

Ecological Assessment / Statement

Site description

The proposal is to install four antennae on the roof of the existing Weybourne Atmospheric Observatory building. The site is located within the Norfolk Coast AONB. There are also a number of statutory designated areas within 2kms of the site as follows:

- North Norfolk Coast SAC
- North Norfolk Coast SPA
- North Norfolk Coast Ramsar
- The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC
- Weybourne Cliffs SSSI
- Kelling Heath SSSI
- Weybourne Town Pit SSSI

The observatory is a single-storey, flat-roofed building located on the cliffs overlooking the North Sea. There are guard rails on the roof edge and several roof-mounted installations. It is surrounded by a perimeter fence with hardstanding on the landward side and coastal grassland on the seaward side. It is reached by a metalled access track from the Muckleburgh collection site.



Ecological features



Vegetation: the grassland on the seaward side is dry and regularly mown. It is of low botanical interest. The hardstanding is largely devoid of vegetation.

Breeding birds: there is no climbing vegetation or ledges on the building which would provide nesting opportunities for birds. The flat roof is not used by nesting seagulls or other bird species. The grassland on the seaward side of the building has some potential to support ground nesting birds.

Bat roosts: the building has negligible Bat Roost Potential due to the lack of double-clad structures, crevices and roof void.

Herptiles: the grassland on the seaward side of the building has the potential to support reptiles, especially common lizard.

Terrestrial mammals: the habitats on the site have negligible potential to support terrestrial mammals other than small mammals (voles, mice, shrews) which may use the grassland.

Impact assessment

Installation of the receiver will take 1 to 2 days and does not require the use of heavy plant or lifting platforms. The equipment will be brought in by landrover on the day of installation. The receiver does not generate noise during operation. Consequently, there will be no adverse impacts from traffic movements, noise or air pollution during the installation or operational phases.

The observatory site has very low ecological value and negligible value for protected species. All work will be confined to the hardstanding and the building. Consequently, the erection of the antennae on the roof will have no adverse ecological impacts.

No elements of the installation or operation phases have potential to affect the neighbouring designated sites, either directly or indirectly. Research data generated from the MOTUS network will add to our understanding of migration within the Norfolk Coast SPA, SAC and Ramsar sites.