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Our ref: 225861
Your ref: DC/17/1435/OUT



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BY EMAIL ONLY

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Dear Mr Woolnough

Planning consultation: Adastral Park

Thank you for your consultation on the above. 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

Our previous consultation response (11 May 2017 ref: 213665) advised that Natural England had no objection to this application subject to appropriate mitigation being secured. We asked for the various identified mitigation measures to be drawn together into an Environmental Action Plan (EAP), and for further detail to be provided on a number of points.

Since that time, a further revised EAP has been produced. Natural England is satisfied that this now provides sufficient detail to conclude that the development *is not likely to have an adverse effect on any designated Natura 2000 Site, alone, or in combination with any other plan or project, and is not likely to cause damage to any Site of Special Scientific Interest.*

We advise that an appropriate planning condition or obligation is attached to any planning permission to secure the measures detailed in the Environmental Action Plan.

Further advice on mitigation

Recreational Disturbance

There is potential for housing developments to result in increased recreational disturbance to birds on designated sites, particularly due to recreational dog walking. This issue is addressed in the SCDC core strategy appropriate assessment (2013), and has since been further explored through the Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation (RAMS) project by SCDC and neighbouring local authorities.

For this development, potential impacts will be mitigated through a combination of Green infrastructure associated with the development, and a proportionate financial contribution to the district wide RAMS project. The green Infrastructure area is of a significant size (25ha), and is designed to a high quality standard, with appropriate provisions for dog walking including a variety

of walking routes, signage and promotion, dog bins and off-lead areas. Monitoring is also planned, and the development will be phased to ensure that it is in place as houses become occupied.

The developer has also committed to make a proportionate financial contribution to the developing recreational disturbance and avoidance project, which is designed to address district wide issues through direct measures on designated sites.

Natural England advises that with this combination of development based green infrastructure, and contributions to district wide measures, the proposal is not likely to have an adverse effect in terms of recreational disturbance, either alone and in combination with other site allocations.

SANGS Criteria

The area of Green Infrastructure (GI) to be created as part of the development (based on predicted occupancy rates) is less than the guideline figure of 8 ha per 1000 people of Suitable Accessible Natural Green Space' (SANGS) quoted in the Environmental Action Plan. This figure is a guideline rather than an absolute measure. It is Natural England's advice that from the information provided with the application, a significant area of high quality green infrastructure, incorporating a range of wildlife habitats and recreational opportunities will be provided.

In terms of mitigating impacts on designated nature conservation sites, it is the combination of Green Infrastructure plus contributions towards site specific measures on designated sites site specific measures (The RAMS project) which Natural England advises is sufficient to avoid any adverse effect on designated sites.

Waldringfield Pit Geological Site of Scientific Interest

It is Natural England's advice that provided the provisions of the Environmental Action Plan are adhered to, then the proposal is not likely to damage the Waldringfield Pit SSSI.

Please note that if your authority is minded to grant planning permission contrary to the advice in this letter, you are required under Section 281 (6) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to notify Natural England of the permission, the terms on which it is proposed to grant it and how, if at all, your authority has taken account of Natural England's advice. You must also allow a further period of 21 days before the operation can commence.

Yours sincerely,

John Jackson
Norfolk & Suffolk Team

Reference:

The Landscape Partnership (June 2013) Appropriate Assessment for Modifications to Suffolk Coastal District Council Core Strategy and Development Management Policies.