

Date: 24 August 2017
Our ref: 224238, Case 8173
Your ref: Hartlepool Local Plan HRA



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BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Matthew

Planning consultation: Hartlepool Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment – Update July 2017

I write following our meeting on 25 July, and to confirm the initial comments made in my email of 17 August regarding the amendments and additions to the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), and the additional wording suggested addressing the concerns raised in our previous letter of 6 February 2017.

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.

Local Plan Publication Draft

Policy HSG1 – We note and welcome the additional proposed wording to strengthen the supporting text of this policy, and in particular the specific reference to the need for suitable mitigation to be provided, which links to the mitigation measures proposed within the HRA.

Policy LT1 - We note and welcome the proposed stronger wording of paragraph 6.26 of the Locational Strategy. We particularly welcome the specific references to the mitigation identified within the HRA, and the links to existing management schemes to enable the delivery of these measures.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Having fully considered the revised HRA in light of the concerns we raised previously I am now satisfied that these concerns have been addressed, and the conclusions reached are sound. In my email of 17 August I raised a number of minor queries, which Graham Megson has answered where necessary. Given these minor changes/ clarifications have been provided we agree with the conclusions of the HRA that, subject to the implementation of the mitigation described, policies identified and taken forward to Appropriate Assessment will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site either alone or in-combination.

Conclusion

Given the above comments, and the additional wording and clarification included in the documents provided Natural England is satisfied that the concerns we raised previously have been addressed,

and we now consider the Hartlepool Local Plan to be sound and legally compliant.

Should you require any further information please contact me on 0208 0265533 or andrew.whitehead@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Whitehead
Team Leader – Sustainable Development, Marine and Wildlife Licensing
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Cc: Graham Megson, Ecologist, Hartlepool BC;
Michael Miller, Sustainable Development Adviser, Natural England