Isle of Wight Council

Isle of Wight Island Planning Strategy Habitat Regulations Assessment

Final report
Prepared by LUC
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Isle of Wight Council

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Habitat Regulations Assessment

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Chapter 1
Introduction

Background

1.1 The Isle of Wight is a unitary authority and the largest island in England, with the second highest population. It is located in the English Channel, two miles off the coast of Hampshire, and separated from the mainland by the Solent.

1.2 The Isle of Wight Council has commissioned LUC to undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of its emerging Island Planning Strategy, as described in **Chapter 2**.

1.3 This iteration of the HRA assesses the impacts of the draft Island Planning Strategy that is being consulted on from 30 July to 1 October 2021 and should be read in conjunction with this document.

Previous HRA work

1.4 Island Plan Core Strategy was adopted by the Isle of Wight Council on 21 March 2012. This plan was subject to an HRA, which concluded that potential impacts to European site resulting from the plan would be avoided and/or adequately mitigated for. No adverse effect on the integrity of these European sites was therefore concluded.

1.5 A Regulation 18 Draft Island Planning Strategy was previously prepared, which considered a higher quantum of growth and which was subject to HRA Screening Assessment in 2018. The HRA concluded that *"the draft Island Planning Strategy will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects where effects have been considered."*. However, uncertainty remained in relation to air quality and as such required further assessment to determine the potential impacts of the plan in relation to this was required. This report builds on and updates the information gathered in the previous HRA in 2018, for the Isle of Wight's new Island Planning Strategy.

The requirement to undertake Habitats Regulations Assessment of Development Plans

1.6 The requirement to undertake HRA of development plans was confirmed by the amendments to the Habitats Regulations published for England and Wales in 2007[1]; the currently applicable version is the Habitats Regulations 2017[2], as amended. When preparing the Island Planning Strategy, the Isle of Wight Council is therefore required by law to carry out an HRA. The Council can commission consultants to undertake HRA work on its behalf and this (the work documented in this report) is then reported to and considered by the Isle of Wight Council as the 'competent authority'. The Council will consider this work and would usually[3] only progress a plan if it considers that the plan will not adversely affect the integrity[4] of any 'European site', as defined below. The requirement for authorities to comply with the Habitats Regulations when preparing a plan is also noted in the Government's online Planning Practice Guidance[5] (PPG).

1.7 HRA refers to the assessment of the potential effects of a development plan on one or more sites afforded the highest level of protection in the UK: SPAs and SACs. These were classified under European Union (EU) legislation but, since 1 January 2021, are protected in the UK by the Habitats Regulations 2017[2] (as amended). Although the EU Directives from which the UK's Habitats Regulations originally derived are no longer binding, the Regulations still make reference to the lists of habitats and species that the sites were designated for, which are listed in annexes to the EU Directives:

- SACs are designated for particular habitat types (specified in Annex 1 of the EU Habitats Directive[6]) and species (Annex II).
- SPAs are classified for rare and vulnerable birds (Annex I of the EU Birds Directive[7]), and for regularly occurring migratory species not listed in Annex I.

1.8 The term 'European sites' was previously commonly used in HRA to refer to 'Natura 2000' sites[8] and Ramsar sites (international designated under the Ramsar Convention). However, a Government Policy Paper[9] on changes to the Habitats Regulations 2017 post-Brexit states that:

- Any references to Natura 2000 in the 2017 Regulations and in guidance now refers to the new 'national site network'.
- The national site network includes existing SACs and SPAs; and new SACs and SPAs designated under these Regulations.
- Designated Wetlands of International Importance (known as Ramsar sites) do not form part of the national site network. Many Ramsar sites overlap with SACs and SPAs and may be designated for the same or different species and habitats.

1.9 Although Ramsar sites do not form part of the new national site network, the Government Policy Paper[10] confirms that all Ramsar sites remain protected in the same way as SACs and SPAs. In LUC's view and unless the Government provides any guidance to the contrary, potential effects on Ramsar sites should continue to form part of the HRA of plans and projects since the requirement for HRA of plans and projects that might adversely affect Ramsar sites forms an essential part of the protection confirmed by the Government Policy Paper. Furthermore, the NPPF[11] and practice

1 The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2007 (2007) SI No. 2007/1843. TSO (The Stationery Office), London.
2 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (2017) SI No. 2017/1012, as amended by The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019/579), TSO (The Stationery Office), London.
3 The exception to this would be where 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest' can be demonstrated; see paragraph 1.17.
4 The integrity of a site is the coherence of its ecological structure and function, across its whole area, that enables it to sustain the habitat, complex of habitats and/or the levels of populations of the species for which it was designated. (Source: UK Government Planning Practice Guidance)
5 https://www.gov.uk/guidance/appropriate-assessment
6 Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the 'Habitats Directive')
7 Directive 2009/147/EC of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (the 'Birds Directive')
8 The network of protected areas identified by the EU: https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/index_en.htm
9 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-the-habitats-regulations-2017/changes-to-the-habitats-regulations-2017
10 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-the-habitats-regulations-2017/changes-to-the-habitats-regulations-2017
11 NPPF para 176, available from https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework

guidance[12] currently still state that competent authorities responsible for carrying out HRA should treat Ramsar sites in the same way as SACs and SPAs.

1.10 The requirement for HRA does not apply to other nationally designated wildlife sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest or National Nature Reserves; therefore, for clarity, this report uses the term 'European sites' rather than 'national site network'.

1.11 The overall purpose of the HRA is to conclude whether or not a proposal or policy, or whole development plan would adversely affect the integrity of the European site in question. This is judged in terms of the implications of the plan for a site's 'qualifying features' (i.e. those Annex I habitats, Annex II species, and Annex I bird populations for which it has been designated). Significantly, HRA is based on the precautionary principle. Where uncertainty or doubt remains, an adverse effect should be assumed.

Stages of Habitats Regulations Assessment

1.12 **Table 1.1** summarises the stages involved in carrying out an HRA, based on various guidance documents[13],[14]. This HRA presents the methodology and findings of Stage 1: Screening and Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment.

Table 1.1: Stages in HRA

Stage	Task	Outcome
Stage 1: Screening (the 'Significance Test')	Description of the development plan and confirmation that it is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of European sites. Identification of potentially affected European sites and their conservation objectives[15]. Review of other plans and projects. Assessment of likely significant effects of the development plan alone or in combination with other plans and projects, prior to consideration of avoidance or reduction ('mitigation') measures[16].	Where effects are unlikely, prepare a 'finding of no significant effect report'. Where effects judged likely, or lack of information to prove otherwise, proceed to Stage 2.
Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment (the 'Integrity Test')	Information gathering (development plan and data on European sites[17]). Impact prediction.	Appropriate Assessment report describing the plan, European site baseline conditions, the adverse effects of the plan on the European site, how these effects will be avoided through, firstly, avoidance, and secondly,

[12] The HRA Handbook, Section A3. David Tyldesley & Associates, a subscription based online guidance document: https://www.dtapublications.co.uk/handbook/European
[13] UK Government Planning Practice Guidance, available from https://www.gov.uk/guidance/appropriate-assessment
[14] The HRA Handbook. David Tyldesley & Associates, a subscription based online guidance document: https://www.dtapublications.co.uk/handbook/
[15] Conservation objectives are published by Natural England for SACs and SPAs:
[16] In line with the CJEU judgment in Case C-323/17 People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta, mitigation must only be taken into consideration at this stage and not during Stage 1: HRA Screening.
[17] In addition to SAC and SPA citations and conservation objectives, key information sources for understanding factors contributing to the integrity of the sites include (where available) conservation objectives supplementary advice and Site Improvement Plans prepared by Natural England: http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/5458594975711232

Stage	Task	Outcome
	Evaluation of development plan impacts in view of conservation objectives of European sites. Where impacts are considered to directly or indirectly affect qualifying features of European sites, identify how these effects will be avoided or reduced ('mitigation').	mitigation, including the mechanisms and timescale for these mitigation measures. If effects remain after all alternatives and mitigation measures have been considered proceed to Stage 3.
Stage 3: Assessment where no alternatives exist and adverse impacts remain taking into account mitigation	Identify and demonstrate 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest' (IROPI). Demonstrate no alternatives exist. Identify potential compensatory measures.	This stage should be avoided if at all possible. The test of IROPI and the requirements for compensation are extremely onerous.

1.13 In assessing the effects of the Local Plan in accordance with Regulation 105 of the Habitats Regulations (as amended), there are potentially two tests to be applied by the competent authority: a 'Significance Test', followed, if necessary, by an Appropriate Assessment which will inform the 'Integrity Test'. The relevant sequence of questions is as follows:

- Step 1: Under Reg. 105(1)(b), consider whether the plan is directly connected with or necessary to the management of the sites. If not:
- Step 2: Under Reg. 105(1)(a) consider whether the plan is likely to have a significant effect on the site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects (the 'Significance Test'). [These two steps are undertaken as part of Stage 1: Screening shown in Table 1.1 above.] If so:
- Step 3: Under Reg. 105(1), make an Appropriate Assessment of the implications for the site in view of its current conservation objectives (the 'Integrity Test'). In so doing, it is mandatory under Reg. 105(2) to consult Natural England, and optional under Reg. 105(3) to take the opinion of the general public. [This step is undertaken during Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment shown in Table 1.1.]
- Step 4: In accordance with Reg.105(4), but subject to Reg.107, give effect to the land use plan only after having ascertained that the plan will not adversely affect the integrity of the European site.

1.14 It is normally anticipated that an emphasis on Stages 1 and 2 of this process will, through a series of iterations, help ensure that potential adverse effects are identified and eliminated through the avoidance of likely significant effects at Stage 1, and through Appropriate Assessment at Stage 2 by the inclusion of mitigation measures designed to avoid or reduce effects. The need to consider alternatives could imply more onerous changes to a plan document. It is generally understood that so called 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest' (IROPI) are likely to be justified only very occasionally and would involve engagement with the Government.

1.15 The HRA should be undertaken by the 'competent authority', in this case the Isle of Wight Council, and LUC has been commissioned to do this on its behalf. The HRA also requires close working with Natural England as the statutory nature conservation body in order to obtain the necessary information and agree the process, outcomes and any mitigation proposals.

Case law changes

1.16 This HRA has been prepared in accordance with relevant case law findings, including most notably the 'People over Wind' and 'Holohan' rulings from the Court of Justice for the European Union (CJEU).

1.17 The *People over Wind, Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta* (April 2018) judgment ruled that Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive should be interpreted as meaning that mitigation measures should be assessed as part of an Appropriate Assessment and should not be taken into account at the screening stage. The precise wording of the ruling is as follows:

> "Article 6(3) ……must be interpreted as meaning that, in order to determine whether it is necessary to carry out, subsequently, an appropriate assessment of the implications, for a site concerned, of a plan or project, it is not appropriate, at the screening stage, to take account of measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of the plan or project on that site."

1.18 In light of the above, the HRA screening stage does not rely upon avoidance or mitigation measures to draw conclusions as to whether the Local Plan could result in likely significant effects on European sites. Instead, any such measures are considered at the Appropriate Assessment stage as relevant.

1.19 The approach to this HRA is also consistent with the *Holohan v An Bord Pleanala* (November 2018) CJEU judgement which stated that:

> Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora must be interpreted as meaning that an 'appropriate assessment' must, on the one hand, catalogue the entirety of habitat types and species for which a site is protected, and, on the other, identify and examine both the implications of the proposed project for the species present on that site, and for which that site has not been listed, and the implications for habitat types and species to be found outside the boundaries of that site, provided that those implications are liable to affect the conservation objectives of the site.
>
> Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43 must be interpreted as meaning that the competent authority is permitted to grant to a plan or project consent which leaves the developer free to determine subsequently certain parameters relating to the construction phase, such as the location of the construction compound and haul routes, only if that authority is certain that the development consent granted establishes conditions that are strict enough to guarantee that those parameters will not adversely affect the integrity of the site.
>
> Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43 must be interpreted as meaning that, where the competent authority rejects the findings in a scientific expert opinion recommending that additional information be obtained, the 'appropriate assessment' must include an explicit and detailed statement of reasons capable of dispelling all reasonable scientific doubt concerning the effects of the work envisaged on the site concerned.

1.20 In undertaking this HRA, LUC consider the potential for effects on species and habitats, including those not listed as qualifying features, to result in secondary effects upon the qualifying features of European sites, including the potential for complex interactions and dependencies. In addition, the potential for offsite impacts, such as through impacts to functionally linked land, and/or species and habitats located beyond the boundaries of European site that may be important in supporting the ecological processes of the qualifying features, has also been fully considered in this HRA.

1.21 The approach to the HRA also takes into consideration the 'Wealden' judgement and the 'Dutch Nitrogen Case' judgements from the Court of Justice for the European Union.

1.22 Wealden District Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Lewes District Council and South Downs National Park Authority (2017) ruled that it was not appropriate to scope out the need for a detailed assessment for an individual plan or project based on the annual average daily traffic (AADT) figures detailed in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges or the critical loads used by Defra or Environmental Agency without considering the in-combination impacts with other plans and projects.

1.23 In light of this judgement, the HRA therefore considers traffic growth based on the effects of development from the Local Plan in combination with other drivers of growth such as development proposed in neighbouring districts and demographic change.

1.24 The 2018 'Coöperatie Mobilisation for the Environment and Vereniging Leefmilieu (Dutch Nitrogen)' judgement stated that:

> "...the positive effects of the autonomous decrease in the nitrogen deposition…be taken into account in the appropriate assessment…, it is important that the autonomous decrease in the nitrogen deposition be monitored and, if it transpires that the decrease is less favourable than had been assumed in the appropriate assessment, that adjustments, if required, be made."

1.25 The Dutch Nitrogen judgement also states that according to previous case law:

> "…it is only when it is sufficiently certain that a measure will make an effective contribution to avoiding harm to the integrity of the site concerned, by guaranteeing beyond all reasonable doubt that the plan or project at issue will not adversely affect the integrity of that site, that such a measure may be taken into consideration in the 'appropriate assessment' within the meaning of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive."

1.26 The HRA of the Island Planning Strategy therefore only considers the existence of conservation and/or preventative measures if the expected benefits of those measures are certain at the time of the assessment.

Structure of this report

1.27 This chapter (**Chapter 1**) described the background to the production of the Island Planning Strategy and the requirement to undertake HRA. The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2**: **Isle of Wight Island Planning Strategy** summarises the content of the draft Island Planning Strategy, which is the subject of this report
- **Chapter 3**: **Method** sets out the approach used, and the specific tasks undertaken during the screening and Appropriate Assessment stages of the HRA.
- **Chapter 4**: **Screening assessment** describes the findings of the screening stage of the HRA.
- **Chapter 5: Appropriate Assessment** describes the findings of the Appropriate Assessment stage of the HRA.
- **Chapter 6**: **Conclusions and next Steps** summarises the HRA conclusions for the draft Island Planning Strategy and describes the next steps to be undertaken.

Chapter 2
Isle of Wight Island Planning Strategy

Characteristics of the Island Planning Strategy relevant to the HRA

2.1 The Isle of Wight Council is producing a new plan, the Island planning Strategy, which, once adopted, will replace the Island Plan Core Strategy (2012) and form part of the development plan for the Isle of Wight. The Island Planning Strategy will contain strategic policies, allocations, area-based policies and development management policies.

2.2 The Island Planning Strategy will be a key document in the delivery of the council's Regeneration Strategy and Housing Strategy. The new planning strategy will help to identify development needs, and any areas within the Island which need improvement or protection from future development. The Island Planning Strategy will be vital in influencing the determination of planning applications and guiding of investment across the Island; and will replace the current Core Strategy in its entirety.

2.3 The Isle of Wight Council is in the process of revising its corporate priorities and objectives, together with an overall vision for the Island. To ensure consistency throughout the council's key plans and strategies, this corporate vision will be used across all Council documents, including the Island Planning Strategy. The revised corporate objectives will constitute strategic priorities for the purpose of the Island Planning Strategy. There are some objectives from the previous corporate plan that provide an indication of the likely new corporate priorities.

2.4 The plan sets out a number of strategic and development management-style policies and a number of site allocations. These are presented in themed chapters:

- Section 4: Environment
- Section 5: Community

- Section 6: Growth
- Section 7: Housing
- Section 8: Economy
- Section 9: Transport
- Section 10: Delivery, Monitoring and Review

2.5 The distribution of site allocations across the plan area is shown in **Figure 1** in **Appendix A** to this HRA report.

Chapter 3
Method

3.1 The HRA of the draft Island Planning Strategy consists of two stages:

- Screening Assessment.
- Appropriate Assessment.

3.2 The methodology undertaken for the HRA is set out in more detail below.

Screening Assessment

3.3 HRA Screening of the plan was undertaken in line with current available guidance and sought to meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations. The tasks that were undertaken during the screening stage of the HRA and the conclusions reached are described in detail below. This section of the HRA report sets out policies and impact types for which likely significant effects are predicted or cannot be ruled out prior to mitigation and avoidance measures.

3.4 The purpose of the screening stage is to:

- Identify all aspects of the plan which would have no effect on a European site, so that that they can be eliminated from further consideration in respect of this and other plans.
- Identify all aspects of the plan which would not be likely to have a significant effect on a European site (i.e. would have some effect, because of links/connectivity, but which are not significant), either alone or in combination with other aspects of the same plan or other plans or projects, which therefore do not require 'Appropriate Assessment'.
- Identify those aspects of the plan where it is not possible to rule out the risk of significant effects on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. This provides a clear scope for the parts of the plan that will require Appropriate Assessment.

Identifying European sites that may be affected and their conservation objectives

3.5 In order to initiate the search of European sites that could potentially be affected by a development, it is established practice in HRA to consider sites within the local planning authority area covered by the plan, and other sites that may be affected beyond this area.

3.6 A distance of 15km from the boundary of the plan area is typically used in the first instance to identify European sites with the potential to be affected by the proposals within a development plan. Consideration is then given to whether any more distant European sites may be connected to the plan area via effects pathways, for example through hydrological links or recreational visits by residents. The 15km distance has been agreed with Natural England for HRAs elsewhere and is considered precautionary. All European sites within 15km were assessed in this HRA. There were no European sites identified within 15km, which were scoped out of the assessment due to a lack of effects pathway. In addition, the River Itchen SAC located over 15km from the plan area was scoped into this HRA due to the Isle of Wights hydrological reliance on water sources that are abstracted from the River Itchen.

3.7 The assessment also takes into account areas that may be functionally linked to the European sites. The term 'functional linkage' is used to refer to the role or 'function' that land beyond the boundary of a European site might fulfil in terms of supporting the species populations for which the site was designated or classified. Such an area is therefore 'linked' to the site in question because it provides a (potentially important) role in maintaining or restoring a protected population at favourable conservation status.

3.8 While the boundary of a European site will usually be drawn to include key supporting habitat for a qualifying species, this cannot always be the case where the population for which a site is designated or classified is particularly mobile. Individuals of the population will not necessarily remain in the site all the time. Sometimes, the mobility of qualifying species is considerable and may extend so far from the key habitat that forms the SAC or SPA that it would be entirely impractical to attempt to designate or classify all of the land or sea that may conceivably be used by the species[18]. HRA therefore considers whether any European sites make use of functionally linked habitats, and the impacts that could affect those habitats.

3.9 European sites identified for inclusion in the HRA are listed below in **Table 3.1** and **Figure 1** in **Appendix A**. Detailed information about each European site is provided in **Appendix B**, described with reference to Standard Data Forms for the SPAs and SACs, and Natural England's Site Improvement Plans[19]. Natural England's conservation objectives[20] for the SPAs and SACs have also been reviewed. These state that site integrity must be maintained or restored by maintaining or restoring the habitats of qualifying features, the supporting processes on which they rely, and populations of qualifying species.

Table 3.1: European sites within 15km of the Isle of Wight

European Site	Closest Distance / Location from the Isle of Wight
SAC	
Briddlesford Copses	0km (within IoW)
Isle of Wight Downs	0km (within IoW)

[18] CHAPMAN, C. & TYLDESLEY, D. 2016. Functional linkage: How areas that are functionally linked to European sites have been considered when they may be affected by plans and projects - a review of authoritative decisions. Natural England Commissioned Reports, Number 207

[19] Obtained from the Natural England website (www.naturalengland.org.uk)

[20] Obtained from Natural England website http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6490068894089216

European Site	Closest Distance / Location from the Isle of Wight
Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons	0km (within IoW)
Solent Maritime	0km (adjacent) / North
South Wight Maritime	0km (adjacent) / South
New Forest	6.6km / North
Dorset Heaths	13.3km / North-west
River Avon	14.7km / North-west
River Itchen	19.3km / North
SPA	
Solent and Dorset Coast	1.3km / North
Solent & Southampton Water	5.8km / North
Portsmouth Harbour	6.6km / North
New Forest	9.9km / North-east
Chichester and Langstone Harbours	13.3km / North-west
Dorset Heathlands	14.8km / North-west
Avon Valley	14.7km / North-west
Ramsar	
Solent & Southampton Water	1.3km
Portsmouth Harbour	5.8km / North
New Forest	6.6km / North
Chichester and Langstone Harbours	9.9km / North-east
Avon Valley	14.7km / North-west

Assessment of 'likely significant effects' of the Island Planning Strategy

3.10 As required under Regulation 105 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017[21] (as amended), an assessment has been undertaken of the 'likely significant effects' of the plan. The assessment has been prepared in order to identify which policies or site allocations would be likely to have a significant effect on European sites. The screening assessment has been conducted without taking mitigation into account, in accordance with the 'People over Wind' judgment.

3.11 Consideration was given to the potential for the development proposed to result in significant effects associated with:

- Physical loss or damage to habitat.
- Non-physical disturbance (noise, vibration and light pollution).
- Air pollution.
- Recreational pressure.
- Changes to hydrology, including water quantity and quality.

[21] SI No. 2017/2012

3.12 This thematic/ impact category approach also allowed for consideration to be given to the cumulative effects of the site allocations rather than focussing exclusively on individual developments provided for by the plan.

3.13 A risk-based approach involving the application of the precautionary principle was adopted in the assessment, such that a conclusion of 'no significant effect' was only reached where it was considered unlikely, based on current knowledge and the information available, that a development plan policy or site allocation would have a significant effect on the integrity of a European site.

3.14 A screening matrix was prepared (**Appendix C**), to document consideration of the potential for likely significant effects resulting from each policy and site allocation in the plan.

3.15 For some types of impacts, the potential for likely significant effects was determined on a proximity basis. This approach and the assumptions applied are described in more detail in **Chapter 4**.

Interpretation of 'likely significant effects'

3.16 Relevant case law helps to interpret when effects should be considered as a likely significant effect, when carrying out HRA of a land use plan.

3.17 In the Waddenzee case[22], the European Court of Justice ruled on the interpretation of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive (translated into Reg. 102 in the Habitats Regulations), including that:

> An effect should be considered 'likely', "if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that it will have a significant effect on the site" (para 44). An effect should be considered 'significant', "if it undermines the conservation objectives" (para 48). Where a plan or project has an effect on a site "but is not likely to undermine its conservation objectives, it cannot be considered likely to have a significant effect on the site concerned" (para 47).

3.18 A relevant opinion delivered to the Court of Justice of the European Union commented that:

> "The requirement that an effect in question be 'significant' exists in order to lay down a de minimis threshold. Plans or projects that have no appreciable effect on the site are thereby excluded. If all plans or projects capable of having any effect whatsoever on the site were to be caught by Article 6(3), activities on or near the site would risk being impossible by reason of legislative overkill."

3.19 This opinion (the 'Sweetman' case) therefore allows for the authorisation of plans and projects whose possible effects, alone or in combination, can be considered 'trivial' or de minimis; referring to such cases as those *"that have no appreciable effect on the site"*. In practice such effects could be screened out as having no likely significant effect – they would be 'insignificant'.

3.20 The HRA screening assessment therefore considers whether the Local Plan policies could have likely significant effects either alone or in combination.

Mitigation provided by the plan

3.21 Some of the potential effects of the plan could be mitigated through the implementation of other policies in the plan itself, such as the provision of green infrastructure within new developments (which could help mitigate increased pressure from recreation activities at European sites). Nevertheless, in accordance with the 'People over Wind' judgment, avoidance and mitigation measures cannot be relied upon at the Screening Stage, and therefore, where such measures exist, they were considered at the Appropriate Assessment stage for impacts and policies where likely significant effects, either alone or in-combination, could not be ruled out.

Assessment of potential in-combination effects

3.22 Regulation 105 of the Habitats Regulations 2017 requires an Appropriate Assessment where "*a land use plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site (either alone or in combination*

[22] *ECJ Case C-127/02 "Waddenzee"* Jan 2004.

with other plans or projects) and is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site". Therefore, where likely insignificant effects are identified for the Local Plan alone, it is necessary to consider whether these may become significant effects in combination with other plans or projects.

3.23 The HRA Report identified which other plans and projects in addition to the Island Planning Strategy may affect the European sites that were the focus of this assessment. This included a review of relevant plans to identify those components of nearby plans that could have an impact on the European sites scoped in to this HRA, e.g. areas or towns where additional housing or employment development is proposed near to the European sites (as there could be effects from the transport, water use, infrastructure and recreation pressures associated with the new developments).

