

9 June 2010
Our ref: LA 7.2/EE.09/10.2027
Your ref: 10/0484/AM/vb



Mr. A. Mitchell
Planning Services
North Norfolk District Council
Council Offices
Holt Road
Cromer
NR27 9EN

Norfolk & Suffolk
Government Team
Dragonfly House
2 Gilders Way
Norwich
NR3 1UB

Dear Mr. Mitchell,

Re Request for Screening Opinion for proposed public car park, Land at Freeman Street, Wells-next-the-Sea

Thank you for consulting Natural England on a screening opinion for the above proposal. Your letter was received by this office on 25 May 2010.

The site lies approximately 200m from the North Norfolk Coast Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a component site of the North Norfolk Coast and The Wash & North Norfolk Coast Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and the North Norfolk Coast Special Protection Area (SPA).

Wintering brent geese

The Ecological Assessment (27 April 2010) provides details of the impact of the proposal on brent geese, an interest feature of the North Norfolk Coast SSSI/SPA. Natural England concur with the conclusions of this Assessment, and advise that with regard to impact on brent geese, subject to the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures in 7.12 of that Assessment and a scheme of maintenance of those measures being established, a conclusion of no likely significant effect on the North Norfolk Coast SPA can be reached.

Surface Water Drainage

With regard to surface water drainage, there is currently insufficient information for us to advise you whether the proposal is likely to have a significant effect on the European site in accordance with the *Habitats Regulations*¹.

Regulation 61 requires your authority, before deciding to give any consent to a project which is (a) likely to have a significant effect on a European site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and (b) not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site, to make an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of its conservation objectives (see attached).

In this case the proposal is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but may have a significant effect on a European site. The supporting information submitted with the application indicates that the car parking area will be surfaced with a sustainable drainage system matrix, and that a storm water attenuation pond will also be created. We note from the Ecological Assessment that a number of ditches surround the proposed site. There is also an extensive network of ditches in the adjacent area that may connect the proposal site with the SPA/SAC. We are concerned that any contamination of the

¹ *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010*

site, particularly of oils or other substances from vehicles, may enter watercourses and the designated sites. The Ecological Assessment references a 'comprehensive scheme for dealing with car park run off' that will 'ensure no pollution enters the local water courses. In order to determine the application in accordance with the Habitats Regulations, the planning authority must require the applicant to submit details of this scheme, and in particular the following information:

- The hydrological connectivity between the car park (including attenuation pond) and adjacent ditches, and the North Norfolk Coast SPA/SAC.
- Measures to prevent polluting substances from the proposed car park entering the designated sites

Part I B of *ODPM Circular 06/2005 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System* describes the procedure for the consideration of plans and projects that may affect European and Ramsar sites.

Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Natural England consider that the proposal will not have a significant adverse impact on the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as the proposed and existing landscaping will screen the proposed car park. We also understand that there will be no lighting associated with this proposal, other than restricted lighting associated with ticket machines.

If you have any queries relating to the content of this letter, please contact me at the above address.

Yours sincerely,



Mike Meadows
Government and Conservation Adviser

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