



Anne Ramsay
Natural England

Our ref: Catfield Fen renewals
Your ref: 92916 Appendix 11 licence
renewals, Catfield Fen

Sent via email only

Date: 30 August 2013

Dear Anne,

Re: Appendix 11 for Alston licence renewal applications at Catfield, Norfolk

Thank you for your letter dated 22 August 2013 and your agreement with our assessment of likely significant effect of the 2 renewal applications at Catfield in relation to the Upper Thurne Broads & Marshes SSSI and in particular the component unit Mrs Myhill's Marsh.

In response to your outstanding concerns, we have noted your comments regarding references to the Site Options Plan. We will ensure that any referenced reports are made available in the future for transparency. Figure 5 of Annex 5 of the Appendix 11 shows a scenario that was not presented as an option in the Options Appraisal Report, however it was included as a exploratory scenario. During Options Appraisal, 7 exploratory model runs were carried out, with model run 341 being a fully licensed run with both of the Alston abstractions switched off to assess the modelled impact of these abstractions on water levels on Mrs Myhill's Marsh. The model scenarios indicated that the modelled impacts on the site from the Anglian Water Services and Overton abstraction licences greatly exceeded the modelled impacts from any of the other licences. These licences therefore became the focus for licence changes which were agreed following consideration of proposed sustainability reductions, licence holder consultation and available headroom (based on historic use) as documented within the later Options Appraisal report.

For information the relevant section of the Options Appraisal report have been attached to this email for completeness.

Regarding your concerns on the Overton licence, we are actively progressing the permanent change to Mr Overton's base licence in line with the recommendations of the Review of Consents, and have a target of serving notice under Section 52 of the Water Act 2003 to the licence holder and advertising the proposed change before the end of March 2014. There will be an amount of time following this notice before the licence is formally changed. This will be dependent on any comments received from the advert and whether consultation with Defra is needed. Due to the

timescales and process involved it is unlikely that the varied licence for Overton will be issued prior to a decision being made on Mr Alston's licences.

Mr Overton's current practice is to use his time-limited borehole in preference to the base licence well-points and therefore we believe the risk of the full abstraction quantity being used during a drought year in this interim period is very low indeed.

We are content that the above clarity does not change the conclusions within the Appendix 11 assessment and will take your letter dated 22 August 2013 as your agreement. We can confirm that based on your advice we will not be carrying out an Appropriate Assessment for the Upper Thurne Broad & Marshes SSSI, component of The Broadland SAC, Broadland SPA and Broadland Ramsar. We will however as previously agreed be carrying out an Appropriate Assessment for another component of the European site, namely the Ant Broad & Marshes SSSI.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Hannah Hawkins".

Hannah Hawkins
Senior Permitting Officer – Water Resources

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Cc Andrea Kelly, Broadland Authority