



Natural England's endorsement of Sussex North Water Neutrality Study: Part C – Mitigation Strategy, Final Report, 23 November 2022

Natural England endorses the mitigation strategy described in the above report. Natural England has previously advised the relevant Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) that development in the area served by the Pulborough abstraction must not add to potential adverse impact on habitat at Amberley Wild Brooks Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Pulborough Brooks SSSI and Arun Valley Special Protection Area (SPA), Arun Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Arun Valley Ramsar site by requiring increased abstraction. As described within the report, one way in which this can be achieved is by making development within the impacted area water neutral, the definition of this term is laid out below:

“For every new development, total water use in the region after the development must be equal to or less than the total water-use in the region before the new development.”

The proposals put forward by the mitigation strategy are: reducing water demand through defined water efficiency requirements for new development, water company demand management delivery and an LPA-led offsetting scheme.

If properly implemented, these proposals can provide sufficient certainty that those developments which would potentially place additional demands on existing water use in the area served by the Pulborough abstraction, collectively identified in the respective Local Plans, will be water neutral and will therefore not add to the potential adverse effects on the habitats of the Arun Valley in this respect, either alone or in combination.