3.24 There are a large number of potentially relevant plans therefore the review focussed on planned spatial growth within authorities adjacent to the Isle of Wight as well as other authorities that are adjacent to the European sites included in this HRA. The findings of any associated HRA work for those plans have been reviewed where available.

3.25 **Appendix D** presents the review of other plans and projects, outlining the components of each plan that could have an impact on nearby European sites. Where likely significant in-combination effects could not be ruled out at the screening stage, the Appropriate Assessment gathered the information necessary to consider these, for example traffic data for air pollution, or housing provisions and major site allocations in neighbouring authorities for recreation pressure.

3.26 The HRA report identified that the following authorities' plans have the potential to contribute to in-combination effects with the Island Planning Strategy:

- Christchurch Borough Council and East Dorset District Council.
- Bournemouth Borough Council.
- New Forest District Council.
- Southampton City Council.
- Fareham Borough Council.
- Gosport Borough Council.
- Havant Borough Council.
- Portsmouth City Council.

3.27 In addition, major infrastructure projects were included in the in-combination review.

Appropriate Assessment

3.28 Following the screening stage, if likely significant effects on European sites are unable to be ruled out, the plan-making authority is required under Regulation 105 of the Habitats Regulations to make an 'Appropriate Assessment' of the implications of the plan for European sites, in view of their conservation objectives. Appropriate Assessment should consider the impacts of the plan (either alone or in combination with other projects or plans) on the integrity of European sites with respect to their conservation objectives and to their structure and function[23]. This includes consideration of plans and projects with the potential for in-combination effects, where relevant.

Assessing the effects on site integrity

3.29 A site's integrity depends on it being able to sustain its 'qualifying features' (i.e. the habitats and species for which it has been designated) and to ensure their continued viability. The Holohan judgement also clarifies that effects on species and habitats not listed as qualifying features, but which could result in secondary effects upon the qualifying features of European sites also need to be considered. The Appropriate Assessment therefore built upon the information set out in **Appendix B** of this report to consider the characteristics of supporting habitats and species that could be affected by impacts identified at the screening stage.

[23] Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting European sites.
Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission Environment DG, November 2001.

3.30 A high degree of integrity at a site is considered to exist where the potential to meet a site's conservation objectives is realised and where the site is capable of self-repair and renewal with a minimum of external management support.

3.31 A conclusion needs to be reached as to whether or not a plan would adversely affect the integrity of any European site. Assessing the effects on the site(s) integrity involves considering whether the predicted impacts of the plan policies and/or site allocations (either alone or in combination) have the potential to:

- Cause delays to the achievement of conservation objectives for the site.
- Interrupt progress towards the achievement of conservation objectives for the site.
- Disrupt those factors that help to maintain the favourable conditions of the site.
- Interfere with the balance, distribution and density of key species that are the indicators of the favourable condition of the site.
- Cause changes to the vital defining aspects (e.g. nutrient balance) that determine how the site functions as a habitat or ecosystem.
- Change the dynamics of relationships that define the structure or function of the site (e.g. relationships between soil and water, or animals and plants).
- Interfere with anticipated natural changes to the site.
- Reduce the extent of key habitats or the population of key species.
- Reduce the diversity of the site.
- Result in disturbance that could affect the population, density or balance between key species.
- Result in fragmentation.
- Result in the loss of key features.[24]

3.32 The conservation objectives for each SAC and SPA (as set out in **Appendix B**) are generally to maintain the qualifying features in favourable condition. Natural England does not define conservation objectives for Ramsar sites, but these can often be inferred from those for co-located SAC or SPA features. The Site Improvement Plans for each site provide a high-level overview of the issues (both current and predicted) affecting the condition of the designated features on the site(s) and outline the priority measures required to improve the condition of the features. An Appropriate Assessment draws on these to help to understand what is needed to maintain the integrity of the European sites.

3.33 For each European site where an uncertain or likely significant effect was identified in relation to the plan, the Appropriate Assessment sets out the potential impacts and makes a judgement (based on the information available) on whether the impact will have an adverse effect on the integrity of the European site. Consideration was given to the potential for mitigation measures to be implemented that could reduce the likelihood or severity of the potential impacts such that there would not be an adverse effect on the integrity of the European site.

[24] Ibid.

Chapter 4
Screening assessment

4.1 As described in the Method chapter, a screening assessment was carried out in order to identify the likely significant effects of the Island Planning Strategy on the scoped-in European sites. The full screening matrix, which sets out the decision-making process used for this assessment can be found in **Appendix C** and the findings are summarised below.

HRA Screening of policies

No 'likely significant effect' predicted

4.2 The following policies are not expected to result in development and therefore will not result in significant effects on European sites:

- EV1: Conserving and Enhancing our Historic Environment
- EV7: Local Green Spaces
- EV8: Protecting High Grade Agricultural Land
- EV9: Protecting our Landscapes and Seascapes
- EV10: Preserving Settlement Identity
- EV11: Isle of Wight AONB
- EV12: Dark Skies
- EV17: Facilitating Relocation from Coastal Change Management Areas
- EV18: Improving Resilience from Coastal Flooding and Coastal Risks
- EV19: Managing Ground Instability in New Development
- C1: High Quality Design for New Development
- C2: Improving our Public Realm
- C3: Improving Our Health and Wellbeing
- C5: Facilitating Independent Living
- C11: Lowering Carbon and Energy Consumption in New Development

- C12: Utility Infrastructure Requirements for New Development
- C13: Maintaining Key Utility Infrastructure
- C14: Providing Social and Community Infrastructure
- C14: Providing Social and Community Infrastructure
- C15: Community-led Planning
- G1: Our Approach Towards Sustainable Development and Growth
- G3: Developer Contributions
- G4: Managing Viability
- G5: Ensuring Planning Permissions are Delivered
- H2: Housing Development General Requirements
- H5: Delivering Affordable Housing
- H6: Housing in the countryside
- H7: Rural and First Homes Exception Sites
- H8: Ensuring the Right Mix of Housing
- H10: Self and Custom Build
- H11: Planning for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople provision
- E2: Sustainable Economic Development
- E3: Upskilling the Island
- E5: Maintaining Employment Sites with Water Access
- E6: Proofing Digital Infrastructure
- E8: Supporting the Evening Economy
- E9: Supporting High Quality Tourism
- T3: Cross-Solent Transport
- T4: Supporting Our Rail Network
- T6: Parking Provision in New Development

4.3 The following policies will not result in development and will contribute to ensuring the safeguarding of European sites:

- EV2: Ecological Assets and Opportunities for Enhancement
- EV3: Recreation Impact on the Solent European Sites
- EV3: Water Quality Impact on Solent European Sites (Nitrates)
- EV5: Woodland and Hedgerows
- EV6: Protecting and Providing Green and Open Spaces
- EV13: Managing our Water Resources
- EV14: Managing Flood Risk in New Development
- EV15: Monkton Mead Catchment Area
- EV16: Managing our Coast
- T1: A Better Connected Island
- T2: Supporting Sustainable Transport
- T5: Electric Vehicle Charging Points

Policies resulting in development or with potential pathways to European Sites where the scale and location of the impact is negligible, or the effect is insignificant.

4.4 The following policies could result in some development, but the development arising would be either located away from sensitive European sites within the urban area or would be small in scale so would not be expected to contribute significantly to increased vehicle traffic, recreation pressure or changes to water quantity and quality:

- C6: Providing Annex Accommodation
- C7: Delivering Locality Hubs
- C8: Facilitating a Blue Light Hub
- C9: Education Provision
- H4: Infill Opportunities outside Settlement Boundaries

Likely significant effects predicted

4.5 The following policies are highlighted as having potential impact pathways to European sites and likely significant effects cannot be ruled out:

- C4: Health Hub and St Mary's Hospital (land allocated on policies map)

- C10: Supporting Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Technologies
- E4: Supporting the Rural Economy
- E7: Supporting and Improving our Town Centres
- H1: Planning for Housing Delivery
- H2: Sites Allocated for Housing
- KPS1: Key Priority Site 1: HA39 Camp Hill
- KPS2: Key Priority Site 2: HA44 Newport Harbour
- E1: Supporting and Growing our Economy
- E10: The Bay Tourism Opportunity Area
- E11: Ryde Tourism Opportunity Zones
- G2: Priority Locations for Development and Growth
- H9: New Housing on Previously Developed Land
- EA1: Employment Allocation Land to the east of Pan Lane
- EA2: Employment allocation at Nicholson Road, Ryde
- EA3: Employment allocation at Somerton Farm, Cowes
- EA4: Employment allocation at Kingston, East Cowes
- EA5: Employment allocation at Lowtherville, Ventnor
- EA6: Employment allocation at Sandown Airport, Sandown

HRA Screening of Impacts

4.6 For some types of impacts, screening for likely significant effects was determined on a proximity basis, using GIS data to determine the distance of potential development locations to the European sites that were the subject of the assessment. However, there are many uncertainties associated with using set distances as there are very few standards available as a guide to how far impacts will travel. Therefore, during the screening stage a number of assumptions were applied in relation to assessing the likely significant effects on European sites that may result from the plan, as described below.

Physical Damage and Loss (onsite)

4.7 Any development resulting from the plan would take place within the boundary of Isle of Wight; therefore, only European sites within the boundary could be affected by physical damage or loss of habitat within the site boundaries. The HRA identified the following European sites within the boundary of the Isle of Wight:

- Briddlesford Copses SAC.
- Isle of Wight Downs SAC.
- Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoon SAC.
- Solent Maritime SAC.
- South Wight Maritime SAC.
- Solent & Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar.
- Solent and Dorset Coast SPA.

4.8 No development is proposed by the Island Planning Strategy within the boundaries of these European sites and therefore no likely significant effect is predicted as a result of direct physical damage and loss, either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects.

Physical Damage and Loss – Functionally Linked Land (Offsite)

4.9 Habitat loss from development in areas outside of the European site boundaries may result in likely significant effects where that habitat contributes towards maintaining the interest feature for which the European site is designated. This includes land which may provide offsite movement corridors or feeding and sheltering habitat for mobile species such as bats, birds and fish. European sites susceptible to the indirect effects of habitat loss are restricted to those sites with qualifying species that rely on offsite habitat. These were identified as:

- Briddlesford Copses SAC.
- Solent & Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site.

- Solent and Dorset Coast SPA.

4.10 Natural England has advised that their recognised distance for the consideration of offsite functionally linked land in relation to birds is generally 2km, but for certain species, including most notably, golden plover and lapwing, a greater distance of 15km may be appropriate. This buffer has been considered for each of the Europeans sites above, which are designated for supporting qualifying bird species.

4.11 All other European sites were screened out of the assessment as they do not support qualifying features that are reliant on offsite functionally linked habitat on the Island and/or were not functionally connected to the Isle of Wight due to the separation and distance of designated sites on the mainland by the Solent.

Briddlesford Copses SAC

4.12 Briddlesford Copses SAC is designated for supporting an important breeding population of Bechstein's bats. This is a mobile species, which relies on woodland habitat within the SAC and functionally linked woodland habitat in the wider area, which provides important foraging habitat for this species. This species is primarily associated with woodland, particularly ancient woodland habitat.

4.13 Following a review of data sources, it was identified that this species travels within a Core Sustenance Zone (CSZ) of 3km[25]. This CSZ was determined by an extensive literature review and refers to the area surrounding a bat roost for Bechstein's bats within which habitat availability and quality will have a significant influence on the resilience and conservation of the bat colony using the roost.

4.14 Three housing allocation were located within 3km of the SAC: HA051, HA053 and HA055. Further assessment was required at the Appropriate Assessment stage to determine the potential impacts of these site allocations in relation to offsite functional habitat damage and loss and whether mitigation measures were required.

4.15 There is potential for likely significant effects to occur at Briddlesford Copses in relation to off-site functional habitat loss and therefore this effect is considered further at the Appropriate Assessment stage.

Solent and Southampton SPA and Ramsar site

4.16 Solent and Southampton SPA and Ramsar site is located along the coastline adjacent to the Isle of Wight in the north and is designated for a range of qualifying bird species (excluding golden plover and lapwing), which rely on offsite functional habitat. Based on Natural England's recognised distances, a 2km buffer was applied to identify site allocations with potential to affect the SPA and Ramsar.

4.17 A review of proposed development within the plan identified 30 housing allocations and four employment allocations with 2km of the SPA and Ramsar. Of these allocations, a total of four housing allocations have already been granted planning permission for development and as such have been screened out of this assessment. Detail of site allocations identified are provided in **Appendix E**.

4.18 There is potential for likely significant effects to occur in relation to off-site functional habitat loss and therefore this effect is considered further at the Appropriate Assessment stage.

Solent and Dorset Coast SPA

4.19 Solent and Dorset Coast SPA is located along the coastline bordering the Isle of Wight in the north, east and west. This SPA is designated for three qualifying bird species: little, sandwich and common tern. These species typically rely on suitable beach habitat along coastline for breeding and depend on sea habitat for foraging. They are rarely recorded inland. However, in line with a precautionary approach and based on Natural England's recognised distances, a 2km buffer was applied to identify site allocations with potential to affect the SPA and Ramsar.

[25] Collins, J. (2016). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

4.20 A review of proposed development within the plan identified 35 housing allocations and five employment allocations within 2km of the SPA and Ramsar site. Of these allocations, a total of six housing allocations have already been granted planning permission for development and as such have been screened out of this assessment. Detail of site allocations identified are provided in **Appendix E**.

4.21 There is potential for likely significant effects to occur in relation to off-site functional habitat loss and therefore this effect is considered further at the Appropriate Assessment stage.

Non-physical disturbance

4.22 Noise and vibration effects, e.g. during the construction of new housing or employment development, are most likely to disturb bird species and are thus a key consideration with respect to European sites where these species are the qualifying features. Artificial lighting at night (e.g. from streetlamps, flood lighting and security lights) has the potential to affect species where it occurs in close proximity to key habitat areas, such as movement or foraging of SAC bats and key roosting sites for SPA birds.

4.23 It has been assumed that the effects of noise, vibration and light are most likely to be significant within a distance of 500 metres. There is also evidence of 300 metres being used as a distance up to which certain bird species can be disturbed by the effects of noise; however, it has been assumed (on a precautionary basis) that the effects of noise, vibration and light pollution are capable of causing an adverse effect if development takes place within 500 metres of a European site with qualifying features sensitive to these disturbances. European sites susceptible to non-physical disturbance from proposed development were identified as:

- Briddlesford Copses SAC.
- Solent & Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site.
- Solent and Dorset Coast SPA.

4.24 All other European sites are located over 500m from the Isle of Wight boundary at the closest point and/or do not support mobile species likely to be significantly affected as a result of non-physical disturbance.

Briddlesford Copses SAC

4.25 Briddlesford Copses SAC lies within the Isle of Wight and supports Bechstein's bats, which are susceptible to impacts from non-physical disturbance, particularly in relation to lighting which can cause a barrier to the dispersal of this species from their roosts to important foraging habitats.

4.26 A review of site allocations identified no proposed allocations within 500m of the SAC and therefore no likely significant effects were predicted within the SAC itself as a result of non-physical disturbance.

4.27 However, there is potential for non-physical disturbance to occur in relation to offsite functional habitat that the qualifying Bechstein's bat species relies on to disperse and forage. As detailed in the section above on physical damage and loss, a buffer of 3km was applied in this assessment.

4.28 A review of site allocations identified three housing allocations within 3km of the SAC: HA051, HA053 and HA055. Further assessment was required at the Appropriate Assessment stage to determine the potential impacts of these site allocations in relation to non-physical damage and loss to offsite functional habitat and whether mitigation measures are required.

4.29 There is potential for likely significant effects to occur in relation to non-physical disturbance for offsite functional habitat and therefore this effect is considered further at the Appropriate Assessment stage.

Solent & Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site

4.30 The SPA and Ramsar site designations support a range of qualifying bird species that are susceptible to impacts from non-physical disturbance, such as disturbance from noise, vibration and increased lighting.

4.31 A review of site allocations identified the following housing and employment allocations within 500m of the SPA and Ramsar site: HA008, HA019, (SPA only), HA032 (Ramsar only), HA037, HA044, HA060, HA064, HA065, HA112, HA113

(SPA only) and EA4: Employment allocation at Kingston, East Cowes.

4.32 In addition, there is potential for impacts to occur in relation to offsite functionally linked land, which is regularly used by qualifying bird species for foraging and roosting. As detailed above under 'Physical Damage and Loss', in accordance with advice provided by Natural England a 2km buffer has been applied in this assessment. This identified 30 housing allocations and four employment allocations within this buffer that have potential to result in impacts from non-physical disturbance to habitats supporting overwintering bird species within or adjacent to these site allocations. Of these allocations, a total of four housing allocations have already been granted planning permission for development and as such have been screened out of this assessment.

4.33 There is potential for likely significant effects to occur in relation to non-physical disturbance and therefore this effect is considered further at the Appropriate Assessment stage.

Solent and Dorset Coast SPA

4.34 The SPA supports qualifying bird species that are susceptible to impacts from non-physical disturbance, such as disturbance from noise, vibration and increased lighting.

4.35 A review of site allocations identified the following housing and employment allocations within 500m of the SPA and Ramsar site: HA002, HA003, HA006, HA079, HA081 and HA114.

4.36 The qualifying bird species of the SPA are reliant on habitat along the coastline, such as shingle beaches, for breeding and depend on the sea habitat for foraging. These species are rarely recorded inland and if they are, they will be located in areas with gravelly shores along lakes and rivers. In line with a precautionary approach, more detailed assessment will be undertaken at the Appropriate Assessment stage to determine potential impacts and requirements for avoidance and mitigation measures.

4.37 There is potential for likely significant effects to occur in relation to non-physical disturbance and therefore this effect is considered further at Appropriate Assessment stage.

Air Pollution

4.38 Air pollution is most likely to affect European sites where plant, soil and water habitats are the qualifying features but some qualifying animal species may also be affected, either directly or indirectly, by deterioration in habitat as a result of air pollution. Deposition of pollutants to the ground and vegetation can alter the characteristics of the soil, affecting the pH and nitrogen levels, which can then affect plant health, productivity and species composition.

4.39 In terms of vehicle traffic, nitrogen oxides (NOx, i.e. NO and NO2) are considered to be the key pollutants. Deposition of nitrogen compounds may lead to both soil and freshwater acidification, and NOx can cause eutrophication of soils and water.

4.40 Based on the Highways England Design Manual for Road and Bridges (DMRB) LA 105 Air quality (which sets out the requirements for assessing and reporting the effects of highway projects on air quality), it is assumed that air pollution from roads is unlikely to be significant beyond 200m from the road itself. Where increases in traffic volumes are forecast, this 200m buffer needs to be applied to the relevant roads in order to make a judgement about the likely geographical extent of air pollution impacts.

4.41 For highways developments within 200m of sensitive receptors, the DMRB provides the following screening criteria to ascertain whether there are likely to be significant impacts:

- Daily traffic flows will change by 1,000 AADT (Annual Average Daily Traffic) or more; or
- Heavy duty vehicle (HDV) flows will change by 200 AADT or more; or
- There will be a change in speed band[26]; or

[26] A range of categories for which outputs from the traffic model are grouped into to describe their emissions.

- Road carriageway alignment will change by 5m or more.

4.42 This, where significant increases in traffic are possible on roads within 200m of European sites, traffic forecast data may be needed to determine if increases in vehicle traffic are likely to be significant. In line with the Wealden judgment[27], the traffic growth considered by the HRA should be based on the effects of development provided for by the plan in combination with other drivers of growth such as development proposed in neighbouring districts and demographic change.

4.43 The key commuting corridors for new housing and employment development will likely include A3020, A3021, A3054, A3055 and A3056, which are shown in **Figure 2** in **Appendix A**. The following European sites within or adjacent to the Isle of Wight were identified within 200m of one of these strategic roads:

- Isle of Wight Downs SAC (A3055).
- Solent Maritime SAC (A3054)
- South Wight Maritime SAC (A3020, A3021, A3055).
- Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar (A3054, A3055).
- Solent and Dorset Coast SPA (A3020, A3021, A3054, A3055)

4.44 An Air Quality Assessment (AQA)[28] was undertaken by Ricardo Energy and Environment in 2019 to consider the impacts of increased vehicle emissions as a result of proposed development in the previous iteration of the draft Island Planning Strategy. That version of the plan considered a higher level of growth than the one that is currently proposed. Specifically, the AQA considered the impacts of increased air pollutants in relation to European sites within or near to the Isle of Wight. The findings of the assessment identified that likely significant effects from air quality can be ruled out in relation to Isle of Wight Downs SAC, Solent Maritime SAC, Solent Wight Maritime SAC, Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC, Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar and SPA, and Solent & Dorset Coast SPA.

4.45 However, likely significant effects could not be ruled out in relation to Briddlesford Copses SAC, which is intersected by the Combley Road. The AQA identified areas that were *'predicted to exceed the screening thresholds'* that corresponded *'to thin bands of deciduous woodland on either side of Combley Road and extend up to 6m into the designated site'*. Due to the small extent of the area that exceeds the threshold, it is considered unlikely for impacts from air pollution to occur. However, in line with a precautionary approach this will be considered in more detail at the Appropriate Assessment.

4.46 An updated version of this AQA is in the process of being prepared to consider the lower levels of growth proposed as part of the plan. This will be considered as part of the next iteration of the HRA, to inform the Proposed Submission version of the plan. In addition, given the reliance of Bechstein's bats on ancient woodland habitat, the updated AQA will take into consideration the impacts of air pollution on offsite functionally linked land within 3km of Briddlesford Copses SAC. All other European sites were located further than 200m from the strategic road network for the Isle of Wight and therefore were screened out of the assessment.

4.47 There is potential for likely significant effects to occur in relation to air pollution and therefore this effect is considered further at the Appropriate Assessment stage.

Recreation

4.48 Recreational activities and human presence can result in significant effects on European sites. European sites with qualifying bird species are likely to be particularly susceptible to recreational disturbances from walking, dog walking, angling, illegal use of off-road vehicles and motorbikes, wildfowling, and water sports. An increase in recreational pressure from development therefore has the potential to disturb bird populations of SPA and Ramsar sites as a result of both terrestrial and water-based recreation. In addition, recreation can

[27] Wealden v SSCLG [2017] EWHC 351 (Admin)

[28] Ricardo Energy and Environment, (2019), Isle of Wight Local Plan: Air Quality Impact Assessment.

physically damage habitat as a result of trampling, fire or vandalism and also through erosion associated with boat wash and terrestrial activities such as use of vehicles.

4.49 The plan will result in housing growth, and associated population increase on the Island. Where increases in population are likely to result in significant increases in recreation at a European site, either alone or in-combination, the potential for likely significant effects will require assessment.

4.50 Each European site will typically have a 'Zone of Influence' (ZOI) within which increases in population would be expected to result in likely significant effects. ZOIs are usually established following targeted visitor surveys and the findings are therefore typically specific to each European site (and often to specific areas within a European site). The findings are likely to be influenced by a number of complex and interacting factors and therefore it is not always appropriate to apply a generic or non-specific ZOI to a European Site.

4.51 A specific ZOI of 5.6km has been defined as part of targeted visitor surveys, which identified 75% of visitors to travel within this distance to the Solent and Southampton SPA and Ramsar, Portsmouth Harbour SPA and Ramsar and Chichester & Langstone Harbours SPA and Ramsar. This ZOI is in place to inform requirements for mitigation measures as part of the Bird Aware Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy[29] and has been applied in this assessment. Given the distance of Portsmouth Harbour SPA and Ramsar and Chichester & Langstone Harbours SPA and Ramsar from the Island and the barrier to movement created by the Solent, no likely significant effects is predicted in relation to these European sites.

4.52 No ZOI have previously been defined in relation to Solent Maritime SAC and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA. Given the overlap of these designated sites with the Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar sites and the similar habitats types and qualifying features present, the same ZOI of 5.6km has been applied in this assessment. Due to the marine nature of the qualifying habitats of the South Wight Maritime SAC and the types of activities likely to be undertaken, a ZOI has not been defined for this European site.

4.53 No ZOI has previously been defined in relation to the Isle of Wight Downs SAC. Therefore, in line with a precautionary approach a non-specific ZOI of 7km has been applied in this assessment. This is broadly in line with similar visitor study based ZOIs in the south of the UK, including for Thames Basin Heaths and Epping Forest.

4.54 Whilst, Briddlesford Copses SAC supports qualifying Bechstein's bats, which were not considered susceptible to impacts from recreation and as such no likely significant effects is predicted in relation to this European site.

4.55 In addition, given the nature of the Solent Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC designated for its lagoon habitat near Bembridge, which is inaccessible to the public, no likely significant effects is predicted in relation to this European site. Access is restricted to a single permissive footpath in the north and designated trails that are located away from the lagoon in the wider area.

4.56 All remaining European sites are located on the mainland and as such are separated from the Island by the Solent. Given the distance and lack of easy access to these designated sites, no likely significant effects are predicted in relation to these European sites.

Isle of Wight Downs SAC

4.57 Isle of Wight Downs SAC is designated for supporting calcareous grassland, heathland and vegetated sea cliffs to the south and west of the Island. The calcareous grassland and heathland habitat are likely to be particularly susceptible to impacts from recreational activities, such as walking and dog walking, which can result in physical disturbance through trampling, erosion and nutrient enrichment, which can alter the soil chemistry and alter the prevalence of competitive species. In comparison, impacts to the vegetated cliffs from recreational activities are likely to be limited as the steep cliff habitat cannot be accessed and disturbed from recreational activities.

