

Date: 12 October 2018
Our ref: 261126 and 261127
Your ref: Braunton Burrows SAC TLSE – Formal
Notice



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BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Sarah,

Formal Advice to D&S IFCA: Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRAs) for Braunton Burrows SAC.

Thank you for the above assessments, received by email on 25 September 2018.

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.

In 2012, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) announced a revised approach to the management of commercial fisheries in European Marine Sites.¹ The objective of this revised approach is to ensure that all existing and potential commercial fishing activities are managed in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. This document states that a site level assessment will be required to assess whether management of an activity is required to conserve site features. The Department's strong preference is that site level assessments be carried out in a manner that is consistent with the provisions of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. Appropriate management measures should be put in place to ensure that the fishing activity or activities either (a) have no likely significant effect on a site in view of its conservation objectives or (b) following assessment, can be concluded to have no adverse effect on the integrity of the site.

Natural England have considered the Habitat Regulations Assessments (HRAs) prepared by D&S IFCA for the purposes of making an assessment consistent with the provisions of Article 6(3). Please accept this letter as Natural England's formal advice on the assessments and the conclusions they make.

Assessments have been made of the effects of the following fisheries activities in Braunton Burrows SAC:

- Crab tiling on intertidal mudflats and sandflats (HRA_UK0012570_L39)
- Digging with forks on intertidal mudflats and sandflats (HRA_UK0012570_L40)

We are content that the best available and most up to date evidence has been used to carry out these assessments in order to determine whether management of an activity is required to conserve site features, and thus to ensure the protection of the features from direct and indirect impacts from the collection of marine fisheries resources.

It is Natural England's view that through the HRAs, D&S IFCA officers appear to have appropriately identified those activities that are not likely to have a significant effect in view of the site's conservation objectives and whether management measures are required in order to ensure that the assessed fishing activity or activities will have no adverse effect on the integrity of the EMS.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Waddell".

Carolyn Waddell

¹ Defra revised approach: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/revised-approach-to-the-management-of-commercial-fisheries-in-european-marine-sites-overarching-policy-and-delivery>