

Date: 08 September 2017
Our ref: 223695
Your ref: APP1700817



Mr David Eaves
Havant Borough Council

Customer Services
Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear David

Planning consultation: APP/17/00817 Proposed improved and raised path along a section of Northney Road from the Langstone Hotel westwards approximately 215m. Ditch to be piped with new bank, etc (Resubmission of APP/16/00678.)

Location: Northney Coastal Footpath, East of Havant Road, Hayling Island

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 11 August 2017 which was received by Natural England on the same date.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

SUMMARY OF NATURAL ENGLAND'S ADVICE

FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IMPACTS ON DESIGNATED SITES

As submitted, the application could have potential significant effects on the Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation, the Chichester and Langstone Harbours Special Protection Area and Ramsar site and the Chichester Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Natural England requires further information in order to determine the significance of these impacts and the scope for mitigation.

The following information is required:

- loss of supporting habitat (saltmarsh) due to the footprint of the scheme, and impacts arising from prohibiting saltmarsh to move landward due to the raised footpath level and the footpath substrate. We are aware that the rare *Spartina maritima* has been recorded in Northney and this will need to be assessed
- increased recreational disturbance due to increased visits arising from the new footpath. The qualifying features of both the SPA and SAC are vulnerable to increased disturbance by both walkers and dog walkers. Further information is required that the proposal will not increase disturbance
- construction impacts. Further clarity is needed that these works can be carried out without impacting on the adjacent habitat due to dust, run off, pollution control.

Without this information, Natural England may need to object to the proposal.

Please re-consult Natural England once this information has been obtained.

Habitat Regulations Assessment

The consultation documents provided by your authority do not include information to demonstrate that the requirements of Regulations 61 and 62 of the Habitats Regulations have been considered by your authority, i.e. the consultation does not include a Habitats Regulations Assessment. In advising your authority on the requirements relating to Habitats Regulations Assessment, it is Natural England's advice that the proposal is not necessary for the management of the European site. Your authority should therefore determine whether the proposal is likely to have a significant effect on any European site, proceeding to the Appropriate Assessment stage where significant effects cannot be ruled out.

Natural England advises that there is currently not enough information to determine whether the likelihood of significant effects can be ruled out. Whilst the line of the footpath has been mostly removed from the designated sites, the impacts of the proposals on the immediately adjacent designated sites, the supporting habitat and qualifying features need to be assessed under the Habitats Regulations.

In the first instance, an ecological survey will need to be undertaken by a specialist ecologist to identify the species present and evaluate any potential impacts associated with the scheme during construction and operation. Consideration should be given to avoiding any loss and, if this is not possible, consideration should be given to mitigation measures or compensation.

SSSI – Objection due to lack of information

Our concerns regarding the potential impacts upon the Chichester Harbour SSSI coincide with our concerns regarding the potential impacts upon the Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation, the Chichester and Langstone Harbours Special Protection Area and Ramsar site, and are detailed above.

England Coast Path

The England Coast Path will propose following the current footpath on the bank adjacent to the road, but is not proposing any works to upgrade the current path. The ECP team considered various options and routes at this location. In considering the environmental sensitivities to any infrastructure (and associated works) or alternative routes they concluded that overall the proposed route in its current condition struck the best balance in terms of the criteria described in chapter 4 of the Coastal Access Approved Scheme.

Biodiversity

A key requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is to ensure schemes result in net biodiversity gain as set out in paragraphs 7, 109 and 118. The requirements of Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) states that 'Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity'. Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services and Making Space for Nature (2010) also provide strong drivers for the inclusion of biodiversity enhancements through the planning process. Natural England advises that consideration is given to ensuring the proposals meet these requirements.

Further general advice on the consideration of protected species and other natural environment issues is provided at Annex A.

If you have any queries relating to the advice in this letter please contact me on 07717808691.

Should the applicant wish to discuss the further information required and scope for mitigation with Natural England, we would be happy to provide advice through our [Discretionary Advice Service](#).

Please consult us again once the information requested above, has been provided.

We really value your feedback to help us improve the service we offer. We have attached a feedback form to this letter and welcome any comments you might have about our service.

Yours sincerely
Rachel Jones

Lead Advisor Solent
Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Team