



Environmental Information Regulations

MMO dredging licence granted for Goodwin Sands

For a Link to the FOI/EIR page visit: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=6077>

For further information about the Joint Nature Conservation Committee visit:

<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/>

Number of EIR 201904

Request

Goodwin Sands proposed MCZ - marine aggregate dredging

You may be aware that Goodwin Sands SOS has been campaigning against the proposed dredging of the Goodwin Sands by Dover Harbour Board since May 2016.

We were naturally very disappointed that the Marine Management Organisation made the decision to grant this licence whilst the Goodwin Sands proposed Marine Conservation Zone submission was still out for public consultation.

In October last year, we lodged a claim for a Judicial Review of the MMO's decision. One of the grounds for this claim is the process by which the MMO concluded that dredging would not hinder the conservation objectives of the subtidal sand (the target aggregate), which is to maintain this sand in its 'current favourable condition'.

We do not understand at all, why, after proposing the Goodwin Sands as a pMCZ and designating the subtidal sand (one of two habitats) as a Protected Feature, Natural England quickly concluded that dredging, the most destructive of activities, would not hinder its conservation objectives. I would like to make an FOI request for your comments on this please.

We have a verbal permission hearing in the High Court on 21st February and I am writing to ask whether you have any thoughts on the MMO's conclusion, which they arrived at upon advice from Natural England. In particular, we would be interested to know whether you consider retaining 3 million tonnes of this habitat important in order to protect it. Please consider this also as an FOI request.

Reply

Thank you for your request for information received by JNCC on Monday 11th February 2019, which we have dealt with under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

In communication with colleagues who deal with marine protected areas (including Marine Conservation Zones), we would reply under EIR Regulation 12 (4)(a): *Does not hold that information when an applicant's request is received.*

JNCC co-ordinates nature conservation advice at a UK-level and advises UK Government on matters relating to nature conservation internationally. Within each UK country the separate statutory bodies are responsible for nature and landscape conservation these being: Natural England (NE), Natural Resources Wales (NRW), Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside Northern Ireland (CNCCNI).

As part of its remit, JNCC has responsibility for the provision of nature conservation advice in the offshore area; 'offshore' being defined as beyond 12 nautical miles from the coastline. Within this limit nature conservation advice is the responsibility of the relevant country bodies. So, while JNCC is responsible for Marine Protected Areas in the offshore area, in the inshore area, such as the case with Goodwin Sands, Natural England will be the body responsible for dealing with any nature conservation issues

There does not appear to be a specific contact in regard to marine issues, so we have included the standard contact details.

Enquiries

Natural England

County Hall
Spetchley Road
Worcester
WR5 2NP
United Kingdom

Email: enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk

Telephone: 0300 060 3900

Opening times: 8:30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays)

Our apologies that we are unable to assist further.

Please acknowledge receipt of this email. If you require any further detail please do not hesitate to contact us.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint please contact Kirsty Meadows (kirsty.meadows@jncc.gov.uk).

If you are still not satisfied following this, you can make an appeal to the Information Commissioner who is the statutory regulator. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

Telephone: 08456 30 60 60

01625 54 57 45

www.ico.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,

John Henson Webb

Communications and Corporate Governance Officer

BSc (Hons)

JNCC, Monkstone House, City Road, Peterborough, PE1 1JY

Tel: 01733 866801, Direct Dial: 0773 866844

Email: john.hensonwebb@jncc.gov.uk



<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk>

