

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

1. Background

- 1.1. The purpose of this Report is to address the regulatory requirements relating to what is generally referred to as the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) process.
- 1.2. Regulation 63(1) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), known as the Habitats Regulations, requires competent authorities to determine whether any plans or projects that they are giving consent or granting permission to, are likely to have significant (adverse) effects on European Sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. If significant effects upon a European Site are anticipated, then the plan or project must be subject to an Appropriate Assessment. In light of the conclusions of any Appropriate Assessment, a plan or project can only be granted permission after the competent authority has ascertained that the plan or project will not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of any European Site. Where an adverse effect on the integrity of any European Site cannot be ruled out and where there are no alternative solutions, the plan or project can only proceed if there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest and if the necessary compensatory measures can be secured.
- 1.3. This HRA has been prepared by Ashford Borough Council, as Local Planning Authority and the relevant competent authority, to determine whether the planning application, referred to in Section 2 of this report, would have an adverse effect on the integrity of European Sites.

2. Planning Application details

Application Number	21/00521/AS
Application Address	6 Boys Hall Road, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent, TN24 0LA
Application Description	Outline planning application with all matters reserved for the removal of mobile home, hair salon and outbuilding and erection of five detached four bedroom houses.

3. European designated sites impacted

- 3.1. This section of this report sets out the details of the plan/project and the internationally designated sites that could be impacted by the proposed plan/project.

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

European Sites potentially impacted by the plan or project	Stodmarsh Special Protection Area Stodmarsh Special Area of Conservation Stodmarsh Ramsar Site
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Details of the European sites affected

Stodmarsh SAC

The Stodmarsh Special Area of Conservation (SAC) has been designated under the EU Habitats Directive for the presence of the following habitats/species:

- S1016 Desmoulin's whorl snail (*Vertigo moulinsiana*)

The Conservation Objectives of the Stodmarsh SAC are as follows:

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of the habitats of qualifying species
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
- The supporting processes on which the habitats of qualifying species rely
- The populations of the qualifying species, and,
- The distribution of the qualifying species within the site.

Stodmarsh SPA

The Stodmarsh SPA has been designated under the EU Habitats Directive for the presence of the following individual species and/or assemblage of species:

- A021 Great bittern (Non-breeding) (*Botaurus stellaris*)
- A051 Gadwall (Breeding) (*Anas strepera*)
- A051 Gadwall (Non-breeding) (*Anas strepera*)
- A056 Northern shoveler (Non-breeding) (*Anas clypeata*)
- A082 Hen harrier (Non-breeding) (*Circus cyaneus*)
- Waterbird assemblage
- Breeding bird assemblage

The Conservation Objectives of the Stodmarsh SPA are as follows:

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features
- The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely
- The population of each of the qualifying features, and,
- The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.

Stodmarsh Ramsar

The Stodmarsh Ramsar was designated under criterion 2 of the Ramsar criteria for the presence of 6 British Red Data Book wetland invertebrates, two nationally rated plants, five national scarce species and a diverse assemblage of rare wetland birds.

[View more details on the Stodmarsh Ramsar designation](#)

Is the plan or project directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site?	No – the development is neither connected to, nor necessary for, the management of any European Site.
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4. HRA Screening Assessment

- 4.1. This section of the report contains an assessment of whether the proposed plan/project would have a likely significant effect on the European sites identified above.

Would the proposal lead to a likely significant effect on the European Sites, without mitigation measures, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects?

☐	No
☒	Yes (Tick all that apply) ☒ The proposed development is located within the Stour catchment. ☐ The proposed development is located outside the Stour catchment, but the foul water will be discharged into the Stour catchment. ☒ The foul water discharged from the proposed development would be treated at a Wastewater Treatments Works in the catchment. ☐ The foul water discharged from the proposed development would be treated via non-mains sewerage arrangements (e.g. Package Treatment Plant or septic tank).

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 4.2. If 'No', there is no significant likely effect on the Stodmarsh Lakes for nutrient neutrality purposes and an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
- 4.3. If 'Yes', in accordance with the Natural England advice titled '[Advice for development proposals with the potential to affect water quality resulting in adverse nutrient impacts on habitats sites](#)' (dated 16 March 2022), Natural England have stated that any net gain in new residential development within the catchment of the River Stour could pose a risk to the conservation objectives of the designated sites at Stodmarsh, due to increased levels of nitrogen and phosphorus from wastewater and treated sewage effluent.
- 4.1. The development proposed could therefore have a likely significant effect on the Stodmarsh Lakes SPA, SAC and Ramsar designated sites in combination with other plans or projects within the Stour catchment. Therefore, the likelihood of a Likely Significant Effect cannot be excluded and therefore an Appropriate Assessment is required.

5. Appropriate Assessment

- 5.1. As set out in Section 4, the planning application results in a likely significant effect on the European Sites set out in Section 3 of this HRA. Therefore, an Appropriate Assessment is required, which is detailed below.
- 5.2. Where necessary, measures may be required to mitigate adverse effects on designated sites, such as Stodmarsh. In the case of nutrient neutrality, Natural England sets out that adverse effects can be mitigated by offsetting the net additional nutrients (phosphorus and nitrogen) produced by the proposed development to achieve nutrient neutrality. This Appropriate Assessment therefore assesses whether the development can achieve nutrient neutrality.
- 5.3. The scheme proposed will provide new overnight accommodation/residential accommodation within the Stour catchment. The Natural England advice, issued on 16 March 2022, sets out a standard methodology for calculating the nutrient load. The methodology covers all types of overnight accommodation including new homes, student accommodation, care homes and tourism facilities.
- 5.4. As set out in Section 2 of this HRA, the Natural England advice applies to this type of development.

Nutrient calculations

- 5.1. The Natural England advice is accompanied by a Nutrient Neutral Methodology and [Stodmarsh Nutrient Budget Calculator](#), updated in 2025, which determines the net increase in nutrients released post-development.
- 5.2. To meet the requirements set out in the Nutrient Neutral Methodology, the applicant has prepared the following documents, which form part of this Appropriate Assessment:

(Insert document titles)

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Strategy (NNAMS) 21113-NUT-RP-01 C01 (dated 20/04/2026)
- Nutrient Neutrality Offset Scheme – Reservation Certificate Number 047 (dated 11/02/2026)

Stage 1 – wastewater generation

- 5.3. The first stage of the nutrient calculations contained within the Nutrient Budget Calculator relates to the wastewater generated by the overnight accommodation proposed. The average occupancy rate and the number of dwellings should be inserted into the calculator to calculate the net additional population that would occupy the development. From the net additional population, the amount of nutrients released post development can be calculated.

Number of dwellings and occupancy

Number of dwellings	Insert the net gain of dwellings: 5 dwellings (Please see the separate section below regarding the removal of the existing mobile home)
Occupancy	The Council has adopted occupancy values based on the type of accommodation. For flats, the occupancy rate is 1.75 people per dwelling and for houses the occupancy rate is 2.4 people per dwelling. These values are set out on the Council's website (at https://www.ashford.gov.uk/nutrient-neutrality-developer-information). Select the occupancy rate used on the application: ☒ 2.4 per house ☐ 1.75 per flat ☐ Other, please state: If 'other', please explain why these values are considered appropriate and how this can be secured.
Total population	(5 houses x 2.4 people per house) 12 people.

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Water usage

- 5.4. The nutrient calculations have assumed a water usage of 110 litres per person per day, plus an additional 10 litres, to account for changes to less water efficient fittings throughout the lifetime of the development.
- 5.5. This approach is consistent with the approach set out in the Natural England Nutrient Neutral Methodology, and with the mandatory requirements set out in Building Regulations Approved Document G. The approach is also consistent with adopted Ashford Local Plan 2030 Policy ENV7 (Water Efficiency) which requires all new residential development to have an estimated water use of no more than 110 litres of water per person per day.
- 5.6. A condition will be attached to the planning permission to ensure compliance with the Local Plan policy. An example of a proposed condition is set out below:

The dwellings hereby permitted shall achieve the minimum optional requirement set out in the Building Regulations for water efficiency that requires an estimated water use of no more than 110 litres per person per day.

Reason: In order to carefully manage water supply given the level of household demand relating to available resource. In accordance with policy ENV7 of the Ashford Local Plan 2030.

- 5.7. Subject to the proposed (or similarly worded) condition, it is therefore considered appropriate to use a water usage value of 120 litres per person per day (110 litres plus 10 litres) within the nutrient calculations.

Wastewater Treatment Works

- 5.8. The dwellings proposed will connect to a Wastewater Treatment Works, as listed below. Within the catchment there are several Wastewater Treatment Works that will be upgraded to lower permit limits either in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023¹ and/or a with the WINEP programme. The permit limits for the development are set out in the table below:

Select relevant:	Wastewater Treatment Works	Nitrogen permit (mg TN/l)		Phosphorus permit (mg TP/l)	
		Pre-2030	Post-2030	Pre-2030	Post-2030
☒	Ashford	No permit – assume 27	10	0.50	0.25
☐	Charing				
☐	Chartham				

¹ [Information about nutrient significant plants - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Select relevant:	Wastewater Treatment Works	Nitrogen permit (mg TN/l)		Phosphorus permit (mg TP/l)	
		Pre-2030	Post-2030	Pre-2030	Post-2030
☐	Sellindge				
☐	Chilham	No permit – assume 27	10	No permit – assume 8	0.25
☐	Westwell				
☐	Wye				
☐	Brook	No permit – assume 27	No permit – assume 27	No permit – assume 8	No permit – assume 8
☐	Good Intent Cottages				

5.18. Two sets of nutrient calculations have been prepared (pre-2030 and post-2030 calculations).

Removal of existing mobile home

- 5.19. The development proposed as part of the planning application includes the removal of an existing mobile home. The NNAMS takes into account the wastewater generated from the existing mobile home – which is then subtracted from the nutrient load as part of the nutrient calculations.
- 5.20. The NNAMS includes the nutrient calculations of the nutrients released from the wastewater for the existing mobile home.
- 5.21. For the occupancy rates, the calculations are based on the occupancy rates of 2.4 persons per dwellinghouse. This is consistent with the values that have been used earlier within this Appropriate Assessment.
- 5.22. For the water usage, the calculations are based on a value of 135 litres per person per day. This value is different from the value used in paragraphs 5.4 – 5.7, given that the mobile home is already on the site and there are no restrictions on the water usage (such as a planning condition). A different value may therefore be more appropriate to reflect the water usage in the existing dwelling.
- 5.23. The NNAMS uses a value of 135l per person per day, which has been derived from the water usage value of 125l per person per day and a 10l buffer. The 125l value is a mandatory requirement set out in the Building Regulations and is therefore considered appropriate for the water usage of existing dwellings. The 10l buffer is added to the water usage value to account for changes to less water efficient fittings throughout the lifetime of the dwellings. Adding this buffer also ensures consistency with the Natural England Nutrient Neutral Methodology.

