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BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Ms Hanslip

Notice of publication of Rendlesham Neighbourhood Plan proposal in accordance with regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and Localism Act 2011

Thank you for consulting Natural England on the above in your email of 1st September 2014.

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 Rendlesham Neighbourhood Plan (RNP) area includes part of the Sandlings Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a component of the Sandlings Special Protection Area (SPA), which has been designated for its Nightjar populations. The scale and nature of development being proposed through the Plan appears unlikely to have a significant effect on this site.

For clarity the Plan could make reference to green infrastructure and biodiversity policies within the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and/or paragraph 118 of the NPPF which seeks to prevent harm to biodiversity and geological interests through the planning process. The Suffolk Coastal District Council Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Plan, adopted in July 2013, includes Policy DM27 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity, which requires development to protect and enhance this aspect of the environment, including designated sites. In the absence of a specific policy within the RNP to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity the Plan could make reference to the requirements of Policy DM27.

The Plan area incorporates part of the nationally important Suffolk Coasts and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). We note that section 12.11 of the Plan identifies that the RNP contains no policies that would be in conflict with the AONB Management Plan and that the Bentwaters' Master Plan deals with any issues arising regarding the SSSI on their site.

Natural England welcomes requirements and opportunities provided through the plan to enhance the local landscape and the green infrastructure network, including improved connectivity for walking and cycling.

We hope these comments are helpful. For clarification of any points in this letter, please contact Janet Nuttall on . Please send any further consultations to: consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

Janet Nuttall
Sustainable Land Use Adviser