Open Water and Margins and Lowland Wet Grassland.

Criteria 3 states:

"Sites which support outstanding breeding assemblages as defined by the new criteria; Habitat-Species Lists (Tables 2-7)."

On the basis of the 2004 and 2005 data, the site meets Criteria 3 for Wildlife Site status.

There appears to be breeding bird data for 2007, as indicated by EPR in their Environmental Statement Part III (SRFI APPLICATION 2009, paragraph 5.67), but this is not available to us at this point in time. However, Map 5.3 Breeding Wader Territories 2005/2007 (Ecological Planning & Research; March 2009) shows the presence of Lapwing, Redshank, Ringed Plover and Little Ringed Plover at the site. Other breeding species may have been recorded, but we are not aware of any additional data, for 2007 or subsequent years.

The full text of the bird criteria states:

"Species are included in the final score if they have been recorded as probably breeding in a majority of recent years, provided information is available to support that statement."

Therefore, the key issue for the Wildlife Site ratification group to consider is:

Can the site be ratified as a Wildlife Site on the basis of the available bird data.

Graham Goodall. BSc (Hons). CEnv. MIEEM.
Senior Ecology Officer, Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre.

Member of Bird Club Scientific Committee. Hertfordshire Natural History Society.

27th October 2009.

In respect of the above position, further information regarding application of the criteria in respect of the proposed Wildlife Site can be given as follows:

1. For the data applicable to Area 1, the EPR data and more recent information can be tabled for two bird habitat criteria thus:

	Open water & margins						Wet grassland					
	2004	(NoW)	2005	(NoW)	2007	2009	2004	(NoW)	2005	(NoW)	2007	2009
Breeding	21.5	12.5	25.5	16.5	2 spp wader	NoWp	9	6	12	11	1 spp wader	NoWp
Foraging	5	5	8	6			2	2	5	3		
Roosting	6	6					6	6				
(B+F)	26.5	17.5	33.5	22.5			11	8	17	14		
Threshold	25	25	25	25			10	10	10	10		
Met	YES	No	Yes	No	N/A	N/A	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A
Red list	7	4	7	3	ND	ND	4	2	5	3	ND	ND
Threshold	6	6	6	6			4	4	4	4		
Met	YES	No	Yes	No	N/A	N/A	Yes	No	Yes	No	N/A	N/A

NoW = No 'Waders' scenario used from data (ie Redshank, Snipe, Ringed Plover (RP), Little ringed plover (LRP), Lapwing).

ND = No data other than for 2007 map of 'waders' during breeding season (showing in comparison with that of 2005, no Redshank 2-0, reduced Lapwing numbers 28 - 19, increased LRP numbers 2-3 and increased RP numbers 4 - 5). No data has been presented at all for 2009, other than an observation that no breeding waders were observed (NoWp = no waders present) along with the presence of some waterfowl.

Issues for consideration:

Species lists for two 'Habitats' were used to assess WS status covering two years. 'Wader' breeding territories were mapped in 2007, of the three species present then, two are listed in the open water criteria, and one for wet grassland criteria.

Two important considerations of the criteria which reflect the national approach to site assessment have been used in the county system, namely :

- *"Species are included in the final score if they have been recorded as probably breeding in a majority of recent years, provided information is available to support that statement."*

Given this, for Wildlife Site consideration, despite more recent records or observations, **only 2004 and 2005 data can be used**, as this is the only data available that can be used to undertake an adequate Wildlife Site assessment. Given that no other comparable records are available to determine a breeding bird assemblage in Area 1, and that the comprehensive records are recent, the 2004/5 data is the **only** available data that can legitimately be used to assess WS status in the circumstances.

- Furthermore, the criteria also state that '*species regularly using a site for essential activities (such as feeding) whilst breeding may be included even if they nest outside the site*'. Thus foraging records for appropriate species also contribute to an assessment score.

If **breeding and foraging** records are used, **Open water** criteria **are** met in both 2004 and 2005. In addition, in both years, sufficient **Red List** spp are present to meet the criteria.

If **breeding and foraging** records are used, **Wet grassland** criteria **are** met in both 2004 and 2005. In addition, in both years, sufficient **Red List** spp are present to meet the criteria.

On this basis, the data clearly demonstrates the both breeding assemblage and Red List criteria are met in both 2004 and 2005 and Wildlife Site status is clearly justified.

By 2007, 'waders' appear to have faired variably. Although redshank were not recorded along with lower numbers of lapwing (although numbers in themselves are not a criteria consideration), increased numbers of LRP and RP were recorded. The latter are species requiring more open / bare ground swards, suggesting the grassland habitat continued to be suitable. However, no other breeding bird data was presented by EPR, so **no further comparable WS assessments can be made**. Nevertheless it is unlikely that many other previously recorded species would not have been present.