[29] Bird Aware Solent, (2017), Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy

4.58 There is no specific survey data available that can be drawn on to inform a ZOI for this SAC. Therefore, in line with a precautionary approach, a ZOI of 7km has been applied as detailed above.

4.59 A review of site allocations identified six allocations in the West Wight Regeneration Area and seven allocations in the Bay Regeneration Area, which comprised a total of 566 new dwellings within 7km of the SAC. Given the increase in recreational pressure within the ZOI of the SAC, this has potential to result in likely significant effects on the SAC as a result of proposed development within the plan. This will require appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures to ensure no adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC.

4.60 There is potential for likely significant effects to occur in relation to impacts from recreation and therefore this effect is considered further at the Appropriate Assessment stage.

Solent Maritime SAC

4.61 The SAC is designated for supporting a range of coastal and estuarine habitats, including estuary, Spartina swards and Atlantic salt meadows. These habitats are susceptible to terrestrial and water-based activities, which can result in physical damage and loss of habitat through trampling and erosion, increased nutrient enrichment from dogs can alter the soul chemistry and alter the prevalence of competitive plant species. Impacts from recreation are considered to be limited, given the nature of the qualifying habitats, given their inaccessible nature. The presence of permissive footpaths and well-structured public access is likely to direct people away from sensitive habitat types within the SAC, such as Atlantic salt meadows.

4.62 At present, there is no ZOI defined in relation to this SAC. As detailed above, given the overlap of these habitats with the Solent and Southampton Water SPA, a ZOI of 5.6km has been applied for this European site. A review of housing allocations identified six allocations in the West Wight Regeneration Area, six in the West Medina Regeneration Area, 11 in the Newport Regeneration Area, four in the East Medina Regeneration Area and three in the Ryde Regeneration Area. This comprised of 4,019 new dwellings within 5.6km of the SAC. This is a significant number of housing units and as such has the potential to result in increased recreational pressure on the European site as a result of proposed development within the plan and will require appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures to ensure no adverse effect on the integrity of the European site.

4.63 There is potential for likely significant effects to occur in relation to impacts from recreation and therefore this effect is considered further at the Appropriate Assessment stage.

South Wight Maritime SAC

4.64 The SAC supports designated habitats, including vegetated cliffs, submerged or partially submerged sea caves and reefs. Impacts from recreation are limited due to restricted access to these habitats, which are either located on the steep sides of cliffs or in the water. Impacts are therefore considered to be limited to water-based recreational activities that could result in physical damage and disturbance.

Given the specialist nature of these activities, which is likely to attract visitors from greater distances, it is expected that recreation pressure from increased development on the Island itself it likely to be relatively minor. However, in line with a precautionary approach it is recommended that the potential impacts of recreational activities is considered in more detail and that avoidance and mitigation measures are implemented to ensure that increased recreational pressure from the plan in-combination with visitors from the wider area do not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC.

4.65 There is potential for likely significant effects to occur in relation to impacts from recreation and this effect therefore requires further consideration at the Appropriate Assessment stage.

Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar

4.66 The SPA and Ramsar are designated for supporting qualifying overwintering wetland bird

species. These species are particularly susceptible to terrestrial and water-based activities, which can result in physical damage and loss of habitat through trampling and erosion, increased nutrient enrichment from dogs can alter the soul chemistry and alter the prevalence of competitive plant species and disturbance of bird species affecting the foraging and roosting patterns of these species.

4.67 As detailed above, specific visitor surveys have been completed for this European site to inform the Bird Aware Solent Mitigation Strategy. These surveys identified a ZOI of 5.6km, which has been applied in this assessment. A review of site allocations identified that all proposed housing allocations (with the exception of HA084 and HA096) lie within 5.6km of the European site. This comprises of 4,862 new dwellings within 5.6km of the SPA and Ramsar. This is a significant number of housing units and as such has the potential to result in increased recreational pressure on the European sites as a result of proposed development within the plan and will require appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures to ensure no adverse effect on the integrity of the European sites.

4.68 There is potential for likely significant effects to occur in relation to impacts from recreation and therefore this effect is considered further at the Appropriate Assessment stage.

Solent and Dorset Coast SPA

4.69 This SPA is designated for supporting qualifying breeding wetland bird species. These species are particularly susceptible to terrestrial and water-based activities, which can result in physical damage and loss of habitat through trampling and erosion, increased nutrient enrichment from dogs can alter the soul chemistry and alter the prevalence of competitive plant species and disturbance of bird species affecting the foraging and roosting patterns of these species.

4.70 As detailed above, given the overlap of this SPA with the Solent SPA and Ramsar site and the qualifying features present, the same ZOI of 5.6km has been applied in this assessment. A review of site allocations identified that all proposed housing allocations (with the exception of HA096) lie within 5.6km of the European site. This comprises of 4,912 new dwellings within 5.6km of the SPA and Ramsar. This is a significant number of housing units and as such has the potential to result in increased recreational pressure on the European sites as a result of proposed development within the plan and will require appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures to ensure no adverse effect on the integrity of the European sites.

4.71 There is potential for likely significant effects to occur in relation to impacts from recreation and this effect therefore requires further consideration at the Appropriate Assessment stage.

Water quantity

4.72 An increase in demand for water abstraction resulting from the growth proposed in the plan could result in changes in hydrology at European sites. Depending on the qualifying features and particular vulnerabilities of the European sites, this could result in likely significant effects, for example, due to changes in environmental or biotic conditions, water chemistry and the extent and distribution of preferred habitat conditions.

4.73 The Isle of Wight supports a small Water Resource Zone (WRZ) and is reliant on water being supplied from a range of water sources, including from the River Yar and River Medina (23%), from groundwater sources from the chalk aquifer on the Island (47%) and from water supplied from the mainland from the Hampshire South WRZ, which is directed via a sub-Solent water main (30%).

4.74 Water abstracted from the River Medina and River Yar have potential to impact qualifying features of the marine European sites, which are affected by changes in flow rates and water levels. This comprises Solent Maritime SAC, South Wight Maritime SAC, Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons, Solent & Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA.

4.75 A third of the water supply for the Island is supplied from the mainland. This is partially comprised of water from the South East River Basin, which includes the River Itchen SAC. As such an increased in demand for water as a result

of proposed growth has the potential to result in a likely significant effects in relation to water quantity to the River Itchen SAC.

4.76 All remaining European sites were either not considered to be hydrologically connected to the Island and/or did not support qualifying features that were susceptible to impacts from water quantity.

4.77 There is potential for likely significant effects to occur in relation to impacts from water quantity and this effect therefore requires further consideration at the Appropriate Assessment stage.

Water quality

4.78 The Solent region is an internationally important site and there is evidence to show that the European sites in this region are currently subject to high levels of nitrogen and phosphorous input to its water environment, which are causing eutrophication of the designated sites in this area. A key contributor to these high levels of nutrients is wastewater from existing housing and other development, as well as agricultural sources. Therefore, any increase in demand for wastewater treatment from proposed growth in the plan is likely to result in a significant effect on the European sites.

4.79 Following discussions with Natural England, it has advised that the:

"nutrient neutrality approach only applies to developments where treated effluent discharges into any Solent International Sites (Solent Maritime SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar, Portsmouth Harbour SPA and Ramsar, Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA and Ramsar), or any water body (surface or groundwater) that subsequently discharges into such a site.

Sandown Waste Water Treatment Works (WwTW) outfalls into the English Channel and is therefore excluded on that basis and developments that will connect to Sandown WwTW do not have to demonstrate nutrient neutrality."

4.80 Therefore, any development proposed that will discharge into wastewater treatment works (WwTW) outside of the Sandown WwTW will need to demonstrate no additional adverse effects to these European sites by achieving nutrient neutrality. This should be calculated using the Natural England methodology[30] and will require appropriate mitigation measures to achieve this.

4.81 Based in the information provided above, the following Europeans sites have potential to be affected by impacts from water quality and will therefore need to be considered further at the Appropriate Assessment. This includes:

- Solent Maritime SAC.
- Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC.
- Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site.
- Solent and Dorset Coast SPA.
- Portsmouth Harbour SPA and Ramsar site.
- Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA and Ramsar site.

4.82 Given the location of South Wight Maritime SAC, which lies to the south of the Island in the English Channel, no likely significant effects were predicted in relation to water quality.

4.83 All remaining European sites were either not considered to be hydrologically connected to the Island and/or did not support qualifying features, which were susceptible to impacts from water quantity and quality.

4.84 There is potential for likely significant effects to occur in relation to impacts from water quality and this effect therefore requires further consideration at the Appropriate Assessment stage.

Summary of Screening Assessment

Table 4.1 below summarises the Screening conclusions reached in this HRA. Impact types for which a conclusion of No likely significant effect was reached are shown with no colour. Those potential impacts where likely significant effects

[30] Natural England, (2020), Advice on Achieving Nutrient Neutrality for New Development in the Solent Region.

could not be ruled out are shown in orange and these are considered in more detail at the Appropriate Assessment stage in **Section 5**.

Table 4.1: Summary of Screening Assessment

European Site	Physical damage and/loss	Non-physical disturbance	Air Pollution	Recreation	Water Quantity	Water Quality
Briddlesford Copses SAC	Potential likely significant effects (offsite)	Potential likely significant effects (offsite only)	Potential likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects
Isle of Wight Downs SAC	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	Potential likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects
Solent Maritime SAC	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	Potential likely significant effects	Potential likely significant effects	Potential likely significant effects
South Wight Maritime SAC	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	Potential likely significant effects	Potential likely significant effects	No likely significant effects
Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	Potential likely significant effects	Potential likely significant effects
Solent & Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site	Potential likely significant effects (offsite)	Potential likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	Potential likely significant effects	Potential likely significant effects	Potential likely significant effects
Solent and Dorset Coast SPA	Potential likely significant effects (offsite)	Potential likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	Potential likely significant effects	Potential likely significant effects	Potential likely significant effects
New Forest SAC	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects

European Site	Physical damage and/loss	Non-physical disturbance	Air Pollution	Recreation	Water Quantity	Water Quality
New Forest SPA and Ramsar	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects
Portsmouth Harbour SPA and Ramsar site	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	Potential likely significant effects
Dorset Heaths SAC	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects
Dorset Heathlands SPA	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects
River Avon SAC	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects
Avon Valley SPA and Ramsar site	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects
Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA and Ramsar site	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	Potential likely significant effects
River Itchen SAC	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	Potential likely significant effects	No likely significant effects

Chapter 5
Appropriate Assessment

5.1 Following the screening stage, the plan-making authority is required under Regulation 105 of the Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended) to make an 'Appropriate Assessment' of the implications of the plan for European sites, in view of their conservation objectives.

5.2 European Commission Guidance[31] states that the Appropriate Assessment should consider the impacts of the plan (either alone or in combination with other projects or plans) on the integrity of European sites with respect to their conservation objectives and to their structure and function.

5.3 This stage seeks to determine whether implementation of the Local Plan will result in an adverse effect on the integrity of the whole European site in question (many European sites are made up of a number of fragments of habitat). It also considers the potential for in-combination effects from development proposed in neighbouring authorities' Local Plans or from major infrastructure projects. Consideration was given to mitigation measures that may be included in the Local Plan to reduce the likelihood and significance of effects on European sites.

5.4 A European site's integrity depends on it being able to sustain its 'qualifying features' (i.e. those Annex 1 habitats, Annex II species, and Annex 1 bird populations for which it has been designated) and to ensure their continued viability. A high degree of integrity is considered to exist where the potential to meet a European site's conservation objectives is realised and where the European site is capable of self-repair and renewal with a minimum of external management support.

5.5 Likely significant effects arising from the plan, either alone or in-combination, were identified for the following sites and impact types:

[31] Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting European sites. Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission Environment DG, November 2001.

- **Physical damage and loss (offsite only)** – in relation to Briddlesford Copses SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site, and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA.
- **Non-physical disturbance** – in relation to Briddlesford Copses SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site, and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA.
- **Air pollution** – in relation to Briddlesford Copses SAC.
- **Recreation** – in relation to Isle of Wight Downs SAC, Solent Maritime SAC, South Wight Maritime SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site, and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA.
- **Water Quantity** – in relation to Solent Maritime SAC, South Wight Maritime SAC, Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site, Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, and River Itchen SAC.
- **Water Quality** – in relation to Solent Maritime SAC, Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site, Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, Portsmouth Harbour SPA and Ramsar site, and Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA and Ramsar site.

5.6 Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken for these European sites to determine whether the plan will result in Adverse Effects on Integrity.

5.7 The Appropriate Assessment focuses on those impacts that are judged likely to have a significant effect on the qualifying features of a European site, or where insufficient certainty regarding this remained at the screening stage. As described in **Chapter 1**, a conclusion needs to be reached as to whether or not a policy or site allocation in the plan would adversely affect the integrity of a European site. To reach a conclusion, consideration was given to whether the predicted impacts of the proposals (either alone or in combination) have the potential to:

- Delay the achievement of conservation objectives for the site.
- Interrupt progress towards the achievement of conservation objectives for the site.
- Disrupt factors that help to maintain the favourable conditions of the site.
- Interfere with the balance, distribution and density of key species that are the indicators of the favourable condition of the site.

5.8 The conservation objectives for the above European sites are to ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and to ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring:

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats.
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats.
- The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species.
- The populations of qualifying species.
- The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

Physical damage and loss - functionally linked land (offsite)

Briddlesford Copses SAC

5.9 The plan proposes development in areas where qualifying SAC bat species may make use of offsite habitat for foraging, commuting and roosting. Proposed allocations with potential to result in a likely significant effect as a result of physical damage and loss were identified in the screening assessment and comprised HA051, HA053 and HA055.

5.10 A desk-based review was undertaken to identify the potential impacts from these proposed allocations on offsite habitat used by Bechstein's bats. This included the following components to inform the assessment:

- A review of aerial imagery and Magic Map Application to identify the main habitat types and land use within each site allocation and

establish their potential value for this qualifying bat species.

- Recognition of factors likely to affect suitability of allocations for this species, including presence of suitable woodland habitat, particularly ancient woodland, which this species relies on.
- Consideration of the site's location within the landscape. For example, whether there is direct functional connectivity between the site allocation and the European site.

Bat Habitat Preferences

5.11 Bechstein's bats are found almost exclusively in woodland habitat. This species is particularly reliant on ancient woodland habitat for roosting and foraging and as such is particularly vulnerable to impacts from habitat loss and fragmentation.

5.12 As detailed in the Screening Assessment, this species was identified to travel within a Core Sustenance Zone (CSZ) of 3km[32]. This CSZ was determined by an extensive literature review and refers to the area surrounding a bat roost for Bechstein's bats within which habitat availability and quality will have a significant influence on the resilience and conservation of the bat colony using the roost.

5.13 A total of three site allocations were identified within 3km of the SAC and as such have been subject to further, more detailed assessment to determine the suitability of these sites for this qualifying species. The findings of this assessment are presented below.

- **HA051:**
  - This site allocation is located to the west of Wooton, at the edge of the existing urban development. The site is comprised of habitats, including arable, grassland, bare ground and buildings, which were considered to have negligible value for this species.
  - However, the site is located immediately adjacent to a pocket of ancient woodland known as Lushington Copse, which is considered likely to contribute to the network of offsite functional habitat for this qualifying species. Given the proximity of the proposed site allocation in relation to this woodland habitat, there is potential for impacts from tree loss within the woodland to occur from root damage as part of any proposed development within 15m of the ancient woodland habitat.
- **HA053:**
  - This site allocation is comprised of a mixture of plantation woodland/scrub, arable fields and pasture. The habitats within the site are of low value for this species. However, given its connectivity to suitable ancient woodland habitat in the wider area, there is potential for this habitat to be used by this species for foraging purposes.
- **HA055:**
  - This site allocation is located within an urbanised area of Ryde supporting bare ground habitat. This habitat is of negligible value for this species and therefore no adverse effect on integrity can be concluded in relation to this site.

Mitigation

5.14 The impacts from proposed development on offsite functional habitat is considered to be small-scale and unlikely to result in a significant adverse effect on the integrity to the SAC. However, to provide certainty that the loss of offsite functional habitat will not adversely affect the integrity of the Briddlesford Copses SAC, it is recommended that the following safeguard measures are implemented at the project level:

- Bat surveys will be required for any development coming forward in relation to HA051 and HA055 to determine the individual and cumulative importance of woodland habitat for this species and inform mitigation proposals.

[32] Collins, J. (2016). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

- A commitment to mitigation is required within the plan dependent on the findings of bat surveys. If required, mitigation will need to ensure the avoidance of ancient woodland habitat loss, which is irreplaceable habitat, and the creation and enhancement of woodland habitat for this species.

5.15 It is recommended that the plan is updated to include specific wording in EV2: Ecological Assets and Opportunities for Enhancement, which outlines the requirement for site allocations identified in this HRA to implement the above safeguard measures.

5.16 In addition to this, policies within the plan will provide safeguards and mitigation measures from physical damage and loss of habitats. Policies includes: EV2: Ecological Assets and Opportunities for Enhancement, which outlines protection measures for European sites and provides specific detail on the protection of irreplaceable habitat, such as ancient woodland and EV5: Woodland and Hedgerows, which states:

"The council recognises the wider benefits of trees, woodlands and hedgerows and therefore development proposals will be supported where they:

i. Retain trees, woodlands and hedges on site wherever possible, especially where they are of high amenity.

ii. Avoid direct and indirect harmful impacts on trees, woodlands and hedges, and where this is not possible mitigation should be provided.

iii. Provide a minimum 15 metre buffer between new development and ancient woodland (where relevant)."

Conclusion

5.17 **Provided that the above policy mitigation is incorporated into the plan and implemented successfully, adverse effects on the integrity of the Briddlesford Copses SAC, as a result of impacts from physical habitat damage and loss will be avoided.**

Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar / Solent and Dorset Coast SPA

5.18 The plan proposes development in areas where qualifying SPA and Ramsar bird species may make use of offsite habitat for foraging, roosting and loafing. Proposed allocations with potential to result in a likely significant effect as a result of physical damage and loss were identified in the screening assessment and are presented in **Appendix E**.

5.19 A desk-based study was undertaken to identify potential impacts from proposed allocations on offsite habitat used by the qualifying bird species. The desk-based study relied on a sequential approach, whereby if a site's suitability for qualifying bird species was considered negligible or low for a specific reason (e.g. distance or habitat type) no further investigations for that allocation were carried out. If, following the initial review of distance and habitat, a site's potential suitability for qualifying bird species could not be ruled out, a more detailed assessment including mapping of existing relevant bird records may be required. The initial desk study included the following components to inform the assessment:

- Identification of the bird species which are susceptible to the loss of the habitat types affected and ruling out those species unlikely to utilise the habitat types located within the site allocations (e.g. species restricted to marine habitats).
- A review of aerial imagery and Magic Map Application to identify main habitat types and land use within each site allocation and establish their potential value for qualifying birds.
- Recognition of factors likely to affect suitability of allocations for bird species, including openness, size, shape, proximity of negative factors such as tall boundary features and urban environs, and potential existing sources of disturbance.
- Consideration of the site's location within the landscape. For example, is there direct functional connectivity along flight lines between the allocation and the European sites? Are there landscape scale features which would reduce the suitability of the allocation, e.g. urban areas located along flight lines?

- A review of the site's location within flood risk zones, because many of the SPA bird species favour sites which do or do not flood.
- A review of Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy[33] mapping of locations of extant site for the feeding sites for brent geese and high-water roost sites for wading birds

Bird Habitat Preferences

5.20 Bird habitat preferences were cross referenced against the habitat types present within each allocation to determine the suitability of site allocations for qualifying species. Known habitat preferences are summarised in **Table 5.1** and **Table 5.2** below, which were taken from Birds of the Western Palearctic, British Trust for Ornithology. **Table 5.1** and **Table 5.2** also assess whether each bird species is susceptible to the loss of habitats located within the site allocations.

Table 5.1: Typical Habitat Preferences of Qualifying Bird Species of Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site

Bird Species	Season	Species Habitat Preferences (relative to season of designation)	Susceptible to loss of offsite habitat as a result of the plan
Eurasian teal *Anas crecca*	Wintering	On passage or in winter will frequent open habitats such as shallow tidal coasts, large estuaries, saltmarshes, and lagoons, brackish or saline, flooded fields, and artificial waters such as reservoirs devoid of vegetation.	**Yes – may use flooded fields**
Dark-bellied brent goose *Branta bernicla*	Wintering	On leaving breeding quarters, resorts to shallow sea coasts and estuaries, especially with extensive mudflats rich in sea grass. Strongly attached to intertidal feeding zones, but in Britain since 1970's increasing numbers have moved inland to feed on grass and cultivated crops. Prefer large open sites with clear sight lines and short, lush grass and they are easily disturbed. When not feeding, prefers to rest or sleep on sea surface.	**Yes - this species may use pasture and arable fields.**
Common ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula*	Wintering	A bird of sea coasts. Secondarily occupies adjoining hinterlands up to substantial distance inland, where estuaries, rivers, lakes, tundra, gravel beds, sand bars, grasslands of spare and low growth, or other suitable well-drained terrain exists. Whether breeding, migrating or wintering, tends to be most	No - habitats affected are of low importance to this species

[33]Whitfield, D (2020) Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. Curdridge.

Bird Species	Season	Species Habitat Preferences (relative to season of designation)	Susceptible to loss of offsite habitat as a result of the plan
		numerous and concentrated on wide sandy or shingle tidal beaches, with access to suitable resting or nesting places above high-water mark.	
Mediterranean gull *Larus melanocephalus*	Breeding	They favour sparse vegetation, generally avoiding barren sand, and nest near water on flood-lands, fields and grasslands and on wet or dry areas of islands. The majority of the breeding population nests at coastal wetlands and large reed beds but they can also be found inland, roosting on reservoirs, large steppe lakes and marshes in open lowland areas. They can be seen feeding on farmed fields. It is rarely seen at sea far from coasts. Small populations can be found within black-headed gull colonies.	**Yes – they can use arable fields**
Black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa islandica*	Wintering	During breeding, typically favours marshy hummocky moorland but changes in land management have created new habitat and poorly drained pastures, damp heaths free of scrub, or border of reedy wetland are of primary importance. But other grasslands managed as meadows, especially when grazed and hay-cut and flooded in winter are also used. Outside the breeding season, favoured habitats include sewage farms, lake margins, tidal marshes, mudflats and sheltered coastal inlets.	**Yes – despite a preference for coastal habitat outside the breeding period this species may use flooded pasture and other grasslands for feeding.**
Little tern *Sternula albifrons*	Breeding	Frequently coast dwelling, more along mainland than on islands, but spreads freely up suitable reaches of major rivers and to some lakes where suitable conditions occur. Strongly prefers linear strips of bare shingle, shell beach, or sand, only just above normal tide or flood limits, and often only a few metres from shallow clear water, saline or fresh, where fish of suitable size can be caught by plunging,	No – habitats affected are of low importance to this species

Bird Species	Season	Species Habitat Preferences (relative to season of designation)	Susceptible to loss of offsite habitat as a result of the plan
		without necessity for extended foraging flights.	
Roseate tern *Sterna dougallii*	Breeding	A coastal species. Breeds on sandy seacoasts and islands, laying eggs under dense vegetation or in a hollow. In winter, it is a pelagic species. Feeds almost invariably from the sea and only visits freshwater lagoons on the coast to bathe.	No – habitats affected are of low importance to this species
Common tern *Sterna hirundo*	Breeding	The common tern breeds along coasts with shingle beaches and rocky islands, on rivers with shingle bars, and at inland gravel pits and reservoirs, feeding along rivers and over freshwater. Strongly prefers to nest site on bare ground or surrounded by low vegetation, sometimes on floating mat of dead vegetation or floating rafts. Although, this species may use flat roofs to nest near to the coast.	**Yes – may use flat roof buildings to nest.**
Sandwich tern *Sterna sandvicensis*	Breeding	Favours warm waters near coastlines, on jetties and on beaches. Often shallow areas, such as bays and estuaries, near extensive beaches and mudflats. Nests on sandy islands, sand and shingle beaches, sandbars, in coastal lagoons or offshore.	No, habitats affected are of low importance to this species

Table 5.2: Typical Habitat Preferences of Qualifying Bird Species of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA

Bird Species	Season	Species Habitat Preferences (relative to season of designation)	Susceptible to loss of offsite habitat as a result of the plan
Little tern *Sternula albifrons*	Breeding	Frequently coast dwelling, more along mainland than on islands, but spreads freely up suitable reaches of major rivers and to some lakes where suitable conditions occur. Strongly prefers linear strips of bare shingle, shell beach, or sand, only just above normal tide or flood limits, and often only a few metres from shallow clear water, saline or fresh,	No – habitats affected are of low importance to this species

Bird Species	Season	Species Habitat Preferences (relative to season of designation)	Susceptible to loss of offsite habitat as a result of the plan
		where fish of suitable size can be caught by plunging, without necessity for extended foraging flights.	
Common tern *Sterna hirundo*	Breeding	The common tern breeds along coasts with shingle beaches and rocky islands, on rivers with shingle bars, and at inland gravel pits and reservoirs, feeding along rivers and over freshwater. Strongly prefers to nest site on bare ground or surrounded by low vegetation, sometimes on floating mat of dead vegetation or floating rafts. Although, this species may use flat roofs to nest near to the coast.	**Yes – may use flat roof buildings to nest.**
Sandwich tern *Sterna sandvicensis*	Breeding	Favours warm waters near coastlines, on jetties and on beaches. Often shallow areas, such as bays and estuaries, near extensive beaches and mudflats. Nests on sandy islands, sand and shingle beaches, sandbars, in coastal lagoons or offshore.	No, habitats affected are of low importance to this species

5.21 The review of habitat types located within the site allocations, in light of individual bird species preferences, identified the following bird species as being potentially susceptible to the loss of offsite habitat associated with site allocations proposed within the Plan. This included:

- Eurasian Teal.
- Dark-bellied Brent Goose.
- Mediterranean gull.
- Black-tailed godwit
- Common tern.

