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Wendy Hague
Forward Planning Officer
East Cambridgeshire District Council

Customer Services
Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Ms Hague

Consultation on Application by Sutton Parish Council to Designate a Neighbourhood Area

Thank you for consulting Natural England on the above in your email of 19th November 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.

Natural England is a statutory consultee on Neighbourhood Plans where these are likely to affect a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or 20 hectares or more of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land. We must also be consulted where proposals require Environmental Impact Assessment or screening for Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA).

Designated sites

We note that the proposed Sutton Neighbourhood Area incorporates the nationally and internationally designated Ouse Washes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site. The Neighbourhood Plan will therefore be required to demonstrate that policies will not have an adverse effect on the notified interest features of this statutorily designated site.

Additional information

The following is offered as advice to assist the Parish Council in preparing their Neighbourhood Plan.

Natural England, together with the Environment Agency, English Heritage and Forestry Commission has published joint advice on neighbourhood planning which sets out sources of environmental information and ideas on incorporating the environment into development proposals. This is available at: <http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/PDF/GEHO0212BWAZ-E-E.pdf>

Local environmental record centres hold a range of information on the natural environment. A list of local records centre is available at: <http://www.nbn-nfbr.org.uk/nfbr.php>



Protected species

You should consider whether the plan is likely to have any impacts on protected species. To help you do this Natural England has produced standing advice to help understand the impact of particular developments on protected or Biodiversity Action Plan species should they be identified as an issue. The standing advice also sets out when, following receipt of survey information, you should undertake further consultation with Natural England: [Natural England Standing Advice](#)

The Plan should ensure that protected and/or biodiversity habitats and species are protected, and ideally enhanced, through its policies.

Opportunities for enhancing the natural environment

Proposals may provide opportunities to enhance the character and local distinctiveness of the surrounding natural and built environment; use natural resources more sustainably; and bring benefits for the local community, for example through green space provision and access to and contact with nature. You should consider encouraging such enhancements through development policies.

Opportunities to incorporate features into new build or retro fitted buildings which are beneficial to wildlife, such as the incorporation of roosting opportunities for bats or the installation of bird nest boxes should also be promoted through development policies where possible.

The lack of specific comment from Natural England should not be interpreted as a statement that the Plan will have no impacts on the natural environment. Other bodies and individuals may make comments that will help the Parish Council to fully take account of the environmental value of this area in their Plan making process.

Natural England looks forward to commenting further as the Sutton Neighbourhood Plan progresses.

Yours sincerely

Janet Nuttall
Area 08 Sustainable Land Use and Regulation