

RE: 2017-28602-SCI-SCI Further information requirements.

Subject	RE: 2017-28602-SCI-SCI Further information requirements.
From	[REDACTED]
To	[REDACTED]
Sent	11 May 2017 08:45

Dear [REDACTED]

As you probably know we live in [REDACTED] and therefore we are not able to care for any Hen Harriers that are likely to be put into release aviaries in the North of England. As firstly we have no idea where Hen Harriers are likely to nest, and therefore have no idea where they might be brood managed, and also where they might be released, at this point we do not know who we will be calling on to manage the husbandry of the birds for the release period.

Once we know that a) we are getting a license, and therefore can actually achieve brood management, b) the hen harriers lay and two pairs lay within 10 kilometres of one another so we will know where the eggs are going to come from, c) once we know where the eggs have been removed then we can choose out of the many areas, the best place for the young hen harriers to be released and only then d) can we pick and train the people who will care for the young hen harriers prior to release. We will ask for local volunteers who are interested in the project. They will come down to [REDACTED] where there will be a mirror aviary holding the young hen harriers. They will be trained in monitoring them in the enclosure, feeding, moving to and from the aviary and what to watch for in terms of problems. NE will be given the names of whoever it is.

This first question you have asked is putting the cart before the horse and is impossible to answer in any more detail

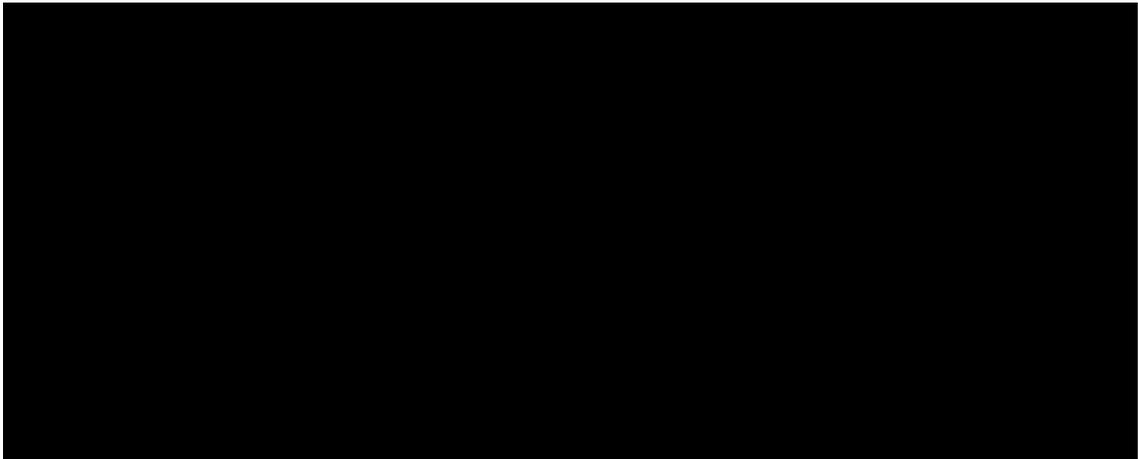
Question two

The facility is about three years old, the incubation room has two Grumbach Incubators, up to seven Brinsea Octagon 20's can be in use and a large Brinsea Contact Incubator. Each Brinsea Octagon can take up to 20 eggs of the size of a Hen Harriers egg. The Brooder room is in the same building, there are four small brooders that could take 24 young birds in the first few days of hatching, then they are generally moved to larger brooders which could take easily up to 35 young Harriers. All these facilities can hold more if needs be, however as we are working in the dark on this trial, and last year only three pairs of hen harriers actually nested, we are well within the limits at the moment. Please bear in mind that this is a trial and much of what is likely to happen is unpredictable at this stage.

I hope this answers your queries.

Your sincerely

[REDACTED]



From: [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2017 12:45 PM
To: [redacted]
Subject: RE: 2017-28602-SCI-SCI Further information requirements.

Dear [redacted]

To further the assessment of the application, we require the following information:

1. **Further information regarding the local people that will care for the birds at the release site.** How will these local people be identified and be made known to Natural England? Please provide details regarding how they will be trained at the [redacted]
2. **The facilities currently available at the [redacted]** Please provide details about what facilities are currently available at the [redacted] for egg incubation and chick rearing. Are these facilities newly built? What is the capacity of the facilities (e.g. how many chicks could be fully looked after at any one time?).

