

From: Veryan, Emma (NE) [mailto:Emma.Veryan@naturalengland.org.uk]
Sent: 10 September 2015 17:41
To: Hornsea2
Cc: Kerby, Martin G (NE); Bussell, James (NE)
Subject: Greater Wash SPA - Hornsea Zone

Dear Katherine,

I am writing to highlight to the Planning Inspectorate that on 7th September 2015 Natural England started informal dialogue on proposals to improve the protection for breeding tern species that use the marine environment within and around the colonies at the Humber Estuary, Gibraltar Point, and along the Norfolk coast, and to protect important marine areas used by non-breeding waterbirds.

Natural England is developing recommendations to classify a new site, the Greater Wash Special Protection Area (SPA), to include areas where Sandwich, common and little tern species forage and feed within the marine environment. This SPA will enhance the protection already afforded by the adjacent coastal tern breeding colony SPAs in Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Norfolk. The SPA will also include areas used by non-breeding red-throated diver, common scoter and little gull, and will help complete a network of SPAs at sea to safeguard the internationally important populations of breeding, migrating and wintering birds that use England's seas. Please see our [factsheet](#) for further information.

Informal dialogue is an opportunity for stakeholders to feed in any ecological or socio-economic data that they hold. Following this, Natural England is expecting to submit our recommendations to the Minister towards the end of the year for consideration. The Minister will then review Natural England's advice and will make the decision as to whether to start a Formal Consultation on protecting this site. If approval is given, the site will become a potential Special Protection Area (pSPA). At this point, the impacts on the proposed designated features of the pSPA will become a material consideration with relation to the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) for Hornsea Project Two.

Therefore we would recommend that potential impacts on the site should be considered in a shadow HRA. This will ensure the likely Conservation Objectives for the site, should it be classified in the future, will not be undermined, and decision-making can be fully 'future-proofed' against the risk of any permission being reviewed post-classification.

The Hornsea Project Two array falls outside the draft boundary for the site, but the cable route partly falls within it. Accordingly Natural England has been in consultation with the Applicant regarding our proposals for the Greater Wash, to ensure that they are in a position to provide relevant information regarding the potential impacts of Hornsea Project Two should they be required.

Best regards,

Emma

Emma Veryan

Marine Lead Adviser

Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire

Natural England

4th Floor, Foss House

Kings Pool,

1-2 Peasholme Green,

York, YO1 7PX

Landline: 0300 060 0937 Mobile: 07825 676322

www.naturalengland.org.uk

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