



29 March 2021

Planning Inspectorate
Temple Quay House
Temple Quay
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Dear Sirs

Swanscombe Marshes Development

The Swanscombe Marshes site has been recognised as a wildlife rich environment by Natural England, of high importance for wildlife both locally and nationally in the UK. Natural England believes it should be designated a SSSI site.

It is a known fact that the UK is the most nature deprived country in Europe and the constant destruction of what is left of our naturally wild areas is to be avoided at all costs. The Kent Wildlife Trust considers that the proposed theme park is expected to destroy 76 hectares of priority habitat which form a vital part of the ecological network of the Thames Estuary. They say the loss would be equivalent to losing their entire Oare Marshes Nature Reserve. Wildlife in the UK is in severe decline as documented in the State of Nature Report 2019 and we need to preserve and restore wildlife habitats wherever we can.

I understand that Swanscombe Marshes supports over 250 species of invertebrates which are currently on the critically endangered list, along with many bird species which are red listed. The site provides habitat for mammals such as otter, water vole, bats and reptiles as well as diverse plant species such as the man orchid. I cannot see how the destruction of this important habitat can be allowed at a time when we have already lost so much of our UK wildlife.

The recent increase in interest and value of our natural world with its mental health and climate change benefits is something that we should be mindful of and we should be ensuring that these areas are conserved for the benefit of all into the future. Many of us are working hard as volunteers with local wildlife groups and NGOs to help improve and conserve our wild places. We should not be destroying such important wildlife habitats for short term gain.

It is time to conserve and protect these wildlife areas for future generations and to value the natural world and recognise the importance it deserves.

Yours faithfully

Pauline Smith