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

5.24. In accordance with the Natural England Nutrient Neutral Methodology, the wastewater reduced by the removal of the mobile home would remove the nutrient load set out in the table below from the overall nutrient calculations.

	Nitrogen (kg TN/yr)	Phosphorus (kg TP/yr)
Pre-2030	3.20	0.05
Post-2030	1.07	0.03

Nutrient load from wastewater

5.25. In accordance with the Natural England Nutrient Neutral Methodology, the wastewater generated from the development produces the nutrient load set out in the table below:

	Nitrogen (kg TN/yr)	Phosphorus (kg TP/yr)
Pre-2030	11.01	0.18
Post-2030	3.67	0.09

Stages 2 & 3 – land use change

5.26. Stages 2 & 3 of the Nutrient Neutral Methodology calculate the net increase in nutrients as a result of surface water generated from land use changes. Stage 2 focuses on the existing nutrients generated from the existing land use, whereas Stage 3 of the calculations are based on the future nutrient load generated from the proposed land use.

Existing land use

5.27. The existing land use is classified as set out in the table below.

Land use classification	Area (hectares)
Residential urban land	0.32
Commercial / industrial land	0.07
TOTAL	0.39

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Tick all that apply:	☒	Based on the information submitted as part of the application, the land classification is considered appropriate. Reason: The commercial / industrial land area relates to the current hairdressers and the remaining area is considered residential given the existing mobile home and garden space. Overall, the classifications are considered appropriate.
	☐	I do not consider that the land classification is considered appropriate for the following reasons:

5.28. In accordance with the values contained in the Natural England Nutrient Neutral Methodology, the existing land use generates the nutrient load set out in the table below:

	Nitrogen (kg TN/yr)	Phosphorus (kg TP/yr)
Nutrient load	4.83	0.54

Proposed land use

5.29. The proposed land use is classified as set out in the table below.

Land use classification		Area (hectares)
Residential urban land		0.39
TOTAL		0.39
Tick all that apply:	☒	Based on the information submitted as part of the application, the land classification is considered appropriate. Reason: The whole site is converted to residential.

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

	☐	I do not consider that the land classification is considered appropriate for the following reasons:
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5.30. In accordance with the Natural England Nutrient Neutral Methodology, the proposed land use generates the nutrient load set out in the table below:

	Nitrogen (kg TN/yr)	Phosphorus (kg TP/yr)
Nutrient load	5.27	0.57

Nutrient load

5.31. Using the Natural England Nutrient Neutral Methodology, the pre-2030 net nutrient budget and post-2030 net nutrient budget have been calculated and set out in the table below.

	Nitrogen (kg TN/yr)	Phosphorus (kg TP/yr)
Pre-2030	13.74	0.25
Post-2030	4.93	0.14

5.32. Based on the information provided, the Council are satisfied that the calculations have been undertaken in accordance with the Natural England Nutrient Neutral Methodology and concurs with the results of the nutrient calculations undertaken.

Mitigation proposed

Does the nutrient calculations identify a net increase in nutrient generated? (Tick the box that applies)	☒	Yes. As the scheme is not nutrient neutral, mitigation is required.
	☐	No. As the scheme is nutrient neutral, no mitigation is required.
How is mitigation proposed?	☒	Nutrient credits

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

(Tick all the boxes that apply)	☐	Septic Tank Upgrades
	☐	Agricultural offsetting
	☐	Other. Please give details.....

Nutrient credits

- 5.33. It is proposed to rely on nutrient credits generated from two projects of the DACE Environmental Ltd credit scheme (Project Bliby DD1 and Project Price Following).
- 5.34. A strategic assessment has been prepared by the Local Planning Authority assessing the nutrient credits generated from the Project Bliby DD1, set out in Appendix 1.
- 5.35. A separate strategic assessment has been prepared by the Local Planning Authority assessing the nutrient credits generated from the Project Price Following, set out in Appendix 2.
- 5.36. The outcomes of the strategic assessment in Appendix 1 and 2 are that mitigation can be provided from the Project Bliby DD1 and Project Price Following nutrient credit scheme. Credits are then issued to individual planning applications for the quantum of mitigation as set out in the reservation nutrient credit certificates.
- 5.37. The outcomes and conclusions of the strategic assessments are duplicated for this Appropriate Assessment.

Total mitigation generated – Project Bliby DD1

- 5.38. The strategic assessment in Appendix 1 sets out that Project Bliby DD1 generates a total amount of mitigation as set out in the table below.

Type of mitigation	Nitrogen (kg TN/yr)	Phosphorus (kg TP/yr)
Permanent Credits	2491.19	106.43
Temporary Credits	0.00	0.00

- 5.39. As set out in the strategic assessment (Appendix 1), the drainage ditch enhancements have been secured by Conservation Covenant. Therefore, for the purposes of the Appropriate Assessment, the mitigation has been secured.

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 5.40. However, the mitigation has not yet been delivered, there is a need to prevent occupation of the development until such time as the mitigation is delivered and is operational (see below for further information).

Total mitigation generated – Project Price Fallowing

- 5.41. The strategic assessment in Appendix 2 sets out that Project Price Fallowing generates a total amount of mitigation as set out in the table below.

Type of mitigation	Nitrogen (kg TN/yr)	Phosphorus (kg TP/yr)
Permanent Credits	0.00	0.00
Temporary Credits	119.12	2371.46

- 5.42. As set out in the strategic assessment (Appendix 2), the land fallowing measures have been secured by Conservation Covenant. Therefore, for the purposes of the Appropriate Assessment, the mitigation has been secured.
- 5.43. The mitigation has been delivered, therefore for this element of the mitigation there is no need to prevent occupation of the development (e.g. for the quantum of mitigation secured as temporary mitigation).

Allocation of mitigation to the development

- 5.44. For the development, a Nutrient Neutrality Offset Scheme – Reservation Certificate has been issued:

Credit certificate reference	047	
Date of credit certificate	16/04/2026	
Credits	Nitrogen (kg TN/yr)	Phosphorus (kg TP/yr)
Permanent from Project Bliby DD1	4.93	0.25
Temporary (up to 2030 only) from Project Price Fallowing	8.81	0.00
Has sufficient credits been allocated to meet the nutrient load?	☒	Yes, sufficient credits have been allocated to meet the nutrient load generated by the development.
	☐	No, further mitigation will be required.

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Is there sufficient capacity in the credit scheme to provide the credits to this development?	☒	Yes, credits are available and have been allocated for this development.
Appendix 3 & 4 details the credits that have been allocated as part of the credit scheme.	☐	No, there is not sufficient capacity in the credit scheme to generate these credits.

- 5.45. The above table and appendices to this Appropriate Assessment confirms that there is sufficient capacity in the Project Bliby DD1 and Project Price Fallowing schemes to offset the proposed development.
- 5.46. To link the nutrient credits to this planning application, it is proposed that any grant of planning permission would include listing the Nutrient Neutrality Offset Scheme – Reservation Certificate as an approved document.
- 5.47. Additionally, given that the implementation of the mitigation has not yet taken place for the permanent credits (Bliby DD1), there is a requirement for a restriction on the occupation of the development. It is proposed that any grant of planning permission would include the following (or appropriately worded) planning condition:

Prior to the occupation of the dwellings hereby approved, a verification report of the implementation and operation of the Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme at Bliby Wood DD1 shall be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority. This verification report shall include the following:

- *Confirmation from the landowner of the Bliby Wood DD1 Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme that the mitigation scheme has been delivered in accordance with the permits and approved plans and a Works Completion Certificate has been issued.*
- *Submission of a vesting certificate to confirm that the nutrient credits as reserved in the [INDIVIDUAL PLANNING APPLICATION NUTRIENT RESERVATION CERTIFICATE] have been allocated to the proposed development.*

Reason: *In the interest of preserving protected and qualifying features of European protected sites from water pollution associated with the occupation phase of development in accordance with policies SP1 and ENV1 of the Ashford Local Plan 2030.*

- 5.48. Subject to the nutrient mitigation from the credit scheme being secured by appropriate planning conditions, it is concluded that appropriate mitigation can be provided to offset the nutrients generated from the development proposal.

Securing nutrient mitigation

- 5.49. To secure the nutrient mitigation in perpetuity, appropriately worded planning conditions will be used to secure the following:

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- Secure 110l water usage per person per day in the proposed dwelling.
 - Listing the Nutrient Neutrality Offset Scheme – Reservation Certificate as an approved plan
 - Prior to occupation, submit a verification report which includes evidence that the credit scheme has been delivered/is operational and a 'Works Completion Certificate' has been issued. The report should also include the 'final nutrient credit certificate/vesting certificate' confirming reserved nutrient credits have been allocated, purchased and secured/linked to the planning permission.
- 5.50. Nutrient mitigation is proposed in the form of the Project Bliby DD1: drainage ditch enhancements scheme and Project Price Fallowing land following scheme from DACE Environmental Ltd.
- 5.51. The nutrient calculations, including the nutrient mitigation, demonstrate that the development achieves the following nutrient loads:

	Nitrogen (kg TN/yr)	Phosphorus (kg TP/yr)
Pre-2030	0.00	0.00
Post-2030	0.00	-0.11

- 5.52. Subject to the nutrient mitigation being secured by appropriately worded planning conditions and/or legal agreements, as set out in the report, it is concluded that appropriate mitigation can be provided to offset the nutrients generated from the development proposal.
- 5.53. Consequently, it is concluded that the development proposal will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Stodmarsh Lakes, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

6. Natural England consultation

- 6.1. In accordance with Regulation 63(3) the Local Planning Authority, in its role as competent authority, must consult the Natural England and have regard to any representations made by Natural England.

Natural England's comments	
Date of Natural England consultation	24/04/2026
Response received	07/05/2026
Summary of response	No comments to make on its detail.

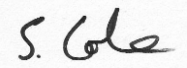
Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Natural England's comments	
	A copy of the Natural England consultation is available in Appendix 5.

