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## **BY EMAIL ONLY**

Dear Marie

**Planning consultation:** Main Modifications of the Local Plan Single Issue Review (SIR) and Site Allocations (SALP) Local Plan HRAs, Air quality Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal (SA).

Thank you for your consultation on the above which was received by Natural England on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

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 broadly welcomes the modifications in so far as they have regard to our strategic environmental interests. We are pleased that all our previous comments have evidently been taken into account regarding the environment. We are also satisfied that designated sites have been fully taken into account within the two HRAs, and that the SIR and the SALP will not have a significant effect on European sites, alone and in-combination with other plans or projects.

### **Proposed Single Issue Review HRA main modifications**

Natural England welcomes the proposed Main Modifications of the Habitat Regulations Assessment and is broadly satisfied that the assessment is legally compliant. We particularly welcome the clarification regarding recreational offsetting measures for Breckland Special Protection Area (SPA), including the commissioned SANG report.

We consider the report has now been updated to reflect the recent European rulings and gives adequate consideration to in-combination effects with other plans or projects.

### **Proposed Site Allocations HRA main modifications**

Natural England welcomes the updated assessment. We consider the assessment to be legally compliant with regards to our strategic environmental interests. As above, the recent EU rulings have, in our view, been taken into account in the way applications have been assessed and described in the report. As above, we particularly welcome the further clarity on the offsetting measures to address recreational impacts.

In terms of the information on the allocations, which we note is all accurate in terms of Natural England's input, we particularly welcome the removal of screening as a means of avoidance of effects following our earlier advice.

**Proposed Main Modifications Sustainability Appraisal and air quality assessment**

Natural England notes and welcomes the updates to the assessment. We consider the assessments to be legally compliant and have no specific comments to make regarding either assessment.

We would be happy to comment further should the need arise but if in the meantime you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter please contact Francesca Shapland at [francesca.shapland@naturelengland.org.uk](mailto:francesca.shapland@naturelengland.org.uk). For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk).

Yours sincerely

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Natural England