Following a review of these species' habitat preferences and in line with previous discussions with Natural England with regards to recognised buffers zones within which these species are likely to rely on offsite habitats, a distance of 2km was applied.

Assessment of Site Allocations

Following the establishment of typical habitat preferences for each species, each site allocation proposed in the plan within 2km of the Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA was assessed for its suitability in supporting the qualifying bird species listed above, i.e. Eurasian teal, dark-bellied brent goose, Mediterranean gull, black-tailed godwit and common tern. The assessment was based on a number of parameters, as described in **Table 5.3** below. Typically, site allocations displayed varying combinations of the parameters outlined below and findings on suitability for SPA/Ramsar qualifying birds were therefore subject to professional judgement. The findings of the assessment of site allocations are set out in **Table 5.4** in relation to bird species that are qualifying featues of both Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site and Dorset Coast SPA and **Table 5.5** in

relation to bird species that are qualifying features of Dorset Coast SPA only.

Table 5.3: Habitat suitability rating criteria

Suitability for SPA and Ramsar Birds	Typical Description
High	Large sites; area of suitable habitat (e.g. wet grasslands, permanent pastures, arable) capable of supporting significant numbers of SPA birds; absence of any notable negative factors such as PRoW and edge features; land parcel functionally linked with wider habitat and directly linked to SPA/Ramsar via green corridor; site may be prone to flooding (although note absence of flooding favoured by lapwing and golden plover); typically close to SPA/Ramsar and coast.
Moderate	Sites support large areas of functionally linked suitable habitat capable of attracting numbers of SPA birds which by themselves are unlikely to be significant, but which may contribute to supporting significant numbers of birds in-combination with other sites. Likely to be further from SPA/Ramsar and coast, and with presence of some limiting factors.
Low	Smaller or fragmented sites; habitats present may be suitable for supporting low numbers of SPA birds on occasion but limited by negative factors such as size, distance from SPA/Ramsar; absence of sight lines and reductions in 'openness' as a result of edge features such as trees, scrub, and buildings; edge features likely to be close to centre of site; suitability may be compromised by existing recreational use; may be isolated within urban areas.
Negligible	Habitats present are entirely unsuitable for SPA birds, for example existing developed land or small urban infill sites.

Table 5.4: Suitability of allocations for qualifying bird species of Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site or Solent and Dorset Coast SPA

Site allocation name	Review of Site Parameters	Assessment of Suitability for SPA/Ramsar Qualifying birds
Housing Allocations		
HA005: Land to the east of Football Club, Camp Road	Distance from European Site: Approximately 1km south west of Solent and Southampton SPA and Ramsar and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~ 5.4 ha Habitats Present: One arable field surrounded on the north, east and southern side by residential areas with scattered trees around these boundaries.	Low

Site allocation name	Review of Site Parameters	Assessment of Suitability for SPA/Ramsar Qualifying birds
Housing Allocations		
	Football club to the west with more abundant linear scrub and tree lines along the south west boundary. Use of Site: Arable land for growing crops	
HA006: Heathfield Campsite, Heathfield Road	Distance from European Site: Approximately 1.5km west of Solent and Southampton SPA and RAMSAR and ~450m south east of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~4.9 ha Habitats Present: Amenity grasslands used for camping surrounded by prominent tree lines, hedgerows and scrub, reducing the openness of the site. The site is surrounded by residential areas with some arable fields and pasture separating it from the Solent and Dorset Coast SPA. Use of Site: Recreational – camping site	Low
HA008: Church Field, Copse Lane	Distance from European Site: Approximately 150m west of Solent and Southampton SPA and Ramsar and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~1.9 ha Habitats Present: Pasture field with prominent edge features including hedgerows and some scattered trees on the boundaries, apart from northern part of east boundary which is more open. Farm shop present in north east corner. The site is surrounded on the north and west by residential properties. Separated from Solent and Southampton Ramsar/SPA by a small woodland and arable field Use of Site: Recreational: Public footpath running along eastern boundary, farm shop. Animal grazing on pasture	Low
HA114: Land off Birch Close	Distance from European Site: Approximately 1.6km west of Solent and Southampton SPA and Ramsar and within 500m south east of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~1.7 ha Habitats Present: Greenfield site comprised of rough grassland with scattered trees, scrub and	Low

Site allocation name	Review of Site Parameters	Assessment of Suitability for SPA/Ramsar Qualifying birds
Housing Allocations		
	hedgerows. Bordering the Heathfield Campsite on the east and residential properties surrounding the remaining borders of the site. Use of Site: Possible disturbance from recreation (dog walking/use of site from residents living close-by)	
West Medina Regeneration Area		
HA018: Green Gate Industrial Estate, Thetis Road	Distance from European Site: 1.4km north of Solent and Southampton SPA and Ramsar and 95 meters west of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~0.1 ha Habitats Present: Hard standing ground, buildings and few trees in the centre of the site Use of Site: Industrial estate	Negligible
HA019: Medina Yard	Distance from European Site: Majority of the site is adjacent to Solent and Dorset Coast SPA with the eastern section of the site within this SPA. Approximately 1.3km north of the Solent and Southampton SPA and Ramsar, at the closest point. Size: ~5.9 ha Habitats Present: Developed land adjacent to River Medina comprised of Marina buildings, docks, car parks and hard standing Use of Site: Recreation – Marina, highly disturbed	Negligible.
HA020: Former Somerton Reservoir, Newport Road	Distance from European Site: Approximately 1km north west of the Solent and Southampton SPA and Ramsar and 530m west of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~1.9 ha Habitats Present: This site is located adjacent to an A-road in the centre of an urbanised area of Cowes. Habitats include: Artificial ponds; hedgerows; treelines; and tall ruderal vegetation Use of Site: Disused reservoir	Low

Site allocation name	Review of Site Parameters	Assessment of Suitability for SPA/Ramsar Qualifying birds
Housing Allocations		
HA022: Somerton Farm, Newport Road	Distance from European Site: Approximately 600m north west of Solent and Southampton SPA and Ramsar and 530m west of Solent and Dorset SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~ 15.2 ha Habitats Present: Site comprises of 6 farmland fields, separated with hedges and scattered trees. Farm buildings present. Adjacent land use includes industrial, residential, open fields and woodland. It is situated within the urbanised area of Cowes. Use of Site: Agricultural	**Moderate**
HA025: Land rear of 84 Wyatts Lane	Distance from European Site: 1.6km west of Solent and Southampton SPA and Ramsar and 1.7km west of Solent and Dorset SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~1.8 ha Habitats Present: 2 pasture fields separated by a track and scrub. The southern field is long and thin. One property also present as part of the site. Scattered trees around the edges of site boundary and woodland bordering on the west. Large residential area bordering the north and east of the site, separating the site from the Ramsar and SPA's closest points. Use of Site: Agricultural	Low
HA026: Land rear of Harry Cheek Gardens and Wyatts Lane	Distance from European Site: 1.7km west of Solent and Southampton SPA and RAMSAR and Solent and Dorset SPA, at the closest point. Size:~2.9 ha Habitats Present: Pasture field with trees and sporadic hedgerows at the site's edges. Woodland to the south of the site and large residential area to the east, separating the site from the SPAs and Ramsar. Several arable fields to the west of the site separated by hedgerows Use of Site: Agricultural	**Moderate**
Newport Regeneration Area		

Site allocation name	Review of Site Parameters	Assessment of Suitability for SPA/Ramsar Qualifying birds
Housing Allocations		
HA031: Various land adjacent to and east of Carisbrooke College	Distance from European Site: 1.9km south west of Solent and Southampton SPA and Ramsar and 1.8km south west of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~11.9 ha, split into 2 sites - 10.8 ha and ~1.1 ha Habitats Present: This allocation is mostly out of the buffer. The area within is split into 2 sites and habitats include buildings with some bare ground, arable fields separated with hedgerows and sporadic trees. Within the urbanised area of Newport, large residential areas surrounding site with arable fields to the north. Use of Site: Agricultural	Low
HA032: Land at Horsebridge Hill & Acorn Farm	Distance from European Site: 430m west of Solent and Southampton SPA, 210m west of Solent and Southampton Ramsar and 790m west of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~8.4 ha Habitats Present: 3 arable fields and 3 pasture fields, separated by hedgerows and treelines, with a farm building. The site is just north of the urbanised area of Newport. Bordered on the north and east by arable fields and woodland. Relatively clear flight lines between Ramsar/SPAs and site Use of Site: Agricultural	**Moderate**
HA033: Land west of Sylvan Drive	Distance from European Site: Approximately 1km south west of Solent and Southampton SPA and Ramsar, and 900m west of Solent and Dorset SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~10.3 ha Habitats Present: 2 arable fields, separated by tree lines. Hedgerows and tree lines surrounding the site. Bordering the urbanised area of Newport with large residential area to the south and arable fields to the north. Flight path to European sites (within 2km) is over dual carriageway and urbanised area	**Moderate**

Site allocation name	Review of Site Parameters	Assessment of Suitability for SPA/Ramsar Qualifying birds
Housing Allocations		
	Use of Site: Agricultural and possible recreational (walkers)	
HA036: Land at Noke Common	Distance from European Site: 1.3km west of Solent and Southampton SPA, 700m west of Solent and Southampton Ramsar and 1.4km west of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~8.6 ha Habitats Present: 6 thin, long pasture fields, separated by hedgerows and frequent trees, reducing the openness of the site. Some houses/farm buildings, hard standing and car park in the northern part of the site. Residential area bordering the south and east of the site. Large woodland to the west and open arable fields to the north Use of Site: Agricultural	Low
HA037: Former Library HQ, land adjacent St Marys Hospital	Distance from European Site: 490m to west of Solent and Southampton SPA and Ramsar, 890m to Solent and Dorset SPA, at the closest point Size: ~1.1 ha Habitats Present: Woodland area with footpaths, scrub and tall ruderal. Bordered by tall boundary features – trees and houses. Hospital to the south, residential area to the north. Just North of the urbanised area of Newport. Use of Site: Recreational	Negligible
HA039: Former HMP site	Distance from European Site: 800m west of Solent and Southampton SPA and Ramsar, 920m west of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~99.8 ha Habitats Present: Fragmented site consisting of hard standing, old prison buildings with a tennis court, residential area with scattered trees and 10 arable/pasture fields, separated with hedgerows, trees and fences. Urbanised area of Newport to the south east of the site. Large woodland to the west.	Low

Site allocation name	Review of Site Parameters	Assessment of Suitability for SPA/Ramsar Qualifying birds
Housing Allocations		
	Use of Site: Disturbance from recreation, agricultural land	
HA044: Newport Harbour	Distance from European Site: Approximately 60m south of Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar, at the closest point. Part of the site is adjacent to the east of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA Size: ~2.6 ha Habitats Present: Developed land with hard standing ground, buildings, car parks, roads and rare scattered trees. South of the site is the urbanised area of Newport Use of Site: Harbour, recreational	Negligible
HA110: Land at Moreys Timber Yard, Trafalgar Road	Distance from European Site: 1.2km south west of Solent and Southampton SPA and Ramsar and 900m south west of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA Size: ~1.7 ha Habitats Present: All hard standing ground with buildings and a car park in the urbanised area of Newport. Use of Site: Timber Yard	Negligible
HA115: Former Polars Residential Home	Distance from European Site: 800m south east of Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and 570m south east of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point Size: ~ 1.0 ha Habitats Present: Hard standing ground, car park and buildings in the north east of the site. The rest of the site is grassland with scattered trees and paths. The site is in the urbanised area of Newport, surrounded by large residential areas Use of Site: Recreational	Low
East Medina Regeneration Area		
HA046: Land at Crossway	Distance from European Site: 600m north east of Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and 670m east of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point	Low

Site allocation name	Review of Site Parameters	Assessment of Suitability for SPA/Ramsar Qualifying birds
Housing Allocations		
	Size: ~4.8 ha Habitats Present: One straight edged arable field with hedgerows and scattered trees bordering the site. South of the urbanised area of East Cowes with residential areas to the north and west and arable fields to the east. Use of Site: Farmland / agricultural	
HA113: Land at Red Funnel	Distance from European Site: 1.4km north of Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and adjacent/partly within Solent and Dorset Coast SPA. Size: ~ 2.5 ha Habitats Present: Developed Land adjacent to the River Medina consisting of hard standing ground, parking, roads and buildings. Use of Site: Recreational – ferry terminal	Negligible
HA051: Palmers Farm, Brocks Copse Road	Distance from European Site: 500m south east of Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and 930m west of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~10.2 ha Habitats Present: Farmland fields with buildings and a pond in the south of the site. Woodland area separating the two fields and a track running along the western boundary of the site. Surrounded on the south side by the residential area of Wootton and further arable/pasture fields to the north. Use of Site: Farmland	Low
HA053: Land adjoining Lushington Hill & Hunters Way, Wootton	Distance from European Site: 1.1km south of Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and 1.1km west of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~5.6 ha Habitats Present: Arable fields (1 field on the west, section of an arable field on the east of the site). Middle field is pasture with scattered scrub and trees. Hedgerows surrounding all fields. Some hardstanding and buildings in the centre of the site	Low

Site allocation name	Review of Site Parameters	Assessment of Suitability for SPA/Ramsar Qualifying birds
Housing Allocations		
	with a road adjacent to the south. West of residential area of Wootton and surrounded on the north and west side by arable fields and woodland. Use of Site: Agricultural farmland	
Ryde Regeneration Area		
HA055: Old Hosiden Besson site, Binstead Road	Distance from European Site: 620m south of Solent and Southampton SPA and Ramsar and 930m south of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~ 0.6 ha Habitats Present: Brownfield site of bare ground and grassland with trees surrounding southern edges. In the residential area of Binstead, surrounded entirely by housing and roads. Urbanised area of Ryde to the east. Use of Site: Redundant site / possible disturbance from recreational activity close-by	Negligible
HA060: Westridge Cross Dairy and land to the north of Bullen Road, Ryde	Distance from European Site: 400m south of Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and 840m south of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA. Size: ~27.9 ha Habitats Present: Nine pasture and arable fields separated by hedgerows and treelines, to the west of the urbanised area of Ryde. Close to European sites with relatively clear sight lines. Bordered on the east by further arable / pasture fields which are known to be used by low numbers of wading birds and brent geese. Use of Site: Farmland / Agricultural	**Moderate**
HA062: Land off Quarry Road	Distance from European Site: 1.3km south of Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and 1.5km south of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point Size: ~ 1.5 ha Habitats Present: Pasture fields with woodland area in the south west of the site. Bordered on the north by the urbanised area of Ryde and	Low

Site allocation name	Review of Site Parameters	Assessment of Suitability for SPA/Ramsar Qualifying birds
Housing Allocations		
	woodland/pasture to the south. Flight paths over Ryde and tall boundary features, limiting the suitability of the habitat for qualifying species Use of Site: Recreational – dog walking	
HA112: Land at Harcourt Sands	Distance from European Site: Adjacent to Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and 550m south east of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~11.2 ha Habitats Present: Derelict buildings and hard standing ground with abundant trees and some grassland. Tall features (trees and buildings) reduce the openness of the site, limiting the suitability of the habitat, although the closes to European sites suggest it may be used. Use of Site: Abandoned holiday park, disused and derelict currently	Low
HA116: Former St Marys Convent, High Street	Distance from European Site: 650m south of Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and 1km south of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~ 0.3 ha Habitats Present: Developed land in the urbanised area of Ryde, comprised of building and hard standing ground. Use of Site: Recreational	Negligible
HA064: Land north of Mill Road and east of High Street	Distance from European Site: 340m east of Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and 1.3km south west of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA. Size: ~6.1 ha Habitats Present: Two pasture fields separated by a hedgerow with scattered trees along northern boundary, limiting the openness of the habitat. West of the urbanised area of Bembridge, surrounded on the north and east by residential areas and roads bordering the south and west of the site. Sight lines limited by tall boundary features and woodland	Low

Site allocation name	Review of Site Parameters	Assessment of Suitability for SPA/Ramsar Qualifying birds
Housing Allocations		
	between site and Southampton SPA/Ramsar. Bembridge lies between the site and Dorset SPA. Use of Site: Recreational – dog walking	
HA065: Land east of Hillway Road and south of Steyne Road	Distance from European Site: 400m north west of Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and 700m north of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA. Size: ~4.9 ha Habitats Present: Two pasture linear shaped fields separated by a hedgerow with scattered trees in the middle of the site. Edge features including hedgerows and tree lines present. Bordered by urbanised area of Bembridge on the North and East. Pasture fields and trees separate the site from SPAs and Ramsar. Use of Site: Farmland (used for grazing)	Low
Employment Allocations		
EA1: Employment Allocation Land to the east of Pan Lane	Distance from European Site: 1.3km south of Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and 950m south of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~3.1 ha Habitats Present: Hard standing ground with buildings, garages and cars. Two pasture fields split by Godric Road with scattered trees and hedges. In the urbanised area of Newport, surrounded by roads and residential/business areas. Use of Site: Garage and Electrician unit, recreational	Low
EA2: Employment allocation at Nicholson Road, Ryde	Distance from European Site: Approximately 1.4km south of Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and 1.6km south of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~14.6 ha Habitats Present: This site is comprised of 6 pasture fields, separated by hedgerows and tree lines. It is adjacent to the railway line and bordered on the north by the urbanised area of Ryde, which separates the site from the SPAs/Ramsar.	**Moderate**

Site allocation name	Review of Site Parameters	Assessment of Suitability for SPA/Ramsar Qualifying birds
Housing Allocations		
	Use of Site: Farmland.	
EA3: Employment allocation at Somerton Farm, Cowes	Distance from European Site: Approximately 830m north west of Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and 580m west of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~2 ha Habitats Present: In the urbanised area of Cowes. Rough grassland surrounded by tree lines, scrub and hedgerows, limiting the openness of the habitat. Use of Site: Farmland	Low
EA4: Employment allocation at Kingston, East Cowes	Distance from European Site: Adjacent to Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and 90m east of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, at the closest point. Size: ~6.3 ha Habitats Present: Area of grassland and sand with very few scattered trees to the east of the River Medina. Pavement running along eastern boundary and hedgerow along the southern boundary, separating the site from arable fields. North of the site is the urbanised area of East Cowes. Records of low numbers of bird's present. Use of Site: Recreational	Low

Table 5.5: Suitability of Allocations for Qualifying Bird Species of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA only

Site Allocation Name	Review of Site Parameters	Assessment of suitability for SPA qualifying birds
Housing Allocations		
HA077: Winchester House, Sandown Road	Distance from European Site: 1.3km south west of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA Size: ~ 0.7 ha Habitats Present: Large building with a car park, amenity grassland in the south east of the site and trees in the north of the site. Surrounded by tall	Negligible

Site Allocation Name	Review of Site Parameters	Assessment of suitability for SPA qualifying birds
	hedgerows. Between urbanised areas of Shanklin and Sandown and to the west of Sandown Bay. Use of Site: Recreational - hostel	
HA078: Learning Centre, Berry Hill	Distance from European Site: 1.1km west of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA Size: ~ 1.5 ha Habitats Present: Rectangular grassland with bordering hedgerows and scattered trees. Some hard standing ground in the east of the site. Located between urbanised areas of Sandown and Shanklin, separated from SPA by large urbanised area, reducing suitability of habitat. Use of Site: Recreational	Negligible
HA079: 23 Carter Street, Sandown	Distance from European Site: 700m north of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA Size: ~0.2 ha Habitats Present: Residential property with garden and driveway in urbanised area of Sandown Use of Site: Residential housing	Negligible
HA080: Former Sandham Middle School site	Distance from European Site: 840m north west of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA Size: ~4.1 ha Habitats Present: Linear shaped grassland field with old disused tennis courts in the middle. Hedgerows and tree lines surrounding the edge of the site. Bordered to the east by urbanised area of Sandown, separating the site from the SPA Use of Site: Recreational – disused school site	Low
HA081: Sandown Town Hall, Grafton Street	Distance from European Site: 280m north west of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA. Size: ~0.2 ha Habitats Present: Building (disused town hall) with hard standing ground in urbanised area of Sandown. Use of Site: Recreation – old town hall	Negligible
Employment Allocations		

Site Allocation Name	Review of Site Parameters	Assessment of suitability for SPA qualifying birds
EA6: Employment allocation at Sandown Airport, Sandown	Distance from European Site: 1.9 km west of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA Size: ~3.0 ha Habitats Present: Partial section of pastoral field with hedgerow boundaries and scattered trees. Half of the site is outside of the buffer. Use of Site: Farmland	Negligible.

5.22 The desk-based review of site allocations identified that the majority of site allocations have low or negligible potential to support significant numbers of SPA/Ramsar qualifying bird species, either alone or cumulatively with other allocations, and were therefore discounted from further consideration in terms of offsite functional land.

5.23 A total of six site allocations (HA022, HA026, HA032, HA033, HA060, EA2) were identified with moderate potential to support these qualifying bird species. The sites identified above provide suitable offsite foraging habitat for qualifying bird species in the form of arable and pasture fields. In isolation, the importance of these sites for the qualifying species is likely to be low when compared with the extensive areas of habitat of greater suitability surrounding these European sites. As a result, the potential for the loss of offsite habitat to adversely affect these species relates primarily to the cumulative effect of reducing the extent of feeding areas. Given the small number of sites identified, the impacts of proposed development are considered unlikely to adversely affect the integrity of the European sites.

5.24 Despite this conclusion, uncertainty remains under the precautionary principle as to whether the loss of habitats within these site allocations will, cumulatively with each other and in-combination with the loss of habitat with other plans and projects, adversely affect the integrity of the SPAs and Ramsar sites in relation to the qualifying species. Given the dependency of these species on offsite arable fields and grasslands, inclusion and implementation of appropriate safeguards and mitigation will be required in Local Plan to provide certainty that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the SPAs and Ramsar site.

Mitigation

5.25 To provide certainty that the loss of offsite functional habitat will not adversely affect the integrity of Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site or Solent and Dorset Coast SPA it is recommended that the following safeguard measures are implemented at the project level:

- Wintering or and breeding bird surveys are required for sites with high or moderate suitability to support these qualifying bird species to determine their individual and cumulative importance for these species and inform mitigation proposals.
- A commitment to mitigation is required within the plan, dependent on the findings of bird surveys. In the unlikely but possible event that cumulative numbers of SPA and Ramsar birds affected are likely to exceed thresholds of significance (i.e. >1% of the population of associated European Site), appropriate mitigation in the form of habitat creation and management in perpetuity, either on-site or through provision of strategic sites for these species elsewhere on the Island, will be required. If required, mitigation will need to create and manage suitably located habitat which maximises feeding productivity for these SPA and Ramsar species, and such mitigatory habitat would need to be provided and be fully functional prior to development

which would affect significant numbers of SPA and Ramsar birds.

5.26 It is recommended that the plan is updated to include specific wording in EV2: Ecological Assets and Opportunities for Enhancement, which outlines the requirement for site allocations identified in this HRA to implement the above safeguard measures.

5.27 In addition to this, policies within the plan will provide safeguards and mitigation measures from physical damage and loss of habitats. This includes: EV2: Ecological Assets and Opportunities for Enhancement, EV13: Managing our Water Resources, EV14: Managing Flood Risk in New Development and EV16: Managing our Coast.

Conclusion

5.28 **Provided that the above mitigation measures are incorporated into the plan, and implemented successfully, adverse effects on the integrity of the Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, as a result of offsite damage and loss of habitat will be avoided.**

Non-physical disturbance

Briddlesford Copses SAC

5.29 No development is proposed within 500m of the SAC and therefore no direct impacts are considered likely in relation to non-physical disturbance. However, there is potential for impacts to occur in relation to non-physical disturbance from increased light spill on off-site functional habitat within of adjacent to proposed site allocations.

5.30 As detailed in the Screening Assessment, the Bechstein's bat qualifying species was identified to travel within a Core Sustenance Zone (CSZ) of 3km[34]. A total of three site allocations were identified within 3km of the SAC and as such have been subject to further, more detailed assessment. Of the three site allocations, only two (HA051 and HA053) supported woodland habitat within or adjacent to the site, which could be used by this qualifying species to forage and roost. The ancient woodland adjacent to HA051 was considered to be of particular value for this species.

5.31 An increase in light spill on this woodland habitat has the potential to result in the loss of suitable roosting features for Bechstein's bat and to cause functional fragmentation of woodland habitat, which this species may rely on to disperse into the wider area. Given the specialist nature of this species, which is known to exclusively use woodland habitat to forage and roost, this species is particularly susceptible to impacts from habitat loss and fragmentation.

5.32 Therefore, to ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of the SAC as a result of proposed development in the plan, appropriate mitigation measures will be required, as detailed below.

Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site

5.33 Proposed allocations in the plan identified within 500m of the SPA and Ramsar have potential to result in a likely significant effect on qualifying bird species as a result of disturbance from noise and vibrations and from increased light spill. Site allocations identified in the Screening Assessment were:

- HA008: Church Field, Copse Lane
- HA019: Medina Yard (SPA only)
- HA032: Land at Horsebridge Hill & Acorn Farm (Ramsar only)
- HA037: Former Library HQ, land adjacent St Marys Hospital
- HA044: Newport Harbour
- HA060: Westridge Cross Dairy and land to the north of Bullen Road, Ryde
- HA064: Land north of Mill Road and east of High Street
- HA065: Land east of Hillway Road and south of Steyne Road
- HA112: Land at Harcourt Sands

[34] Collins, J. (2016). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

5.34 Due to the proximity of these proposed site allocations to the SPA and Ramsar site, appropriate mitigation measures will be required to ensure no adverse effects on integrity.

5.35 In addition to this, there is potential for impacts to occur in relation to offsite functional habitat that wading bird species of the SPA and Ramsar site rely on. A desk-based review was undertaken using mapping produced as part of Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy 2020[35]. This mapping has identified a network of core areas that are regularly used and are of fundamental importance to over-wintering waterfowl across the Solent.

5.36 This review identified a single site allocation, HA046, that lies beyond 500m of the SPA and Ramsar but is located within 500m of a candidate site. Candidate sites are defined by the Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy 2020 as those which *"have records of high numbers of birds (max count equal to or greater than 100) and/or a total score equal to or greater than 1 in the 3 metrics: GB Importance, SPA Importance and SPA Assemblage but have less than 3 records in total.*".

5.37 In addition, the review identified HA060 to partially lie within a site considered of low use by qualifying bird species, and HA064 and HA065 to lie adjacent to a candidate site. Low use sites are those which *"have records of birds but in low numbers"*.

5.38 These additional sites will therefore require appropriate mitigation measures as detailed below to ensure no adverse effects on integrity of the SPA and Ramsar site.

Solent and Dorset Coast SPA

5.39 Proposed allocations in the plan identified within 500m of the SPA have potential to result in a likely significant effect on qualifying bird species as a result of disturbance from noise and vibrations and from increased light spill. Site allocations identified in the Screening Assessment were:

- HA002: Land and School buildings at Weston Primary School, Weston Road
- HA003: Land to the rear of Lanes End
- HA006: Heathfield Campsite, Heathfield Road
- HA079: 23 Carter Street, Sandown
- HA081: Sandown Town Hall, Grafton Street
- HA114: Land off Birch Close

5.40 Due to the proximity of these proposed site allocations to the SPA, appropriate mitigation measures will be required to ensure no adverse effects on integrity.

Mitigation

5.41 The plan includes wording in EV2: Ecological Assets and Opportunities for Enhancement, which specifies that:

"Development proposals will only be permitted if it can be clearly demonstrated that the integrity of the national site network will not be adversely affected, other than in exceptional circumstances relating to overriding public interest.

The loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats will not be permitted except in wholly exceptional cases and then only when a suitable compensation strategy is provided.

There are a number of habitats and features outside of designated sites that make a significant contribution to local biodiversity. Development proposals are expected to promote the maintenance and enhancement of the links between designated sites and to positively contribute to the aims and objectives of the Biodiversity Action Plans.

Development proposals should demonstrate how they have considered the ecological network on the Island"

5.42 This wording is considered to provide sufficient mitigation to ensure that no adverse effects on integrity will occur in relation to non-physical disturbance on these European sites.

Conclusion

5.43 **Provided that the above policy wording is incorporated into the plan, and implemented**

[35] Whitfield, D (2020) Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. Curdridge.

successfully, adverse effects on the integrity of the Briddlesford Copses SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, as a result of non-physical disturbance of habitat will be avoided.

Air pollution

Briddlesford Copses SAC

5.44 The SAC is situated in the north-east of the Island and is comprised of a complex of structurally diverse, ancient semi-natural woodlands, which are known to support resident breeding Bechstein's bats.

5.45 Bechstein's bats are found exclusively in woodland habitat, which is known to be sensitive to impacts from air pollution. Therefore, changes in the structure and composition of this habitat as a result of increases in air pollution has the potential to result in an adverse effect on the qualifying bat species of the SAC through habitat loss and changes in food sources.

5.46 As detailed in the Screening Assessment, significant increases in traffic-related air pollution are possible within 200m of a European Site. This is supported by data provided within the DMRB, which shows that the effects of nitrogen deposition from traffic is reduced dramatically with distance from the road as illustrated by **Figure 5.1**.

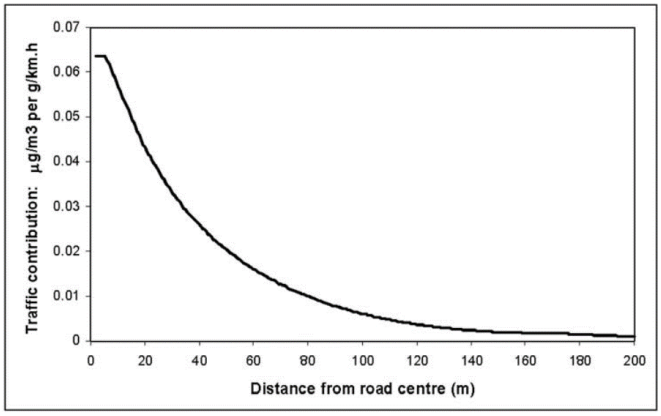

Figure 5.1: Traffic Contribution to Pollutant Concentration at Different Distances from the Road Centre[36]

5.47 An Air Quality Assessment[37] was undertaken by Ricardo Energy and Environment, which identified the potential for likely significant effects in relation to Briddlesford Copses SAC along Combley Road located off the of the primary road network. The AQA identified areas that were *'predicted to exceed the screening thresholds'* that corresponded *'to thin bands of deciduous woodland on either side of Combley Road and extend up to 6m into the designated site'*.

5.48 A desk-based review of aerial imagery, Magic Maps and street maps identified that this habitat within 6m of the roadside support sections with road verges comprising of bracken and grassland habitat and sections of relatively young tree regrowth and scrub to the south of Combley Road, which are considered of relatively low value for Bechstein's bat to forage and roost.

5.49 Given the small extent of suitable woodland habitat that will be affected by increased vehicle emissions from proposed growth in the plan, no adverse effects on integrity is considered likely in relation to habitats within the SAC provided that mitigation measures detailed below are implemented successfully.

5.50 There is, however, potential for impacts to arise from increased air pollution to ancient woodland habitat located within the 3km CSZ of the SAC and which lie within 200m of the primary

[36] Figure C1 from Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (May 2007) Volume 11 Environmental Assessment, Section 3 Environmental Assessment Techniques. Part 1 HA207/7 Air Quality

[37] Ricardo Energy and Environment, (2019), Isle of Wight Local Plan: Air Quality Impact Assessment.

road network. This includes New Copse, Elenors Grove and Lushington Copse, which lie immediately adjacent to the A3054. These habitats have the potential to have a significant influence on the resilience and conservation of the bat colony using roosts in the SAC.

5.51 An updated version of the AQA is in the process of being prepared to consider the lower levels of growth proposed by the current (Regulation 18 consultation draft) version of the plan and the potential for impacts on offsite functional habitat. The findings of this study will be considered as part of the next iteration of the HRA, during drafting of the Regulation 19 consultation version of the plan.

Mitigation

5.52 The requirement for mitigation will be informed by the findings of the updated AQA. Broad mitigation measures outlined in the current AQA include planning measures such as encouraging the use of electric cars, traffic management and investment in public transport.

5.53 Policies already contained within the Plan will provide a degree of mitigation. These include T1: A Better Connected Island, T2: Supporting Sustainable Transport and T5: Electric Vehicle Charging Points. These policies encourage the reduction and use of sustainable transport to minimise impacts from vehicle emission. In addition, policy EV2: Ecological Assets and Opportunities for Enhancement provides safeguards and mitigation.

Conclusion

5.54 **In light of the above and in accordance with the precautionary principle, a conclusion of no adverse effects on integrity cannot be reached in relation to the effect of air pollution on Briddlesford Copses SAC until an updated AQA has been undertaken to account for the change in growth in the plan. This will also include consideration of offsite functional habitat potentially used by the sites Bechstein's bat qualifying species.**

Recreation pressure

Isle of Wight Downs SAC

5.55 The SAC is located in two areas along the coastline in the south-east near Ventnor and in the west near Freshwater. Key threats from recreation to this SAC include walking from people living in the local area, as well as from visitors to view the Alfred Lord Tennyson Memorial. The SAC is subject to high levels of pedestrian visitors, which is particularly affecting the calcareous grassland habitat through trampling and erosion, as well as from nutrient enrichment from dogs being walked within the site.

5.56 As outlined in the Screening Assessment, there is no specific survey data available, which can be drawn to inform a ZOI for this SAC. Therefore, in line with a precautionary approach a ZOI of 7km has been applied as detailed above. This reflects similar visitor studies in the south of the UK, including Thames Basin Heaths and Epping Forest.

5.57 A review of site allocations proposed as part of the plan identified 566 new dwellings proposed within 7km of the SAC. This includes proposed development at West Wight Regeneration Area and the Bay Regeneration Area.

5.58 In light of the above information, it is recommended that mitigation measures as detailed below and which are designed to address the cumulative impacts of increased recreation on the SAC as a result of the plan are implemented to ensure a sufficient level of certainty in concluding that the plan will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of the SAC.

Solent Maritime SAC / Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site / Solent and Dorset Coast SPA

5.59 The SAC, SPAs and Ramsar site are located along the northern coastline of the Isle of Wight with part of the Solent and Dorset Coast SPA extending along the south-western coastline as well. Key threats from recreation to these Solent European Sites include walking/dog walking, cycling and jogging, which represent 91% of all recreational activity along this coastline. Additional threats from recreation include surfing, horse riding

and rowing, which comprise of 9% the remaining recreational activity.

5.60 As detailed in the Screening Assessment, targeted visitor surveys undertaken as part of the Solent Disturbance and Mitigation Project[38] established that 75% of visitors to the Solent and Southampton Water SPA come from within 5.6km. The research predicted a 13% increase in visitor numbers as a result of planned new housing. The same research also highlighted that dogs off lead were a cause of 47% of all 'major flights' i.e. bird(s) flying more than 50 metres to escape disturbance. The findings of these visitor surveys have been used to inform a suite of avoidance and mitigation measures as part of the Bird Aware Solent Strategy[39],[40]. Given the overlap of habitats between the Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar, the same ZOI of 5.6km has been applied in relation to Solent Maritime SAC and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA.

5.61 A review of site allocations proposed as part of the plan identified the following number of proposed dwellings within the ZOI of each of the European sites:

- Solent Maritime SAC: 4,019 new dwellings.
- Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar: 4,862 new dwellings.
- Solent and Dorset Coast SPA: 4,912 new dwellings.

5.62 This includes proposed development at West Wight Regeneration Area, West Medina Regeneration Area, Newport Regeneration Area, East Medina Regeneration Area, Ryde Regeneration Area and the Bay Regeneration Area.

5.63 In light of the above and providing mitigation measures detailed in the Bird Aware Solent Strategy are incorporated in the plan and delivered successfully, there is a high level of confidence that the mitigation strategy being prepared will provide the appropriate mechanisms required to ensure no adverse effects on integrity in relation to the SAC, SPAs and Ramsar site.

South Wight Maritime SAC

5.64 This SAC is located along the southern coastline of the Isle of Wight. Key threats from recreation to this SAC primarily relate to water-based activities, in particular from recreational boat anchoring and landings upon subtidal reef and intertidal rocky shore habitats.

5.65 As detailed in the Screening Assessment, no ZOI has been defined in relation to this European site. Given the specialist nature of the activities, which is likely to attract visitors from greater distances, it is expected that increased development on the Island is only likely to result in limited recreational impacts on the SAC. To ensure no adverse effects on integrity, it is therefore recommended that the plan supports the provision of safeguards and mitigation measures as part of a Coastal Code of Conduct to encourage increased self-regulation from participants. Detail of this is presented below.

Mitigation

5.66 It is recommended that the following mitigation measures are implemented to ensure that there is a sufficient level of certainty that proposed development in the Local Plan will not result in an adverse recreation effect on the integrity of the European sites described above. These measures have been designed to ensure that each site allocation's contribution to cumulative increases in recreational pressure on each European site is addressed.

Provision of Open Spaces

5.67 The provision of alternative natural green space and green infrastructure (GI) represents an important aspect of mitigation for non-coastal European sites, such as Isle of Wight Downs SAC. Therefore, the strategic approach to incorporating protective measures specified in the plan is considered likely to provide an effective

[38] Phase 2 report, Solent Disturbance and Mitigation Project Phase II: Predicting the impact of human disturbance on overwintering birds in the Solent, (Footprint Ecology, February 2012) Available here: http://www.solentems.org.uk/natural_environment_group/SRMP/SDMP/

[39] Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership, (2014), Interim Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy

[40] Bird Aware Solent, (2017), Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy

contribution in mitigating significant effects associated with recreation. This mitigation is provided in the plan through Policy EV6 Protecting and Providing Green and Open Spaces, which outlines:

> *"Development proposals are expected to protect and contribute to green and open space in line with the standards set out in the Isle of Wight Open Space Assessment. Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they:*
>
> *1. Avoid the loss of identified open space, as shown on the Policies Map.*
>
> *2. Ensure the deficiencies identified within the councils Open Space Assessment are being addressed.*
>
> *3. Where relevant, make provision for public green, open and recreational space through on site or off site provision (including SANGs), taking into account proposals within the Isle of Wight Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)."*

5.68 To maximise the effectiveness of its role in mitigating recreational impacts on European sites, the design and management of open space and green infrastructure will need to be focused towards attracting those groups of visitors who regularly visit the Isle of Wight Downs SAC, such as walkers and dog walkers. It is recommended that the plan includes changes to the policy EV6 Protecting and Providing Green and Open Spaces by providing additional wording to ensure that there is no adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC.

5.69 Given the unique nature and attraction of coastal Europeans sites, provision of alternative open space is less applicable as a mitigation measure for the Solent Maritime SAC, South Wight Maritime SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA and therefore the focus of the Mitigation Strategy should be primarily on access management and monitoring.

Project Level HRA

5.70 Site specific planning applications, especially larger ones in proximity to the above European sites, will need to consider the requirement to undertake project level HRA, and where appropriate would be expected to incorporate necessary safeguards in line with the policy safeguards included within the plan. Detail of this requirement should be outlined in policy EV2 Ecological Assets and Opportunities for Enhancement.

Financial Contribution / Developer-led Mitigation Scheme for the Solent European Sites

5.71 Development proposals that will result in a net gain of residential housing within 5.6km of the Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA will be required to provide mitigation through either a financial contribution or a developer- led mitigation scheme that achieves the requirements of the Bird Aware Solent Strategy. The level of financial contribution with be subject to the net increase in residential housing proposed. This mitigation is provided in the plan through Policy EV3 Recreation Impact on the Solent European Sites.

5.72 Given the overlap of habitats between the Solent SPAs and Ramsar and the Solent Maritime SAC, it is recommended that this requirement for financial contribution and/or develop-led mitigation scheme is extended to include the Solent Maritime SAC.

Watercraft – Code of Conduct

5.73 Water-based recreational activities have the potential impact coastal and marine habitats. These activities can be difficult to manage and monitor the location and frequency of these activities because they are less predictable and take place in inaccessible locations. As a result, it is recommended that the most appropriate means of reducing the frequency and severity of such activities is by promoting a Code of Conduct and encouraging increased self-regulation from participants. This could be achieved via an education and awareness campaign targeted at the leisure operators, marinas, sailing clubs and holiday parks, in addition to quaysides, jetties and other launch sites. Such an approach could be undertaken via promotional leaflets, posters and signage. It is recommended that there is provision in the plan policies for a commitment for a targeted

education and awareness campaign to ensure no adverse effect on the integrity of coastal and marine habitats. This could be funded as part of developer contributions as detailed in policy EV3 Recreation Impact on the Solent European Sites.

Policy Wording

5.74 Policies in the plan already provide some safeguards and mitigation from recreational impacts. These include: EV2: Ecological Assets and Opportunities for Enhancement, which provides safeguards and mitigation to European protected sites, and EV3 Recreation Impact on the Solent European Sites and EV6 Protecting and Providing Green and Open Spaces, which provide the mechanism for providing mitigation in the plan.

Conclusion

5.75 **Provided that the above recommendations incorporated into the plan, and implemented successfully, adverse effects on the integrity of the Isle of Wight Downs SAC, Solent Maritime SAC / Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site / Solent and Dorset Coast SPA and South Wight Maritime SAC, as a result of non-recreational impacts will be avoided.**

Water Quantity

5.76 The Isle of Wight supports a small Water Resource Zone (WRZ) and is reliant on water being supplied from a range of water sources, including from the River Yar and River Medina (23%), from groundwater sources from the chalk aquifer on the Island (47%) and from water supplied from the mainland from the Hampshire South WRZ, which is directed via a sub-Solent water main (30%).

5.77 The Integrated Water Management Strategy (IWMS)[41] has identified that The Hampshire South and Isle of Wight WRZ's are at risk of large supply deficits and as such will require appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures to ensure that there is no adverse effects on integrity to European sites that are hydrologically connected to the WRZ.

Catchment Abstraction Licencing Strategy (CALS)

5.78 The Environment Agency is responsible for managing water resources in England. The Environment Agency controls how much water is abstracted with a permitting system, regulating existing licences and granting new ones. It uses the CALS process and abstraction licensing strategies to do this. The CALS process aims to aid the meeting of the environmental objectives of the Water Framework Directive by:

- Providing a water resource assessment of rivers, lakes, reservoirs, estuaries and groundwater referred to as water bodies under the Water Framework Directive (WFD).
- Identifying water bodies that fail flow conditions expected to support good ecological status.
- Preventing deterioration of water body status due to new abstractions.
- Providing results which inform River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs).

5.79 The Isle of Wight lies within the Isle of Wight WRZ for which the most recent CALs was published in March 2019[42]. The CALS identifies that the Isle of Wight is "*heavily committed to abstraction and there is very little scope for additional abstraction"* to be available.

5.80 The CALS process has developed a classification system in order to inform the abstraction process. This classification provides an indication of:

- The relative balance between the environmental requirements for water and how much is licensed for abstraction.
- Whether water is available for further abstraction.
- Areas where abstraction may need to be reduced.

5.81 In terms of water resource availability, this has been calculated at four different flows with Q30 being higher flows and Q90 being lower flows.

[41] Partnership for Urban South Hampshire, (2018), Integrated Water Management Strategy.

[42] Environment Agency, (2019), Isle of Wight Abstraction Licensing Strategy

The findings are presented below for each flow rate.

- Q30 – this comprises a mixture of restricted water and no water availability in relation to the Eastern Yar and Medina and water available in relation to the remaining waterbodies.
- Q50 – this identified a large area of no water availability in relation to the Eastern Yar and Medina and restrict water in relation to the Caul Bourne. Water was available in relation to the remaining waterbodies.
- Q70 – this comprised of no water availability in relation to the Easter Yar (with exception to the Upper Yar, which was identified as a discharge rich waterbody), Caul Bourne and the Medina, and restricted water availability in relation to Atherfield Stream. Water was available in relation to the remaining waterbodies.
- Q90 - this comprised of no water availability in relation to the Easter Yar (with exception to the Upper Yar, which was identified as a discharge rich waterbody), Caul Bourne and the Medina, and restricted water availability in relation to Atherfield Stream. Water was available in relation to the remaining waterbodies.

5.82 In terms of groundwater resource availability, the CALS identified this to have restricted water available across the Island.

Mitigation

5.83 The Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH), Natural England and the Environment Agency are working together to develop an Integrated Water Management Strategy (IWMS). The purpose of the IWMS is to examine the potential for the PfSH region to accommodate future housing growth without having a detrimental effect upon the water environment (both in terms of water quality and quantity). The IWMS contains an Action Plan for how to take forward recommended actions and includes:

- Water efficiency to minimise increase in demand.
- Protection and enhancement of watercourses.
- Ensuring sufficient capacity for the treatment of wastewater.

5.84 The Island Planning Strategy has taken these measures into consideration. In addition to ongoing engagement with both the Environment Agency and Natural England, the council has been working in partnership with Southern Water to ensure synergy between the water company's Water Resource Management Plan and the plan and to deal with any potential conflicts as early as possible.

5.85 Policy EV13: Managing our Water Resources sets out ways the council expect new development to conserve and manage water resources. This includes:

- Implementing measures to restrict predicted internal potable water consumption to 100 litres per person per day.
- Providing on-site recycling measures, where appropriate, to include, but not limited to, rainwater harvesting, greywater recycling and the use of flood mitigation measures such as attenuation to augment supply.
- Ensuring no negative impact upon the Island's watercourses and providing environmental enhancements wherever relevant.
- Ensuring no negative impact upon the Island's aquifers, including through the appropriate provision of sustainable drainage systems.
- Ensuring no net increase in surface water run-off, compared with the predevelopment rate and, where relevant, reduce run-off rates to below the greenfield run-off rates by at least 20%.
- Ensuring drainage systems meet the drainage needs of the development in full over the lifetime of the development and do not increase flood risk elsewhere.
- Connection to the sewer system, where relevant, is made at the nearest point of adequate capacity, as advised by the relevant statutory provider.
- Where sewers have limited capacity, site promoters need to work with Southern Water to ensure delivery of the network aligns with

occupation of the development. A condition may be required.

- Taking into account the existing sewerage infrastructure, to safeguard future access for maintenance and upsizing purposes.

5.86 Policies detailed within the plan will provide, to some degree, safeguards and a level of mitigation to European sites. This includes EV2: Ecological Assets and Opportunities for Enhancement, which outlines protection measure to European designated sites, and EV13: Managing our Water Resources, EV14: Managing Flood Risk in New Development and EV15: Monkton Mead Catchment Area, which outline safeguards and mitigation measures specifically in relation to management of water resources and preventing flooding.

Conclusion

5.87 **Provided that the policy wording incorporated into the plan is implemented successfully, adverse effects on the integrity of the Solent Maritime SAC, South Wight Maritime SAC, Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons, Solent & Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar, Solent and Dorset Coast SPA and River Itchen SAC, as a result of impacts from water quantity on habitat will be avoided.**

Water Quality

5.88 Proposed development as part of the plan on the Isle of Wight has the potential to contribute to increased levels of nitrogen and phosphorus entering the Solent causing eutrophication of the European sites.

5.89 Natural England has advised that any new development proposed that uses WwTW that discharge into the Solent European sites and/or waterbodies that subsequently discharge into these designated sites will need to demonstrate no adverse effects on integrity by achieving nutrient neutrality. This should be calculated using the Natural England methodology[43] and may require appropriate mitigation to achieve this.

5.90 As part of this advice, Natural England has confirmed that any development that will discharge into the Sandown WwTW will not be required to demonstrate nutrient neutrality because this WwTW discharges into the English Channel rather than the Solent. Southern Water has confirmed that a large proportion of the sites proposed as part of the plan will discharge to the Sandown WwTW and will not therefore result in an adverse effects on integrity of the Solent European Sites.

5.91 There is uncertainty at this stage in the plan making process as to which WwTW the remaining site allocations will discharge to. This will need to be confirmed in due course and in the event that they discharge into a WwTW outside of the Sandown WwTW, these site allocations will need to demonstrate nutrient neutrality.

5.92 The following site allocations will therefore require further consideration and at this stage adverse effects on integrity cannot be ruled out:

- HA002: Land and School buildings at Weston Primary School, Weston Road.
- HA003: Land to the rear of Lanes End.
- HA018: Green Gate Industrial Estate, Thetis Road.
- HA025: Land rear of 84 Wyatts Lane.
- HA033: Land west of Sylvan Drive.
- HA035: Land off Gunville Road (west).
- HA055: Old Hosiden Besson site, Binstead Road.
- HA062: Land off Quarry Road.
- HA064: Land north of Mill Road and east of High Street.
- HA065: Land east of Hillway Road and south of Steyne Road.
- HA077: Winchester House, Sandown Road.
- HA078: Learning Centre, Berry Hill.
- HA080: Former Sandham Middle School site.
- HA096: Land adjoining Scotland Farm and Tresslewood Care Village.

[43] Natural England (2020), Advice on Achieving Nutrient Neutrality For Development in the Solent Region.

- HA115: Former Polars Residential Home.
- HA116: Former St Marys Convent.

5.93 In addition, this approach will also need to be applied to windfall sites, which come through as part of the plan.

Mitigation

Policy Wording

5.94 The plan includes provision of a specific policy, EV4 Water Quality Impact on Solent European Sites (Nitrates), which specifically addresses the potential impacts to water quality in the Solent from nutrient enrichment that may arise from proposed development in the plan. The policy states:

> *For all planning applications that involve a net increase of residential units (including tourist accommodation), it must be demonstrated that the development would not cause harm to the Solent European Sites as a result of drainage that would result in a net increase in nutrients. Development proposals should demonstrate how nutrient neutrality has been achieved by:*
>
> *a) Confirming that the development will connect to the public sewer system and if so, gain written confirmation from Southern Water that it would drain to Sandown Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTW). If this is the case, then the IWC will impose a planning condition on any grant of planning permission that secures the drainage solution in perpetuity;*
>
> *b) If the proposed development would not drain to Sandown WwTW, then details of the drainage solution for the development and an accompanying nitrogen budget must be provided together with any required mitigation in agreement with Natural England;*

5.95 In addition, the Isle of Wight Council has prepared a position statement[44] on this issue that sets out the Council's approach to both new housing development being proposed on the island and island land being used to offset mainland development. This position statement has been agreed with Natural England and will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes on this issue.