7. Conclusion after Natural England consultation

- 7.1. In accordance with Regulation 63(5) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Council, as the competent authority, has undertaken an Appropriate Assessment on the nutrient impact of the proposed development on the integrity of the Stodmarsh Lakes.
- 7.2. The Council considers that subject to the mitigation being secured by relevant conditions and legal agreements, as set out above, the development will not have an adverse impact on the integrity of the Stodmarsh Lakes either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

HRA Completion Date:	14 May 2026
HRA Completed by:	Harriet Turner Deputy Team Leader – Plan Making & Infrastructure
HRA signed:	 Simon Cole Assistant Director – Planning & Development

Summary table

	Nitrogen (kg TN/yr) Pre-2030	Nitrogen (kg TN/yr) Post-2030	Phosphorus (kg TP/yr) Pre-2030	Phosphorus (kg TP/yr) Post-2030
Nutrient Calculations				
Stage 1 (wastewater)	14.20	4.73	0.24	0.12

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

	Nitrogen (kg TN/yr) Pre-2030	Nitrogen (kg TN/yr) Post-2030	Phosphorus (kg TP/yr) Pre-2030	Phosphorus (kg TP/yr) Post-2030
5 new dwellings				
Stage 1 (wastewater) Removal of mobile home	-3.20	-1.07	-0.05	-0.03
Stage 2 & 3 (land use change)	0.44	0.44	0.03	0.03
Nutrient load generated (including 20% buffer)	13.74	4.93	0.25	0.14
Nutrient mitigation				
Nutrient credits – Project Bliby DD1	-4.93	-4.93	-0.25	-0.25
Nutrient credits – Project Price Fallowing	-8.81	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total nutrient load (including any mitigation)	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.11

Appendix 1 – Strategic HRA AA of DACE Environmental Ltd
Project Bliby DD1

Strategic Assessment of DACE Environmental Ltd Project Bliby DD1 Nutrient Credit Scheme

1. Background

- 1.1. The purpose of this Report is to address the regulatory requirements relating to what is generally referred to as the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) process.
- 1.2. Regulation 63(1) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), known as the Habitats Regulations, requires competent authorities to determine whether any plans or projects that they are giving consent or granting permission to, are likely to have significant (adverse) effects on European Sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. If significant effects upon a European Site are anticipated, then the plan or project must be subject to an Appropriate Assessment. Considering the conclusions of any Appropriate Assessment, a plan or project can only be granted permission after the competent authority has ascertained that the plan or project will not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of any European Site. Where an adverse effect on the integrity of any European Site cannot be ruled out and where there are no alternative solutions, the plan or project can only proceed if there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest and if the necessary compensatory measures can be secured.
- 1.3. This HRA has been prepared by Ashford Borough Council, as Local Planning Authority and the relevant competent authority, to determine whether the strategic drainage ditch enhancements measures (referred to in Section 6 of this report) would have an adverse effect on the integrity of European Sites.

2. Nutrient Neutrality and the Stodmarsh Lakes

- 2.1. The Stodmarsh Lakes, located to the east of Canterbury, are a set of lakes that are afforded a range of environmental designations and protections including a Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar site, Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Parts are also designated a National Nature Reserve (NNR).
- 2.2. In accordance with Regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (referred to as the Habitats Regulations) the Stodmarsh Lakes are designated as 'European Sites' and referred to as 'Habitats Sites' within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).
- 2.3. In July 2020, Natural England (NE) issued an Advice Note to Ashford Borough Council titled 'Advice on Nutrient Neutrality for New Development in the Stour Catchment in Relation to Stodmarsh Designated Sites – For Local Planning Authorities'¹. This Advice was then updated in November 2020 and again on 16 March 2022 in a letter titled 'Advice for development proposals

¹ <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/media/l3dgnfyu/stodmarsh-nutrient-neutral-methodology-november-2020.pdf>

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

with the potential to affect water quality resulting in adverse nutrient impacts on habitats sites'².

- 2.4. The Advice note sets out that there are excessive nitrogen and phosphorus levels in the Stodmarsh Lakes, and so the water within the Lakes is in an unfavourable condition and has the potential to further deteriorate.
- 2.5. In line with established case law and the 'precautionary principle', Natural England advise that applications for certain types of development (including housing) within the Stour River catchment, and/or which discharge to particular Wastewater Treatment Works within the catchment, have the potential to contribute to deterioration of the Stodmarsh Lakes. Natural England concluded that these types of development proposals have the potential to affect water in such a way that adverse nutrient impacts on the Stodmarsh Lakes cannot be ruled out.
- 2.6. Regulation 63 of the Habitats Regulations requires a 'competent authority' to undertake an Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the implications of the project (planning permission) to determine the effect on the integrity of the Stodmarsh Lakes. For an AA to conclude that there is no significant adverse effect, the decision maker must be satisfied that the development can achieve nutrient neutrality.
- 2.7. This report is prepared at a strategic level to review a form of nutrient mitigation being prepared by the DACE Environmental Ltd. The mitigation, once generated, would enter a centralised nutrient mitigation bank and can subsequently be sold to developments in the form of nutrient credits. This report therefore assesses whether the proposals will generate nutrient mitigation which can then be sold as nutrient credits to individual developments and planning applications within the borough.

3. European designated sites impacted

- 3.1. This section of this report sets out the details of the plan/project and the internationally designated sites that could be impacted by the proposed plan/project.

European Sites potentially impacted by the plan or project	Stodmarsh Special Protection Area Stodmarsh Special Area of Conservation Stodmarsh Ramsar Site
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Details of the European sites affected

Stodmarsh SAC

The Stodmarsh Special Area of Conservation (SAC) has been designated under the EU Habitats Directive for the presence of the following habitats/species:

² <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/media/0jabvost/ne-march-2022-letter-water-quality-and-nutrient-neutrality-advice.pdf>

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- S1016 Desmoulin's whorl snail (*Vertigo moulinsiana*)

The Conservation Objectives of the Stodmarsh SAC are as follows:

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring.

- The extent and distribution of the habitats of qualifying species
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
- The supporting processes on which the habitats of qualifying species rely
- The populations of the qualifying species, and,
- The distribution of the qualifying species within the site.

Stodmarsh SPA

The Stodmarsh SPA has been designated under the EU Habitats Directive for the presence of the following individual species and/or assemblage of species:

- A021 Great bittern (Non-breeding) (*Botaurus stellaris*)
- A051 Gadwall (Breeding) (*Anas strepera*)
- A051 Gadwall (Non-breeding) (*Anas strepera*)
- A056 Northern shoveler (Non-breeding) (*Anas clypeata*)
- A082 Hen harrier (Non-breeding) (*Circus cyaneus*)
- Waterbird assemblage
- Breeding bird assemblage

The Conservation Objectives of the Stodmarsh SPA are as follows:

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features
- The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features
- The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely
- The population of each of the qualifying features, and,
- The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.

Stodmarsh Ramsar

The Stodmarsh Ramsar was designated under criterion 2 of the Ramsar criteria for the presence of 6 British Red Data Book wetland invertebrates, two nationally rated plants, five national scarce species and a diverse assemblage of rare wetland birds.

[View more details on the Stodmarsh Ramsar designation](#)

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Is the plan or project directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site?	No – the development is neither connected to, nor necessary for, the management of any European Site.
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4. Scope of this HRA/AA

- 4.1. This strategic HRA/AA has been written by Ashford Borough Council, as competent authority, to assess the proposed mitigation measures on the impacts on the Stodmarsh Lakes. Mitigation is proposed in the form of enhancement to drainage ditches within Ashford borough.
- 4.2. This report is solely focused on the issue of water quality and nutrients on the Stodmarsh Lakes. Other impacts on the European site are not within the scope of this report.
- 4.3. The assessment is a strategic level assessment and does not assess the individual needs for mitigation for planning applications which are required to achieve nutrient neutrality.

5. Relationship with individual planning applications

- 5.1. This Strategic HRA/AA provides an overarching assessment that will support individual planning applications seeking to rely on the proposed mitigation measures. Site specific Appropriate Assessments will be undertaken by the competent authority and should be read alongside this strategic HRA/AA.
- 5.2. For the site-specific Appropriate Assessments relying on this mitigation measure, developers will be required to submit the following information:
 - Nutrient load calculations, using the Natural England Nutrient Neutral Methodology, to assess the net phosphorus and nitrogen load generated by the proposed development.
 - Evidence of the credit purchase via Reservation Certificates and Vesting Certificates.

6. Mitigation measure – Project Bliby DD1: Drainage ditch enhancements

- 6.1. This Strategic HRA/AA reviews the proposed mitigation measure of enhancements to the drainage ditches at Bliby Wood in Ashford borough for the purposes of generating nutrient mitigation.
- 6.2. To support this Strategic HRA/AA, the Council has assessed the following information:
 - Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme Management and Monitoring Plan

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- Design Method Statement – Bliby Wood (Long) and Hinxhill_DD1 v2.0 (dated 18/02/2026)
 - Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme Blybi Wood DD1 Plan view (drawing 2150779_Bliby1_DE_01 Rev5 v2) (dated 03/12/2025)
 - Natural England Discretionary Advice Service Reference UDS-A018728/507071 (dated 05/08/2025)
 - Natural England confirmation of nutrient load calculations (dated 03/11/2025)
 - Greenshank ODG Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme Delivery Proposal (Project ref. GSL14/Stodmarsh_ODG v2) (dated 18/07/2025)
 - Greenshank ODG Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme Technical Appendices (Project ref. GSL14/Stodmarsh_ODG v2) (dated 18/07/2025)
 - Environment Agency Permit Number EPR/CB3543UR (dated 23/02/2026)
 - Conservation Covenant Agreement Nutrient Neutrality relating to Stodmarsh Stream (Site: land on the South East side of Steeds Lane Kingsnorth Ashford) (dated 20/03/2026)
 - Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme – Bliby Wood DD1 Flood Risk Assessment v2.0 (dated 17/02/2026)
- 6.3. For ease of reference, this mitigation measure will hereafter be referred to as 'drainage ditch enhancements'.

7. HRA Screening Assessment

- 7.1. This section of the report contains an assessment of whether the proposed plan/project would have a likely significant effect on the European sites identified above.

Would the proposal lead to a likely significant effect on the European Sites, without mitigation measures, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects?