By 2009, although no waders are reported to be present by Ecology Solutions, no data is presented although a number of common wildfowl were observed. There is no record of numbers of visits or dates etc. It was not the intention to conduct breeding bird surveys. Consequently, whilst this may suggest further wader changes, **no sensible comparisons with breeding bird assemblages within Area 1 can be made using this information**. It therefore cannot be reasonably applied in any meaningful assessment of the relative status of the site as a whole.

Indeed, with respect to the comprehensive 2004/5 data used, an assessment by HBRC has also been made *excluding* the more significant wader species which have subsequently been used to demonstrate the decline in importance of the site. It can be seen from this that in **2005**, for **wet grassland** the **breeding bird assemblage criteria** are still met. Thus, if a full breeding bird survey was undertaken now, even if this still showed a complete absence of any such wader species, the criteria could still be met if the other species remained, as they were for wet grassland in 2005. It is therefore **not** reasonable to conclude that, on the basis of the available recent information, Wildlife Site status would not be met.

Furthermore, from the attached notes from HCC Minerals Planning Authority (30/10/09, see below) the conditions suitable for all of these wader species are more than likely to have existed on this site soon after quarrying commenced, providing a suitable habitat for many years before 2004 for a good assemblage

of birds. It is suggested that this should also be considered in respect of the context of the site when considering its proposed Wildlife Site status.

Martin,

In answer to your question about the restored airfield, I can confirm the following from my own knowledge of the site and old site visit records. I first visited in 1994 when mineral extraction was still in the early phases (then in the eastern part, adjacent to the railway line):

The site has contained open water in the form of clean water and silt lagoons since operations began in the early 1990's, these were well established by the time of my first site visit in 1994. These lagoons remained operational through to the late 1990's or early 2000's when mineral extraction ceased;

Both the clean water and silt lagoons were retained as part of the final restoration scheme with specific improvements being made to them in agreement with Lafarge to enhance their conservation value;

In addition to the retention of the lagoon systems, the main extraction area was restored to the lower level with the (current) pond area created in the centre to act as a drainage sump. This was established during the later restoration phases which were completed in the late 1990's or early 2000's. This pond was well established as a water body at least as far back as July 2002, by which time most of the open area south of the lagoons had been fully restored;

I can provide documentary evidence to support the above and can provide a more detailed chronology if it will help.

I hope this helps but please let me know if you need more detailed information from our records.

Andy.

Andy McIntosh
Restoration Manager
COUNTY DEVELOPMENT UNIT
Tel: 01992 556275

It is proposed to review any such designation after five years in order to assess the position relating to the breeding bird assemblage present. This would also take into account any management undertaken in the meantime to maintain the important habitats, as is currently being requested. It would also require sufficient survey information to enable an adequate assessment to be made.

Martin Hicks
Senior Ecology Officer
HBRC

3/11/09

HERTFORDSHIRE WILDLIFE SITE RATIFICATION FORM

SITE DETAILS

SITE NAME:	Quarry at former Radlett Aerodrome			SITE REF:	77/082
GRID REF:	TL 156 033	DISTRICT	City & District of St Albans	AREA:	89.46 ha
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	26/10/09	ASSESSORS: (include organisation)	Gordon Wyatt, Natural England Carol Lodge, Herts & Middx Wildlife Trust Anita Parry, Herts Biological Records Centre		
HABITAT DESCRIPTION:					
<p>Extensive former gravel quarry supporting re-seeded grassland and various lagoons, pools and ponds, the larger water bodies being near the northern edge of the site. Recent plantation woodland along part of the western boundary as well as the southern and south-eastern boundary. Currently subject to a restoration proposal back to agriculture with grassland for livestock and hedgerow. Quarry floor very flat and still largely open, despite the developing hedgerow. Grassland gradually developing a tighter sward as it continues to be grazed, although large reseeded areas in 2005 - 07 still provided an open sparse sward. Largely extensively grazed with sheep from Hedges Farm to the north.</p>					
WILDLIFE SITE STATUS ASSESSMENT					
CURRENT STATUS AT ASSESSMENT DATE:		WILDLIFE SITE:	YES	NO No	
No status		OTHER (Specify):			
WILDLIFE SITE CRITERIA MET:	HABITAT				
	SPECIES				
RATIONALE FOR DESIGNATION:		State reasons for meeting criteria e.g. list indicators species no. of individual species found etc.			
<p>Data from 2004 and 2005 indicated the site supported the following breeding bird species: Little Grebe, Mute swan, Tufted duck, Little Ringed Plover, Ringed Plover, Redshank, Yellow wagtail, Reed Warbler, Sedge warbler, Reed bunting, Lapwing, Gadwall. Additional foraging bird species included: Grey heron, Cuckoo, Snipe. Additional roosting bird species included: Shelduck, Teal.</p> <p>The criteria are met for both lowland open water and margins and lowland wet grasslands in 2004 and 2005. Lapwing, Ringed plover and Little Ringed plover remained present in 2007. A claim has been made that no breeding waders were present in 2009, but no details of surveys have currently been made available to further inform this position.</p>					
DATA SET/S USED (AGE):	EPR (Ecological Planning and Research) survey reports, 11/8/04 and Sept 2007	DATA VALIDATED BY:	G Goodall, M Hicks, HBRC		
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: e.g. other species of note					
RECOMMENDED REVIEW PERIOD	5 years				
DATE OF RATIFICATION:			LANDOWNER/S NOTIFIED		
COPY OF DATA SET/S, MAP AND BOUNDARY OF SITE ATTACHED					
FOR HBRC use only	GIS x2:	Audit trail:	Site File:		
HBRC date:	Recorder:	WS Register:			

