



Ceri Davies
Executive Director Knowledge, Strategy & Planning
Natural Resources Wales
Cambria House
29 Newport Road
Cardiff
CF24 0TP

15 January 2016

Dear Ceri,

Proposed Special Areas of Conservation for Harbour Porpoise

I am writing further to your letter of 19 June 2015 where Natural Resources Wales (NRW) alongside the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) submitted advice on proposals for Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for harbour porpoise. The advice sets out proposals for three SACs that lie partly within Welsh waters:

- North Anglesey Marine / Gogledd Môn Forol;
- West Wales Marine / Cymru Gollewin Forol; and
- Bristol Channel Approaches / Dynesfeydd Môr Hafren.

Your recommendations have been considered and I am writing to give you notice that the Welsh Government is minded to include the three sites, as they relate to Wales, in the list to the European Commission as eligible for selection as sites of Community importance. I understand that Defra is writing in the same effect to JNCC regarding these areas as they relate to the English inshore and UK offshore areas.

The Welsh Government is minded to submit the sites for the following reasons:

- They have been recognised as eligible in line with the criteria set out in Annex III (Stage 1) of the Habitats Directive and supporting guidance published by the European Commission in 2007.
- They have been recognised as supporting persistent high densities of harbour porpoise (a species listed on Annex II of the Habitats Directive).

This letter requests that NRW, working with JNCC, now undertakes a public consultation on the proposals to give anyone who might be affected by the changes, or has relevant scientific information the opportunity to comment. The consultation will also include a draft

Marine Biodiversity and Conservation
Marine and Fisheries Division
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ
Tel: 02920 801258
Email: Louise.George@wales.gsi.gov.uk

assessment of the potential social and economic impacts of the proposed SACs. This will assist in identifying any additional information or evidence that would help improve the impact assessment of the proposed sites. While the impact assessment cannot inform or affect the decision to submit the sites it will ensure that the Welsh Government is aware of any social and economic impacts arising from the proposed changes.

The SAC consultation will run in parallel with a similar exercise on the sites that have been identified as suitable Special Protection Areas (SPAs). I am writing to you separately about the SPA proposals as they relate to Wales.

I am copying this letter to Paul Rose, Director Standards and Advice at JNCC.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. D. Bray". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end of the name.

Julian Bray
Head of Marine Nature Conservation & Biodiversity