Dear John

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation Review

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of the London Wildlife Sites Board (LWSB). The LWSB was established to ensure that the selection and approval of Sites of Importance or Nature Conservation (SINCs) by London Boroughs is consistent with:

- national guidance set out in Local Sites – guidance on their identification, selection and management (Defra 2006)
- regional policy as set out in Appendix 1 of the Mayor’s Biodiversity Strategy Connecting to London’s Nature (GLA, 2002)

Boroughs are not obliged to consult the LWSB on their site selection and review process. But seeking the views of the LWSB about the scope, approach, and outcome of any review helps to demonstrate that the review has been transparent and consistent with the existing policy framework in London.

The views of the LWSB should be sought when the Borough is seeking to select a new Site of Metropolitan Importance (SMI) for nature conservation or to change the boundary or status of an existing SMI.

The advice set out in the Appendix to this letter is the advice of the LWSB and should not be construed as any formal commentary from the Greater London Authority.

Yours sincerely

Peter Massini
Chair, London Wildlife Sites Board
APPENDIX 1

London Wildlife Sites Board Advisory Comments

Set out below is a summary of your submission, and the LWSB comments on your Borough’s process for selecting or reviewing Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). As the primary role of the LWSB is to comment on the process of selection or review, the LWSB comments relate to: survey of sites; the review or selection methodology; the local site selection panel; plus observations on the outcomes of the selection or review process. Where appropriate there are LWSB comments on proposed changes to Sites of Metropolitan Importance.

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<tr>
<th>Borough:</th>
<th>Tower Hamlets</th>
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<tr>
<td>Document:</td>
<td><em>Review of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Tower Hamlets</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Submitted by:</td>
<td>John Archer, Biodiversity Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of LWSB meeting:</td>
<td>27th October 2011</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| LWSB Members:     | Peter Massini - Greater London Authority  
                    Mathew Frith - London Wildlife Trust  
                    Alister Hayes - London Boroughs of Bromley  
                    Ian Holt - London Borough of Haringey  
                    Richard Harris - London borough of Camden  
                    Mandy Rudd - Greenspace Information for Greater London  
                    David Brook - London Geodiversity Partnership |

**Site Survey**
Based on comprehensive borough-wide survey undertaken by the GLA in 2004. The Borough’s Biodiversity Officer undertook a resurvey of sites during the summer of 2011 (plus visits to water bodies between Oct 2010-April 2011 to record wintering waterfowl).

**Review methodology**
Site survey was augmented by consultation with the Tower Hamlets Biodiversity Partnership (THBP) and relevant Borough Officers. Following survey and consultation recommendations were drafted and discussed with the Steering Group of the THBP.

**Local panel**
Effectively the Steering group of the THBP

**Outcome**
No changes to Sites of Metropolitan Importance; various minor changes to Sites of Borough Importance; deletion of several Sites of Local Importance and identification of new Sites of Local Importance

**LWSB Comments on Review Process**
- The existing survey information (a borough wide survey undertaken in 2004), backed up by consultation with the THBP and surveys by the Borough’s Biodiversity Officer, is adequate to ensure the review is based on sound understanding of the extant nature conservation resource.
- Local knowledge and stakeholders were engaged in the process.
- The review was undertaken with a sound understanding of the policy and procedures recommended by the London Plan.
- The reasoning behind proposed changes is sound. The wholesale changes in Sites of Local Importance are understandable in light of significant small-scale ecological enhancements to various local parks and green spaces I recent years.
- The LWSB endorses the SINC review process undertaken by Tower Hamlets.

**LWSB Comments on proposed Sites of Metropolitan Importance changes**
- n/a