

Date: 23 June 2009  
Our ref: B05/2-8/4  
Your ref: ME/LW/FP/LDF15

Mike Ebbs  
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**By email only, no hard copy to follow**

Dear Mike,

### **Submission Core Strategy**

Natural England and Dover District Council have engaged in constructive discussions following concerns we raised regarding the Core Strategy. This letter constitutes Natural England's views in light of these discussions.

### **Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure**

Natural England remains disappointed that the Core Strategy will not include a dedicated and locally specific policy relating to biodiversity, given the considerable biodiversity resource in the District. However, Natural England recognises that the Green Infrastructure policy provides some opportunity to incorporate the biodiversity element, and welcomes the detailed mapping of biodiversity resource which has been carried out in support of the Green Infrastructure policy. Natural England also looks forward to working with Dover District Council on the Green Infrastructure Strategy and foresees wide benefits which can be secured through this.

### **Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)**

Natural England strongly supports the supplementary work which Dover District Council has carried out, in response to comments made by us and others, and which we understand will form a supporting document relating to the HRA. In Natural England's view the evidence provided clarifies the processes by which conclusions were reached in the HRA, and demonstrates more detailed consideration of the potential impacts of the Whitfield allocation on Lydden and Temple Ewell Down SAC. In particular Natural England welcomes the detailed maps provided as part of the evidence, indicating the general relationship between the housing allocation and the SAC. Natural England remains concerned that the indicated greenspace may not provide a continuous buffer between the housing development and the SAC, but acknowledges that this will be considered at the masterplan stage, where Appropriate Assessment (AA) may be required. The results of any AA may indicate that likely significant effects cannot be fully mitigated, in which case certain elements of the allocation may require revision or removal.

Natural England welcomes the continued positive working relationship with Dover District Council and looks forward to supporting its work in the future.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E Dresner".

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