

10th August 2010



Josef Hanik
Senior Ranger – Wirral's Coast
North Wirral Coastal Park,
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By email – No hard copy to follow

To Josef Hanik on behalf of Metropolitan Borough of Wirral,

**The Dee Estuary SSSI, SAC, SPA & Ramsar site
North Wirral Foreshore SSSI
Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore pSPA & pRamsar**

**Assent of Natural England under Section 28H of the Wildlife and
Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)**

Thank you for your notice dated 8th June 2010 regarding the proposed activities Wirral Council wish to undertake on the amenity beach stretching from the Hoyle Road Slipway to Hilbre Point as documented in the Hoylake Site Management Agreement. These activities, as listed in the Hoylake Site Management Agreement are to:

- spray both *Spartina anglica* and *Puccinellia maritima* using the approved herbicide Roundup BioActive Gold
- spraying of isolated *Spartina anglica* clumps using the approved herbicide Roundup BioActive Gold with hand held lance sprayer (as documented on supplementary map)
- mechanically rake the amenity beach using either a comb rake or a Barber Surf rake
- the removal of accumulated windblown sand and for it to be 'recycled' within the protected site

The proposed operations are within the Dee Estuary SSSI, SAC, SPA & Ramsar site, the North Wirral Foreshore SSSI and the Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore pSPA & pRamsar site. However, given the details within the documentation submitted alongside this request, including an Appropriate Assessment with respect to the international designations, it is the opinion of Natural England that the works will not significantly impact on any of these designated sites.

As such Natural England gives assent to the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral to undertake the proposals made in your notice of 8th June 2010 under S28H of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) but with the following caveats:

1. That spraying with Roundup BioActive Gold and mechanical raking may take place between April and November 2010 until 2015, at low water and avoiding times when large populations of bird are present at the site. Any spraying or raking outside of this time frame can only be undertaken with the prior agreement of Natural England.
2. That the area to be sprayed and/or mechanically raked is maintained as a high water roost and any spraying activity reflects this protection by ceasing at high water when birds are present.
3. That all spraying is undertaken by a qualified person and follows the protocols set down by the herbicide manufacturer and the Environment Agency as regards its use.

Natural England also brings to your attention that, as a S28G body of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), you are required to take reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exercise of your functions to further the conservation and enhancement of the SSSI.

If you wish to change the proposed operation, or carry out additional operations for which assent has not yet been given, or if a time period given in your letter of date has expired, you are required to give further written notice to Natural England.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kate Mudie', written over a faint circular stamp or watermark.

Kate Mudie

Marine Advisor

Wirral to the Wyre Team