



Report to the Partnership for South Hampshire Joint Committee

Date: 25 October 2021

Report of: Paddy May, SRMP Board Chair
Anna Parry, Partnership Manager

Subject: Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership Strategy Bird Aware Solent -
Amendments to Site Specific Projects

SUMMARY

The purpose of the report is to seek endorsement from the Joint Committee for minor alterations to two previously approved site specific projects supported by the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership.

RECOMMENDATION

It is RECOMMENDED that Joint Committee:-

- a) NOTE and ENDORSE the revised proposal for the Apuldram Manor Farm site;
and
- b) NOTE and ENDORSE the revised proposal for the East Head site.

BACKGROUND

APULDRAM MANOR FARM

1. As part of a wider scheme, the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership (SRMP), has previously committed to support site specific projects at Apuldram Manor Farm and East Head. The site managers are now requesting minor changes to the agreed schemes.
2. The first of these schemes is at Apuldram Manor Farm, is proposed by Chichester Harbour Conservancy (CHC), and has a value of £3,000. This project is situated within Chichester Harbour and the original proposal centres around visitor management techniques including interpretation boards, fencing and planting.
3. As time has gone on, changes within the wider site have now impacted upon the area in question. Firstly experience has shown that hedgerow planting close by in 2019 (with alternative funding) has not become strongly established due to site conditions. Now, the planned area for the Bird Aware funded planting has had a barbed wire fence installed by the farmer, which CHC staff did not have prior warning of. See photograph below.



4. Whilst it is accepted that planting would have been more attractive, from a disturbance point of view, this new fencing will still keep people and dogs off the field at that location and therefore away from the Brent Geese.
5. CHC staff then installed more boardwalk in sensitive areas to keep people from damaging the land with desire paths and by creating wide paths to avoid waterlogged areas. Materials for this are valued at just short of £3k and the Conservancy is requesting that the remainder of the Grant Award (£1,410) can be used towards these costs, with CHC making up the difference.
6. The Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership's Project Board have considered this request and have concluded that consideration should be taken by CHC to see if the barbed wire fence could be enhanced to further deter dogs from entering the field. Alongside that request, they are prepared to offer the recommendation that it is supported.

EAST HEAD

7. The second project is at East Head, and was proposed by Chichester District Council on behalf of the National Trust. It centres around the creation and extension of boardwalk and fencing and has a value of £20,600.
8. There were delays in starting this project as key project staff were placed on furlough. They have now returned to work and are requesting a variation because:

"Erosion of the dune frontage at East Head means the proposed exit of the boardwalk onto the beach is potentially at risk of being washed away during storm events and being affected by the natural erosion of the dunes."

"The cost of materials for the board walk alone have risen dramatically since the time of application, and now stand at over £20,000, not including labour costs."

9. Their changed request is:

"Instead of a boardwalk, the National Trust install chestnut post with rope fencing that will be more moveable if the dunes are affected by storm damage/erosion. Experience has shown that these types of fences are effective in limiting disturbance."

"Cargo netting be hung from the rope fence at the most critical points to physically restrict access by dogs to sensitive high tide roosts."

10. Further details provided within the revised application state that the National Trust is not looking for ongoing maintenance funding for this scheme, and that they propose to maintain and replace posts from their own woodlands.
11. Details of this have been shared with the site-specific project team and have received support from several sources (Natural England, New Forest National Park Authority (NFNPA) and the Bird Aware site specialist ranger). NFNPA staff noted that the flexibility to reposition the posts and ropes over time was actually an advantage over the more static boardwalk method originally proposed and that more should be done to actively promote a 'winter walking route' which should be noted on the interpretation boards and actively promoted. Should this change request receive approval, this idea will be fed back to the National Trust.
12. The Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership's Project Board have considered this request and are prepared to offer the recommendation that it is supported.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is RECOMMENDED that Joint Committee:-

- a) NOTE and ENDORSE the revised proposal for the Apuldram Manor Farm site;
and
- b) NOTE and ENDORSE the revised proposal for the East Head site.

ENQUIRIES:

For further information on this report please contact:-

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