Dear Mrs Burkey

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT - MIXED USE URBAN EXTENSION COMPRISING RESIDENTIAL, LOCAL CENTRE, PRIMARY SCHOOL, PUBLIC OPEN SPACE INCLUDING RIVERSDIE PARK & ALLOTMENTS, LANDSCAPING, 4 VEHICULAR ACCESSSES, SITE ROADS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE  ROWDEN PARK, PATTERDOWN, CHIPPENHAM, WILTS

Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the amended plans for the above mentioned planning application. Please note that I am responding on behalf of Ellie Challans who normally deals with your Authority area.

We have no objection to the proposed development subject to the conditions and informatives from our letter 22 January 2015 being included in any planning permission granted. We also request an additional condition and can offer the following additional advice.

Biodiversity
We have reviewed the ecological appraisal and are pleased to see that hedgerows, mature trees, brooks, ponds and woodland are being retained. It is very important to keep these ecosystems connected for the protected species on site and other wildlife sites nearby.

Any loss of habitat on site would need mitigation elsewhere in order to avoid any detriment to the environment and accord with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 109, which recognises that the planning system should aim to conserve and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures. Paragraph 118 of the NPPF also states that opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged.
We could not find an Environmental Management Plan which is mentioned in the plans. We would wish to see this plan and would therefore recommend that this is conditioned.

CONDITION
No development shall take place until a Environmental Management Plan, including long-term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all areas (except privately owned domestic gardens), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The Environmental Management Plan shall be carried out as approved and any subsequent variations shall be agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

REASON
This condition is necessary to ensure the protection of wildlife and supporting habitat and secure opportunities for the enhancement of the nature conservation value of the site in line with national planning policy.

NOTES TO LPA / APPLICANT
With regards to protecting species on site, if grassland on the site is to be removed then necessary surveys will need to be carried out to assess the population of snakes and other reptiles on site. They will then need to be carefully removed by an appropriate/experienced ecologist and relocated to other suitable habitat.

Any planting of trees or other flora should be locally native trees and plants in keeping with the surrounding area.

Please send us a copy of the decision notice issued for this application for our records.

Please contact us if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

MR MICHAEL HOLM
Planning Advisor - Sustainable Places
Direct dial 02030 259358
Direct e-mail swx.sp@environment-agency.gov.uk

cc D2 Planning Limited