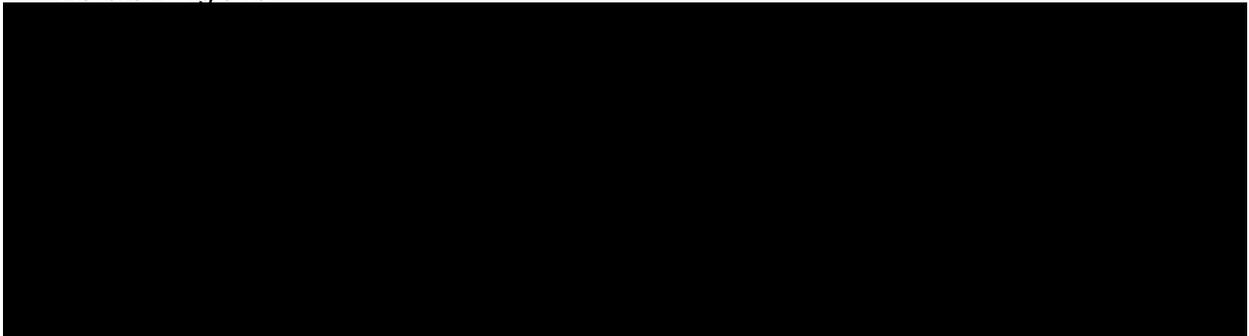
Chris Kaighin is liaising with the Moorland Association regarding other aspects of the further information request.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this further.

Kind Regards,

[redacted]

[redacted]
Wildlife Management Lead Adviser
Natural England





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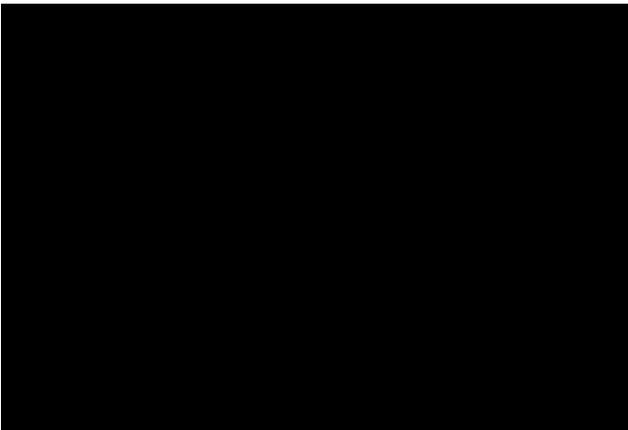
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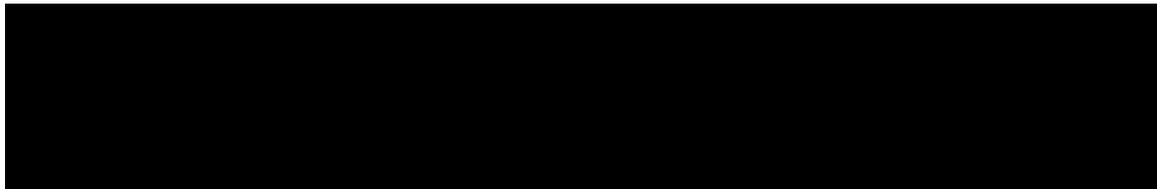
From: [Redacted]
Sent: 29 April 2017 08:34
To: [Redacted]
Subject: RE: 2017-28602-SCI-SCI Further information requirements. Please reply by Friday 28th April 2017.

Dear [Redacted]

As there are some fairly vociferous people out there about brood management, I think that I will not send the contract, but assure you that it is in place and that should either side wish to terminate the contract, that can only happen as long as no birds are involved. The funding is there to do the job and we have the facilities here. The only thing we have not done is release aviaries and quite frankly I am not prepared to do that until we know if we are going to get a license in the first place – it would be a poor waste of resources.

As ever





From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, April 28, 2017 5:39 PM
To: [redacted]
Subject: RE: 2017-28602-SCI-SCI Further information requirements. Please reply by Friday 28th April 2017.

Good afternoon [redacted]

I have received clarification from the FOI team.

