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BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Ms Edwards,

Letter of Intent regarding the approach to recreational disturbance mitigation for Clumber Park SSSI

I am writing to you with respect of Natural England's intended approach to help mitigate the potential disturbance from increased recreational pressure on the Clumber Park Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) as a result of the proposed housing allocations included in the Bassetlaw Local Plan.

As Natural England indicated in our response to the Publication Version of the Bassetlaw Local Plan (Second Addendum) we agreed that any housing development that falls within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for Clumber Park SSSI should give full consideration to the potential recreational impact on the SSSI. The IRZs are a GIS tool developed by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks to SSSIs posed by development proposals. They define zones around each SSSI which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts.

As a result of further discussions with the Bassetlaw District's planning officers and the National Trust we intend to strengthen this approach by amending the current 10km IRZ for Clumber Park SSSI to specifically reference recreational disturbance resulting from planning applications for residential development¹. We consider that this will allow a wider range of developments that Natural England would be alerted to through local authority planning consultations and as a consequence be able to give advice regarding appropriate mitigation measures, particularly including the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS) or other appropriate design, layout or management measures.

The amended IRZ will include housing allocation sites of over 50 units proposed in the Bassetlaw Local Plan. This distance has been based on evidence from the Recreational Impact Assessment for Clumber Park SSSI² which includes information from a visitor behaviour survey. The results from this survey showed that a quarter of all interviewees who visited Clumber Park 1 to 3 times per week, were notably walkers and dog walkers, with >16% visiting most days or daily. It is this group of visitors that would live in proximity to Clumber Park, and therefore most likely to increase as a result of additional housing development, that the amended IRZ will focus on. The 10km IRZ will also incorporate the Birklands & Bilhaugh SSSI/ Special Area of Conservation (SAC) /Sherwood

¹ Residential to include: new dwellings; Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs); Student accommodation; Residential care homes and residential institutions (excludes nursing homes); Residential caravan sites (excludes holiday caravans and campsites)

² [Clumber Park SSSI Recreation Impact Assessment \(bassetlaw.gov.uk\)](https://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk)

Forest National Nature Reserve (NNR).

To implement the extension of the Clumber Park SSSI IRZ Natural England will notify both Bassetlaw District Council and other surrounding local authorities whose areas fall within the 10km IRZ. The amended IRZ will be included on [NE Open Data Geoportal](#) and [Magic](#) which is available to all local authorities. The success of this approach using an extended IRZ will be monitored and adjusted if appropriate including the extent of the IRZ.

The approach using IRZs to alert Natural England to planning applications in close proximity to Clumber Park SSSI will be a first step towards wider mitigation of the recreational pressures on the Sherwood Forest Area. It is envisaged that a strategic approach will be developed through working in partnership with relevant stakeholders involving both the Local Nature Recovery Strategies and Green Infrastructure Strategies. These could identify a package of mitigation measures, including SANGs, Biodiversity Net Gain off-setting areas and land management agreements which will all contribute to the Nature Recovery Network.

If you have any queries relating to the advice in this letter please contact me on 02080268500

Yours sincerely

Roslyn Deeming
Senior Planning Adviser – Strategic Plans for Places
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