- 7.2. In accordance with the Natural England advice titled '[Advice for development proposals with the potential to affect water quality resulting in adverse nutrient impacts on habitats sites](#)' (dated 16 March 2022), Natural England have stated that any net gain in new overnight accommodation within the Stour catchment, or which discharges wastewater into the catchment, poses a risk to the conservation objectives of the designated sites at Stodmarsh due to increased levels of nitrogen and phosphorus from wastewater and treated sewage effluent.
- 7.3. Where wastewater from development is discharged into the Stour catchment, the nutrients in the wastewater could follow hydrological pathways to the Stodmarsh Lakes. Therefore, development could have a likely significant effect on the Stodmarsh Lakes SPA, SAC and Ramsar designated sites in combination with other plans or projects within the Stour catchment. As the likelihood of a Likely Significant Effect cannot be excluded, an Appropriate Assessment is required.

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Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Note: the proposed mitigation measure does not generate a net increase in overnight accommodation. The purpose of this Strategic HRA/AA is to review the proposed drainage ditch enhancements to confirm whether it can provide nutrient mitigation for development schemes required to achieve nutrient neutrality.

8. Appropriate Assessment

- 8.1. This Appropriate Assessment is being undertaken on the proposed drainage ditch enhancements to determine whether any developments relying on this mitigation measure can, in principle, achieve nutrient neutrality.

Scope of nutrient mitigation

- 8.2. The proposed mitigation will involve reprofiling works along the drainage ditch and surrounding floodplain of the specified location (set out below) to increase the natural capacity of the river network and to minimise direct and indirect sources of nutrient pollution by simulating natural hydrological processes.

Location of nutrient mitigation

- 8.3. This drainage ditch enhancement project is proposed on a 520 metre reach of the Ruckinge Dyke located south of Brockmans Lane and west of Bliby Wood. The ditches are located within the Stour catchment area, upstream of the Stodmarsh Lakes.
- 8.4. A location plan for the proposed drainage ditch enhancements is set out in Figure 9 of the Greenshank ODG Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme Delivery Proposal (Project ref. GSL14/Stodmarsh_ODG v2) (dated 18/07/2025) and is copied below.

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Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

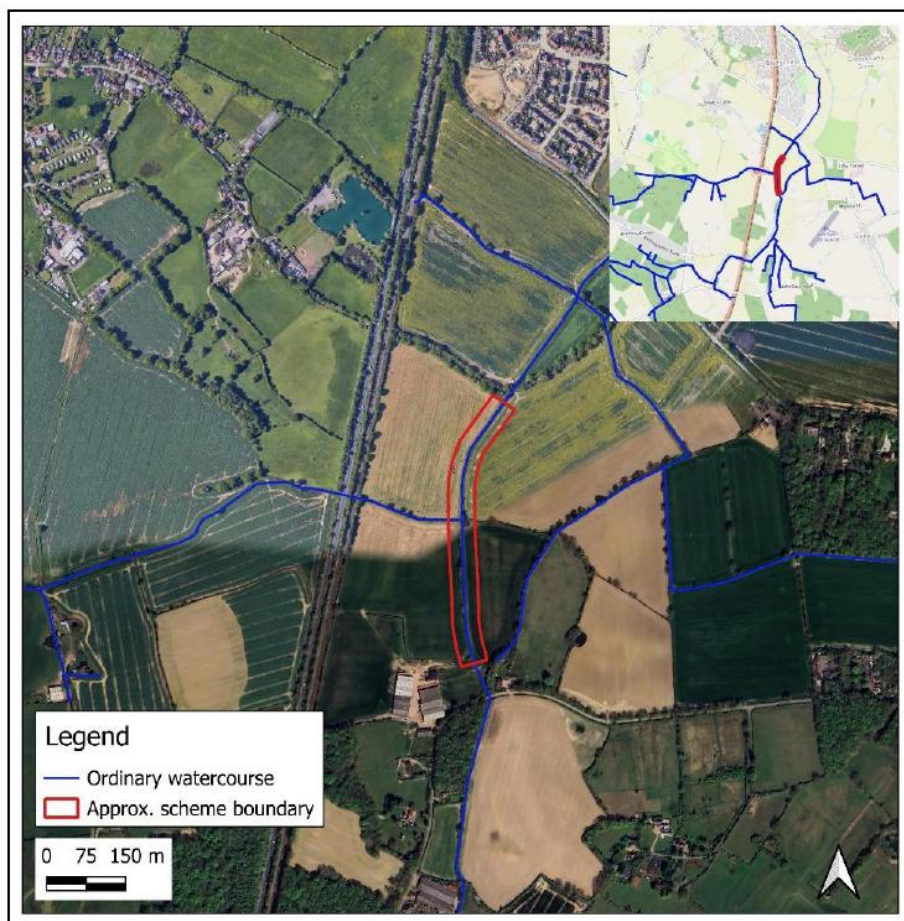


Figure 1 Map showing the scheme boundary for the proposed watercourse management option at the Blybi_wood_DD1 site. The map also shows the designations of the watercourse at this location. Taken from Figure 8 of Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme Delivery Proposal (dated 18/07/2025).

- 8.5. The Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme (drainage ditch enhancements) will involve the reprofiling of the area identified in Figure 1. A full set of the proposed reprofiling works and detailed drawings are set out in the Technical Appendices to the Greenshank ODG Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme Delivery Proposal and the drawing titled 'Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme Blybi Wood DD1 Plan view' (document reference 2150779_Bliby1_DE_01 Rev5 v2).
- 8.6. The proposals include realignment of the existing ditch, installation of leaky log jams to promote sediment deposition and the creation of inset floodplains to generate habitat diversity and dissipate flow energy to reduce bank erosion.

Mitigation generated

- 8.7. The principle of generating nutrient mitigation from drainage ditch enhancements has been established and confirmed as acceptable by Natural

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

England as part of the Enhanced Drainage Ditch Management Methodology and Framework³.

- 8.8. The Greenshank ODG Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme Delivery Proposal v2 follows the approved methodology to calculate the nutrients generated as part of Project Bliby Wood DD1. The technical appendices and main report set out that the measures proposed would generate the following amounts of nutrient mitigation:

	Nitrogen Kg TN/yr	Phosphorus Kg TP/yr
Project Bliby Wood DD1	2491.19	106.43

- 8.9. Natural England have reviewed the Greenshank ODG Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme Delivery Proposal v2 as part of their Discretionary Advice Service (DAS). In their response dated 5 August 2025, Natural England confirmed that the seven ditches proposed for enhanced ditch management would provide appropriate mitigation for new development proposals. (Note this strategic AA is only focused on the assessment of one of the seven ditches – Bliby Wood DD1. Further Assessments would be prepared for the other ditches proposed).
- 8.10. The response by Natural England also confirmed the calculations and evidence provided on the Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme would support reductions in Nitrogen and Phosphorus given in the Greenshank ODG Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme Delivery Proposal v2.
- 8.11. In a subsequent email confirmation, provided in the document titled 'Natural England confirmation of nutrient load calculations – dated 3 November 2025', Natural England confirmed that the scheme for the ditch Bliby Wood DD1 would deliver the required nutrient removals as set out in the table above. Given that Natural England have reviewed the information and concur with the conclusions of the technical reports, the competent authority has the confidence to confirm that the proposed enhancements will generate the quantum of mitigation as set out in the table above.

Impacts of the construction on nutrient levels in the Stodmarsh Lakes

- 8.12. Within the Natural England DAS response (dated 5 August 2025), concerns were raised that the proposed works would have a likely significant effect on the Stodmarsh Lakes from the construction phase. This is because of a risk of soil and sediment mobilisation during the construction phase.
- 8.13. To mitigate this impact, a series of pollution control measures have been proposed as part of the proposed works. These measures are set out in the

³ Further details about the Enhanced Drainage Ditch Management Framework: Connor-Streich, G. (2024a). Enhanced Drainage Ditch Management: A framework approach for nutrient neutrality. www.gov.uk/natural-england and Connor-Streich, G. (2024b). Enhanced Drainage Ditch Management: Annex A. www.gov.uk/natural-england

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

document titled 'Design Method Statement – Bliby Wood (Long) and Hinxhill_DD1' (dated 07/10/2025).

- 8.14. The Design Method Statement sets out the need to provide silt mitigation for the regrading of the existing channel bed and the infilling of the existing channel. Measures including SiltMats and Silt Wattles will be for shallow water and bubble curtains used for deeper water.
- 8.15. Subject to the measures set out in the Design Method Statement, it is considered that there are appropriate measures to minimise soil and sediment mobilisation during the construction phase.

Environment Agency permit

- 8.16. As the proposed works would impact on a main river, a flood risk activity permit is required from the Environment Agency (EA).
- 8.17. The EA granted a permit (Reference EPR/CB3543UR) for the proposed work on the 23/02/2026.
- 8.18. The permit sets out a series of conditions which must be met as part of the construction of the proposed ditch at Bliby Wood DD1 with regards to flood risk activities.

Securing the nutrient mitigation, and the management, maintenance and monitoring of the mitigation

- 8.19. To secure the mitigation in perpetuity, DACE Environmental Ltd have entered into a Conservation Covenant with RSK Biocensus Ltd (who are acting as the responsible body for the Conservation Covenant).
- 8.20. The Conservation Covenant (dated 20/03/2026) sets out a requirement on DACE Environmental Ltd to deliver the proposed enhancement works by no later than 20 March 2028. Once the works are implemented, the Conservation Covenant requires that evidence is submitted to confirm the completion of the works and a Works Completion Certificate will be issued by the Responsible Body. At that point, the Conservation Covenant requires that the land is maintained, managed and monitored for a minimum of 85 years.
- 8.21. Within the Conservation Covenant there is also the requirement to comply with the provisions of the Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme Delivery Proposal and to not allow the use of the site for any use that would increase the nutrient load at the site.
- 8.22. The Conservation Covenants also require the land to be managed and maintained to deliver the nutrient mitigation and DACE Environmental Ltd are required to submit a Monitoring Pack to the Responsible Body on an annual basis. Powers relating to enforcement and remediation, in the event of failure of mitigation, will lie with the Responsible Body.
- 8.23. It is therefore considered that the management, maintenance and monitoring requirements for the nutrient mitigation have been robustly considered and secured through appropriate mechanisms.