All information that Natural England hold is subject to release under the FOI/EIR legislation. Currently as the licence application is still being processed then we would withhold all information concerning the licence application. This would be to allow us to make a decision away from external influences, i.e. to think in private. However, we would release high level information about the licence application. Once the licence has been determined, then the reasons stated above fall away. Then it becomes difficult to withhold as we should be open and transparent about the evidence we used in determining a licence application. All FOIed information is subject to redaction (i.e. removal of sensitive information such as names, addresses etc.).

Information should not be accepted in confidence, unless the information is extremely important for us to obtain; if this is the case then we can enter into a confidentiality agreement. To consider accepting the contract in confidence we would need information on the harm that would arise from the release of the contract. Once we have this information then it must be agreed that this warrants the information being withheld; if this is agreed then we may be able to apply for an exception to release.

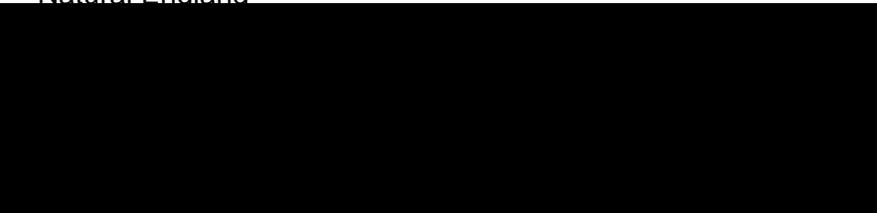
For your information, I have also spoken with [redacted] today with regards to the further information request, so I am aware that all of the information will not be submitted today. I have asked the ornithologist to contact [redacted] to provide clarification on releasing birds back into the SPA from which they were taken.

I hope this provides clarification.

Kind Regards,



Wildlife Management Lead Adviser
Natural England





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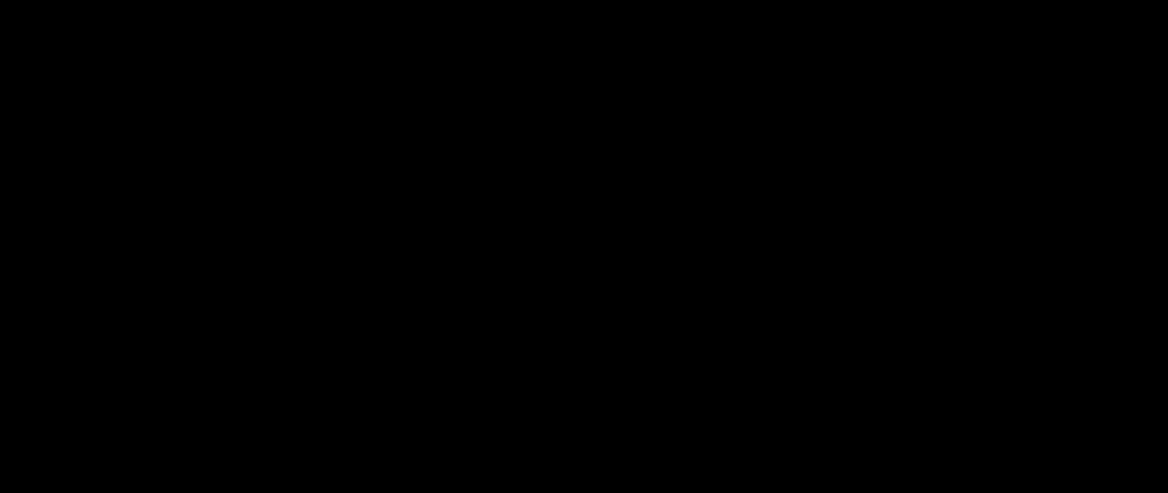
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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 27 April 2017 11:14
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: 2017-28602-SCI-SCI Further information requirements. Please reply by Friday 28th April 2017.

Thanks



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, April 27, 2017 11:12 AM
To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: 2017-28602-SCI-SCI Further information requirements. Please reply by Friday 28th April 2017.

