



Mike Keiser and Todd Warnock
Bandon Dunes Golf Resort
57744 Round Lake Road
Bandon
OR 97411

29 August 2016

Dear Mike Keiser and Todd Warnock

Proposed golf course at Coul Links, near Embo, Sutherland, Scotland

Our organisations were very alarmed to hear of the above proposed development. We have therefore decided to write to you jointly to ensure that you are in no doubt as to the scale of our concerns.

Frustratingly, your agents have so far declined to meet with our staff to discuss the plans in detail. This reluctance to engage with key stakeholders is a highly unusual and very concerning approach to progressing any development. However, even without the benefit of those detailed discussions, it seems inevitable that the current proposals would destroy much of the natural heritage interest of this internationally important and legally protected wildlife site.

The site is a unique example of undeveloped coastal dunes and seasonally flooded dune slacks with a wide range of habitat types and species found across the site. A large part of it is therefore given strict policy and legal protection through designation as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, as a Special Protection Area and as a RAMSAR site. In effect, these designations highlight that the area is one of the most important and heavily protected areas for nature in Scotland. It is very difficult to see how the proposed project could progress without breaching this strict legal and policy framework or without causing significant public outcry.

Our organisations are always keen to provide advice at as early a stage as possible in the development process so as to reduce the risk of protracted conflict. We would therefore like to make it clear that we would be likely to resist the current proposals at Coul Links in the strongest terms. It is unfortunate that we did not have an earlier opportunity to do this but we hope that this letter will give you an opportunity to halt progress on the project before too much additional effort is invested.

Because of the likely significant public interest in protecting the site at Coul Links we have decided to make this letter publicly available.

Should you or your agents wish to discuss anything further please contact Aedán Smith, Head of Planning at RSPB Scotland (aedan.smith@rspb.org.uk 0131 317 4100) in the first instance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Aedán Smith', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Aedán Smith
RSPB Scotland

Signed on behalf of and with the support of:

Jonathan Hughes, Chief Executive of the Scottish Wildlife Trust
Stuart Housden, Director, RSPB Scotland
Craig Macadam, Director, Buglife Scotland
Deborah Long, Head of Plantlife Scotland