

Hearing statement for Matter 1 Habitats Regulation Assessment from the Wivenhoe Society

These comments focus on question 5 but are also relevant to question 1.

Q1 The draft Local Plan has long term implications for the location of housing in NE and would commit to building on the proposed sites so the long term possible likely significant effects of the Garden Communities should be assessed and not just effects within the Plan period. The proposed Tendring/Colchester Garden Community is only 3,5 km from the nearest SPA and is also close to other feeding areas on the Colne Estuary. The potential implications of the fully built out proposals on recreational disturbance should be assessed.

Q5 The RAMS proposals rely mainly on the appointment of rangers, land and water based and on providing information about potential harm to the European sites from land and water based recreational. It also includes provision for monitoring bird numbers. Given the area of coast involved it would be questioned whether the proposed number of both land and water based rangers is adequate. Only two water based rangers are included. In the HRA it was noted that NE was particularly concerned about the habitat effects from river craft - disturbance and the effects of wash on roosting and feeding areas. Two rangers to cover all the coastline and estuarial waters of the combined authorities this would seem inadequate for enforcement. While monitoring of bird populations is desirable the RAMS proposals say nothing about what actions could be taken if the surveys reveal adverse effects.

A further issue is the financing of the RAMS provisions. The proposed charge per dwelling (see para 8,8) seems to have been derived by dividing the total projected cost up to 2038 by a projected number of new dwellings. In paragraph 7.6 it is recognised that the package of measures will need to be implemented "in perpetuity" and makes reference to RAMS schemes elsewhere investing some of the developer receipts to fund mitigation in the future. No provision appears to be made for future funding in the proposed Essex scheme. All the receipts would appear to be needed to fund the scheme only until 2038.

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