

**To whom it may concern:**

**Natural England Appropriate Assessment FVAG input.**

FVAG have reviewed the Draft Natural England Draft Appropriate Assessment Proforma for Planning Applications at 30 Frensham Vale, Farnham, Surrey GU10 3HT and would like to assist by adding a local perspective with our day-to-day knowledge of the site and the immediate area.

We understand the temptation to assess solely the site to reflect the recent Sweetman European Court of Justice ruling (Case C 323/17 - People Over Wind and Sweetman 2018) relating to the Habitats Directive and understand the imperative for Waverley Council to review its decision-making processes in respect of new dwellings within the Buffer Zones of the Wealden Heaths and Thames Basin Heaths SPAs.

This Assessment forms a key element along with the council liaising closely with Natural England to ensure decisions made by the council in these areas are lawful and to avoid the possibility of legal challenge. In this instance, 30 Frensham Vale cannot be assessed in isolation to the surrounding area because it forms a key section of the **Wildlife Corridor 04**. This site is situated at an important junction bounded by Woodlands in this ecologically sensitive area. The Frensham Forest to the West, with its protected Ancient Woodland and hundreds of mature trees, along with several other mature woodlands further West and woodlands to the North, South and East of 30 Frensham Vale are all connected by Wildlife Corridor 04.

There is an underground culvert that runs beneath Frensham Vale road surface to the South of 30 Frensham Vale at number 35 Frensham Vale giving wildlife access to over 5 hectares of woodland at 35 Frensham Vale and further onwards to many more hectares of privately-owned woodlands. This culvert (dry for much of the summer months) re-emerges into the Frensham River immediately adjacent to 30 Frensham Vale and the Service Strip channel running parallel with the sites southern boundary. Both protected species and a variety of important wildlife species use the network that forms Wildlife Corridor 04 utilising concealed culverts along the way with Frensham Vale Riverbed and Riverbanks as their migratory routes and habitat. When dry, these linked corridors form a protected, out of sight, highway for nocturnal and diurnal wildlife, when wet or flooded a migratory route for amphibians. FVAG feels it is vital to include in the Natural England Appropriate Assessment Proforma, the function and importance of these migratory routes along Wildlife Corridor 04 at this site. Travelling to the East, the riverbed and riverbank network links up with the extensive Bourne Woods and land much of which is owned by the RSPB who aim to benefit scarce heathland species such as nightjar, woodlark, Dartford warbler and tree pipit as well as species such as sand lizard within these woods [Ref: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bourne\\_Wood](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bourne_Wood)]. The Frensham River then continues onwards to the River Wey and wider countryside. The Frensham River adjacent to 30 Frensham Vale, forms a transitional route passing under the A287, skirting several woodlands and on towards the River Thames. The River Wey is a tributary of the River Thames in south east England and one of two major tributaries in Surrey. [Ref: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/River\\_Wey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/River_Wey)] Suffice to say wildlife knows no boundaries but has an aversion for physical man-made barriers, human habitation and night-time artificial lighting.

Wildlife Corridor 04 is two-way carrying great importance to many forms of wildlife on this semi-rural site which is used by deer, badgers, foxes, snakes (grass and viper/adder), lizards (slow worms/smooth snakes and sand lizards), as well as other amphibians and a variety of birds including greater and lesser spotted woodpeckers, cuckoos and owls. Residents have frequently seen several species of bats flying from the main house at 30 Frensham Vale and aware (from the previous owner) that protected species (brown long eared bats) roost in the main house roof space. Any felling of trees must be examined as they are the feeding habitat of this protected bat species. The site is a 'Developed Area of Special Environmental Quality' covered by South Farnham Policy BE3 rightly designates this area of 'Special Environmental Quality'. Any diminishment of this site and the network that forms Frensham Vale Wildlife Corridor 04 through new housebuilding, will severely impact the movement and habitat of wildlife which is appreciated and enjoyed by so many residents.

***N.B. All native UK reptile species are legally protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and as such are protected from killing or injuring. UK Native species are also listed as a species of Principle Importance within the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.***

The 'Appropriate Assessment Proforma' cannot be looked at in isolation especially for the application for two Houses on the front garden floodplain Zone 3b at 30 Frensham Vale. You would do the environment and local people a great

service by including this local information to the Natural England Appropriate Assessment based on the ECJ judgement to protect all forms of wildlife.

We've mentioned this before in our comments, but following snowfalls the floodplain/front garden area of 30 Frensham Vale can be seen criss-crossed by animal foot/paw/claw/hoof prints. Animals and amphibians find this site at 30 Frensham Vale via Wildlife Corridor 04 and migration from surrounding woodlands.

Mr and Mrs Abrahams are new residents and since arriving in 2015 they have submitted 12 various planning applications with seemingly little regard for the damage caused to their neighbours and the environment. Neighbours to the East and West are experiencing flooding – this must stop on this very sensitive site designated as Flood Zone 3b.

Please use any of this local information to ensure a robust answer to this Appropriate Assessment Draft. We include these images to show 30 Frensham Vale's close neighbours' property and woodland.



Aerial view of 30 Frensham Vale in foreground with TPO Woodland. The 'Visual Amenity' of Local Residents in Frensham Vale and Vale Close to the South showing the possible migratory areas of Wildlife Corridor 04.



Partial aerial view of trees to the North at 30 Frensham Vale before TPO Woodland was felled in the foreground by claiming a 'natural gap' existed for the new second driveway opening, this refused planning application was Dismissed by the Secretary of State Inspector. This felling (claimed as maintenance) cut through part of the protected Wildlife Corridor 04 and harmed the 'Visual Amenities' of Local Residents in Frensham Vale and Vale Close and caused deterioration in the Floodplain defences through the diminished 'soakaway'. Numbers 28 and 32 Frensham Vale are now experiencing increased flooding in their gardens.



Flood water receding at 30 Frensham Vale across the Floodplain Zone 3b.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Michel

For and on Behalf of FVAG (23 Frensham Vale, Lower Bourne, GU10 3HS)