

03 March 2025

Mark Knight
Clerk, Walberswick Parish Council

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Dear Mr Knight

Southwold Harbour Revision Order

We act for East Suffolk Council ("**the Council**") in relation to the Southwold Harbour Revision Order ("**the proposed HRO**"). The Marine Management Organisation ("**the MMO**") has passed us a copy of the representation dated 10 June 2024 ("**the Representation**") you submitted on behalf of Walberswick Parish Council ("**the Parish Council**") in an email sent on 11 June 2024. We are contacting you in response to the Representation.

The Representation highlights five points which the Parish Council considers are essential for inclusion in the proposed HRO. It makes clear that the Parish Council considers these five points are already included in the proposed HRO.

The purpose of this letter is to simply reassure the Parish Council that it has correctly understood the proposed HRO (which is broadly has) and therefore that the five points are covered by the proposed HRO.

1. *Our understanding is that the revenues earned in the Harbour must be used only in the harbour. This is important to protect against not only any loss of revenue but to protect against the possibility of using profit from land or other asset sales which could then be taken out of the harbour and used elsewhere by the District Council.*

Yes, the use of 'harbour revenue' is ringfenced under article 10 of the proposed HRO (application of finances) and cannot be used by the Council in relation to its non-harbour functions.

The only exception would be the power under article 5(2)(b)(iii) to carry out or provide funding towards works in the river Blyth upstream of the harbour (a place that is technically outside the 'harbour' as defined in the proposed HRO). The exercise of this power is, however, safeguarded by article 5(1) in any event and we note your support of this provision under point 5 below.

2. *We support the governance arrangements whereby the Harbour Management Committee (HMC) includes not only ESC Councillors, but also includes independent members who have specific skills and expertise in harbour management.*

Yes, the Southwold Harbour Board will include independent lay members under article 7(1)(b). Each of them must be a person appearing to the Council to have special knowledge, experience or ability as set out in paragraph (2).

3. *We support the requirement for an advisory body that is constituted and substantially consulted so that voice is given to the key stakeholders and harbour users. We expect that a representative from Walberswick Parish Council will continue to be part of the Advisory Group into the future.*

Yes, a representative of the Parish Council will continue to be part of the Advisory Group.

4. *We hope that the HRO will provide Harbour Management with more control over parking and use of the harbour road so that long running problems of vehicular traffic, safe operation of both commercial and tourist businesses and foot traffic can finally be addressed and resolved.*

Yes, the proposed HRO will provide the Council with stronger powers to control landside activities (including parking etc.) via modern byelaw powers (article 32) and powers to make general directions (article 24). It will also empower to Council with modern powers to provide parking facilities (article 54).

5. *We support the provision that allows the Harbour to do work and spend revenue on the upstream area above the Bailey Bridge into the Estuary. Particularly as climate change and coastal erosion continue to take their toll on our area, taking a holistic approach including the Blyth Estuary is essential for the operation and sustainability of the harbour.*

Thank you for your support.

If the Council does not hear from the Parish Council within 8 weeks, it will assume that the Parish Council is content with the clarifications set out above.

Yours sincerely



Lara Moore
Partner on behalf of Ashfords LLP