LAND NORTH OF EAGLETHORPE
WARMINGTON
NORTHANTS

Retrospective Section 73A Applications
to extend the timescale for

Construction of an Agricultural Reservoir together with
removal of surplus material arising in the course
of construction and the importation of a limited
quantity of engineering clay
(Permission EN/02/846C)

AND

Variation of Condition 3 of Planning Permission
EN/05/02356C to vary the details of the
plant and ancillary works on land north of
Eaglethorpe, Warmington, Northants
(Permission NCC/09/00047/MIN & EN/09/01072/NCC)

NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

on behalf of
RJD Ltd

D. K. SYMES ASSOCIATES
Mineral Planning & Development Consultants

email: dks@dksymes.co.uk
Tel: 01295 712266
May 2014

APPLETREE FARMHOUSE, 39 MAIN ROAD,
MIDDLETON CHENEY, BANBURY, OXON OX17 2ND
Fax: 01295 712283
contents

1. BACKGROUND 1

2. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT 2
   2.1 Overview 2
   2.2 Landscape and Visual 2
   2.3 Access and Traffic 3
   2.4 Water/Flood Risk 3
   2.5 Agriculture 4
   2.6 Ecology 5
   2.7 Archaeology 7
   2.8 Noise 7
   2.9 Dust 7
   2.10 Cumulative 8

3. CONCLUSIONS 8

PLANS:
95010/R/3b/L - Reservoir Plan showing Landscape Scheme
95010/PS/D/1 - Plant Site Drainage
LAND NORTH OF EAGLETHORPE
WARMINGTON
NORTHANTS

Retrospective Section 73A Applications
to extend the timescale for

Construction of an Agricultural Reservoir together with
removal of surplus material arising in the course
of construction and the importation of a limited
quantity of engineering clay
(Permission EN/02/846C)

AND

Variation of Condition 3 of Planning Permission
EN/05/02356C to vary the details of the
plant and ancillary works on land north of
Eaglethorpe, Warmington, Northants
(Permission NCC/09/00047/MIN & EN/09/01072/NCC)

NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Two retrospective applications are submitted to Northamptonshire County Council
to extend the timescale for the construction of the agricultural reservoir and the associated
processing plant area until 31 December 2018.

1.2 The reservoir works comprise the excavation of a void that will subsequently be
lined with engineering clay to provide the reservoir. In the south an area of shallows and associated
wetland will be constructed in order to provide biodiversity gain (see plan 95010/R/3b/L).

1.3 The majority of the materials that need to be excavated are sand and gravel. This
material is taken to the plant site which is on slightly higher adjacent land to the north east.
Following processing the mineral is removed by lorry to a new junction on the A605 (see plan 95010/PS/D/1).

1.4 This junction has been designed to ensure that no lorries turn across the flow of traffic or have to wait to turn into the site through the construction of a short section of central reservation.

1.5 The site commenced operation in 2004/2005 and has operated successfully and without any impacts since starting.

1.6 The extension of time is needed in order to complete the construction which has been severely delayed owing to the recent long period of downturn in the economy. As the original application for the reservoir site required an environmental assessment an Updated Environmental Statement has been prepared that addresses mainly the reservoir operations but also includes the plant site.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 It is relevant to note that there have been no material changes in the locality since the reservoir started, namely there has been no new development near the site, no changes to the areas of statutory designation, no changes to floodplain boundaries and there is no 'new' development proposed as a result of this application.

2.1.2 The only change has been the identification of Eaglenthorpe New Lake as a local wildlife area which is dealt with in the section on ecology.

2.2 Landscape and Visual

2.2.1 There are no changes to the landscape and visual setting of the site since the original environmental statement was prepared. The current situation is that the whole of the area has been disturbed by the permitted works apart from the margins to the River Nene in the west and north and the wooded escarpment to the east.
2.2.2 The impacts in terms of landscape were addressed in the original Environmental Statement and these do not change as a result of these further applications. Visual protection is provided by the perimeter bunds and in particular to the footpath along the south east of the site and the bridleway which crosses between the reservoir site and the plant area.