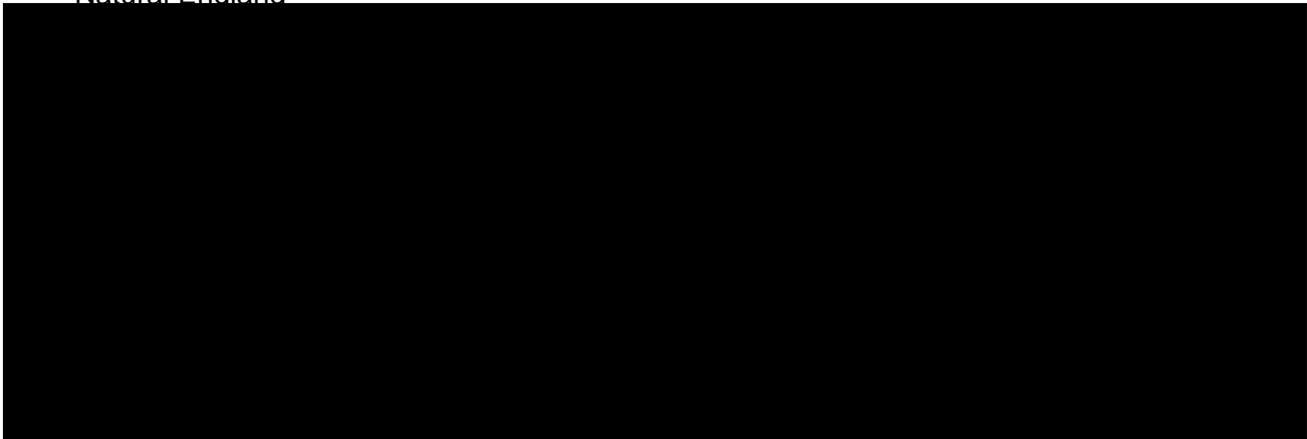
Dear [REDACTED]

I am seeking clarification with regards to this from our FOI team. I will update you as soon as I receive a response.

Kind Regards,



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Natural England



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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 April 2017 17:30
To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: 2017-28602-SCI-SCI Further information requirements. Please reply by Friday 28th April 2017.

[REDACTED] can I assume that this would be confidential and not subject to and FOI??



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 26, 2017 5:14 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: 2017-28602-SCI-SCI Further information requirements. Please reply by Friday 28th April 2017.

Dear [REDACTED]

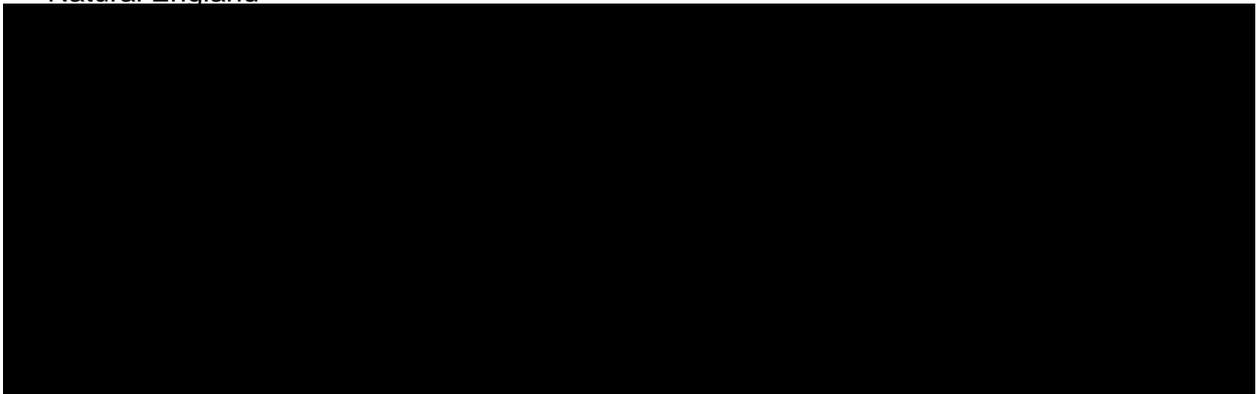
Thank you for your prompt response and for the offer of providing a copy of the contract between the [REDACTED] Natural England would find the contract beneficial in the assessment of the application and would be grateful if a copy of the contract could be provided.

I have noted that you are currently awaiting information for some answers; please could this be forwarded to myself when the answers are available.

