

From: David Huckstep [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, April 6, 2024 8:08 AM
To: Andrew Rutter [REDACTED]
Subject: Proposed AD Plant Spring Grove Farm Withersfield Ref SCC/0045/23SE.....SLR Responses

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Good Morning Andrew

It is apparent that the applicant has failed to address 9a and 9b of the Regulation 25.

Although SLR have carried out a survey of water voles and their habitat between July and September last year it would appear they have failed to follow best practice which requires a survey earlier in the breeding season between April and June.

This in reality is now a tad academic as the Thurlow Estate, land owning promoters, have dredged the water course/Stour brook stream over the application area earlier this year on the pretext of flood protection, no doubt under instruction from Acorn to mitigate this Environmental issue in support of the application.

Ironically I have lived opposite the Meldham Washlands since 1976 and this is the first time I have seen the Thurlow Estate perform on this water course, pure coincidence of course?

Water voles and most importantly their habitat, are protected under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act as you aware. This does not seem to be the case in this instance.

These works were undertaken without prior consent from the Agency and not supervised. This flagrant breech was subject to a site meeting on the 12th Jan this year which I attended with Richard Haylock (who farms adjoining land) where the extent of damage and desecration to their habitat was witnessed first hand by the Environmental Agency.

Maybe The ex High Sheriff of Suffolk, George Vestey Thurlow Estates is exempt. (core values of the post "Promoting initiatives to benefit the environment and community")

So that's alright then?

Taking a more positive view it is encouraging that the applicant now acknowledges the site (zone 3 flood risk) is prone to flooding . Acorn have been in public denial of this to date.

We await their further survey with interest.

KR David

Andy would you please be kind enough to forward on to the County Wildlife Team.