APPENDIX 2

Correspondence received from HBRC on 3rd November 2009

RECEIVED

- 6 NOV 2009

HERTFORDSHIRE BIOLOGICAL RECORDS CENTRE

c/o Environment, County Hall, Hertford, Herts, SG13 8DN

Tel: 01992 555220

Biorec.info@hertscc.gov.uk

Mr Tim Goodwin
Director
Ecology Solutions Ltd
Crossways House
The Square
Stow on the Wold
Gloucestershire GL54 1AB

Pl. ask for: M J Hicks
Our Ref : 77/025
Your Ref: 4743/TG/KG/003.let.Birds.HBRC
Tel : 01992 556158

Date : 3/11/09

Dear Mr Goodwin

Land in and around former aerodrome, North Orbital Road, Upper Colne Valley, Hertfordshire

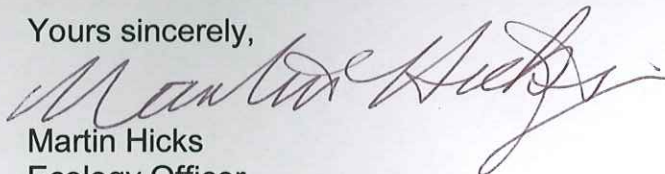
Thank you for your recent letter dated 19th October. As you are aware the proposals relating to this large and complex site raise a number of important ecological considerations, most if not all of which were placed before the Inspector at the previous Public Inquiry. His report was important in recognising several issues which established significant areas and aspects of concern regarding the impacts of the proposals on the local ecology. Many of these were also recognised by the previous ecological consultants, EPR.

The relative importance of the bird fauna is an important issue and we would be interested to receive any additional data you may have collected to help inform the understanding of the site. The existing available data collected and presented by EPR represent relatively comprehensive breeding bird survey information against which the Herts bird criteria can be applied.

With respect to any potential Wildlife Site status, any information presented to the Ratification Group is publicly available. Representations on a decision to accept or object to a proposed site can be made at or following this stage or subsequently when owners are informed of the status of the site. The Group will be informed of the issues you have raised.

If you have any queries regarding the above or would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,



Martin Hicks
Ecology Officer

Sponsored by:

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL, EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL,
HERTSMERE BOROUGH COUNCIL, NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL, CITY AND DISTRICT OF ST ALBANS,
THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL, WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL
NATURAL ENGLAND and ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

APPENDIX 3

Letter received from Hertfordshire Wildlife Sites Partnership dated 6th
November 2009



Hertfordshire Wildlife Sites Partnership

Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Grebe House, St. Michael's Street, St. Albans, Hertfordshire, AL3 4SN
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Vanessa Garner
CgMs Consulting
Morley House
26 Holborn Viaduct
London
EC14 2AT

6th November 2009

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Dear Vanessa

Ref: Radlett Aerodrome

Regarding the proposed Wildlife Sites at the above site, I wish to inform you of the decision of the Wildlife Project's Ratification Panel, which met on 5th November 2009.

We have considered the existing available information relevant to the site including the EPR data, the '*Bird criteria issues to be considered by the Ratification Group of the Hertfordshire Wildlife Sites Project*' report by Graham Goodall (27th October 2009) and Martin Hicks (3rd November 2009), and Ecology Solutions' letter to Martin Hicks (19th October 2009). We have concluded that despite the concerns raised by Ecology Solutions, the evidence submitted is sufficient to enable recognition of two new Wildlife Sites, namely Grassland at Former Radlett Aerodrome (Site Ref: 77/025/1) and Quarry at Former Radlett Aerodrome (Site Ref: 77/082).

In coming to this decision, we have had regard to all of the data available to us, its age, detail and extent of survey coverage. We consider the proposed review periods to be adequate for any re-assessment of Wildlife Site status.

Yours sincerely,

Carol Lodge
Wildlife Sites Programme Manager
Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust
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