2.2.3 The general setting of both sites is such that they are well protected visually by the embankment/cutting of the A605 which is heavily vegetated and the surrounding areas of woodland.

2.2.4 At completion the plant site will be returned to agriculture so there should be no evidence that it has been disturbed. The reservoir will provide additional landscape interest and will not be out of keeping in the valley context.

2.3 Access and Traffic

2.3.1 The original transport assessment was based on expected traffic movements of 120 (60 in, 60 out per day). Based on this assessment a purpose-designed access has been installed in order to ensure safe movement by lorries generated by the development.

2.3.2 The past and expected levels of traffic movement will be approximately half that used for the assessment. This demonstrates that traffic will not give rise to any adverse impacts which appears to have been the case since operations started. Once the reservoir is constructed there will be no traffic generated by the site.

2.4 Water/Flood Risk

2.4.1 The reservoir is located in the floodplain of the River Nene and the activity of reservoir construction is considered a water compatible development. The plant site is located outside the floodplain on the higher land to the north east.

2.4.2 The impact on the water environment and flood risk was fully investigated at the time of the original application and confirmed there would be no impacts. The mitigation that has been adopted to date include,
• campaign excavation (i.e. works 4 to 5 times per year for approximately 3 weeks) which limits the periods that dewatering needs to take place,

• when dewatering takes place the water is fully settled and cleaned before it is discharged back to the River Nene,

• the River Nene itself acts as a 'recharge' facility thereby naturally mitigating any adverse impacts on groundwater levels to the west of the site. The aquifer does not extend to the east of the site.

• the abstraction point at Wansford is not impacted by the reservoir construction works.

2.4.3 In view of the very limited periods of activity within the reservoir site there is no adverse impact on flood risk. The campaign excavation approach ensures that dewatering does not take place when the rivers are running bank full or there is any risk of local flooding.

2.4.4 The completed reservoir will not result in any adverse impacts to the water environment or to flood risk and will provide a beneficial use of the water resources in the locality.

2.5 Agriculture

2.5.1 Prior to works commencing the reservoir site comprised damp waterlogged land that was providing temporary summer grazing. The plant site was more productive land being located outside the floodplain.

2.5.2 The temporary loss of agricultural use for the plant site does not give rise to any impacts in terms of the overall farming activities and at completion the site will be fully restored back to agriculture so there will be no net loss.

2.5.3 The reservoir site will be lost to farming in terms of summer grazing but provides a water storage facility which is a benefit to the future farming of the Estate.
2.6 Ecology

2.6.1 The ecological setting of the site has changed as a result of the development. The principal impact is on the reservoir site itself as the plant site is operational throughout the year. An updated ecological assessment has been carried out that has focused on the reservoir site. It is also pertinent to note that there is a Management Plan for the Creation of Wetland Habitat in place to ensure that the biodiversity gains are delivered at completion of the reservoir works.

2.6.2 In terms of the impacts to the ecology, these are summarised below.

- no nationally designated sites will be affected but it is noted that Eaglethorpe New Lake, which is within the site, has recently been identified as of local interest. It is relevant to note that this lake was identified when the reservoir was under active construction. The new area of wetlands and shallows will replicate the habitat of Eaglethorpe New Lake with fen marsh and swamp species establishing.

- the survey confirmed that the vegetation on the site had either a local or low ecological value formed of common and widespread floral species. The completed reservoir will provide additional wetland habitat with a net loss of principally grassland. Grassland habitat will be maintained along the boundaries of the River Nene and will not be disturbed for agricultural purposes.

- no badger sets were found within either site although the area is known to be used by badgers for foraging. The loss of the reservoir area is in part mitigated by the improved foraging habitat of the completed reservoir design.

