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BY EMAIL ONLY

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Dear Richard

Planning consultation: Construction of a building for the packaging, preparation & distribution of fresh foods with ancillary accommodation associated with the existing horticultural business, revisions to internal access road, car parking & hardstanding areas & landscaping & provision of a wetland.

Location: Sefter Farm, Pagham Road, Pagham PO21 3PX

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 07 April 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

NO OBJECTION - SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATE MITIGATION BEING SECURED

The application site is upstream of Pagham Harbour Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site, and connected to it by Pagham Rife. Therefore there is a risk that, without mitigation, the application could have a water quality impact on the SPA/Ramsar site.

In order to mitigate these potential impacts, and make the development acceptable, the following should be secured:

- Measures to avoid pollutants entering any waterbodies during construction;
- Design of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to treat surface water run-off and water generated by processes undertaken by the food preparation and packing plant.

We advise that an appropriate planning condition is attached to any planning permission to secure these measures.

Natural England's advice on other natural environment issues is set out below.

Internationally and nationally designated sites

The application site is upstream of Pagham Harbour SPA, which is a European designated site, and therefore has the potential to affect its interest features. European sites are afforded protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, as amended (the 'Habitats Regulations'). The site is also listed as Pagham Harbour Ramsar site¹ and also notified at a national level as Pagham Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

In considering the European site interest, Natural England advises that you, as a competent authority under the provisions of the Habitats Regulations, should have regard for any potential impacts that a plan or project may have².

In advising your authority on the requirements relating to the Habitats Regulations Assessment, and to assist you in screening for the likelihood of significant effects, based upon the information provided, Natural England offers the following advice:

- The proposals are not necessary for the management of the European site;
- Subject to appropriate mitigation being secured to avoid water quality impacts (see below), the proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on Pagham Harbour SPA/Ramsar, and can therefore be screened out from any requirement for further assessment.

Further advice on mitigation

There is a risk that accidental spills during construction could enter Pagham Rife, which feeds Pagham Harbour. Therefore, a Construction Management Plan should detail methods for avoiding pollutants entering any waterbodies, and set out areas for storage of fuels and any other potential pollutants.

In terms of impacts during operation, the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) indicates that the surface run-off from loading bays and access road will go through petrol interceptors and then enter the storage reservoir and run-off from roofs will go straight into the storage reservoir. The FRA also says (para. 6.29) that the full extent of the drainage infrastructure will be confirmed at detailed design and may include SuDS. This level of treatment is acceptable in terms of mitigating potential impacts on Pagham Harbour from surface water run-off, though if the detailed design includes additional SuDS features, then that may provide further treatment and reduce the risk to the SPA further.

The application includes a constructed wetland to the north of the main application site. The applicant has confirmed, in their letter dated 3 October 2016, that this wetland is a 'closed' system for the purposes of recycling water used in the washing process of the food preparation building. It is not clear from the application documents how the constructed wetland is hydrologically connected to the food preparation building. Therefore, the detailed design of the wetland should set this out, and demonstrate how water quality impacts on the Rife will be avoided (perhaps through reference to the water quality chapter (tables 26.2 – 26.3) of the CIRIA SuDS manual 2015). The detailed design should also consider management of the wetland in the future, to maintain its effectiveness.

On the basis that the applicant has confirmed that no untreated water will enter Pagham Rife, and that the detailed design of the treatment measures is secured by condition, Natural England advises that there is unlikely to be a significant effect on the SPA/Ramsar site.

Other advice

¹ Listed or proposed Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention (Ramsar) sites are protected as a matter of Government policy. Paragraph 118 of the National Planning Policy Framework applies the same protection measures as those in place for European sites.

² Requirements are set out within Regulations 61 and 62 of the Habitats Regulations, where a series of steps and tests are followed for plans or projects that could potentially affect a European site. The steps and tests set out within Regulations 61 and 62 are commonly referred to as the 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' process.

Protected Species

Natural England has produced [standing advice](#)³ to help planning authorities understand the impact of particular developments on protected species. We advise you to refer to this advice. Natural England will only provide bespoke advice on protected species where they form part of a SSSI or in exceptional circumstances.

Environmental enhancement

Development provides opportunities to contribute to and enhance biodiversity and the local environment, as outlined in paragraph 109 of the NPPF. The constructed wetland offers the opportunity to deliver wildlife benefits by providing additional habitat.

If you have any queries relating to the advice in this letter please contact me on 0208 225 7693.

We would be pleased to provide advice on the discharge of planning conditions or obligations attached to any planning permission to address the issues above.

Should the proposal change, please consult us again.

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

Alison Giacomelli
Sussex and Kent Area Team

³ <https://www.gov.uk/protected-species-and-sites-how-to-review-planning-proposals>