Sale of nutrient credits

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 8.24. The nutrient credit scheme will be delivered and administered by DACE Environmental Ltd. DACE Environmental Ltd are the landowners of the site.
- 8.25. As DACE Environmental Ltd are the landowners and have entered into the Conservation Covenant, it is therefore concluded that DACE Environmental Ltd are able to sell credits generated from the drainage ditch enhancements at Project Bliby Wood DD1.
- 8.26. It is important to note that DACE Environmental Ltd sell credits via a two-part approach. DACE Environmental Ltd issue an initial 'reservation nutrient credit certificate' prior to the granting of planning permission, which will be used for the purposes of undertaking the Appropriate Assessment for planning applications relying on this form of nutrient credits. A final 'vesting certificate' is then issued after the grant of planning permission. The reservation nutrient credit certificate confirms the intention to allocate nutrient credits to the development and this is confirmed through the vesting certificate. The submission of the reservation certificate provides the competent authority with assurances that the nutrient mitigation will be allocated to the development and can therefore be relied upon for the Appropriate Assessments for individual planning applications. In the absence of a vesting certificate, at the point of granting planning permission, appropriate worded planning conditions restricting occupancy of the development will be applied until such time as the vesting certificate is issued, to confirm the credits have been allocated to the development.

Availability of the nutrient credits

- 8.27. As of the 25 March 2026, the works at Bliby Wood DD1 have not been implemented, and the mitigation is not yet operational.
- 8.28. Developments which are reliant on this scheme for the purposes of nutrient credits will need to have a restriction on the occupation of the development, until such a time as the mitigation is operational. This is to ensure that the mitigation is fully operational prior to the occupation of the development (which generates the nutrients).
- 8.29. To confirm that the mitigation is operational and the works have taken place, the credit providers are required in the Conservation Covenant to submit evidence to the Responsible Body. Once the Responsible Body is satisfied that the works have been completed, they will issue a 'Works Completion Certificate'. This certificate will act as evidence that the works have been completed and the mitigation is operational.
- 8.30. For planning applications relying on nutrient credits ahead of the issue of the Works Completion Certificate, a verification report will be required to be submitted to the competent authority prior to occupation of the developments, to confirm that the mitigation has been delivered and is operational in accordance with the approved plans referred to in this Appropriate Assessment and the relevant permits and consents.
- 8.31. Once this verification report has been submitted and approved by the competent authority (e.g. the Local Planning Authority) and the mitigation is operational, the occupation restrictions can be removed for developments utilising the nutrient credits.

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 8.32. An example of a pre-occupation planning condition that will be attached to planning permissions for schemes relying on these nutrient credits (prior to the implementation and operation of the ditch enhancements) is set out below:

Prior to the occupation of the dwellings hereby approved, a verification report of the implementation and operation of the Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme at Bliby Wood DD1 shall be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority. This verification report shall include the following:

- *Confirmation from the landowner of the Bliby Wood DD1 Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme that the mitigation scheme has been delivered in accordance with the permits and approved plans and a Works Completion Certificate has been issued.*
- *Submission of a vesting certificate to confirm that the nutrient credits as reserved in the [INDIVIDUAL PLANNING APPLICATION NUTRIENT RESERVATION CERTIFICATE] have been allocated to the proposed development.*

Reason: *In the interest of preserving protected and qualifying features of European protected sites from water pollution associated with the occupation phase of development in accordance with policies SP1 and ENV1 of the Ashford Local Plan 2030.*

Nutrient credit ledger

- 8.33. To record the mitigation generated, the credit provider will hold a Nutrient Credit Ledger. RSK, as the responsible body in the Conservation Covenant, will be responsible for holding the nutrient credit ledger.
- 8.34. Similarly, the Council will hold a Nutrient Credit Ledger which tracks the available and secured mitigation and records the mitigation allocated as credits to individual developments. It will be a composite list of the mitigation generated and where this source has come from, e.g. the individual drainage ditch that has been enhanced.
- 8.35. Mitigation will only enter the Ledger once it has been secured through the relevant legal agreements, e.g. Conservation Covenants. At this stage, the mitigation enters a central bank. Mitigation is then reserved to individual planning applications, removing it from the central bank (to prevent double counting of mitigation).
- 8.36. Credit certificates will be issued by the credit provider to developers to confirm the mitigation has been reserved for the proposed development. The reservation certificates will then be submitted as part of the planning application/Appropriate Assessment for individual developments.

9. Natural England consultation

- 9.1. In accordance with Regulation 63(3) the Local Planning Authority, in its role as competent authority, must consult the Natural England and have regard to any representations made by Natural England.

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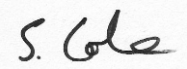
Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Natural England's comments

Natural England was consulted on the strategic HRA/AA on the 26 March 2026. In their response dated 30 April 2026, Natural England 'advises that we [Natural England] concur with the assessment conclusions, proving that all mitigation measures are appropriately secured in any planning permission given'.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1. In accordance with Regulation 63(5) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Council, as the competent authority and Local Planning Authority, has undertaken an Appropriate Assessment on the nutrient impact of the Project Bliby DD1: Drainage ditch enhancements scheme of the DACE Environmental Ltd nutrient credit scheme.
- 10.2. The Council considers that, subject to the mitigation being secured and delivered in accordance with the relevant conditions and legal agreements set out above, developments relying on nutrient credits from the Project Bliby DD1 will not have an adverse impact on the integrity of the Stodmarsh Lakes either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

HRA Completion Date:	5 May 2026
HRA Completed by:	Harriet Turner Deputy Team Leader – Plan-Making & Infrastructure
HRA signed:	 Simon Cole Assistant Director – Planning & Development

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Appendix 1 – Natural England Consultation response

Date: 30 April 2026
Our ref: 544729
Your ref: DACE Environmental Ltd – Bliby DD1 credit scheme



Ashford Borough Council

BY EMAIL ONLY

Customer Services
Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

0300 060 3900

Dear Harriet Turner,

Consultation: Strategic HRA and AA for the creation of nutrient credit scheme for drainage ditch enhancements at Bliby DD1.

Thank you for your consultation which was received by email on 26 March 2026. Please find below our comments to the submitted strategic Appropriate Assessment.

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.

Natural England welcome and the strategic approach to the creation of nutrient mitigation in the Stour/Stodmarsh catchment. Having assessed the proposed scheme (drainage ditch enhancements at Bliby DD1), we are satisfied in principle that the scheme can be used to generate permanent nutrient mitigation.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Natural England notes that your authority, as competent authority, has undertaken an appropriate assessment of the proposal in accordance with regulation 63 of the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended). Natural England is a statutory consultee on the appropriate assessment stage of the Habitats Regulations Assessment process.

Your appropriate assessment concludes that your authority is able to ascertain that the proposal will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of any of the sites in question. Having considered the assessment, and the measures proposed to mitigate for all identified adverse effects that could potentially occur as a result of the proposal, Natural England advises that we concur with the assessment conclusions, providing that all mitigation measures are appropriately secured in any planning permission given.

A key component of the Appropriate Assessment is the application of a pre-occupation planning condition to control the timing of development in relation to the delivery of the Bliby DD1 nutrient mitigation drainage ditch enhancement scheme. Occupation of any dwelling should not take place until the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the relevant elements of the nutrient mitigation scheme have been fully constructed, delivered and are operational. This approach ensures that the mitigation relied upon by the development is in place and effective prior to any nutrient loading arising from occupation, and that permissions are only implemented where the delivery of the required mitigation scheme is fully assured.

Natural England are satisfied that there is scientific certainty that proposed nutrient mitigation scheme will result in the calculated nutrient reductions. We advise that you as the competent authority, should ensure conditions are sufficiently robust to ensure that the mitigation measures

can be fully implemented and are enforceable in perpetuity and therefore provide a sufficient degree of certainty to pass the Habitats Regulations.

If you have any queries relating to the advice in this letter please contact me at Thomas.scott-heagerty@naturalengland.org.uk.

Should the proposal change, please consult us again.

Yours sincerely
Thomas Scott-Heagerty
Sussex & Kent Area Team

Appendix 2 – Strategic HRA AA of DACE Environmental Ltd
Project Price Following

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Strategic Assessment of DACE Environmental Ltd Project Temporary fallowing (Price Fallow) Nutrient Credit Scheme

1. Background

- 1.1. The purpose of this Report is to address the regulatory requirements relating to what is generally referred to as the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) process.
- 1.2. Regulation 63(1) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), known as the Habitats Regulations, requires competent authorities to determine whether any plans or projects that they are giving consent or granting permission to, are likely to have significant (adverse) effects on European Sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. If significant effects upon a European Site are anticipated, then the plan or project must be subject to an Appropriate Assessment. Considering the conclusions of any Appropriate Assessment, a plan or project can only be granted permission after the competent authority has ascertained that the plan or project will not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of any European Site. Where an adverse effect on the integrity of any European Site cannot be ruled out and where there are no alternative solutions, the plan or project can only proceed if there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest and if the necessary compensatory measures can be secured.
- 1.3. This HRA has been prepared by Ashford Borough Council, as Local Planning Authority and the relevant competent authority, to determine whether temporary land fallowing measures (referred to in Section 6 of this report), would have an adverse effect on the integrity of European Sites.

2. Nutrient Neutrality and the Stodmarsh Lakes

- 2.1. The Stodmarsh Lakes, located to the east of Canterbury, are a set of lakes that are afforded a range of environmental designations and protections including a Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar site, Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Parts are also designated a National Nature Reserve (NNR).
- 2.2. In accordance with Regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (referred to as the Habitats Regulations) the Stodmarsh Lakes are designated as 'European Sites' and referred to as 'Habitats Sites' within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).
- 2.3. In July 2020, Natural England (NE) issued an Advice Note to Ashford Borough Council titled 'Advice on Nutrient Neutrality for New Development in the Stour Catchment in Relation to Stodmarsh Designated Sites – For Local

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Planning Authorities'¹. This Advice was then updated in November 2020 and again on 16 March 2022 in a letter titled 'Advice for development proposals with the potential to affect water quality resulting in adverse nutrient impacts on habitats sites'².

- 2.4. The Advice note sets out that there are excessive nitrogen and phosphorus levels in the Stodmarsh Lakes, and so the water within the Lakes is in an unfavourable condition and has the potential to further deteriorate.
- 2.5. In line with established case law and the 'precautionary principle', Natural England advise that applications for certain types of development (including housing) within the Stour River catchment, and/or which discharge to particular Wastewater Treatment Works within the catchment, have the potential to contribute to deterioration of the Stodmarsh Lakes. Natural England concluded that these types of development proposals have the potential to affect water in such a way that adverse nutrient impacts on the Stodmarsh Lakes cannot be ruled out.
- 2.6. Regulation 63 of the Habitats Regulations requires a 'competent authority' to undertake an Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the implications of the project (planning permission) to determine the effect on the integrity of the Stodmarsh Lakes. For an AA to conclude that there is no significant adverse effect, the decision maker must be satisfied that the development can achieve nutrient neutrality.
- 2.7. This report is prepared at a strategic level to review a form of nutrient mitigation being prepared by the DACE Environmental Ltd. The mitigation, once generated, would enter a centralised nutrient mitigation bank and can subsequently be sold to developments in the form of nutrient credits. This report therefore assesses whether the proposals will generate nutrient mitigation which can then be sold as nutrient credits to individual developments and planning applications within the borough.