Project-level HRA

5.96 Sites that will result in a net increase in nutrient levels will be required to achieve nutrient neutrality and to ensure no adverse effect on the integrity (adverse effects on integrity) of the Solent European Sites. This must be demonstrated through the provision of a project-level HRA and where there is an increase nutrient levels, appropriate mitigation measures implemented to ensure the scheme achieves nutrient neutrality. As recommended by Natural England, this should include consideration of the following measures:

- Nature-based solutions:
  - Interceptor Wetlands – wetlands can be effective at uptake of nutrients through natural processes. They include storm interceptor wetlands and interceptor wetlands to take effluent from WwTWs before discharge into watercourses. Wetlands need to be appropriately designed and located to be effective and this would need to be assessed on a case by case basis.
  - Offsetting – through change in land use in the catchment area from land uses with high nutrient loads to conversion of less nutrient intensive land uses, for example converting agricultural land with high phosphorous and nitrogen inputs to woodland or semi-natural grassland such as chalk grassland with no additional nutrient inputs and low natural discharge.
- Upgrade existing WwTWs:
  - To increase nutrient removal capacity and therefore reduce the effluent nutrient loading.

5.97 It is recommended that there is further clarity provided in EV4 Water Quality Impact on Solent European Sites (Nitrates), which details the requirement for project-level HRA for sites, which come forward that do not discharge into the Sandown WwTW.

[44] Isle of Wight Council, Isle of Wight Council Position Statement: Nitrogen neutral housing development

Conclusion

5.98 **Provided that the above mitigation is incorporated into the plan, and implemented successfully, adverse effects on the integrity of the Solent Maritime SAC, Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site and Solent, Dorset Coast SPA Portsmouth Harbour SPA and Ramsar site and Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA and Ramsar site, as a result of impacts from water quality of habitat will be avoided.**

Summary of Appropriate Assessment

5.99 The conclusions of the Appropriate Assessment are summarised in **Table 5.6:**

- The European sites that are shown as screened out with no colour indicate sites that were considered to have no likely significant effect at the screening stage.
- The European sites highlighted in grey were found to have no adverse effect on integrity (AEoI) provided the mitigation measures detailed in Chapter 5 are implemented.
- For the remaining European site in orange, the potential impacts of the plan in relation to this site are uncertain until more detail is obtained through relevant studies, in this case an updated Air Quality Assessment.

Table 5.6: Summary of Appropriate Assessment

European Site	Physical damage and/loss	Non-physical disturbance	Air Pollution	Recreational Pressure	Water Quantity	Water Quality
Briddlesford Copses SAC	No AEoI	No AEoI	**Uncertain - further information is required to determine AEoI in relation to air quality.**	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out
Isle of Wight Downs SAC	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	No AEoI	Screened out	Screened out
Solent Maritime SAC	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	No AEoI	No AEoI	No AEoI
South Wight Maritime SAC	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	No AEoI	No AEoI	Screened out
Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	No AEoI	No AEoI

European Site	Physical damage and/loss	Non-physical disturbance	Air Pollution	Recreational Pressure	Water Quantity	Water Quality
Solent & Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar	No AEoI	No AEoI	Screened out	No AEoI	No AEoI	No AEoI
Solent and Dorset Coast SPA	No AEoI	No AEoI	Screened out	No AEoI	No AEoI	No AEoI
New Forest SAC	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out
New Forest SPA and Ramsar	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out
Portsmouth Harbour SPA and Ramsar	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	No AEoI
Dorset Heaths SAC	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out
Dorset Heathlands SPA	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out
River Avon SAC	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out
Avon Valley SPA and Ramsar	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out
Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA and Ramsar	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	No AEoI
River Itchen SAC	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	Screened out	No AEoI	Screened out

Chapter 6
Conclusions and next steps

Findings at this stage of HRA and information required prior to the next stage

6.1 At the Screening stage, likely significant effects on European sites, either alone or in combination with other policies and proposals, were identified for plan policies:

- C4: Health Hub and St Mary's Hospital.
- H1: Planning for Housing Delivery.
- H2: Sites Allocated for Housing.
- KPS1: Key Priority Site 1: HA39 Camp Hill.
- KPS2: Key Priority Site 2: HA44 Newport Harbour.
- E1: Supporting and Growing our Economy.
- EA1: Employment Allocation Land to the east of Pan Lane.
- EA2: Employment allocation at Nicholson Road, Ryde.
- EA3: Employment allocation at Somerton Farm, Cowes.
- EA4: Employment allocation at Kingston, East Cowes.
- EA5: Employment allocation at Lowtherville, Ventnor.
- EA6: Employment allocation at Sandown Airport, Sandown.

6.1 The findings of the HRA screening determined that impacts from physical damage and loss, non-physical disturbance, air pollution, recreation and water quantity and quality could result in a likely significant effect in relation to:

- **Physical damage and loss (offsite only)** – in relation to Briddlesford Copses SAC, Solent

and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA.

- **Non-physical disturbance** – in relation to Briddlesford Copses SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA.
- **Air pollution** – in relation to Briddlesford Copses SAC.
- **Recreation** – in relation to Isle of Wight Downs SAC, Solent Maritime SAC, South Wight Maritime SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA.
- **Water Quantity** – in relation to Solent Maritime SAC, South Wight Maritime SAC, Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site, Solent and Dorset Coast SPA and River Itchen SAC.
- **Water Quality** – in relation to Solent Maritime SAC, Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site, Solent and Dorset Coast SPA, Portsmouth Harbour SPA and Ramsar site and Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA and Ramsar site.

6.2 The Appropriate Assessment stage identified whether the above likely significant effects will, in light of mitigation and avoidance measures, result in adverse effects on integrity of the European sites either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. The findings of the Appropriate Assessment are detailed below.

6.3 It can be concluded that no adverse effect on integrity will occur for the following European sites subject to the provision of safeguarding and mitigation measures as detailed in Chapter 5.

- **Physical Damage and Loss** - the Appropriate Assessment concluded no adverse effect on integrity as a result of physical damage and loss in relation to Briddlesford Copses SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA providing the following safeguards and mitigation measures are implemented:
  - Completion of bat surveys for site allocations HA051 and HA053 to determine the ecological value of these sites in relation to Bechstein's bats.
  - There is a commitment in the plan that proposals will mitigate for impacts, including avoidance of damage and loss of irreplaceable habitat, such as ancient woodland, which this bat species relies.
  - Completion of wintering and breeding bird surveys for site allocations identified with moderate suitability for qualifying bird species and where bird surveys identify the potential for a site allocation to exceed the threshold of >1% for birds that there is a commitment in the plan for specific mitigation, such provision of suitable habitat for birds to be implemented.
- **Non-physical disturbance** - the Appropriate Assessment concluded no adverse effect on integrity as a result of non-physical disturbance in relation to Briddlesford Copses SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA. Sufficient mitigation is provided in the plan through policy EV2: Ecological Assets and Opportunities for Enhancement.
- **Recreation** - the Appropriate Assessment concluded no adverse effect on integrity as a result of increased recreational pressure in relation to all European sites provided that the following safeguards and mitigation measures are required by the plan and successfully implemented. This includes:
  - Provision of Open Spaces.
  - Project-level HRA, where site allocations are proposed in close proximity to these European sites.
  - Financial Contribution / Developer-led Mitigation Scheme for the Solent European Sites.
  - Watercraft – Code of Conduct.
- **Water Quantity** – the Appropriate Assessment concluded no adverse effect on integrity as a result of increased recreational pressure in relation to all European sites.

Sufficient mitigation is provided through Policy EV13: Managing our Water Resources.

- **Water Quality** – the Appropriate Assessment concluded no adverse effect on integrity as a result of water quality issues from the plan in relation to all European sites. Sufficient mitigation is provided through EV4 Water Quality Impact on Solent European Sites (Nitrates) and as part of the position statement prepared by the Isle of Wight Council.

6.4 At this stage and in line with a precautionary approach, no adverse effect on integrity cannot be concluded in relation to the following sites:

- **Air Quality** – in relation to Briddlesford Copses SAC.

6.5 Further information is required to determine the potential impacts alone and in-combination with other plans and policies in relation to these European sites.

Next Steps

6.6 HRA is an iterative process and as such is expected to be updated in light of newly available evidence and comments from key consultees. It is recommended that this report is subject to consultation with Natural England and the Environment Agency to confirm that the conclusions of the assessment are considered appropriate at this stage of plan-making.

Appendix A
Figures

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Figure 1: Site Allocations Proposed as part of the Island Planning Strategy

- Isle of Wight UA boundary
- Surrounding district boundaries
- Employment allocation
- Housing allocation

0 5 10 km

Map scale 1:145,150 @ A3

CB:RW EB:Bean_C LUC 11397_FIG1_r0_SiteAllocation_A3L 13/07/2021
Source: LUC, OS, NE

Isle of Wight Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment
Isle of Wight Council

LUC

Figure 2: European Sites within 15km of Isle of Wight

- Isle of Wight UA boundary
- Surrounding district boundaries
- 15km buffer
- Ramsar
  - R1: Avon Valley
  - R2: New Forest
  - R3: Solent & Southampton Water
  - R4: Portsmouth Harbour
  - R5: Chichester and Langstone Harbours
- Special area of conservation
  - SAC1: Briddlesford Copses
  - SAC2: South Wight Maritime
  - SAC3: Solent Maritime
  - SAC4: Dorset Heaths
  - SAC5: Solent & Isle of Wight Lagoons
  - SAC6: Isle of Wight Downs
  - SAC7: River Avon
  - SAC8: River Itchen
  - SAC9: The New Forest
- Special protection area
  - SPA1: Solent and Dorset Coast
  - SPA2: Dorset Heathlands
  - SPA3: Avon Valley
  - SPA4: New Forest
  - SPA5: Solent & Southampton Water
  - SPA6: Portsmouth Harbour
  - SPA7: Chichester and Langstone Harbours
  - SPA8: Pagham Harbour

15km

0 5 10 km

Map scale 1:300,000 @ A3

CB:RW EB:Bean_C LUC 11397_FIG1_r0_EuropeanSiteswithin15km 13/07/2021
Source: LUC, OS, NE

LUC

Figure 3: Strategic Road Network on the Isle of Wight and surrounding area

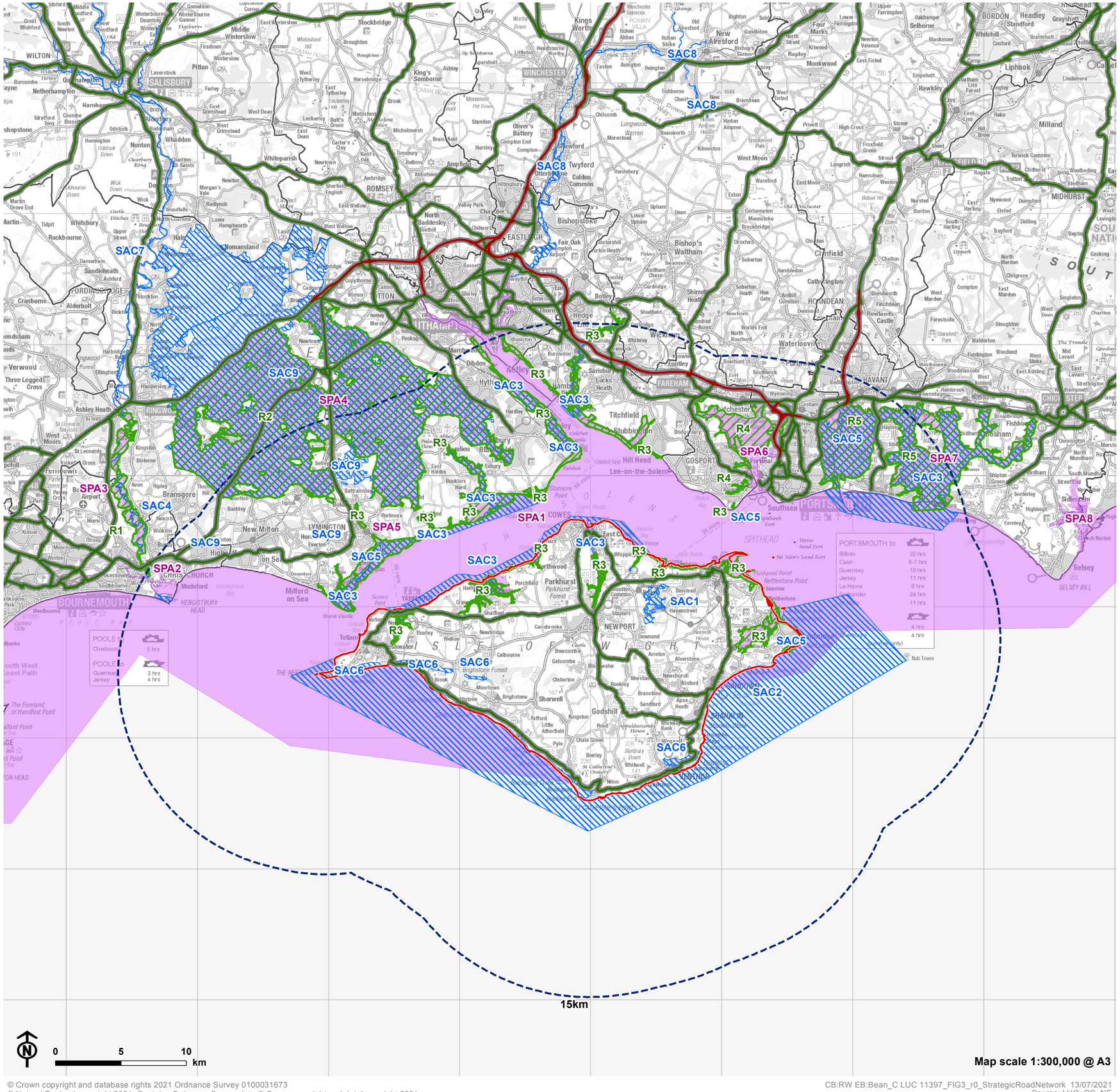
SAC8
SAC8
SAC8
SAC7
SAC9
SPA4
R2
SAC9
SAC9
SPA3
SAC4
R1
SAC9
SPA2
SPA5
SAC5
SAC3
SAC3
SAC3

Figure 4a: Offsite Functionally Linked Land within 2km of Solent and Dorset Coast SPA

- Isle of Wight UA boundary
- Surrounding district boundaries
- Solent and Dorset Coast SPA
- 2km buffer
- Employment allocation
- Housing allocation

0 5 10 km

Map scale 1:450,000 @ A3

CB:RW EB:Bean_C LUC 11397_FIG4_r0_OffsiteFunctionallyLinkedLandwithin2kmSolentandDorsetCoastSPA 13/07/2021
Source: LUC, OS, NE

Isle of Wight Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment
Isle of Wight Council

LUC

Figure 4b: Offsite Functionally Linked Land within 2km of Solent & Southampton Water SPA

- Isle of Wight UA boundary
- Surrounding district boundaries
- Solent & Southampton Water SPA
- 2km buffer
- Employment allocation
- Housing allocation

0 5 10 km

Map scale 1:160,000 @ A3

CB:RW EB:Bean_C LUC 11397_FIG4b_r0_OffsiteFunctionallyLinkedLandwithin2kmSolentSouthhamptonWaterSPA 13/07/2021
Source: LUC, OS, NE

Isle of Wight Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment
Isle of Wight Council

LUC

Figure 4c: Offsite Functionally Linked Land within 2km of Solent & Southampton Water Ramsar

- Isle of Wight UA boundary
- Surrounding district boundaries
- Solent & Southampton Water Ramsar
- 2km buffer
- Employment allocation
- Housing allocation

0 5 10 km

Map scale 1:160,000 @ A3

CB:RW EB:Bean_C LUC 11397_FIG4c_r0_OffsiteFunctionallyLinkedLandwithin2kmSolentSouthhamptonWaterRamsar 13/07/2021
Source: LUC, OS, NE

Appendix B

European Site information

This appendix contains information about the European sites scoped into the HRA. Information about each site's area, the site descriptions, qualifying features and pressures and threats are drawn from Natural England's Site Improvement Plans (SIPs) and the Standard Data Forms or Ramsar Information Sheets available from the JNCC website. Site conservation objectives are drawn from Natural England's website and are only available for SACs and SPAs

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
SACs					
Briddlesford Copses SAC	166.71	Bechstein's bat *Myotis bechsteini*	Offsite habitat availability/management – Bechstein's bat is known to forage widely across undesignated pasture and hedgerow habitat surrounding the SAC and there is considerable uncertainty over the potential impact on essential invertebrate populations. The value and likely optimal condition of these habitats needs to be much better understood. Local solar array developments, campsites and other development adjacent to the designated site may impact on bat foraging opportunity. Air pollution – Nitrogen deposition exceeds site-relevant critical load for ecosystem protection and hence there is a risk of harmful effects on the sensitive features but this has not been established, and requires further investigation.	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; ■ The extent and distribution of qualifying habitats. ■ The structure and function of (including typical species) of its qualifying habitats.	The following has been identified in the supplementary advice[45]: Bechstein's primarily feed on invertebrates such as spiders and day-flying insects that are picked from branches and leaves. The species is closely associated with mature deciduous woodland and appears to select old woodpecker holes or rot holes in trees for breeding. It also occurs in coniferous woodland in some areas. Maternity colonies may move between suitable crevices within a small area, such as a piece of woodland. It is believed to

[45] http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4805699678765056

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
				■ The supporting process (on which the feature relies ■ The population of qualifying feature	hibernate in hollow trees and sometimes in underground localities. Connectivity to Firestone Copse should be maintained as bats from Briddlesford Copses use the wetland between the two sites for foraging. It is important to maintain the intervening undesignated grassland because it provides a foraging area as well as improved connectivity between other areas/habitats. Soil biodiversity has a vital role to recycle organic matter. Changes to natural soil properties may therefore affect the ecological structure, function and processes associated with the supporting habitat of this Annex II feature.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
Isle of Wight Downs SAC	458.59	1230 Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic Coasts *Gentianalla anglica* 4030 European dry heaths, comprising tracts of 6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates *Festuco-Brometalia;* and some strands of the rare chalk heath, with features intermediate between Festuca ovina – *Avenula*	Public access/disturbance – Tennyson Down, a part of Headon Warren & West High Down SSSI, is locally experiencing high levels of pedestrian visits that damage the chalk grassland habitat. Air pollution – Nitrogen deposition exceeds the site-relevant critical load for ecosystem protection and hence there is a risk of harmful effects, but the sensitive features are currently considered to be in favourable condition on the site. This requires further investigation.	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; ■ The extent and distribution of qualifying habitats. ■ The structure and function of (including typical species) of its qualifying habitats. ■ The supporting process (on which the feature relies ■ The population of qualifying feature	The following has been identified in the supplementary advice[46]: Maritime cliff grassland habitat on both cliff faces and fringing cliff tops are maintained by a combination of grazing and natural factors, such as erosion, periodic cliff falls and exposure to salt-spray and wind. Together these maintain a characteristic open sward and bare ground mosaic. Changes in agricultural practices led to the abandonment of grazing and subsequently scrub encroachment has occurred in small areas. The following vegetation types are present and associated with the H2 heathland and are integral parts to the heathland

[46] http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5856185597034496

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		pratensis grassland and *Calluna – Ulex* heath			mosaic, but are not SAC features ■ W23 *Ulex europaeus* - Rubus fruticosus scrub ■ W24 *Rubus fruticosus* - Holcus lanatus underscrub ■ W25 *Pteridium aquilinum* - Rubus fruticosus under-scrub ■ MG5 *Cynosurus cristatus* – Centaurea nigra grassland ■ U1 Festuca ovina – *Agrostis capillaris – Rumex acetosella* grassland The following vegetation types are present and associated with the CG NVC types and are integral parts to the chalk grassland mosaic, but are not SAC features: ■ CG1 *Festuca ovina – Carlina vulgaris* grassland

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
					■ CG2 Festuca ovina – *Avenula pratensis* grassland ■ CG3 *Bromus erectus* grassland
Solent Maritime SAC	11240.83	1130 Estuaries 1320 *Spartina swards Spartinion maritimae* 1330 Atlantic salt meadows *(Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae* H1110 Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time H1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by	Public access/disturbance - Many human activites in the area can disturb birds. This includes activities such as: walking; dog walking; bird watching; boating; kayaking; kite surfing; hang gliding; paramotors; jet skis; wildfowling; model helicopters/aircraft; boat mooring, and Hovercraft. Water pollution - Water pollution affects a range of habitat and bird species at the site through eutrophication and toxicity. Sources include both point source discharges (including flood alleviation / storm discharges) and diffuse water pollution from agriculture / road runoff, as well as historic contamination of marine sediments, primarily from copper and Tributyltin (TBT). Environment Agency flood event discharge consents allow untreated waters to be discharged which end up in the SAC and	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; ■ The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species ■ The structure and function (including typical species) of	Sediment habitats within the estuaries include extensive estuarine flats, often with intertidal areas supporting eelgrass *Zostera* spp. and green algae, sand and shingle spits, and natural shoreline transitions. The mudflats range from low and variable salinity in the upper reaches of the estuaries to very sheltered almost fully marine muds in Chichester and Langstone Harbours. Unusual features include the presence of very rare sponges in the Yar estuary and a sandy 'reef' of the polychaete *Sabellaria spinulosa* on the steep eastern

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		seawater at low tide; Intertidal mudflats and sandflats H1150 Coastal lagoons H1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines H1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks; Coastal shingle vegetation outside the reach of waves H1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand; Glasswort and other annuals	are likely to have a negative impact. There is a threat of spillage from Oil Transportation and Transfer and by the usage by Ships & Pilotage. Air Pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition - Nitrogen deposition exceeds site relevant critical loads. Locally observed effects are unknown. Hydrological changes - Titchfield Haven has a high level of water abstraction licences - if all were used then water levels would be too low in the SAC/SPA . Percolation of sea water through sea walls is causing saline intrusion into non-saline grassland habitats and changing them. Direct impact from 3rd party - Off-roading is causing damage to some areas of grassland. Private sea defences are causing disruption to the natural movement processes of natural materials along the coast. Military helicopters cause disturbance to wintering birds. House boats are unlicenced and have the potential to cause damage to intertidal habitats. Fly	qualifying natural habitats ■ The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species ■ The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely ■ The populations of qualifying species, and, The distribution of qualifying species within the site.	side of the entrance to Chichester Harbour. In contrast to the Severn estuary, the salt meadows at this site are notable as being representative of the ungrazed type and support a different range of communities dominated by sea-purslane *Atriplex portulacoides*, common sea-lavender *Limonium vulgare* and thrift *Armeria maritima*.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		colonising mud and sand H1330 Atlantic salt meadows *Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae* H2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* ("white dunes"); Shifting dunes with marram S1016 *Vertigo moulinsiana; Desmoulin`s* whorl snail	grazing is causing issues affecting large areas of Chichester Harbour. Extraction: non-living resources - Shingle extraction for aggregates may have an adverse impact upon intertidal fauna and flora and may affect the movement of coastal sediments that would in turn have an impact upon intertidal habitats.		
South Wight Maritime SAC	19866.15	H1170 Reefs H1230 Vegetated sea cliffs of the	Public access disturbance - There are potential impacts of recreational boat	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate,	There is a large reef of harder limestone off Bembridge and Whitecliff Bay, where the

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		Atlantic and Baltic coasts H8330 Submerged or partially submerged sea caves	anchoring and landings upon subtidal reef and intertidal rocky shore habitats Physical modification - Potential measures to stabilise areas of SAC cliff habitat in the Compton Chine to Steephill Cove SSSI could impact upon habitat function. Physical modification - The presence of beach huts in areas of the Whitecliff Bay & Bembridge Ledges SSSI is reducing natural processes and the consequent diversity of SAC vegetation types. .	and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; ■ The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats ■ The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely	horizontal and vertical faces and crevices provide a range of habitats. The bedrock is extensively bored by bivalves. Their presence, together with the holes they create, give shelter to other species, which adds further to habitat diversity. Intertidal pools support a diverse marine life, including a number of rare or unusual seaweeds, such as the shepherd's purse seaweed *Gracilaria bursa-pastoris*. At the western end, the site adjoins the Isle of Wight Downs, providing an unusual combination of maritime and chalk grassland. The most exposed chalk cliff tops support important assemblages of nationally rare lichens, including Fulgensia fulgens. The longest section is composed of slumping acidic sandstones and neutral clays

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
					with an exposed south-westerly aspect. The vegetation communities are a mixture of acidic and mesotrophic grasslands with some scrub and a greater element of maritime species, such as thrift Armeria maritima, than is usual on soft cliffs. This section supports the Glanville fritillary butterfly Melitaea cinxia in its main English stronghold. A small, separate section of the site on clays has a range of successional stages, including woodland, influenced by landslips. This site also contains the only known location of subtidal chalk caves in the UK. The large littoral caves in the chalk cliffs are of ecological importance, with many hosting rare algal species, which are restricted to this type of habitat. The fauna of these sea caves

