



Environment Agency
Permitting and Support Centre
Water Resources Team
Quadrant 2
99 Parkway Avenue
Sheffield S9 4WF

River Chess Association
Established 2009
10th October 2019

Dear Sirs,

Affinity Water Limited (NPS/WR/031635): application made to abstract water
Ref: NPS/WR/031635

We have reviewed the associated files connected to this application and have the following comments.

Firstly we are disappointed with the way this consultation has been advertised and managed on your webpage. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/affinity-water-limited-npswr031635-application-made-to-abstract-water/affinity-water-limited-npswr031635-application-made-to-abstract-water> To see the files you need to attend the Environment Agency offices, why could these not be made available online? It is only when you access the associated files you discover that this is all connected with the development of HS2, should HS2 not have been referenced online. We are concerned that this process has been done deliberately to minimize this consultation being picked up by the public.

Secondly we are concerned that if this application is approved by the Environment Agency you are enabling HS2 to pollute the aquifer. This application is required solely to cover the possibility that HS2 damage the aquifer with their tunneling work. So this is a pollution enabling application. It is the job of the Environment Agency to protect the environment, not assist in its pollution. For this reason alone we object to this application.

In addition we have major concerns that the HS2 tunneling work will not only damage public water supply but also the chalk rivers such as the Colne, Chess and Misbourne that also depend on the aquifer for their flow. We are also aware that, as yet, HS2 have not yet secured the water they need for their development operations, a volume of between 6 – 10mld. Any increase in abstraction in the stressed, over abstracted Colne catchment to meet this requirement should not be allowed. The fact that, at this late stage, HS2 have not secured a water supply for their development puts their whole project management capabilities into question.

We have reviewed the detail files and we note a number of other concerns regarding how this application has been justified, which we are happy to discuss with you.

Yours sincerely

Paul Jennings

River Chess Association

Contact Email: secretary@riverchessassociation.co.uk

To find out more about the River Chess Association go to www.facebook.com/RiverChess or www.riverchessassociation.org

The River Chess is a chalk stream that rises in Chesham, Buckinghamshire, and runs through the Chess Valley to Rickmansworth where it becomes a tributary of the Colne. The Chess Valley is part of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the river is home to a variety of important species, such as water vole, kingfisher, brown trout, grayling and stream water crowfoot. Interesting visitors, such as Osprey, also come to the river.

The Chess faces many threats, including low flows caused by abstraction for public water supply, invasive species such as mink and Japanese knotweed, and sewage discharges.

The Association carries out environmental monitoring, raises awareness of the issues facing the Chess, educates people about the importance of chalk streams, lobbies the appropriate authorities and provides a forum for the exchange of expertise and ideas.