

Date: 08 December 2022
Our ref: Boston Alternative Energy Facility
Your ref: EN010095



Secretary of State
Head of Energy Infrastructure Planning Delivery
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy
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BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Sir

NSIP Reference Name: Boston Alternative Energy Facility (BAEF)

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's answers to the Secretary of State's further questions as requested on 25th November are as follows.

Overarching position

Natural England has reviewed the response provided by the Applicant to the 14th October 2022 SoS consultation and unfortunately there is insufficient information to materially change Natural England previous advice in relation The Wash SPA Annex I Bird impacts and The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC Annex II Harbour Seals impacts.

We draw your attention to the detailed comments provided in the accompanying Appendices, which provide further explanation for our advice.

Please note that Natural England has only reviewed/considered those sections of the documents highlighted in the Secretary of States Questions 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, and 5.5. However, we do note that in Appendix A relating to Harbour seals the applicant has provided a response relating to priority Habitats namely

'In relation to intertidal habitats, the potential effect of vessel wash has been considered in detail in the ES within Chapter 16 (APP-054) and it was concluded that the increase in vessel traffic is unlikely to affect the intertidal mudflats and saltmarsh as the contribution to the overall accretion of these areas by

locally-generated wind waves and tidal currents would significantly exceed the contribution to erosion from ship waves the effect on sensitive receptors would be negligible.'


For avoidance of doubt and for audit trial purpose Natural England wishes to highlight that our position in relation to erosion of priority saltmarsh habitats from construction and operational activities associated with the proposed development from vessel movements remains unchanged. Thereby, we do not agree with the Applicant's statement.

In relation to the Secretary of States question

5.4 In response to Natural England's comment in [REP8-024] regarding the Technical Note for Navigation Management and Ornithology [REP6-033], that: "Natural England advises that associated plans referenced in the technical note are not currently available and therefore we are unable to provide further advice", the Applicant in Paragraph 2.2.30 of its responses to the information request, states that it is unable to discern which plans Natural England is referring to, but offers to make such information available to Natural England. Natural England is invited to inform the Applicant of the information it seeks, to help resolve its outstanding concerns.

There has been insufficient consultation time to resolve this matter fully, but NE advises that Natural England comments at [REP8-24] related to [REP6-033] which was a technical note setting out the process for developing the Navigational Management Plan, Navigational Risk Assessment and the Outline Ornithological Monitoring Plan which at the time of writing our advice were not provided; thereby we were unable to advice on the adequacy of the proposed process and the subsequent plans. However, subsequent provision of the documents from the Applicant and Natural England advice, means that this comment is no longer requires addressing.

Natural England highlights that due to Natural England closing between Christmas and New Year and already agreed annual leave we will not be monitoring the PINS website and/or have the resources to respond to further consultations between 15th December 2022 and 3rd January 2023.

If you have any queries relating to the advice in this letter, please contact Andy Stubbs at  [@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto: [redacted]@naturalengland.org.uk)

Yours faithfully

Andy Stubbs
Senior Planning Adviser East Midlands