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
					includes a range of mollusc species such as limpets Patella spp. and the horseshoe worm Phoronis hippocrepia.
Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC	38.03	1150 Coastal lagoons – Three notable species ■ Foxtail stonewort *Lamprothamnium papulosum* ■ Lagoon sand shrimp *Gammarus insensibilis* ■ Starley sea anemone *Nematostella vectensis*	Hydrological changes - Sluices around the lagoons, particularly in East Hampshire and the Isle of Wight are in poor condition/potentially not functioning fully. This causes water quality issues and changes in the hydrology of the lagoons, for example, a poor condition outfall at Gilkicker Lagoon has caused an inappropriate salinity regime which threatens its ability to support lagoonal specialist communities. Freshwater streams and land and golf course drainage also threaten the salinity and water quality of the lagoons. Air pollution – Nitrogen deposition exceeds the site-relevant critical load for ecosystem protection and hence there is a risk of harmful effects, but the sensitive features are currently considered to be in favourable	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; ■ The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats ■ The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats	The lagoons show a range of salinities and substrates, ranging from soft mud to muddy sand with a high proportion of shingle, which support a diverse fauna including large populations of three notable species: the nationally rare foxtail *stonewort Lamprothamnium papulosum*, the nationally scarce lagoon sand shrimp *Gammarus insensibilis*, and the nationally scarce starlet sea anemone *Nematostella vectensis*.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
			condition on the site. This requires further investigation.	The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely	
New Forest SAC	29254.11	3110 Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains *Littorelletalia uniflorae* 3130 Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or of the *Isoëto-Nanojuncetea* 4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix* 4030 European dry heaths – H2	Drainage - A legacy of 150 years of drainage of mires, wet heathlands, wet grasslands and streams to improve grazing has led to a loss of peat, reduction of habitat condition, bracken and scrub encroachment. Air pollution - Air pollution impacts on vegetation diversity. Aerial deposits of nitrogen may exceed the threshold limits above which the quality and character of vegetation begins to be altered and adversely impacted. This could potentially lead to a loss or change of habitat type which in turn will impact on species reliant on that habitat. Public access/disturbance - The New Forest attracts high numbers of visitors annually and there is an assumption that disturbance affects the breeding success of SPA birds and SAC habitats through erosion,	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; ■ Extent and distribution of the feature ■ Structure and function of the feature (including typical species) ■ Supporting processes on which the feature relies ■ Population of the feature	The following has been identified in the supplementary advice[47]: Habitats Hatchet Pond - It contains shoreweed Littorella uniflora and isolated populations of northern species such as bog orchid Hammarbya paludosa and floating bur-reed Sparganium angustifolium, alongside rare southern species such as Hampshirepurslane Ludwigia palustris. Hatchet Pond is therefore important as a southern example of this lake type where northern species, more common in the uplands of the UK, co-exist with

[47] http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5727577884852224

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		Calluna vulgaris – Ulex minor heath type, and H3 *Ulex minor- Agrostis curtisii* heath 6410 Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils *Molinion caeruleae* 7150 Atlantic acidophilous beech forests with Ilex and sometimes also Taxus in the shrublayer *Quercion robori-petraeae or Ilici-Fagenion* 9120 Atlantic acidophilous beech forests with Ilex and	compaction and damage to vegetation and water bodies. Water pollution - Many villages have properties that are not on mains sewerage and have domestic treatment units which discharge into ditches and streams that are either within or flow into the SAC. The ditches and streams have seasonal flow and this in combination with a number of properties all discharging into the same channel could lead to an increase in nutrient levels impacting on the habitats they flow through, reducing species richness and diversity. Forestry and woodland management - Lack of management of woodlands in private ownership has led to loss of characteristic ground flora and shrubs and threat from non-natives such as scots pine, turkey oak and rhododendron Vehicles - Much of the SAC is unfenced with open access and numerous roads crisscrossing the site. Although the area is well served by car parks, parking on the verges is common, this is a particular problem in villages with parking on verges		southern species. Fish communities may exert a strong influence on overall lake ecology and may cause or exacerbate eutrophication symptoms. Where fisheries are present it should be a balanced mixed fishery. Eight species of fish have been recorded from Hatchet Pond; Northern Pike *Esox lucius*, European Perch *Perca fluviatilis*, Common Roach *Rutilus rutilus*, Eurasian Ruffe *Gymnocephalus cernuus*, Common Bream *Abramis brama*, *Tench Tinca tinca*, Common Carp *Cyprinus carpio*, Mirror Carp *Cyprinus carpio* and Common Eel *Anguilla anguilla*. - The minimum biomass present is estimated to be 159.3 kg/ha, although the actual fish stock was surmised to be above 200 kg/ ha.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		sometimes also Taxus in the shrublayer *Quercion robori-petraeae or Ilici-Fagenion* 9130 *Asperulo-Fagetum* beech forests 9190 Old acidophilous oak woods with *Quercus robur* on sandy plains 91D0 Bog woodland 91E0 Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)*	outside properties, village greens and Manorial wastes. This leads to a loss of vegetation, compaction of the soil and pollution. There are a variety of solutions available, but funding will be required.		In the New Forest vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or of the *Isoëto-Nanojuncetea* occurs on the edge of large temporary ponds, shallow ephemeral pools and poached damp hollows in grassland, which support a number of specialist species in a zone with toad rush *Juncus bufonius*. These include the two nationally scarce species coral-necklace *Illecebrum verticillatum* and yellow centaury *Cicendia filiformis*, often in association with allseed *Radiola linoides* and chaffweed Anagallis minima. Heavy grazing pressure is of prime importance in the maintenance of the outstanding flora of these temporary pond communities. Livestock maintain an open habitat, controlling scrub

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		1044 Southern damselfly *Coenagrion mercurial* 1083 Stag beetle *Lucanus cervus*			ingress, and trampling the surface. Wet heaths - Wet heaths enriched by bog myrtle Myrica gale are a prominent feature of many areas of the Forest. Unlike much lowland heath, the New Forest heaths continue to be extensively grazed by cattle and horses, favouring species with low competitive ability. Dry heaths in the New Forest are also characterised by a continuous history of grazing. Species The southern damselfly *Coenagrion mercuriale* has very specialised habitat requirements, being confined to shallow, well-vegetated, base-rich runnels and flushes in open areas or small side-channels of chalk rivers. Most sites are on wet heath. Females lay eggs onto submerged plants, and the

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
					predatory aquatic larvae probably take two years to mature. The stag beetle *Lucanus cervus* is the UK's largest terrestrial beetle, and amongst the most spectacular, reaching 7 cm in length. Larvae develop in decaying tree stumps and fallen timber of broad-leaved trees in contact with the ground, especially of apple *Malus* spp., elm *Ulmus* spp., lime *Tilia* spp., beech *Fagus sylvatica* and oak Quercus spp. Such timber is an essential feature for conservation of structure and function of the habitat for this species. Development takes around 3-4 years. The great crested newt is the largest native British newt, reaching up to around 17cms in length. Newts require aquatic habitats for breeding.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
					Eggs are laid singly on pond vegetation in spring, and larvae develop over summer to emerge in August – October, normally taking 2–4 years to reach maturity.
Dorset Heaths SAC	5719.54	4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix* 4030 European dry heaths 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion 6410 Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils	Public Access/Disturbance – Public access and disturbance affect large parts of the site mainly in the area of Poole/Bournemouth. Disturbance of breeding SPA birds, mostly by dogs, can affect their breeding success, with implications for population level effects e.g. nightjar and woodlark. Other effects include predation by domestic cats and urban foxes, habitat change from nutrients in dog faeces, and dumping of garden rubbish. On a number of sites the illicit use of heaths for motorcycle scrambling is resulting in disturbance and erosion, however motorcycle use on heathlands has generally declined relative to previous levels in response to site wardening and alternative facilities being made available.	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; ■ The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species ■ The structure and function (including typical species) of	The following has been identified in the supplementary advice[48]: The dry heath occurs on very infertile soils and is dominated by heather *Calluna vulgaris* growing in association with bell heather Erica cinerea, gorse *Ulex europaeus* and usually one of the dwarf gorse species. The dry heath, in conjunction with the wider heathland mosaic, supports important assemblages of animal species that include grasshoppers (Orthoptera), bees and wasps (Hymenoptera), spiders

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Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		(*Molinion caeruleae*) 7210 Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae* * Priority feature 7230 Alkaline fens 9190 Old acidophilous oak woods with Quercus robur on sandy plains 1044 Southern damselfly *Coenagrion mercuriale* 1166 Great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*	Water Pollution – Pollution from different sources affect a number of areas. It comprises of pollution from adjacent agricultural land (run-off causing nutrient enrichment); leaching from adjacent landfill sites (3 sites); pollution from foul drainage (septic tanks, sewage discharge); urban run-off. Poor water quality from the sources listed can also impede the ability to restore the sites' natural hydrology. Silt/sand run-off from adjacent sand/gravel workings and now capped landfill have smothered part of a mire system at Upton Heath. Successful remedial work in the above cases is difficult. Air Pollution: impact of Pressure atmospheric nitrogen deposition - Air pollution impacts on the site's vegetation diversity. As with most lowland heathlands and mires in England N deposition is close to, and in some cases exceeds critical loads.	qualifying natural habitats ■ The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species ■ The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely ■ The populations of qualifying species, and, ■ The distribution of qualifying species within the site.	(Arachnida), and all six species of native British reptiles. The wet heaths occupy areas of impeded drainage on the lower sides of valleys and on areas of less steeply sloping ground over more impermeable soils. The valley mires contain small pockets of wet woodland but most of these appear to be of recent origin. At Studland there is a large acidic dune system. The structure and function are well conserved with dune-building processes still active. Acidic humid dune slack communities with a high water table lie in the parallel hollows between the dune ridges. To the north of the Purbeck chalk ridge and in places elsewhere, spring-fed water

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
					flushes the heathland wetlands. The heathland wetlands together with numerous small water bodies form a stronghold for invertebrates. Some of the ponds, particularly towards the edges of the heathland area where there is base enrichment of the groundwater, support populations of great crested newt.
River Avon SAC	467.58	H3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation; Rivers with floating	Water pollution - Elevated levels of phosphate (P) lead to dominance by algae and a loss of characteristic plant species. Within Blashford Lakes high P levels could switch the system from a macrophyte dominated system to an algal dominated one resulting in a poorer feeding conditions for gadwall. Organic pollution, reducing dissolved oxygen levels (from microbial breakdown of organic material) effects biota and is also an issue. Water quality can also	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; ■ The extent and distribution of qualifying	The following has been identified in the supplementary advice[49]: Over time the Avon SAC and its tributaries have been managed and modified to suit man's needs. These practices have resulted in more than 50% of the river channel length being modified producing uniform channel habitats,

[49] http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6048472272732160

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		vegetation often dominated by water-crowfoot S1016 Desmoulin`s whorl snail *Vertigo moulinsiana* S1095 Sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus* S1096 Brook lamprey *Lampetra planeri* S1106 Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar* S1163 Bullhead *Cottus gobio*	affect the habitat quality necessary to support Desmoulin's whorl snail and the SPA species. Diffuse pollution from agriculture, small point discharges and sewage treatment work (STW) discharges are contributing to elevated levels of nutrients (by 10-50ug/l P) and reduced disolved oxygen levels in parts of the SAC. Water abstraction - Water abstraction causes lower than natural river flows that affects a range of habitat factors including current velocity, water depth, wetted area, substrate quality, dissolved oxygen levels and water temperature Public access/disturbance - Dog walkers disturbing wildfowl in areas outside public rights of way is a concern. Hydrological changes - Desmoulin's whorl snail is an annual species and requires localities that are stable hydrologically. Changes in the hydrology that may affect the species include flooding or drying out due to low ground water levels which may be linked to either changing climate conditions or over-abstraction.	natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species ■ The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats ■ The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species ■ The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely ■ The populations of qualifying species, and, ■ The distribution of qualifying species within the site.	detrimentally modified water velocities and water depths and loss of key features such as gravel substrates, in-channel woody material and tree cover. Surveys have also found the riparian and floodplain vegetation to be severely degraded over much of the system. In addition to the physical impacts; elevated levels of nutrients and sediment loads from diffuse and point sources also continue to impact on the habitat. Desmoulin's whorl snail Vertigo moulinsiana is the largest Vertigo species, with a shell height up to about 2.6 mm. This snail is restricted to calcareous wetlands, usually bordering lakes or rivers, or in fens where high levels of humidity appear to be important in determining local

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
			Inappropriate weed control - Insensitive weed cutting may impact on the chalk stream habitat and the fish species it supports. Habitat fragmentation - SAC/SPA boundaries may not adequately cover the extent of all Annex 1 and Annex 2 features and/or their supporting habitats		distribution within sites. It normally lives on reed-grasses and sedges, such as reed sweet-grass Glyceria maxima and tussocks of greater pond-sedge Carex riparia and lesser pond-sedge C. acutiformis, where it feeds on the micro-flora, and in autumn it may climb taller reeds and scrub. It is highly dependent on the maintenance of existing local hydrological conditions. The restoration of a naturally functioning river and floodplain with a network of back-water swamp and fen habitats is critical to the survival of this species in the catchment. Like other species of lamprey, sea lampreys need clean gravel for spawning, and marginal silt or sand for the burrowing larvae following egg-hatching. They spawn between

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
					the months of May-July in areas of pebble and cobble substrate. The River Avon SAC represents sea lamprey in a high-quality river in the southern part of its range. There are excellent examples of the features that the species needs for survival, including extensive areas of sand and gravel in the middle to lower reaches of the river where sea lampreys are known to spawn. Like other lamprey species, the brook lamprey requires clean gravel beds for spawning and soft marginal silt or sand for the larvae. It spawns mostly in parts of the river where the current is not too strong. The Avon is a high-quality river that represents the southern part of the range of brook lamprey. A healthy, stable population occurs in the main river and in a number of tributaries. The

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
					main river, and in particular its tributaries, provides clean beds of gravel for spawning and extensive areas of fine silt for juveniles to burrow into. The impact of summer low flows and high temperatures are now considered to be the principal limiting factors on the recovery of the salmon population. However, there also continue to be a number of in-river factors that also impact on the salmon population. These include past channel modifications affecting channel habitat such as gravels, water velocities and water depth, and diffuse pollution from a variety of land uses in the wider catchment.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
River Itchen SAC	303.99	H3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation; Rivers with floating vegetation often dominated by water-crowfoot S1044 Southern damselfly *Coenagrion mercurial* S1092 White-clawed (or Atlantic stream) crayfish	Water pollution - Pollution causes excessive algal growth, smothering macrophytes, and increased BOD, decreasing oxygen availability for spawning gravels used by salmon and trout. Water abstraction - Abstraction modifies the natural flow regime on which the Annex I river habitat depends for its proper functioning. Impacts may occur on habitat character and habitat extent, within the channel or in riparian wetland areas. All parts of the flow regime may be affected but low-to-intermediate flows are most likely to be significantly impacted. Abstraction should not impact on floodplain SAC features such as southern damselfly, as well as riverine features such as salmon Hydrological changes - Some locations on the floodplains are too dry	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; ■ The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species ■ The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats ■ The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species	The following has been identified in the supplementary advice[50]: The H3260 habitat type is generally characterised by the abundance of water-crowfoots *Ranunculus* spp. Floating mats of these white-flowered species are characteristic of river channels in early to midsummer. They help to vary water flow, promote fine sediment deposition, and provide shelter and food for fish and invertebrate animals. The southern damselfly has very specialised habitat requirements, with most populations being confined to shallow, well-vegetated, base-rich runnels and flushes in open areas or small side-channels of chalk rivers. Some important populations are

[50] http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5130124110331904

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		Austropotamobius pallipes S1096 Brook lamprey *Lampetra planeri* S1106 Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar* S1163 Bullhead *Cottus gobio* S1355 Otter *Lutra lutra*		■ The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely ■ The populations of qualifying species, and, ■ The distribution of qualifying species within the site.	however found on larger carrier streams and sections of rivers and their margins. White-clawed crayfish can grow up to 12cms long and live in rivers and streams about 1 metre deep where they hide in rocks and submerged wood. Like other lamprey species, the brook lamprey requires clean gravel beds for spawning and soft marginal silt or sand for the ammocoete larvae. It spawns mostly in parts of the river where the current is not too strong. The Atlantic salmon is an anadromous species (i.e. adults migrate from the sea to breed in freshwater). Spawning takes place in shallow excavations called redds, found in shallow gravelly areas in clean rivers and streams where the water flows swiftl.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
					The bullhead is a small bottom-living fish that inhabits a variety of rivers, streams and stony lakes. It appears to favour fast-flowing, clear shallow water with a hard substrate (gravel/cobble/pebble) and is frequently found in the headwaters of upland streams. However, it also occurs in lowland situations on softer substrates, so long as the water is well-oxygenated and there is sufficient cover. It is not found in badly polluted rivers. The Itchen is a classic lowland chalk river that supports high densities of bullhead throughout much of its length. The river provides good water quality, extensive beds of submerged plants that act as a refuge for the species, and coarse sediments that are vital for spawning and juvenile development.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
					Otters mainly eat fish, though crustaceans, frogs, voles and aquatic birds may also be taken. Being at the top of the food chain, an otter needs to eat up to 15% of its body weight in fish daily.
SPA					
Solent & Southampton Water SPA	5399.6	A046a Dark-bellied brent goose (Non-breeding) *Branta bernicla bernicla* A052 Eurasian teal (Non-breeding) *Anas crecca* A137 Ringed plover (Non-breeding) *Charadrius hiaticula* A156 Black-tailed godwit (Non-	Public access/disturbance - Many human activites in the area can disturb birds. This includes activities such as: walking; dog walking; bird watching; boating; kayaking; kite surfing; hang gliding; paramotors; jet skis; wildfowling; model helicopters/aircraft; boat mooring, and Hovercraft. Water pollution - Water pollution affects a range of habitat and bird species at the site through eutrophication and toxicity. Sources include both point source discharges (including flood alleviation / storm discharges) and diffuse water pollution from agriculture / road runoff, as well as historic contamination of marine sediments, primarily from copper and Tributyltin (TBT). Environment Agency flood event discharge	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring; ■ The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features ■ The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features	In general, the qualifying bird species of the SPA rely on: ■ The sites ecosystem as a whole (see list of habitats below). ■ Maintenance of populations of species that they feed on (see list of diets below). Dark-bellied brent goose *Branta bernicla bernicla* ■ Habitat preference: Tundra, on migration marshes & estuaries.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		breeding) *Limosa limosa islandica* A176 Mediterranean gull (Breeding) *Larus melanocephalus* A191 Sandwich tern (Breeding) *Sterna sandvicensis* A192 Roseate tern (Breeding) *Sterna dougallii* A193 Common tern (Breeding) *Sterna hirundo* A195 Little tern (Breeding) *Sterna albifrons*	consents allow untreated waters to be discharged which end up in the SAC and are likely to have a negative impact. There is a threat of spillage from Oil Transportation and Transfer and by the usage by Ships & Pilotage. Direct land take from development - Private sea defences are causing disruption to the natural processes of allowing erosion to move sediments around the SAC. Air Pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition - Nitrogen deposition exceeds site relevant critical loads. Locally observed effects are unknown. Hydrological changes - Titchfield Haven has a high level of water abstraction licences - if all were used then water levels would be too low in the SAC/SPA . Percolation of sea water through sea walls is causing saline intrusion into non-saline grassland habitats and changing them. Direct impact from 3rd party - Off-roading is causing damage to some areas of grassland. Private sea defences are causing disruption to the natural movement	■ The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely ■ The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	■ Diet: Eelgrass (Zostera), also vegetation by grazing on land or shallow water. Eurasian teal *Anas crecca* ■ Habitat preference: Lakes, marshes, ponds & shallow streams. ■ Diet: Omnivorous, mostly seeds in winter, feeds mostly at night in shallow water. Ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula* ■ Habitat preference: Sandy areas with low vegetation, on migration estuaries. ■ Diet: Summer, invertebrates, Winter primarily marine worms, crustaceans and molluscs. Black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa islandica*

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
			processes of natural materials along the coast. Military helicopters cause disturbance to wintering birds. House boats are unlicenced and have the potential to cause damage to intertidal habitats. Fly grazing is causing issues affecting large areas of Chichester Harbour. Extraction: non-living resources - Shingle extraction for aggregates may have an adverse impact upon intertidal fauna and flora, and may affect the movement of coastal sediments that would in turn have an impact upon intertidal habitats.		■ Habitat preference: Marshy grassland & steppe, on migration mudflats. ■ Diet: Invertebrates, also some plant material, located by touch and sight Mediterranean gull *Larus melanocephalus* ■ Habitat preference: Steppe, seacoasts, marshes, lakes. ■ Diet: Summer, insects, Winter, marine fish and molluscs. Little Tern: *Sterna albifrons* ■ Habitat preference: nest exclusively on the coast in well-camouflaged shallow scrapes on sand and shingle beaches, spits or inshore islets. ■ Diet: fish, crustacean and invertebrates. Roseate tern *Sterna dougallii*

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
					■ Habitat preference: Sandy seacoasts, in winter pelagic. ■ Diet: Fish, mostly plunge-diving. Common Tern: *Sterna hirundo* ■ Habitat preference: shallow water, along coasts, at freshwater inland lakes and in estuaries. ■ Diet: mainly eat fish, but also consume shrimps and other crustaceans, small squid, marine worms, and leeches. Sandwich Tern: *Sterna sandvicensis* ■ Habitat preference: coastal areas, nesting in colonies on sand and shingle beaches. ■ Diet: fish such as sandeels, sprats and whiting.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
Solent and Dorset Coast SPA	88980.55	A195 Little tern (Breeding) *Sterna albifrons* A193 Common tern (Breeding) *Sterna Hirundo* A191 Sandwich tern (Breeding) *Sterna sandvicensis*	No site improvement plan has been prepared, which identified the key vulnerabilities to this site. Reference should be made to Solent and Southampton Water SPA above, which overlaps the SPA.	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring; ■ The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features ■ The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features ■ The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely ■ The population of each of the qualifying features, and,	See Solent and Southampton Water SPA above.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
				■ The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	
Portsmouth Harbour SPA	1249.6	A046a Dark-bellied brent goose (Non-breeding) *Branta bernicla bernicla* A069 Red-breasted merganser (Non-breeding) *Mergus serrator* A149 Dunlin (Non-breeding) *Calidris alpina alpine* A156 Black-tailed godwit (Non-breeding) *Limosa limosa islandica*	Public access/disturbance - Many human activites in the area can disturb birds. This includes activities such as: walking; dog walking; bird watching; boating; kayaking; kite surfing; hang gliding; paramotors; jet skis; wildfowling; model helicopters/aircraft; boat mooring, and Hovercraft. Water pollution - Water pollution affects a range of habitat and bird species at the site through eutrophication and toxicity. Sources include both point source discharges (including flood alleviation / storm discharges) and diffuse water pollution from agriculture / road runoff, as well as historic contamination of marine sediments, primarily from copper and Tributyltin (TBT). Environment Agency flood event discharge consents allow untreated waters to be discharged which end up in the SAC and are likely to have a negative impact. There is a threat of spillage from Oil	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring; ■ The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features ■ The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features ■ The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely	See Solent and Southampton Water SPA above. Additional species include: Red-breasted merganser *Mergus serrator* ■ Habitat preference: Lakes, rivers, on migration also seacoasts ■ Diet: Primarily fish, often pursued by swimming short distances. Dunlin *Calidris alpina alpine* ■ Habitat preference: undra, moor, heath, on migration estuaries & coasts. ■ Diet: Invertebrates, located by sight and touch.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
			Transportation and Transfer and by the usage by Ships & Pilotage. Direct land take from development - Private sea defences are causing disruption to the natural processes of allowing erosion to move sediments around the SAC. Air Pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition - Nitrogen deposition exceeds site relevant critical loads. Locally observed effects are unknown. Hydrological changes - Titchfield Haven has a high level of water abstraction licences - if all were used then water levels would be too low in the SAC/SPA . Percolation of sea water through sea walls is causing saline intrusion into non-saline grassland habitats and changing them. Direct impact from 3rd party - Off-roading is causing damage to some areas of grassland. Private sea defences are causing disruption to the natural movement processes of natural materials along the coast. Military helicopters cause disturbance to wintering birds. House boats are unlicenced and have the potential to	■ The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
			cause damage to intertidal habitats. Fly grazing is causing issues affecting large areas of Chichester Harbour. Extraction: non-living resources - Shingle extraction for aggregates may have an adverse impact upon intertidal fauna and flora, and may affect the movement of coastal sediments that would in turn have an impact upon intertidal habitats.		
New Forest SPA	27997.59	A072 European honey-buzzard (Breeding) *Pernis apivorus* A082 Hen harrier (Non-breeding) *Circus cyaneus* A099 Eurasian hobby (Breeding) *Falco Subbuteo* A224 European nightjar (Breeding) *Caprimulgus europaeus*	Air pollution - Air pollution impacts on vegetation diversity. Aerial deposits of nitrogen may exceed the threshold limits above which the quality and character of vegetation begins to be altered and adversely impacted. This could potentially lead to a loss or change of habitat type which in turn will impact on species reliant on that habitat. Public access/disturbance - The New Forest attracts high numbers of visitors annually and there is an assumption that disturbance affects the breeding success of SPA birds and SAC habitats through erosion, compaction and damage to vegetation and water bodies.	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring; ■ The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features ■ The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features	In general, the qualifying bird species of the SPA rely on: ■ The sites ecosystem as a whole (see list of habitats below). ■ Maintenance of populations of species that they feed on (see list of diets below). European honey-buzzard *Pernis apivorus* ■ Habitat preference: Open wood and forest edge. ■ Diet: Mostly bees and wasps (*Hymenoptera*), also