Kind Regards,



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Natural England



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For further information on the Pre-submission Screening Service see [here](#)

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 26 April 2017 10:05

To: [REDACTED]

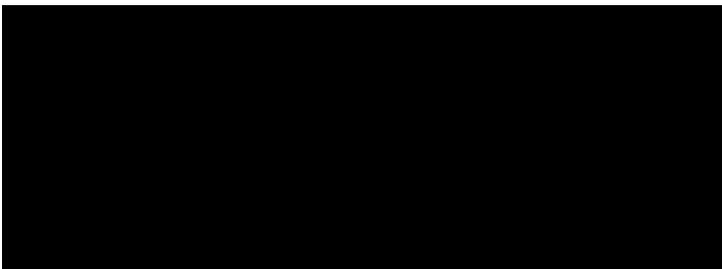
Subject: RE: 2017-28602-SCI-SCI Further information requirements. Please reply by Friday 28th April 2017.

Dear [REDACTED]

We are awaiting a couple of answers, but I have done all I can on your questions so I am sending it now. If you would like to talk over any of it on the phone I will be around until about 11.00 and then again after 3.00pm. On your question about the fitness of the birds because they are taken as eggs rather than most of the release programmes where they were taken as chicks. It should not make a difference. They will be reared as a group so will socialise with their own kind and the actual flying fitness only happens when they start flying, so the chicks taken from nests were not fit and only became fit once they started flying. The release aviary we have designed is far larger than any of the release aviaries for Kites, Sea Eagles or Ospreys, so we consider the young birds will gain a certain amount of fitness prior to release. That is what we have done with the vultures in India.

Do you need to see the contract between the [REDACTED]

I look forward to hearing from you.





From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, April 21, 2017 11:21 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: 2017-28602-SCI-SCI Further information requirements. Please reply by Friday 28th April 2017.

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your recent application for a licence to take hen harriers for the purposes of science, research, education and conservation. To allow Natural England to complete a full technical assessment of the application we will need some further information from you. You have supplied most of the relevant information for us to assess the suitability of the capture, care and release of the birds, though there is some further information set out at 3 below that will enable me to make a decision on this aspect of your proposals. Where Natural England will need substantially more information is on the governance, planning and monitoring of the wider research aspects of the project.

1. **Governance, planning and monitoring**

A more detailed project plan should be submitted in support of this application. Some information relevant to a project plan has been provided with the application in the appendices, the Habitats Regulations Assessment and Disease Risk Assessment; however, the project plan should also address the following further information requirements. The [IUCN Criteria for Reintroductions and Translocations](#) provide a helpful information source for the project plan and you may also find the [Scottish Code for Conservation Translocations](#) a useful reference

1. Governance: Please provide a clear summary of the governance of this project, which shows how responsibilities for funding, resourcing, planning, monitoring and reporting are allocated.
2. Project aims/objectives: The plan must set out clear research objectives and clarify the links between the Kent University social science study and the brood management trial.
3. Detailed Project Plan: Timetable, including planned reporting schedule; Resources and funding; Roles and responsibilities for work areas (e.g. egg collection, satellite tagging, release, monitoring, liaison with Natural England etc.)
4. How will success be monitored and evaluated? Detail should be provided to show how the aims/ objectives of the trial will be met. How will adaptive management of the project be undertaken? There should also be a clearly set out exit strategy.

2. **Trial location and nest selection**

5. Details of trial area, donor sites and release sites:
 - Further information should be included to clarify which landowners have agreed to participate in the trial and details of any conditions/restrictions imposed by landowners, such as the numbers of birds they will allow to be released on their sites or the numbers of broods they wish to be managed on their sites. A map should be provided to show the trial areas where landowner permissions have been received.

6. Nest selection:

- Please provide clarification with respect to the nesting density that would trigger brood management in the trial. The application form states at Appendix 1 an intervention density of 0.025 nests per km² will be used, derived from Elston et al. (2014). This is equivalent to a nearest nest distance of approximately 7km, whereas Appendix 1 states a nearest nest distance of 10km.
- How will hen harrier density be monitored to determine that the threshold density for brood management has been reached? Is there any forecast to suggest that this density will be reached within 5 years?
- Detail should be provided to explain how nests will be selected to be part of the Brood Management Trial. This should include information regarding whether the same locations/ nests will be subject to brood management each year or whether nests/locations will be alternated.

7. Release site assessment

- To meet designated site requirements, it is likely that there will need to be at least one release pen constructed in each SPA prior to any eggs being taken. Can you provide confirmation that preparations for construction of release pens in Bowland and the North Pennines SACs are in place? Please note that consent for siting of release pens must be agreed with the relevant NE responsible officers for the sites involved ahead of construction.