- the area is used by bats for foraging and there will be little impact as no work takes place on site when bats are active, and again any works are on a campaign basis. There are no fixed lights at any time. It is not proposed to fell any trees which will not have an impact on the potential for bat roosts.

- there is no habitat on site that is suitable to support dormice so the proposals will not have an impact.
• otters are known to be present in the wider catchment of the River Nene but no evidence of otters have been found on the site. There is a moderate potential for otters to use the river Nene adjacent to the site but no foraging or holts are identified and there is no habitat suitable for holt construction within the proximity of the site. The only direct impact to the River Nene is when the feeder channel to the reservoir is constructed which is a very short-term activity (1 - 2 days) and will be carried out during daylight hours when otters are unlikely to be less active.

• The generally disturbed nature of the site and the fluctuation in water level makes this area unsuitable for water voles during the construction period. The only impact is when the feeder channel is constructed and this is a straightforward very short-term activity and before any work is started the area will be inspected to see if there is evidence of water voles. If present the location of the feeder channel can be moved or appropriate mitigation carried out. The completed scheme provides new wetland and aquatic habitats which are suitable for water voles.

• The reservoir site forms part of the very wide expanse of floodplain valley within which there is a mixed mosaic of habitats suitable for a wide range of birds. The site has been cleared of all scrub which was carried out outside the recognised nesting season to avoid any impacts. Whilst construction works will have an impact it will be of a low order which is in part mitigated by the campaign method of working. The completed reservoir will result in a net increase in the range of habitat with the shallows and marshy grassland being suitable for snipe and other over-wintering birds.

• the retained grassland along the bank of the River Nene is suitable for reptiles and evidence suggests there may be a very small local population. Currently this area is protected by a low earth bund and when this is removed a small scale translocation exercise will be implemented to ensure there is no adverse impact on any reptiles that may be present.

• there are no suitable water bodies on the site or within a 500 metre radius that are suitable to support Great Crested Newts so there is no impact on this species.
• the reservoir area contains a range of aquatic and terrestrial habitats that have the potential to support some rare or notable species of invertebrates. Any impact as a result of the construction works will be mitigated by the improved habitats of the final reservoir scheme.

2.6.3 The conclusion reached by the recent ecological report is that overall the current site is considered to be of moderate ecological value, that the ongoing construction works will have a short-term slight adverse impact and at completion there will be a long-term slight beneficial impact on ecology.

2.7 Archaeology

2.7.1 The development of both the reservoir and the plant site have already impacted on the archaeology and no undisturbed areas remain to be developed. At completion any archaeological features that were present will have been lost but suitable records through the strip, map and sample exercise that was carried out will be available.

2.8 Noise

2.8.1 The area has a high background noise level due to the busy A605. As a result the activities have not given rise to any impacts since commencement. There are no changes to the proposed method of construction/processing so there should be no noise issues for the rest of the operations. At completion the irrigation pumps will be electric and therefore silent.

2.9 Dust

2.9.1 The generally damp nature of the materials handled and the wet processing methods results in little dust being generated by the activities. Where dust may be generated is through the movement of vehicles on dry roads and this is managed by regular damping to ensure dust is kept under control. There are no activities associated with the reservoir that will give rise to dust once the project is completed.
2.10 Cumulative

2.10.1 There are no new or proposed schemes that are adjacent or close to the project that have any cumulative impacts.

3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1 There have been no material changes to the baseline position that prevailed when the permissions were granted. The Updated Environmental Statement has not identified any new or additional impacts. The existing mitigation measures appear to be working well as the site has not given rise to any unacceptable impacts nor have there been any complaints or concerns from the statutory consultees or the local community. The completed scheme for the reservoir includes a large area of swamp, wetland and water with the reservoir itself being surrounded by grassland. This has been designed to provide an increased range of habitat that will provide a permanent benefit to a wide range of species and this area will be managed in accordance with the approved Management Plan.