



Hampshire Ornithological Society

Policy: The HOS position on development & planning issues

Purpose

This policy outlines the Society's approach when responding and contributing to development plan consultations, environmental impact assessment (EIA) consultations, planning applications, and any other associated planning issues.

Policy

Hampshire Ornithological Society (HOS) will not normally be actively involved in conservation issues in a campaigning or political role, or in opposing or supporting specific proposals, plans, or planning applications. However, HOS will always endeavour to provide data on bird use and bird populations in particular areas, and will provide general advice on the potential impact on birds of any development or planning proposal.

Context

From time to time, there are HOS members who feel that HOS should be more actively involved in supporting or opposing many different kinds of plans, proposals, and policies relating to land-use. These may include everything from very specific local planning applications, through major proposals for housing development or mineral extraction, right through to strategic issues such as the South East Regional Plan or Government policies relating to countryside or coastal access.

However, HOS is a small society of around 1,000 members, and is run wholly by volunteers. To participate fully in planning issues would require professional expertise and financial resources well beyond the level that can be supported by such a small membership. HOS therefore concentrates on providing data, and works closely with other conservation agencies within the county who do have the necessary resources and professional staff.

Practicalities

- HOS has an agreement to provide bird data to the county records centre – the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC). All basic information about birds (including non-sensitive HOS data) is available to all organisations, authorities, and agencies, from HBIC.
- Where need be, HOS will respond to consultations on plans, proposals, EIAs, etc, by providing more detailed information and advice concerning bird data and its interpretation to relevant parties. In certain cases we may also provide general advice on the potential ornithological impact of developments. All requests for data, and all provision of data, should be channelled through the County Recorder. Provision of data may be subject to the Society's Data Release Policy, and there may be an administration charge.
- Campaigning support or opposition by HOS members to specific proposals and plans should be in their personal capacity, and not in the name of HOS. Such lobbying should be through the relevant political framework (local authorities, councils, or park authority) and/or through the professional conservation organisations such as the Hampshire & IOW Wildlife Trust or RSPB.

Exceptions

In exceptional circumstances, such as proposals for a major development on a key site of ornithological importance, the HOS Management Committee may consider that a particular planning issue may benefit from the society's active involvement.