



National Infrastructure Directorate
Room 3/18
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN

29th June 2012
Your ref: TR030001
Our Unique Reference Number: 10015530

Dear Sir/Madam

Written Representation – Proposed Able Marine Energy Park on the south bank of the river Humber at Immingham, North Lincolnshire

Thank you for consulting the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust on the above application. The Yorkshire Wildlife Trust works across the Yorkshire and Humber region managing eighty reserves and with a membership of over 32,000. The YWT is the second oldest of the 47 Wildlife Trusts which work in partnership to cover the whole of the UK. The Trust's principle vision is to work for a Yorkshire rich in wildlife, valued and enjoyed by people.

The development itself falls outside our area and we would refer you to the written representation made by Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust (LWT) which we fully support. We also have some comments to make regarding the compensation areas.

Old Little Humber Farm

Black-tailed Godwit

We are concerned that the Old Little Humber Farm site will not provide adequate interim habitat for black-tailed godwit. Annex 35.6 says that '*Black-tailed Godwit use of feeding areas outside the inter-tidal zone on the Humber is much less frequent*'. They are therefore unlikely to fly inland to reach this site. In addition although black-tailed godwits will use wet grassland this is more likely to be associated with breeding habitat rather than the post-breeding and overwintering habitat which will be lost as part of the development.

Other

The Environmental Statement says that this site is also expected to provide mitigation for breeding birds and the loss of terrestrial habitat. However as the site is only intended to be temporary we agree with Natural England that Able need to clarify how these impacts will be mitigated in the long term¹.

Monitoring

The site should be monitored to ensure that the habitats are functioning correctly before the development takes place.

Cherry Cobb Sands

Timing

The compensation at Cherry Cobb Sands should be completed before the development begins,

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¹ Natural England's Relevant Representation Paragraph 2.17



especially given the risk that the Old Little Humber Farm site may not provide suitable habitat for black-tailed godwit. This is supported in the European Commission's guidance document² which states that *'The compensatory measures must ensure the continuity of the ecological processes essential for maintaining the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network. The compensation scheme should be 'effective' at the time the negative effects occur on the site concerned. Early implementation is of the essence'*. The site should be monitored to ensure that the habitats are functioning correctly before development takes place. If the site did not provide sufficient habitat then further compensation would be required before the development could go ahead. We agree with LWT that a contingency plan should be put in place.

Habitat

The compensation site must deliver sufficient areas of intertidal mudflat and saltmarsh to adequately compensate for the habitat lost at the development site. Previous managed realignment schemes on the northern bank have resulted in significantly less intertidal mudflat creation than was initially intended as much of the proposed intertidal area has become saltmarsh habitat, for example at Paull Holme Strays³. Annex 32.4 paragraph 5.1.14 also states that *'In view of the uncertainty inherent in sedimentation predictions, it would be prudent to assume that the predicted changes in ground levels probably have an uncertainty of ± 50 percent.'* We are therefore very concerned that there is a high risk that the habitats will not be created in the ratio needed to compensate for the loss. In order for the site to provide adequate compensation there may also need to be a mix of habitats. Existing mudflats opposite the proposed development site are not used in the same way as those at Killingholme or in the same proportions indicating that the suite of habitats at Killingholme may be very important. The provision of roosting habitat near to the Cherry Cobb Sands site may be required to ensure that the compensation is successful.

Management

The sites should be managed in perpetuity to compensate for the long term impact of the development. As mentioned in our registration submission we would be keen to work with Able to manage the sites especially given that we will soon be taking on the management of Paull Holme Strays nearby.

Living Landscapes

The NPPF states that *'The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: ...establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures'* (Paragraph 109). The Cherry Cobb Sands site is within our Outer Humber Living Landscape (<http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/living-landscape/schemes/outer-humber>). This is an area that we have identified as an important corridor for wildlife which connects habitats and allows wildlife to move between areas. We would therefore be keen to see Cherry Cobb Sands managed in a way which links with our other three reserves in this Living Landscape; Spurn Point, Welwick Saltmarsh and Hodgson's Fields (<http://www.ywt.org.uk/reserves>) to create a coherent ecological network.

Yours faithfully,

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²European Commission (2011), The Implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives in estuaries and coastal zones with particular attention to port development and dredging. http://ec.europa.eu/transport/maritime/doc/guidance_doc.pdf

³ Environment Agency (2009) Paull Holme Strays Environmental Monitoring report