

# Site monitoring report for inactive/ dormant/ aftercare sites

Please find detailed below the report for the site monitoring undertaken. If you should have any queries or require any photographs taken, please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Site Name:** Wallasea Island (Wild Coast Project), Rochford, Essex

**File Ref:** 34. 457. 18

**Operator:** RSPB

**Site Representative:** Rachel Fancy (RSPB)

**Visit no:** 1 of 1

**Date:** 26<sup>th</sup> April 2023

**Time on site:** 10:30am

**Time off site:** 11:55am

**Monitoring Officer:** Shelley Bailey                      Tel No: 03330136824

Accompanied by Hamish Jackson – ECC Place Services Ecological Consultant.

**Site Co-ordinator:** Shelley Bailey                      Tel No: 03330136824

## **Planning Permission no's:**

- ESS/28/15/ROC (Wind Shelters)
- ESS/42/15/ROC (Fencing) and ESS/42/15/ROC/NMA
- ESS/12/17/ROC: The erection of buildings comprising one Reception Hide and one Viewing Hide for use by the general public; the development of a staff compound comprising one Office Building and one Meeting Room Building, Staff Parking Area; the erection of one Workshop and development of a new Hardstanding; and associated works.

And ESS/12/17/NMA

- ESS/02/18/ROC: Continuation of the development of a coastal nature reserve without compliance with Conditions 2 (Submitted details), 20 (Revised Aftercare scheme), 21 (Maintenance of Rights of Way and permissive routes), 30 (work in accordance with Flood Risk Assessment), 31 (timeline for project completion) and 32 (Date for removal of plant and machinery) attached to planning permission ref ESS/13/17/ROC, to allow modifications to the landform design within Cells 2 and 4 (adjusting the design detail to facilitate timely completion while also creating a greater range of new coastal habitat types) and to bring forward the proposed completion date to 31 December 2020.

#### **Inspection Results/Actions from last site visit:**

- Cell habitats to continue to be managed as per approved details.
- Once data has been analysed for the wild bird cover areas/ corn buntings, the WPA requests to see the report with a plan of action and justification for changing the habitat if that is proposed, together with measures required to maintain the species populations. This should be submitted prior to the formal aftercare submission, which should include the formalised strategy.
- Water Vole habitat/population should be reviewed following the survey to be completed this year.

#### **Inspection Results Summary:**

- Water levels across the site very high due to recent rainfall.
- The works in Cells 5 and 4 (additional islands etc) have been fully implemented in accordance with ESS/02/18/ROC/NMA3. This is having an immediate benefit for breeding birds.
- Wild bird cover – some of the area has been cut and some land drains will be blocked as per aftercare proposals to improve the habitat. Proposals not fully implemented yet. This is supported by the Ecologist as a more varied landscape will result in benefit to farmland species.
- The aftercare report shows that the water vole population appears to have increased in 2022 following a poor survey in 2021.
- Jubilee Marsh appeared to be much more vegetated than in previous visits.
- The site generally is being very well managed by the RSPB and all objectives are being met.
- Importantly, the submitted APMer report shows that there has been no significant change in channel morphology or to intertidal areas in the Crouch and Roach estuaries. Additionally, Jubilee Marsh is progressively accreting sediment, as predicted, such that the volume of water exchanged with the estuary has lowered by around 12%.

**Actions to be taken before next site visit:**

- This completes the final aftercare monitoring visit for the Wallasea Island site. There are no further actions.