

Date: 02 September 2014
Our ref: 130444
Your ref: APP/14/00672



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BY EMAIL ONLY

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Dear Mrs Haywood,

Planning consultation: Construction of new electrical substation including 1No. substation building (elevated) and 2No. concrete bunds.

Location: Land at Seagull Lane, Emsworth

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 27 August 2014 which was received by Natural England on the same day.

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.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)

The National Park and Access to the Countryside Act 1949

Natural England's comments in relation to this application are provided in the following sections.

Statutory nature conservation sites – no objection

This application is in close proximity to the Chichester Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This SSSI forms part of the Chichester And Langstone Harbours Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention (Ramsar Site) and Special Protection Area (SPA) and the Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

Natural England advises your authority that the proposal, if undertaken in strict accordance with the details submitted, is not likely to have a significant effect on the interest features for which Chichester And Langstone Harbours and Solent Maritime have been classified. Natural England therefore advises that your Authority is not required to undertake an Appropriate Assessment to assess the implications of this proposal on the site's conservation objectives.¹

¹ This reply comprises our statutory consultation response under provisions of Article 20 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010, Regulation 61 (3) of the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)*, (The Habitat Regulations) and Section 28(l) of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)*.

In addition, Natural England is satisfied that the proposed development being carried out in strict accordance with the details of the application, as submitted, will not damage or destroy the interest features for which the Chichester Harbour SSSI has been notified. We therefore advise your authority that this SSSI does not represent a constraint in determining this application. Should the details of this application change, Natural England draws your attention to Section 28(I) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), requiring your authority to re-consult Natural England.

Protected landscapes

Having reviewed the application Natural England does not wish to comment on this development proposal.

The development however, relates to the Chichester Harbour AONB. We therefore advise you to seek the advice of the Chichester Harbour Conservancy. Their knowledge of the location and wider landscape setting of the development should help to confirm whether or not it would impact significantly on the purposes of the designation. They will also be able to advise whether the development accords with the aims and policies set out in the AONB management plan.

Protected species

We have not assessed this application and associated documents for impacts on protected species.

Natural England has published [Standing Advice](#) on protected species. The Standing Advice includes a habitat decision tree which provides advice to planners on deciding if there is a 'reasonable likelihood' of protected species being present. It also provides detailed advice on the protected species most often affected by development, including flow charts for individual species to enable an assessment to be made of a protected species survey and mitigation strategy.

You should apply our Standing Advice to this application as it is a material consideration in the determination of applications in the same way as any individual response received from Natural England following consultation.

The Standing Advice should not be treated as giving any indication or providing any assurance in respect of European Protected Species (EPS) that the proposed development is unlikely to affect the EPS present on the site; nor should it be interpreted as meaning that Natural England has reached any views as to whether a licence is needed (which is the developer's responsibility) or may be granted.

If you have any specific questions on aspects that are not covered by our Standing Advice for European Protected Species or have difficulty in applying it to this application please contact us with details at consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Priority Habitat as identified on Section 41 list of the Natural Environmental and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

The consultation documents indicate that this development includes an area of priority habitat, as listed on Section 41 of the Natural Environmental and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. The National Planning Policy Framework states that 'when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity. If significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.'

Local sites

If the proposal site is on or adjacent to a local site, e.g. Local Wildlife Site, Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Site (RIGS) or Local Nature Reserve (LNR) the authority should ensure it has sufficient information to fully understand the impact of the proposal on the local site before it determines the application.

Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Natural England has recently published a set of mapped Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). This helpful GIS tool can be used by LPAs and developers to consider whether a proposed development is likely to affect a SSSI and determine whether they will need to consult Natural England to seek advice on the nature of any potential SSSI impacts and how they might be avoided or mitigated. Further information and guidance on how to access and use the IRZs is available on the [Natural England website](#).

We would be happy to comment further should the need arise but if in the meantime you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

For any queries regarding this letter, for new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

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,

Victoria Kirkham
Sustainable Development Consultation Team