3. European designated sites impacted

- 3.1. This section of this report sets out the details of the plan/project and the internationally designated sites that could be impacted by the proposed plan/project.

European Sites potentially impacted by the plan or project	Stodmarsh Special Protection Area Stodmarsh Special Area of Conservation Stodmarsh Ramsar Site
--	--

Details of the European sites affected

¹ <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/media/l3dgnfyu/stodmarsh-nutrient-neutral-methodology-november-2020.pdf>

² <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/media/0jabvost/ne-march-2022-letter-water-quality-and-nutrient-neutrality-advice.pdf>

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Stodmarsh SAC

The Stodmarsh Special Area of Conservation (SAC) has been designated under the EU Habitats Directive for the presence of the following habitats/species:

- S1016 Desmoulin's whorl snail (*Vertigo moulinsiana*)

The Conservation Objectives of the Stodmarsh SAC are as follows:

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring.

- The extent and distribution of the habitats of qualifying species
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
- The supporting processes on which the habitats of qualifying species rely
- The populations of the qualifying species, and,
- The distribution of the qualifying species within the site.

Stodmarsh SPA

The Stodmarsh SPA has been designated under the EU Habitats Directive for the presence of the following individual species and/or assemblage of species:

- A021 Great bittern (Non-breeding) (*Botaurus stellaris*)
- A051 Gadwall (Breeding) (*Anas strepera*)
- A051 Gadwall (Non-breeding) (*Anas strepera*)
- A056 Northern shoveler (Non-breeding) (*Anas clypeata*)
- A082 Hen harrier (Non-breeding) (*Circus cyaneus*)
- Waterbird assemblage
- Breeding bird assemblage

The Conservation Objectives of the Stodmarsh SPA are as follows:

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features
- The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features
- The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely
- The population of each of the qualifying features, and,
- The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Stodmarsh Ramsar

The Stodmarsh Ramsar was designated under criterion 2 of the Ramsar criteria for the presence of 6 British Red Data Book wetland invertebrates, two nationally rated plants, five national scarce species and a diverse assemblage of rare wetland birds.

[View more details on the Stodmarsh Ramsar designation](#)

Is the plan or project directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site?	No – the development is neither connected to, nor necessary for, the management of any European Site.
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4. Scope of this HRA/AA

- 4.1. This strategic HRA/AA has been written by Ashford Borough Council, as competent authority, to assess the proposed mitigation measures on the impacts on the Stodmarsh Lakes. Mitigation is proposed in the form of enhancement to drainage ditches within Ashford borough.
- 4.2. This report is solely focused on the issue of water quality and nutrients on the Stodmarsh Lakes. Other impacts on the European site, are not within the scope of this report.
- 4.3. The assessment is a strategic level assessment and does not assess the individual needs for mitigation for planning applications which are required to achieve nutrient neutrality.

5. Relationship with individual planning applications

- 5.1. This Strategic HRA/AA provides an overarching assessment that will support individual planning applications seeking to rely on the proposed mitigation measures. Site specific Appropriate Assessments will be undertaken by the competent authority and should be read alongside this strategic HRA/AA.
- 5.2. For the site-specific Appropriate Assessments relying on this mitigation measure, developers will be required to submit the following information:
 - Nutrient load calculations, using the Natural England Nutrient Neutral Methodology, to assess the net phosphorus and nitrogen load generated by the proposed development.
 - Evidence of the credit purchase via Reservation Certificates and Vesting Certificates.

6. Mitigation measure – Project Price Fallowing – temporary land following

- 6.1. This Strategic HRA/AA reviews the proposed mitigation measure of taking land out of agricultural use/low intensity agricultural uses, creating greenspace and associated land management measures on land near Sellindge, Ashford for the purposes of generating nutrient mitigation. Please note that these measures are temporary and will cease on the 1 April 2030.

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 6.2. To support this Strategic HRA/AA, the Council has assessed the following information:
- Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme Temporary Fallow Land Management Plan (Project ref. GSL14/Stodmarsh_ODG v2) (dated 07/08/2025)
 - Natural England Discretionary Advice Service Reference UDS-A018728/522955 (dated 15/08/2025)
 - Conservation Covenant Agreement Nutrient Neutrality relating to land at Sellindge, Ashford, Kent (dated 06/02/2026)
 - Land Owner Deed of Covenant relating to Conservation Obligations over land at Sellindge, Ashford, Kent (dated 06/02/2026)
 - SSES_temp_fallowing_mitigation_per_soil_farm (dated 05/03/2026)
 - Notice of Cessation (dated 06/02/2026)
- 6.3. For ease of reference, this mitigation measure which forms part of the DACE credit scheme will hereafter be referred to as 'Project Price Fallowing'.

7. HRA Screening Assessment

- 7.1. This section of the report contains an assessment of whether the proposed plan/project would have a likely significant effect on the European sites identified above.

Would the proposal lead to a likely significant effect on the European Sites, without mitigation measures, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects?

- 7.2. In accordance with the Natural England advice titled '[Advice for development proposals with the potential to affect water quality resulting in adverse nutrient impacts on habitats sites](#)' (dated 16 March 2022), Natural England have stated that any net gain in new overnight accommodation within the Stour catchment, or which discharges wastewater into the catchment, poses a risk to the conservation objectives of the designated sites at Stodmarsh due to increased levels of nitrogen and phosphorus from wastewater and treated sewage effluent.
- 7.3. Where wastewater from development is discharged into the Stour catchment, the nutrients in the wastewater could follow hydrological pathways to the Stodmarsh Lakes. Therefore, development could have a likely significant effect on the Stodmarsh Lakes SPA, SAC and Ramsar designated sites in combination with other plans or projects within the Stour catchment. As the likelihood of a Likely Significant Effect cannot be excluded, an Appropriate Assessment is required.

Note: the proposed mitigation measure does not generate a net increase in overnight accommodation. The purpose of this Strategic HRA/AA is to review the proposed Project Price Fallowing to confirm whether it can provide nutrient mitigation for development schemes required to achieve nutrient neutrality.

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

8. Appropriate Assessment

- 8.1. This Appropriate Assessment is being undertaken on the proposed Project Price Fallowing to determine whether any developments relying on this mitigation measure can, in principle, achieve nutrient neutrality.

Scope of nutrient mitigation

- 8.2. The proposed mitigation will involve the cessation of agricultural activity and the creation of area of 'greenspace' and low-input grassland via land management processes to minimise direct sources of nutrient pollution from intensive agricultural processes.

Location of nutrient mitigation

- 8.3. This land fallowing project is proposed on a number of land parcels near Stone Hill and south of the M20, near Sellindge. The fields are located within the Stour catchment area, upstream of the Stodmarsh Lakes.
- 8.4. A broad location plan for the proposed land fallowing is set out in Figure 2 of the Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme Temporary Fallow Land Management Plan (Project ref. GSL14/Stodmarsh_ODG v2) and is copied below.

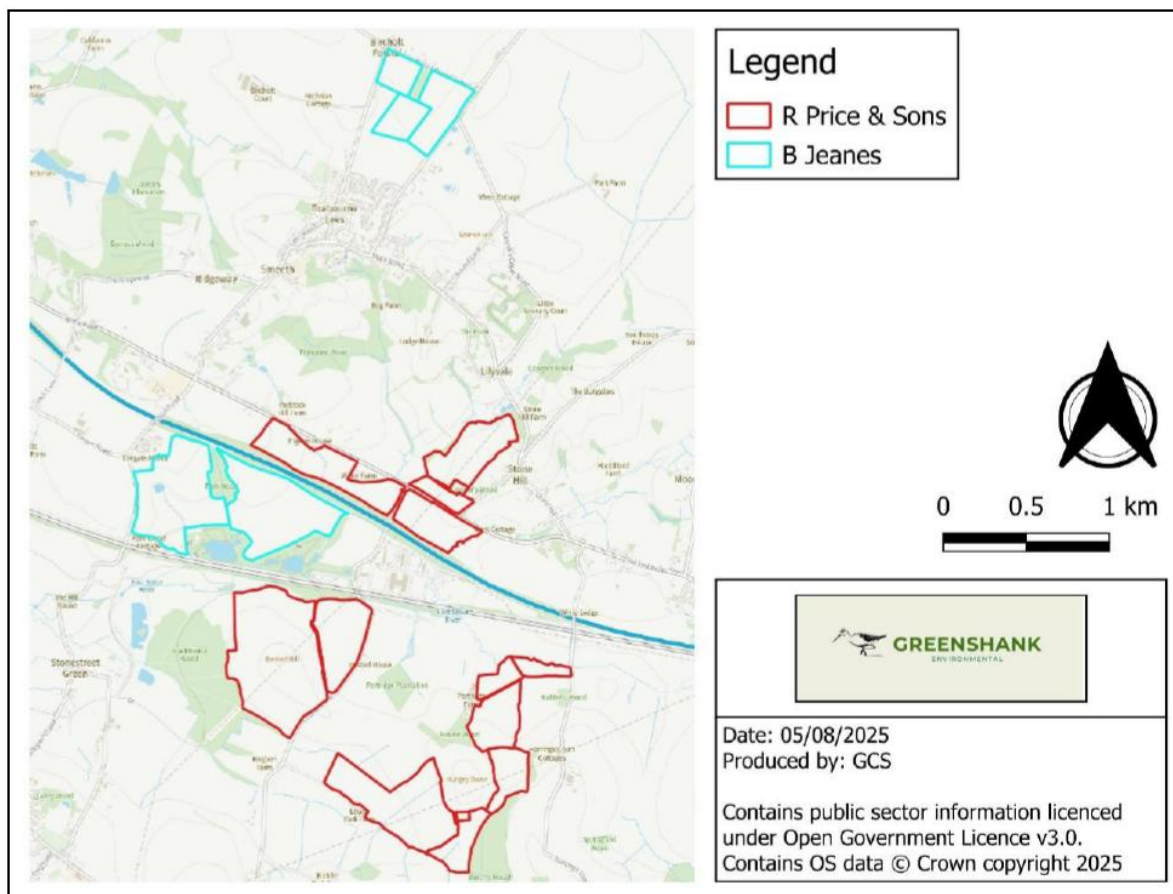


Figure 1 Map showing the scheme boundary. Taken from Figure 2 of Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme Temporary Fallow Land Management Plan (Project ref. GSL14/Stodmarsh_ODG v2). Please note the land subject of this Appropriate Assessment is shown in red outline.