3. Capture, care and release of birds

3.1 Parent Harrier response to brood management

- What measures are in place to monitor adult responses to brood management?
- What has been planned to address the risk of nesting birds laying a second clutch if the first clutch is removed as part of the brood management scheme trial?

3.2 Collection of eggs and transport:

- Your application form and the associated appendices refer to possible taking of both eggs and chicks and there is some inconsistency in the additional information supplied with the application. Please clarify whether you are proposing to take chicks as well as eggs under this licence?
- The Hen Harrier Recovery Plan implies that brood management would consist of complete clutches/broods being captive reared. Could you confirm that you intend to only undertake brood management when complete clutches /broods are to be taken?
- What are the time restrictions in relation to eggs being laid and starting to hatch?
- What is the maximum number of eggs to be taken in any one year under your research plans?

3. Rearing and release:

- Please provide further detail about the rearing methodology for newly hatched harriers and how this will reduce the likelihood of human imprinting.
- How will the long-term fitness of hand-reared birds be assessed? Most similar programmes using raptors in the UK use birds that have been moved from wild nests whereas this trial will use eggs hatched in captivity.

4. Release pens:

- Please provide further detail on the management of release pens throughout the trial: will these will remain in-situ or be moved year-on-year? How will the release pens be serviced?
- Please provide further detail on the extent of the release pens and their associated infrastructure. Further information should be provided such as a hide and accommodation, necessary adjacent habitat management and security measures proposed for the release pens.

4. Post-release Monitoring and adaptive management

1. Satellite tags: Please confirm that throughout the project the number of eggs removed from the wild will always be limited to the number of satellite tags available. Please also provide confirmation regarding the number of satellite tags that the [REDACTED] currently has in their possession, or has already ordered via Microwave Telemetry that are due to be received prior to the point of hen harrier fledging in 2017.

4.2 Please provide clarity on which individuals are to be monitored. Monitoring of control nests, not subject to the Brood Management Trial, would be a requirement of this project to allow the research objectives to be addressed. Sufficient satellite tags must be available to tag the broods subject to the Brood Management Trial and to tag control broods within the same geographical location, that are not subject to Brood Management.

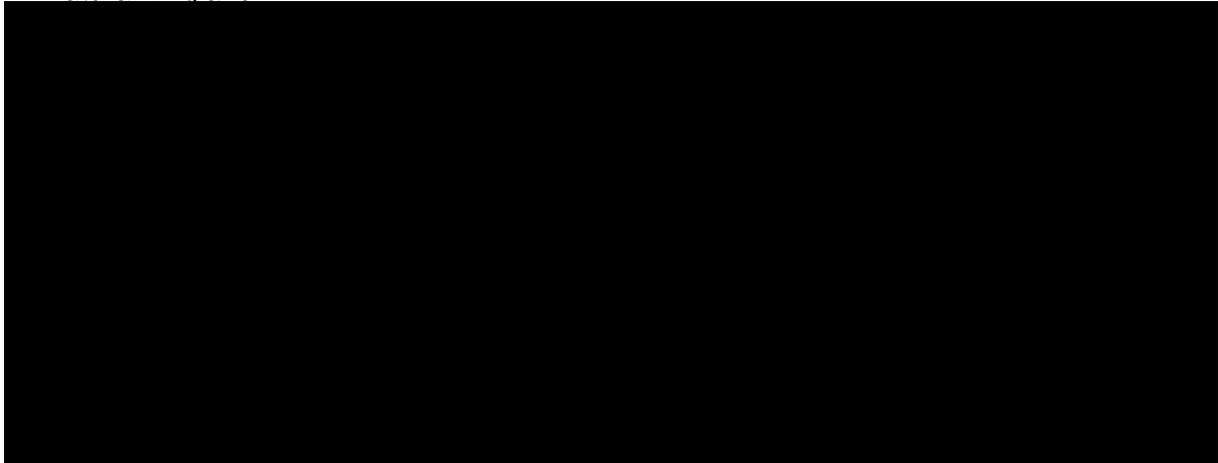
To enable Natural England to make a timely assessment of your application, please could you provide me with the requested information by **Friday 28th April 2017**. If you are not able to supply any of the information at this time, then please let me know.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss anything further.

Kind Regards,



Wildlife Management Lead Adviser
Natural England



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