

Mr Matthew Burns
Reading Borough Council
Development Control
PO Box 17
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 7TD

Our ref: WA/2020/127796/02-L01
Your ref: 200358
Date: 15 May 2020

Dear Mr Burns

The installation of two archimedean screw turbines with a hut covering the generators, gearboxes and the control system (hydropower infrastructure) without complying with condition 2 (approved plans) of planning permission ref. 151715 to allow minor changes to the size of the turbines, housing structure and generator hut. Additional details are also submitted in respect of conditions 3 (public footpath), 4 (bat boxes), 5 (great crested newts licence), 7 (tree protection), 9 (materials), 10 (fencing), 11 (construction method statement), 13 (land cleaning procedures) and 15 (fish and eel pass detailed design) Footpath Next To Caversham Weir, Caversham, Reading, RG1 8BP.

Thank you for your consultation dated 13 May 2020.

We have reviewed the email dated 13 May 2020 from Renewables First and the attached Drawing No. READH-14 Rev.1 – Fish pass entry details.

The site lies within Flood Zone 3 in accordance with our flood map for planning. Flood Zone 3 is defined as having a high probability of river flooding in accordance with Table 1 'Flood risk' of the Planning Practice Guidance. The site also lies adjacent to the River Thames.

Environment Agency position

We have reviewed the submitted information and we are able to **withdraw our objection** on fisheries and biodiversity grounds to the variation of condition 2 of planning permission 151715 subject to the following condition being imposed on any planning permission granted. Without this condition, the proposed development on this site poses an unacceptable risk to the environment and we would wish to object to this application.

Cont/d..

Condition: The development permitted by this planning permission shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved documents:

- Caversham Weir Hydroelectric Scheme: Flood Risk Assessment Summary, dated April 2020 and written by Renewables First.

- Caversham Weir Hydropower Scheme: Flood Risk Assessment, dated 17 September 2015 and written by eWaterpower.

The mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the scheme's timing/phasing arrangements. The measures detailed above shall be retained and maintained thereafter throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants.

Condition 15

From a fisheries and biodiversity perspective **we are able to** recommend the discharge of condition 15 of planning permission 151715.

The revised drawing and the explanation meets our requirements by complying with our fish pass guidance. We can also confirm that this does not need to go back to the National Fish Pass Panel but can be dealt with at the Area. We will need to abolish the existing approval and approve the new updated drawings. However, we are able to do this after planning approval has been granted.

Advice to LPA - Sequential test

In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 158, development should not be permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding. It is for you to determine if the Sequential Test has to be applied and whether or not there are other sites available at lower flood risk as required by the Sequential Test in the National Planning Policy Framework. Our flood risk standing advice reminds you of this and provides advice on how to do this.

Informative Environmental permit

The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 require a permit or exemption to be obtained for any activities which will take place:

- on or within 8 metres of a main river (16 metres if tidal)
- on or within 8 metres of a flood defence structure or culverted main river (16 metres if tidal)
- on or within 16 metres of a sea defence
- involving quarrying or excavation within 16 metres of any main river, flood defence (including a remote defence) or culvert
- in a floodplain more than 8 metres from the river bank, culvert or flood defence structure (16 metres if it's a tidal main river) and you don't already have planning permission For further guidance please visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk->

activities-environmental-permits or contact our National Customer Contact Centre on **03708 506 506** (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm) or by emailing enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk.

The applicant should not assume that a permit will automatically be forthcoming once planning permission has been granted, and we advise them to consult with us at the earliest opportunity.

Advice to applicant - Flood Risk Activity Permit

Informative 1: This applicant has already been granted a Flood Risk Activity Permit for the proposed works (as per the details provided in early 2019). Note that the existing FRAP reference is for two Archimedes screws. At that time, the permit was conditioned with Condition 2.3.1 (requiring an Approved Method of Work) and Condition 2.3.4 (regarding the planning conditions requirements for surveys for great crested newts).

When the applicant sends in the Approved Method of Works which is required as part of the Flood Risk Activity Permit EPR\DB3258UB, we recommend that they provide the updated plans, construction method statement and flood risk assessment summary as per the latest planning permission application. Additional supporting evidence may be required as part of that process.

Final Comments

Once again, thank you for contacting us. Our comments are based on our available records and the information as submitted to us.

Please quote our reference number in any future correspondence.

If you have any queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely

Miss Michelle Kidd
Planning Advisor

Direct dial 02030259712

E-mail planning_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk

cc Renewables First