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

8.5. Please note that the parcels proposed as part of the credit scheme were subsequently amended to mirror land ownership and the full extent of the area secured for following as part of Project Price Following is set out within each of the plans within the Conservation Covenant Agreement Nutrient Neutrality relating to land at Sellindge, Ashford, Kent (dated 06/02/2026).

8.6. The table below contains a breakdown of the parcels and total area.

Land title	Field Parcel ID	Existing land use	Soil type	Area (ha)
TT22234	9741	Cereals	Impeded drainage	9.30
K318715	8068	Cereals	Impeded drainage	4.77
K318715	5578	Cereals	Impeded drainage	11.87
K318714	4095	Cereals	Impeded drainage	6.22
K318714	1201	Cereals	Impeded drainage	6.44
TT22229	609	Cereals	Impeded drainage	6.53
K723677	N/K	Cereals	Impeded drainage	39.13
K723677	N/K	Cereals	Impeded drainage	13.21
K449242	289	Cereals	Impeded drainage	5.77
K449242	2973	Cereals	Impeded drainage	2.16
K449242	7403	Cereals	Freely draining	4.74
K449242	7403	Cereals	Impeded drainage	2.85

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

K449242	2973	Cereals	Freely draining	0.65
TT22234	9863	Cereals	Impeded drainage	3.51
TT180296	2370	Cereals	Impeded drainage	2.76
K422813	5457	Cereals	Freely draining	3.56
K318714	5457	Cereals	Impeded drainage	0.39
K136450	6375	Cereals	Semi-impeded drainage	12.75
K266763	8068	Cereals	Semi-impeded drainage	0.74
TT22229	7797	Lowland	Impeded drainage	6.43
TT22234	N/K	Cereals	Impeded drainage	0.55
TOTAL				144.32

Mitigation generated

- 8.7. The Project Price Following scheme proposes to convert land that is currently in use for 'cereals' to less intensive uses such as greenspace by ceasing agricultural uses on the land. Please note that one parcel of land (title TT22229) will be converted from 'lowland grazing' to greenspace. All other parcels were classified as 'cereals'. The fields would 'temporarily' be converted to greenspace and would revert back to agricultural uses on the 1 April 2030.
- 8.8. The credit providers have used the nutrient neutrality calculator prepared by Natural England as well as conversations with Natural England through their Discretionary Advice Service to assign the following values of mitigation generated per hectare to the associated land use type:

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Existing land use type	Soil type	Nitrogen mitigation generated Kg TN/yr/ha	Phosphorus mitigation generated Kg TP/yr/ha
Cereals	Freely draining	0.00	0.11
Cereals	Impeded drainage	19.01	0.91
Cereals	Semi-impeded drainage	13.89	0.65
Lowland grazing	Impeded drainage	8.02	0.67

- 8.9. Natural England have reviewed the proposals as a whole, including the land use classifications, as part of their Discretionary Advice Service. In their response dated 18/08/2025, Natural England have confirmed calculations and evidence provided on the credit scheme would support reductions in Nitrogen and Phosphorus. Please note that Natural England's comments considered areas which are now not proposed as mitigation (which have been substituted due to issues relating to land ownership).
- 8.10. In total, using the above nutrient coefficients and the table set out under paragraph 8.6, 2433.51 kg TN/yr and 119.12 kg TP/yr of temporary Nitrogen and Phosphorus, respectively, has been generated. A full breakdown of the calculations is set out in the document titled SSSES_temp_following_mitigation_per_title_soil_farm. (Please note any differences are due to rounding errors).
- 8.11. However, to be sufficiently precautionary, the amount of nitrogen mitigation that will be relied on for the purposes of the credit scheme has been reduced. For the Project Price Following, the total nutrient mitigation generated that can be relied upon is set out in the table below:

	Nitrogen Kg TN/yr	Phosphorus Kg TP/yr
Project Price Following	2371.46	119.12

- 8.12. Given that Natural England have reviewed the information and concur with the conclusions of the technical reports and the principles underpinning the nutrient calculations, the competent authority has the confidence to confirm that the proposed measures, once implemented, will generate the mitigation which can be calculated using the quantum of mitigation as set out in the table above.

Securing the nutrient mitigation, and the management, maintenance and monitoring of the mitigation

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 8.13. To secure the mitigation in perpetuity, the landowners have entered into a Conservation Covenant with RSK Biocensus Ltd (who are acting as the responsible body for the Conservation Covenant).
- 8.14. The Conservation Covenant requires that the land will cease agricultural use until 1 April 2030 and to not allow the use of the site for any uses that would increase the nutrient load at the site. In this regard the land use change is referred to as 'temporary'.
- 8.15. The landowners have also entered into a Land Owner Deed of Covenant relating to Conservation Obligations over land at Sellindge, Ashford, Kent (dated 06/02/2026). The Deed of Covenant is between the landowners and DACE Environmental Ltd and requires DACE Environmental Ltd to deliver and maintain the land to ensure that there is not a net increase in the nutrient load at the site.
- 8.16. With regards to monitoring arrangements, Table 4 of the Stodmarsh Stream Enhancement Scheme Temporary Fallow Land Management Plan (Project ref. GSL14/Stodmarsh_ODG v2) sets out the required land management and monitoring actions that will be required to maintain the nutrient benefits from the proposed project.
- 8.17. The Conservation Covenant also includes requirements for monitoring to be undertaken by the responsible body. Powers relating to enforcement and remediation, in the event of failure of mitigation, will lie with the responsible body.
- 8.18. Natural England is satisfied that a Conservation Covenant is an acceptable measure to secure the required management, monitoring and enforcement for the proposed mitigation scheme. Given that Natural England have no objections, it is considered that the maintenance and monitoring requirements for the nutrient mitigation have been robustly considered and secured through appropriate mechanisms

Activation/implementation of the nutrient credits

- 8.19. The Conservation Covenant places legal obligations on the landowners to implement the mitigation for the proposed parcels. The land use changes have taken effect as of the 6 February 2026, evidenced through a notice to the responsible body.

Sale of nutrient credits

- 8.20. The nutrient credit scheme will be delivered and administered by DACE Environmental Ltd. As DACE Environmental Ltd are not the landowners of the site, an additional agreement is required to 'transfer' the ability to sell the credits generated from the development as part of the nutrient credit scheme.
- 8.21. DACE Environmental Ltd have entered into a Land Owner Deed of Covenant relating to Conservation Obligations over land at Sellindge, Ashford, Kent (dated 06/02/2026). The Deed of Covenant grants DACE Environmental Ltd exclusive rights to sell the credits generated from the Project Price Fallowing generated. Therefore, there is a legal agreement in place to enable DACE Environmental Ltd to sell the credits generated as part of the Project Price Fallowing scheme.

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 8.22. It is important to note that DACE Environmental Ltd sell credits via a two-part approach. DACE Environmental Ltd issue an initial 'reservation nutrient credit certificate' prior to the granting of planning permission, which will be used for the purposes of undertaking the Appropriate Assessment for planning applications relying on this form of nutrient credits. A final 'vesting certificate' is then issued after the grant of planning permission. The reservation nutrient credit certificate confirms the intention to allocate nutrient credits to the development and this is confirmed through the vesting certificate. The submission of the reservation certificate provides the competent authority with assurances that the nutrient mitigation will be allocated to the development and can therefore be relied upon for the Appropriate Assessments for individual planning applications. In the absence of a vesting certificate, at the point of granting planning permission, appropriate worded planning conditions restricting occupancy of the development will be applied until such time as the vesting certificate is issued, to confirm the credits have been allocated to the development.

Nutrient credit ledger

- 8.23. To record the mitigation generated, the credit provider will hold a Nutrient Credit Ledger. RSK, as the responsible body in the Conservation Covenant, will be responsible for holding the nutrient credit ledger.
- 8.24. Similarly, the Council will hold a Nutrient Credit Ledger which tracks the available and secured mitigation and records the mitigation allocated as credits to individual developments. It will be a composite list of the mitigation generated and where this source has come from, e.g. the individual drainage ditch that has been enhanced.
- 8.25. Mitigation will only enter the Ledger once it has been secured through the relevant legal agreements, e.g. Conservation Covenants. At this stage, the mitigation enters a central bank. Mitigation is then reserved to individual planning applications, removing it from the central bank (to prevent double counting of mitigation).
- 8.26. Credit certificates will be issued by the credit provider to developers to confirm the mitigation has been reserved for the proposed development. The reservation certificates will then be submitted as part of the planning application/Appropriate Assessment for individual developments.

9. Natural England consultation

- 9.1. In accordance with Regulation 63(3) the Local Planning Authority, in its role as competent authority, must consult the Natural England and have regard to any representations made by Natural England.

Natural England's comments

Natural England was consulted on the strategic HRA/AA on the 2 April 2026. In their response dated 30 April 2026, Natural England 'advises that we [Natural England] concur with the assessment conclusions, proving that all mitigation measures are appropriately secured in any planning permission given'.

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

10. Conclusion

- 10.1. In accordance with Regulation 63(5) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Council, as the competent authority and Local Planning Authority, has undertaken an Appropriate Assessment on the nutrient impact of the Project Price Following scheme of the DACE Environmental Ltd nutrient credit scheme.
- 10.2. The Council considers that, subject to the mitigation being secured and delivered in accordance with the relevant conditions and legal agreements set out above, developments relying on nutrient credits from the Project Price Following will not have an adverse impact on the integrity of the Stodmarsh Lakes either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

HRA Completion Date:	5 May 2026
HRA Completed by:	Harriet Turner Deputy Team Leader – Plan-Making & Infrastructure
HRA signed:	 Simon Cole Assistant Director – Planning & Development

Ashford Borough Council
Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)
Appendix 1 – Natural England Consultation response

Date: 30 April 2026
Our ref: 547370
Your ref: DACE Environmental Ltd – Project Price Fallowing credit scheme



Ashford Borough Council

BY EMAIL ONLY

Customer Services
Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

0300 060 3900

Dear Harriet Turner,

Consultation: Strategic HRA and AA for the creation of nutrient credit scheme for temporary land fallowing (Project Price Fallowing).

