

Request 8900 Nitrates and phosphates FOI

09/04/2021 - DCs

I am writing to make a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000/Environmental Information Regulations about how the local authority has been impacted by Natural England and Natural Resources Wales updated legal advice on nitrogen and phosphorous pollution in or near Natura 2000 sites in England and Wales since 2019.

In June 2019, Natural England updated its legal position on approving planning applications where excess nutrient pollution from a prospective residential development might negatively impact a nearby Natura 2000 site. It has issued this fresh planning advice to councils in south Hampshire, Kent, Herefordshire and Somerset, which includes a provision on housebuilders to demonstrate nitrate or phosphate neutrality as part of the appropriate assessment under the The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

In January, Natural Resources Wales followed suit in relation to excess phosphate levels in river SACs.

Would you please provide a list of all the Natura 2000 sites that sit within, or partially within, the local authority's boundary?

As a result of Natural England's updated planning advice on excess nutrients, would you please tell me how many planning applications are currently stuck or frozen in your planning system?

Would you please tell me how many homes this equates to?

I would prefer to receive this information electronically, preferably as a data set in Excel and not as a PDF, to include the following information:

Relevant SPA/SAC/Ramsar site(s) name

Number of applications frozen in the planning system

How many homes this equate to

If it is not possible to put the information into a spreadsheet, please provide the information in its existing format, rather than rejecting this FOI request.

If the decision is made to withhold some of this data using exemptions in the Data Protection Act, please inform me of that fact and cite the exemptions used.

If some parts of this request are easier to answer than others, I would ask that you release the available data as soon as possible. I would be grateful if you could confirm you have received this request and I look forward to hearing from you within the 20 working day statutory time period.

Response

Question: A list of all the Natura 2000 sites that sit within, or partially within, the local authority's boundary?

Answer: There is only one Natura 2000 (SAC) site in South Cambridgeshire and this Eversden and Wimpole Woods.

Question: As a result of Natural England's updated planning advice on excess nutrients, would you please tell me how many planning applications are currently stuck or frozen in your planning system? (if any)

Answer: We find no evidence of any applications stuck or frozen in our system due to this planning advice, within or adjacent to this site.

Question: Would you please tell me how many homes this equates to? (if any)

Answer: Zero homes.