

RAMSGATE SOCIETY

The inshore waters of Kent have an exceptionally rich natural heritage. Almost the entire coast falls within a Marine Protected Area (MPA), with the majority of the inshore seas being of European importance, making the Kent coast of outstanding importance both within the UK and internationally. Three Marine Conservation Zones were designated in 2013, and the port is adjacent to one of these. The profusion of designations not only demonstrates the importance of this coast, but the wide range of habitats and species which it supports. The coast around the port is protected by the following local, national and international designations:

- Marine Protected Area
- Marine Conservation Zone
- Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
- National Nature Reserve (NNR)
- Natura 2000
- Ramsar
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- Special Protection Areas (SPA)

It is inconceivable that this application can be determined without a full Environmental Impact Assessment and a Habitats Regulations Assessment. The KCC planning website indicates that neither of these essential requirements have been met. We recommend therefore that the consultation period be paused until the planning authority has been provided with these reports and that the consultation period recommences when this information is available.

Under the Pollution Prevention Control Act 1999, there should be “no visible emissions from any source beyond the site boundary.” In view of the highly sensitive nature of the Pegwell SSSI it would be essential that there should be a absolute requirement to comply with this legal obligation and full details of how this is to be achieved should be part of the application.

Unlike the importation of aggregates neither concrete batching or sand and aggregate washing are authorized port activities. This application therefore is for and unauthorized use and must comply fully with strict environmental regulations.

Whilst many of us want the Port of Ramsgate to be a viable business and an asset to the local economy we do not want to see this at the expense of every local, national and international statutory protection for designated sites such as the Pegwell Bay SSSI. If Ramsgate is to flourish it needs to create a high quality environment to attract the businesses and visitors on which our local economy depends.