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12th April 2017

Your Ref: APP/17/00178
Our Ref: 13.79.3.10

Dear Mrs McMurray

PROPOSAL: ERECTION OF 2NO. PONTOON LOCATING PILES, REPOSITIONING OF 2NO. EXISTING PONTOON LOCATING PILES AND EXTEND PONTOON 10M NORTHWARDS.

LOCATION: HAYLING ISLAND SAILING CLUB, SANDY POINT, HAYLING ISLAND

**DESIGNATED SITES: CHICHESTER AND LANGSTONE HARBOURS – RAMSAR, SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA (SPA)
SOLENT MARITIME – SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION (SAC)
CHICHESTER HARBOUR – SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (SSSI)**

Thank you for consulting the Wildlife Trust on this application. We have reviewed the supporting information and conditions provided by Natural England in their response of 10th April 2017, in particular the conditions requiring the over-wintering period to be avoided so as not to impact on the important high tide roost and carry out a walkover survey of the proposed piling site and its nearby surroundings to ensure there is no disturbance to nesting birds, in particular ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula*.

However, we would like to add that when reviewing the application proposals we sought information from a local ornithologist who watches the area on an almost daily basis. We enquired specifically about the breeding status of ringed plover and were informed whilst they have previously nested on the beach adjacent to the red dotted line on site plan SDN001, they have not attempted to nest for several years now. The reason for this is the level of disturbance at the site, particularly on sunny weekends. It appears that nests with eggs are generally trampled, and even if birds are able to find a suitable location that doesn't get trampled, the chicks invariably are by visitors' activities.

It is a worrying sign of the current situation that despite breeding ringed plover being a notifying feature of the Chichester Harbour SSSI, the species is no longer able to breed at a site which forms part of the SSSI, due to the pressures of human recreation. In the Hampshire Bird Atlas 2007 – 2012, the south-eastern corner of Hayling Island is one of only six tetrads showing a breeding gain for the species, but four years on it appears that this may no longer be the case.

In order to halt the decline of ringed plover as a breeding species in Hampshire, measures should be taken to protect them whilst they are nesting. The most practicable way would be to set up temporary exclusion areas/sanctuaries at this location during the nesting season, for example whilst the birds

are nesting and when the chicks have left the nest but are unable to fly. We would therefore recommend that further consideration is given to this matter.

The above advice is given based on the information made available at this time and may change should further or amended details be submitted. We trust that you will find our comments helpful and if you wish to discuss these matters further, please do not hesitate to do so. I also ask that you keep the Trust informed of the progress and outcome of this application.

Yours sincerely



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