Thank you for your consultation which was received by email on 02 April 2026. Please find below our comments to the submitted strategic Appropriate Assessment.

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.

Natural England welcome and the strategic approach to the creation of nutrient mitigation in the Stour/Stodmarsh catchment. Having assessed the proposed scheme (project Price Fallowing credit scheme), we are satisfied in principle that the scheme can be used to generate temporary nutrient mitigation up to 01 April 2030.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Natural England notes that your authority, as competent authority, has undertaken an appropriate assessment of the proposal in accordance with regulation 63 of the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended). Natural England is a statutory consultee on the appropriate assessment stage of the Habitats Regulations Assessment process.

Your appropriate assessment concludes that your authority is able to ascertain that the proposal will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of any of the sites in question. Having considered the assessment, and the measures proposed to mitigate for all identified adverse effects that could potentially occur as a result of the proposal, Natural England advises that we concur with the assessment conclusions, providing that all mitigation measures are appropriately secured in any planning permission given.

Natural England are satisfied that there is scientific certainty that proposed nutrient mitigation scheme will result in the calculated nutrient reductions. We advise that you as the competent authority, should ensure conditions are sufficiently robust to ensure that the mitigation measures can be fully implemented and are enforceable and therefore provide a sufficient degree of certainty to pass the Habitats Regulations.

It should be noted that Natural England have reached the above conclusion based on the nutrient modelling assessments and calculations supplied by the mitigation proposer. Your authority as the competent authority should be satisfied that these figures are suitably robust prior to using them as the basis for any policy or planning decision making.

If you have any queries relating to the advice in this letter please contact me at Thomas.scott-heagerty@naturalengland.org.uk.

Should the proposal change, please consult us again.

Yours sincerely
Thomas Scott-Heagerty
Sussex & Kent Area Team

Appendix 3 - Planning applications allocated nutrient credits (Project Bliby DD1)

Status of 08/05/2026

Credit Ledger	08/05/2026								
Res Cert Number	LPA	Planning Reference	Site Address	Source	Temporary TN (kg/yr)	Temporary TP (kg/yr)	Permanent TN (kg/yr)	Permanent TP (kg/yr)	Date Res. Cert.Issued
2	Canterbury	TBC	Thanington	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	109.73	15.64	19/03/2026
4	Ashford	15/00856/AS	Kingsnorth	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	670.29	7.05	20/03/2026
6	Canterbury	CA/23/00811	The Skip Field	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	6.28	0.41	11/02/2026
8	Ashford	22/00230/AS	Shadoxhurst	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	2.27	0.06	11/02/2026
10	Ashford	20/01208/AS	105 Canterbury Road	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	6.86	0.12	11/02/2026
15	Ashford	18/1861/AS	Stanhope Road (Care Home Pre-2030)	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	46.11	5.84	24/03/2026
16	Ashford	18/1861/AS	Stanhope Road (Resi Post-2030)	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	215.49	6.71	24/03/2026
19	Ashford	PA/2025/0598	Chart Road, Ashford	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	80.54	4.92	02/04/2026
25	Canterbury	CA/23/01296	6 The Villas, Island Road, CT3 4HA	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	1.14	0.02	11/02/2026
34	Ashford	PA/2025/0186	Meadow Court, Ashford Court, Kingsnorth	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	22.84	0.00	16/03/2026
35	Maidstone	25/501979/FULL	The Old Goods Yard Headcorn Road Lenham Kent ME17 2HT	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	39.95	1.68	24/03/2026
36	Ashford	20/00947/AS	New Rents, Ashford	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	85.85	2.20	07/04/2026
37	Folkestone & Hythe	25/1394/FH	Land Adj The Mount, Barrow Hill, Sellindge, TN25 6JQ	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	12.38	0.20	24/03/2026
39	Canterbury	CA/223/02056	Land former car park, Station Road West	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	38.95	7.11	03/04/2026
41	Ashford	PA/2023/0434	Westlea House, Pluckley Road, Charing	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	4.55	0.11	02/04/2026
43	Ashford	22/00790/AS	Land south west of 11, Butt Field Road, Singleton, Kent	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	12.17	0.80	02/04/2026
46	Canterbury	CA/24/00461	29 School Lane, Blean	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.06	02/04/2026
47	Ashford	21/00521/AS	6 Boys Hall Road, Willesborough, TN24 0LA	Bliby DD1	0.00	0.00	0.25	4.93	16/04/2026
				TOTAL	0.00	0.00	1355.73	57.86	

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Appendix 4 - Planning applications allocated nutrient credits (Project Price Following)

Status of 08/05/2026

Credit Ledger		08/05/2026							
Res Cert Number	LPA	Planning Reference	Site Address	Source	Temporary TN (kg/yr)	Temporary TP (kg/yr)	Permanent TN (kg/yr)	Permanent TP (kg/yr)	Date Res. Cert.Issued
1	Canterbury	TBC	Thanington	Price Following	73.44	119.12	0.00	0.00	22/12/2025
12	Canterbury	CA/22/00255	Westgate Towers	Price Following	42.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	11/02/2026
15	Ashford	18/01861/AS	Stanhope Road (Care Home Pre-2030)	Price Following	132.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	24/03/2026
19	Ashford	PA/2025/0598	Chart Road, Ashford	Price Following	140.16	0.00	0.00	0.00	02/04/2026
21	Canterbury	CA/21/00247	Charter House, Canterbury	Price Following	56.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	12/02/2026
24	Canterbury	CA/22/01422	Dover Street, Canterbury	Price Following	2.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	11/02/2026
28	Ashford	18/00098/AS	Waterbrook	Price Following	790.64	0.00	0.00	0.00	26/03/2026
29	Ashford	21/01688	Delcroft, Ashford	Price Following	33.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11/02/2026
34	Ashford	PA/2025/0186	Meadow Court, Ashford Court, Kingsnorth	Price Following	63.62	0.00	0.00	0.00	16/03/2026
35	Maidstone	25/501979/FULL	The Old Goods Yard Headcorn Road Lenham Kent ME17 2HT	Price Following	67.92	0.00	0.00	0.00	24/03/2026
37	Folkestone & Hythe	25/1394/FH	Land Adj The Mount, Barrow Hill, Sellindge, TN25 6JQ	Price Following	29.93	0.00	0.00	0.00	24/03/2026
39	Canterbury	CA/223/02056	Land former car park, Station Road West	Price Following	66.22	0.00	0.00	0.00	03/04/2026
41	Ashford	PA/2023/0434	Westlea House, Pluckley Road, Charing	Price Following	2.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	26/03/2026
43	Ashford	22/00790/AS	Land south west of 11, Butt Field Road, Singleton, Kent	Price Following	18.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	31/03/2026
46	Canterbury	CA/24/00461	29 School Lane, Blean	Price Following	1.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	02/04/2026
47	Ashford	21/00521/AS	6 Boys Hall Road, Willesborough, TN24 0LA	Price Following	8.81	0.00	0.00	0.00	16/04/2026
TOTAL					1529.12	119.12	0	0	

Appendix 5 – Natural England Consultation Response

From: SM-NE-Consultations (NE) <consultations@naturalengland.org.uk>
Sent: 07 May 2026 8:06 AM
To: Steve Musk <steve.musk@ashford.gov.uk>; Harriet Turner <harriet.turner@ashford.gov.uk>
Subject: NE Consultation Response - Consultation on draft HRA/Appropriate Assessment - 21/00521/AS - 6 Boys Hall Road, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent, TN24 0LA

FAO Mr Steve Musk and Ms Harriet Turner Ashford Borough Council

Our ref: 547293
Your ref: 21/00521/AS

Dear Mr Musk and Ms Turner,

Planning consultation: Outline planning application with all matters reserved for the removal of mobile home, hair salon, and outbuilding, and erection of five detached four-bedroom houses.

Location: 6 Boys Hall Road, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent, TN24 0LA

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 24 April 2026.

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.

Further information on when to consult Natural England on planning proposals is here - [Planning and transport authorities: get environmental advice on planning - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Natural England is not able to provide specific advice on this application and therefore has no comment to make on its details. Although we have not been able to assess the potential impacts of this proposal on statutory nature conservation sites or protected landscapes, we offer the further advice and references to Standing Advice.

Natural England advises Local Planning Authorities to use the following tools to assess the impacts of the proposal on the natural environment:

Impact Risk Zones:

Natural England has provided Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) with Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) which can be used to determine whether the proposal impacts statutory nature conservation sites. Natural England recommends that the LPA uses

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

these IRZs to assess potential impacts. If proposals do not trigger an Impact Risk Zone then Natural England will provide an auto-response email.

Standing Advice:

Natural England has published Standing Advice. Links to standing advice are in Annex A.

If after using these tools, you consider there are significant risks to statutory nature conservation sites or protected landscapes, please set out the specific areas on which you require Natural England's advice.

Further information on LPA duties relating to protected sites and areas is here- Protected sites and areas: how to review planning applications - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Further guidance is also set out in Planning Practice Guidance on the natural environment Natural environment - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and on Habitats Regulations Assessment Appropriate assessment - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Non detailed advice from Natural England does not imply that there are no impacts on the natural environment. It is for the local planning authority to determine whether or not the proposal is consistent with national and local environmental policies. Other bodies and individuals may provide information and advice on the environmental value of this site and the impacts of the proposal on the natural environment to assist the decision making process.

Should the proposal change, please consult us again.

Yours sincerely,

Nikki Smart

Officer

Natural England

Consultation Service

Natural England, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester, U.K., WR5 2NP

Email: consultations@naturalengland.org.uk

www.gov.uk/natural-england



We strongly recommend using the SSSI Impact Risk Zones (SSSI IRZs) to decide when to consult Natural England on development proposals that might affect a SSSI. The SSSI IRZs tool is quick and simple to use and gives instant planning advice as a formal consultation response in certain circumstances and can reduce unnecessary delays in the planning process.

Ashford Borough Council

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Natural England offers two chargeable services - the Discretionary Advice Service, which provides pre-application and post-consent advice on planning/licensing proposals to developers and consultants, and the Pre-submission Screening Service for European Protected Species mitigation licence applications. These services help applicants take appropriate account of environmental considerations at an early stage of project development, reduce uncertainty, the risk of delay and added cost at a later stage, whilst securing good results for the natural environment.

For further information on the Discretionary Advice Service see [here](#)

For further information on the Pre-submission Screening Service see [here](#)