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		A246 Woodlark (Breeding) Lullula arborea A302 Dartford warbler (Breeding) *Sylvia undata* A314 Wood warbler (Breeding) *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*	Water pollution - Many villages have properties that are not on mains sewerage and have domestic treatment units which discharge into ditches and streams that are either within or flow into the SAC. The ditches and streams have seasonal flow and this in combination with a number of properties all discharging into the same channel could lead to an increase in nutrient levels impacting on the habitats they flow through, reducing species richness and diversity. Vehicles - Much of the SAC is unfenced with open access and numerous roads crisscrossing the site. Although the area is well served by car parks, parking on the verges is common, this is a particular problem in villages with parking on verges outside properties, village greens and Manorial wastes. This leads to a loss of vegetation, compaction of the soil and pollution. There are a variety of solutions available but funding will be required. Direct impact from 3rd party - Private property owners modify verges which are SAC habitats outside of their ownership.	■ The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely ■ The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	other insects, small vertebrates. Hen harrier *Circus cyaneus* ■ Habitat preference: Moor, marsh, steppe and fields. ■ Diet: Mostly, small birds, nestlings and small rodents. Eurasian hobby *Falco Subbuteo* ■ Habitat preference: Open forest, steppe, farmland. ■ Diet: Small birds and large insects taken in flight. European nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* ■ Habitat preference: Open country. ■ Diet: Insects, esp. moths and beetles, taken from air following pursuit; nocturnal. Woodlark *Lullula arborea*

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
			Issues include: creating new drives; re-turfing; planting hedges; encroachment by moving boundaries, and storage of material and equipment		■ Habitat preference: Woodland edge, savanna. ■ Diet: Summer, insects and spiders, otherwise mostly seeds, feeds on ground. Dartford warbler *Sylvia undata* ■ Habitat preference: Scrub, heath. ■ Diet: Arthropods, occ. fruit, mainly in low scrub. Wood warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* ■ Habitat preference: Forest. ■ Diet: Insects and other invertebrates, some fruit.
Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA	5812.9	A046a Dark-bellied brent goose (Non-breeding) *Branta bernicla bernicla* A048 Common shelduck (Non-	Public access/disturbance - Many human activites in the area can disturb birds. This includes activities such as: walking; dog walking; bird watching; boating; kayaking; kite surfing; hang gliding; paramotors; jet skis; wildfowling; model helicopters/aircraft; boat mooring, and Hovercraft.	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds	See Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Portsmouth Harbour SPA above. Common shelduck *Anas Penelope*

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		breeding) *Anas Penelope* A052 Eurasian teal (Non-breeding) *Anas crecca* A054 Northern pintail (Non-breeding) *Anas acuta* A056 Northern shoveler (Non-breeding) *Anas clypeata* A069 Red-breasted merganser (Non-breeding) *Mergus serrator* A137 Ringed plover (Non-breeding) *Charadrius hiaticula*	Coastal squeeze - Habitats are being lost as they are squeezed between rising sea levels and hard coastal defences that are maintained. There is a direct impact due to loss of the SAC habitats such as saltmarsh. There is also an impact on birds due to the loss of habitat for feeding, roosting and breeding. In some areas rising sea levels will result in coastal grasslands being lost to more saline grasslands, thus losing habitat for some breeding waders of the waterbird assemblage. Fisheries: commercial marine and estuarine - Dredges (inc. Hydraulic), Benthic trawls and seines and Shore-based activities are categorised as 'Red' for these interest features (and specifically the sub-features: Intertidal muddy sand communities; Subtidal eelgrass Zostera marina beds as part of Defra's revised approach to commercial fisheries management in European Marine Sites (EMS), and requisite mechanisms are being or will be implemented by Southern IFCA and Sussex IFCA.	Directive, by maintaining or restoring; ■ The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features ■ The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features ■ The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely ■ The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	■ Habitat preference: Coasts, estuaries & lakes. ■ Diet: Mostly invertebrates, esp. insects, molluscs and crustaceans Northern pintail *Anas acuta* ■ Habitat preference: Lakes, rivers, marsh & tundra. ■ Diet: Omnivorous, feeds on mud bottom at depths of 10-30cm. Northern shoveler *Anas clypeata* ■ Habitat preference: Shallow lakes, marsh, reedbed & wet meadow. ■ Diet: Omnivorous, esp. small insects, crustaceans, molluscs, seeds; filters particles with sideways sweeping of bill. Grey plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		A141 Grey plover (Non-breeding) *Pluvialis squatarola* A144 Sanderling (Non-breeding) *Calidris alba* A149 Dunlin (Non-breeding) *Calidris alpina alpine* A157 Bar-tailed godwit (Non-breeding) *Limosa lapponica* A160 Eurasian curlew (Non-breeding) *Numenius arquata* A162 Common redshank (Non-breeding) *Tringa tetanus*	Changes in species distributions - Many waders and wildfowl are decreasing in the Solent probably as they move north and east under national trends. Some fish, such as Sand eels, may be moving their breeding grounds resulting in less food availability for breeding terns. Invertebrate populations in the intertidal muds are changing and this may disadvantage some wintering wader species. Desmoulin's Whorl Snail has decreased dramatically. Areas of salt-marsh are eroding and decreasing resulting in decreasing breeding gulls and terns as their habitat decreases and decreasing plant species of salt-marshes. Climate change - Climate change has impacts upon coastal species, in that gull and tern colonies are more frequently washed out with raising sea levels when storm surges cause flooding to habitats. Change to site conditions - There is an increasing loss of salt-marsh in much of the Solent for reasons unknown, and this needs to be investigated.		■ Habitat preference: Tundra, on migration pasture & estuaries. ■ Diet: Summer, invertebrates, Winter primarily marine worms, crustaceans and molluscs. Sanderling *Calidris alba* ■ Habitat preference: Tundra, on migration coastal. ■ Diet: Mostly small invertebrates, some plant material when newly arrived on arctic breeding grounds. Bar-tailed godwit *Limosa lapponica* ■ Habitat preference: Coastal tundra, on migration mudflats, flooded fields. ■ Diet: Invertebrates, esp insects, molluscs, crustaceans and worms.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		A169 Ruddy turnstone (Non-breeding) *Arenaria interpres* A191 Sandwich tern (Breeding) *Sterna sandvicensis* A193 Common tern (Breeding) *Sterna hirundo* A195 Little tern (Breeding) *Sterna albifrons*	Invasive species - The highest risk pathways through which marine INNS are introduced and then spread have been identified as: commercial shipping (through release of ballast water, and biofouling on hulls); recreational boating (through biofouling on hulls); aquaculture (through contamination of imported or moved stock - or escaped stock in the case of the pacific oyster), and natural dispersal. Direct land take from development - Private sea defences are causing disruption to the natural processes of allowing erosion to move sediments around the SAC. Biological Resource Use - Gull egg collecting occurs in some places, and wildfowling occurs in several places. These activities are likely to be disturbing to breeding and wintering birds even though they are licenced/consented at the moment Change in land management - Changes to land management are likely to occur in areas where tidal flaps/sluices are altered and this results in changes to water levels or salinity of that land. Some sluices are failing, which may also result in changes to		Eurasian curlew *Numenius arquata* ■ Habitat preference: Marsh, grassland, on migration mudflats. ■ Diet: Omnivorous, though principally invertebrates located by touch. Common redshank *Tringa tetanus* ■ Habitat preference: Rivers, wet grassland, moors & estuaries. ■ Diet: Invertebrates, esp earthworms, cranefly larvae (inland) crustaceans, molluscs, marine worms (estuaries). Ruddy turnstone *Arenaria interpres* ■ Habitat preference: Tundra, on migration beaches & rocky coasts.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
			water levels or salinity of land. Some ditches and drains are neglected and this can cause difficulties in land management, resulting in changes. Inappropriate pest control - Predator control is decreasing, resulting in increased predation by foxes etc. and this is the likely cause of decrease in successful breeding of gulls and terns. Air pollution - Nitrogen deposition exceeds site relevant critical loads. Locally observed effects are unknown. Hydrological changes - Titchfield Haven has a high level of water abstraction licences - if all were used then water levels would be too low in the SAC/SPA . Percolation of sea water through sea walls is causing saline intrusion into non-saline grassland habitats and changing them. Direct impact from 3rd party - Off-roading is causing damage to some areas of grassland. Private sea defences are causing disruption to the natural movement processes of natural materials along the coast. Military helicopters cause		■ Diet: Summer, mostly insects, wider range of invertebrates and other material at other times.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
			disturbance to wintering birds. House boats are unlicenced and have the potential to cause damage to intertidal habitats. Fly grazing is causing issues affecting large areas of Chichester Harbour. Extraction: non-living resources - Shingle extraction for aggregates may have an adverse impact upon intertidal fauna and flora, and may affect the movement of coastal sediments that would in turn have an impact upon intertidal habitats.		
Dorset Heathlands SPA	8166.97	A082 Hen harrier (Non-breeding) *Circus cyaneus* A098 Merlin (Non-breeding) *Falco columbarius* A224 European nightjar (Breeding) *Caprimulgus europaeus*	Inappropriate scrub control - Invasion of heath by trees and scrub results, in the long term, loss of heathland vegetation. The process is at different stages on different sites but scrub control is necessary on the majority of these sites. Public Access/Disturbance - Public access and disturbance affect large parts of the site mainly in the area of Poole/Bournemouth. Disturbance of breeding SPA birds, mostly by dogs, can affect their breeding success, with implications for population level effects	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring; ■ The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features	See New Forest SPA above. Merlin *Falco columbarius* ■ Habitat preference: Moor, heath, desert, open coniferous forest. ■ Diet: Mostly small birds, caught in open country, usually by pursuit low over ground.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		A246 Woodlark (Breeding) *Lullula arborea* A302 Dartford warbler (Breeding) *Sylvia undata*	e.g. nightjar and woodlark. Other effects include predation by domestic cats and urban foxes, habitat change from nutrients in dog faeces, and dumping of garden rubbish. On a number of sites the illicit use of heaths for motorcycle scrambling is resulting in disturbance and erosion, however motorcycle use on heathlands has generally declined relative to previous levels in response to site wardening and alternative facilities being made available. Undergrazing - Generally grazing has now been successfully introduced on most of the larger heathland sites but there remain some ungrazed areas (about 1350ha, usually where the greatest practical difficulties are present) which would benefit from the introduction of an extensive grazing regime. Forestry and woodland management - Several of the heathlands have conifer plantations on former heathland (most planted after notification) or mature conifers (or sometimes birch) that have invaded heathland.	■ The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features ■ The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely ■ The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
			Drainage - Drainage is generally the result of ditches made within the site to endeavour to drain wet heath or mire. These drains invariably result in adverse changes to wet heath and mire communities in the vicinity. Water pollution - Pollution from different sources affect a number of areas. It comprises of pollution from adjacent agricultural land (run-off causing nutrient enrichment); leaching from adjacent landfill sites (3 sites); pollution from foul drainage (septic tanks, sewage discharge); urban run-off. Poor water quality from the sources listed can also impede the ability to restore the sites' natural hydrology. Silt/sand run-off from adjacent sand/gravel workings and now capped landfill have smothered part of a mire system at Upton Heath. Successful remedial work in the above cases is difficult. Invasive species - Various invasive species are present including rhododendron and gaultheria, and these have the potential to impact negatively on the site's features. A population of carp has recently become established in Little Sea lake (previously there were no fish) and has virtually		

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
			eliminated what was previously an abundant and diverse assemblage of macrophytes. The interest of Little Sea is also affected by Australian swamp stonecrop and Canadian pondweed. Invasion of bracken on unmanaged sites is a concern although ongoing bracken management is required on most sites. Habitat fragmentation - Dorset's lowland heathland is a fragmented remnant of a once extensive landscape. Some 86% of Dorset's heathland has been lost since the 1800s, and the surviving area is broken into many fragments. This curtails the genetic and physical interchange of a number of species and leads to edge effects on smaller sites. Moreover, species populations that are dependent on the wider habitat network of heath and forest beyond the designated site boundaries are vulnerable to changes within that wider network. Conflicting conservation objectives - Heathland management aimed at maintaining open heathland does not cater		

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
			for a number of rare species that require more specific management measures. Wildfire/arson - Fire predominantly affects the urban heaths (about a third of the heathland area in and around Poole and Bournemouth) which are subject to arson. The result is that some heaths are burned too frequently and in spring and summer. Air pollution - Air pollution impacts on the site's vegetation diversity. As with most lowland heathlands and mires in England N deposition is close to, and in some cases exceeds critical loads (e.g. fFor Rhynchosporion). Deer - High deer numbers have affected heathland and mire on Arne Heath, Holton Heath and Stokeford Heath. Deer numbers are now being reduced and the habitats are recovering.		
Avon Valley SPA	1351.05	A037 Bewick's swan (Non-breeding) *Cygnus columbianus bewicki*	Water pollution - Elevated levels of phosphate (P) lead to dominance by algae and a loss of characteristic plant species. Within Blashford Lakes high P levels could switch the system from a macrophyte dominated system to an algal dominated	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds	Bewick's swan *Cygnus columbianus bewicki* ■ Habitat preference: Lakes, ponds & rivers, also estuaries on migration.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		A051 Gadwall (Non-breeding) *Anas strepera*	one resulting in a poorer feeding conditions for gadwall. Organic pollution, reducing dissolved oxygen levels (from microbial breakdown of organic material) effects biota and is also an issue. Water quality can also affect the habitat quality necessary to support Desmoulin's whorl snail and the SPA species. Diffuse pollution from agriculture, small point discharges and sewage treatment work (STW) discharges are contributing to elevated levels of nutrients (by 10-50ug/l P) and reduced disolved oxygen levels in parts of the SAC Water abstraction - Water abstraction causes lower than natural river flows that affects a range of habitat factors including current velocity, water depth, wetted area, substrate quality, dissolved oxygen levels and water temperature. The maintenance of both flushing flows and base flows, based on natural hydrological processes, is vital to the sustaining the SAC chalk stream habitat as a whole and to fish species at low flows in particular	Directive, by maintaining or restoring; ■ The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features ■ The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features ■ The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely ■ The population of each of the qualifying features, and, ■ The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	■ Diet: Plant material (e.g. tubers, shoots, leaves) in water or flooded pasture. Gadwall *Anas strepera* ■ Habitat preference: Marshes, lakes, on migration also rivers, estuaries. ■ Diet: Leaves, shoots, mostly while swimming with head under water.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
			Public access/disturbance - Dog walkers disturbing wildfowl in areas outside public rights of way is a concern. Hydrological changes - Desmoulin's whorl snail is an annual species and requires localities that are stable hydrologically. Changes in the hydrology that may affect the species include flooding or drying out due to low ground water levels which may be linked to either changing climate conditions or over-abstraction. Habitat fragmentation - SAC/SPA boundaries may not adequately cover the extent of all Annex 1 and Annex 2 features and/or their supporting habitats		
Ramsar sites					
Solent & Southampton Water Ramsar	5304.63	Criterion 1 - The site is one of the few major sheltered channels between a substantial island and mainland in	See key vulnerabilities for Solent & Southampton Water SPA.	See conservation objectives for Solent & Southampton SPA.	See Solent & Southampton SPA above.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		European waters, exhibiting an unusual strong double tidal flow and has long periods of slack water at high and low tide. It includes many wetland habitats characteristic of the biogeographic region: saline lagoons, saltmarshes, estuaries, intertidal flats, shallow coastal waters, grazing marshes, reedbeds, coastal woodland and rocky boulder reefs. Criterion 2 - The site supports an			

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		important assemblage of rare plants and invertebrates. At least 33 British Red Data Book invertebrates and at least eight British Red Data Book plants are represented on site. Criterion 5 – Assemblages of international importance: Species with peak counts in winter – 51343 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99/2002/2003)			

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		Criterion 6 – species/populations occurring at levels of international importance – Species with peak counts in spring/autumn: ■ Ringed plover, *Charadrius hiaticula*,Europe/Northwest Africa Species with peak counts in winter: ■ Dark-bellied brent goose, *Branta bernicla bernicla*			

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		■ Eurasian teal, *Anas crecca*, NW Europe ■ Black-tailed godwit, *Limosa limosa islandica*, Iceland/W Europe			
Portsmouth Harbour Ramsar	1249.6	Criteria 3 - The intertidal mudflat areas possess extensive beds of eelgrass *Zostera angustifolia* and *Zostera noltei* which support the grazing dark-bellied brent geese populations. The mud-snail *Hydrobia ulvae i*	See key vulnerabilities for Portsmouth Harbour SPA.	See conservation objectives for Portsmouth Harbour SPA.	See Portsmouth Harbour SPA Above.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS), page 3 Ramsar Information Sheet: UK11055 Page 3 of 9 Portsmouth Harbour Produced by JNCC: Version 3.0, 13/06/2008 found at extremely high densities, which helps to support the wading bird interest of the site. Common cord-grass *Spartina anglica* dominates large areas of the saltmarsh and there are also extensive areas of green algae			

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		Enteromorpha spp. and sea lettuce *Ulva lactuca*. More locally the saltmarsh is dominated by sea purslane *Halimione portulacoides* which gradates to more varied communities at the higher shore levels. The site also includes a number of saline lagoons hosting nationally important species. Criterion 6 – species/populations occurring at levels of			

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		international importance Dark-bellied brent goose, *Branta bernicla bernicla,*			
New Forest Ramsar	27997.59	Criterion 1 - Valley mires and wet heaths are found throughout the site and are of outstanding scientific interest. The mires and heaths are within catchments whose uncultivated and undeveloped state buffer the mires against adverse ecological change. This is the largest concentration of intact valley mires	See key vulnerabilities outlined for New Forest SPA.	See conservation objectives outlined for New Forest SPA	See New Forest SPA above.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		of their type in Britain. Criterion 2 - The site supports a diverse assemblage of wetland plants and animals including several nationally rare species. Seven species of nationally rare plants are found on the site, as are at least 65 British Red Data Book species of invertebrate. Criterion 3 - The mire habitats are of high ecological quality and diversity and have undisturbed transition zones.			

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		The invertebrate fauna of the site is important due to the concentration of rare and scarce wetland species. The whole site complex, with its examples of semi-natural habitats is essential to the genetic and ecological diversity of southern England. The site contains a rich invertebrate fauna.			
Chichester and Langstone Harbours Ramsar	5812.9	Criterion 1 – Two large estuarine basins linked by the channel which divides	No threats specified. See threats associated with Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA for threats likely to affect the RAMSAR site.	No specific conservation objectives outlined. See conservation objectives associated with Chichester	See Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA above.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		Hayling Island from the main Hampshire coastline. The site includes intertidal mudflats, saltmarsh, sand and shingle spits and sand dunes Criterion 5 – Assemblages of international importance Species with peak counts in winter: 76480 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003) Criterion 6 – species populations occurring at levels of		and Langstone Harbours SPA.	

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		international importance Species with peak counts in spring autumn are below: ■ Ringed plover, *Charadrius hiaticula* (Europe/North west Africa) ■ Black-tailed godwit, *Limosa limosa islandica* (Iceland/W Europe) ■ Common redshank, *Tringa tetanus tetanus*			

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		Species with peak counts in winter are below: ■ Dark-bellied goose, Branta bernicla bernicla ■ Common shelduck, Tadorna tadorna,(Northwestern Europe) ■ Grey plover, *Pluvialis squatarola* (E Atlantic/W Africa – wintering) ■ Dunlin, *Calidris alpina alpina*, W Siberia/W Europe			

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
Avon Valley Ramsar site	1390.37	Criterion 1a – The site shows a greater range of habitats than any other chalk river in Britain, including fen, mire, lowland wet grassland and small areas of woodland Criterion 2a – The site supports a diverse assemblage of wetland flora and fauna including several nationally-rare species Criterion 3c – Over winter the site regularly supports internationally important	No threats specified. See threats associated with Avon Valley SPA for threats likely to affect the RAMSAR site.	No specific conservation objectives outlined. See conservation objectives associated with Avon Valley SPA.	See Avon Valley SPA above.

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		populations of: Gadwall *Anas strepera* The site supports nationally plant species such as: ■ *Cyperus fuscus, Pulicaria vulgaris* The site also supports bird species of international importance: ■ Gadwall, *Anas strepera* (Northwestern Europe) And of national importance: ■ Bewick's Swan, *Cygnus*			

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		columbianus bewickii (Western Siberia/Northeastern & Northwestern Europe ■ Coot, *Fulica atra* (Northwestern Europe (winterning)) ■ Little Grebe, *Tachybaptus reficollis* (Western Palearctic) ■ Mute Swan, *Cygnus olor (*Northwestern Mainland & Central Europe) ■ Pochard, *Aythya farina*			

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		(Northwestern /Northeastern Europe) ■ Shoveler, Anas clypeata *(Northwestern /central Europe)* ■ White-fronted Goose, *Anser albifrons albifrons* (Northwestern Siberia/Northeastern Europe) ■ Wigeon, *Anas Penelope* (Western Siberia/Northwestern/Northeastern Europe) The site also supports			

Site Name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Key Vulnerabilities	Conservation Objectives	Non-qualifying habitats and species upon which the qualifying Habitats and/or species depend
		nationally important invertebrate species such as: ■ *Libellula fulva, Vulvata macrostoma, Vertigo moulinsiana, Pisidium tenuilineatum*			

Appendix B
European Site information

Isle of Wight Island Planning Strategy
August 2021

Appendix C

Screening matrix

C.1 The table below shows which types of impacts on European sites could potentially result from each of the policies and site allocations in the Isle of Wight Local Plan. Where a policy or site allocation is not expected to have a particular type of impact, the relevant cell is shaded green. Where a policy or site allocation could potentially have a certain type of impact, this is shown in orange. The final column sets out the nature of potential significant effects if they were to arise. Where uncertain or likely significant effects are identified, these are required to be considered further via Appropriate Assessment.

Policy	Likely activities (operation) to result as a consequence of the proposal	Potential effects if proposal implemented	Is the policy likely to have significant effects and therefore need to be scoped into the Appropriate Assessment?
Section 1: Introduction			
N/A	N/A	N/A	No
Section 2: The Island and the issues we face			
N/A	N/A	N/A	No
Section 3: What the IPS will do, area statements and diagrams			
N/A	N/A	N/A	No
Chapter 4: Environment			
EV1: Conserving and Enhancing our Historic Environment	None – This policy provides safeguarding measures to conserve and enhance the Island's historic environment and heritage assets. This policy will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
EV2: Ecological Assets and Opportunities for Enhancement	None – This policy provides safeguarding measure to protect and enhance the integrity of biodiversity	N/A	No

	and geological value on the Island. This policy will not directly result in development.		
EV3: Recreation Impact on the Solent European Sites	None – This policy provides safeguarding measures to mitigate for impacts to the Solent European sites. This policy will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
EV3: Water Quality Impact on Solent European Sites (Nitrates)	None – This policy outlines the requirements to ensure that no development will result in an increase in nutrients (nitrates) into the Solent. This policy will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
EV5: Woodland and Hedgerows	None – This policy provides safeguarding measures to protect woodland and hedgerow habitat on the Island. This policy will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
EV6: Protecting and Providing Green and Open Spaces	None – This policy outlines the requirements for proposed development to protect and contribute to green and open space on the Island. This policy will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
EV7: Local Green Spaces	None – This policy provides safeguarding measures for local	N/A	No

	green spaces in the plan. This policy will not directly result in development.		
EV8: Protecting High Grade Agricultural Land	None – This policy provides safeguarding measures to protect high grade agricultural land. This policy will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
EV9: Protecting our Landscapes and Seascapes	None – This policy supports the conservation, enhancement and promotion of seascapes and landscapes. This policy will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
EV10: Preserving Settlement Identity	None – This policy provides protection for settlement identifies and to prevent their coalescence. This policy will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
EV11: Isle of Wight AONB	None – This policy provides safeguarding measures to protect the integrity of the Isle of Wight AONB. This policy will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
EV12: Dark Skies	None – This policy supports the creation of a Dark Skies Park and outlines avoidance and mitigation measures for increased light spill in	N/A	No

	this area. This policy will not directly result in development.		
EV13: Managing our Water Resources	None – This policy outlines measures to manage water resources and avoid adverse effects on water quality, quantity and flow of ground and surface water. This policy will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
EV14: Managing Flood Risk in New Development	None – This policy outlines requirements for development to reduce the risk of flood on and offsite. This policy will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
EV15: Monkton Mead Catchment Area	None – This policy outlines requirements for development to manage flood risk in the Monkton Mead catchment area. This policy will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
EV16: Managing our Coast	None – This policy outlines requirements for development to demonstrate how coastal erosion and flood risk management has will be dealt with. This policy will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
EV17: Facilitating Relocation from Coastal Change Management Areas	None – This policy outlines requirements for development relocation aware from Coastal	N/A	No

	Change Management Areas. This policy will not directly result in development.		
EV18: Improving Resilience from Coastal Flooding and Coastal Risks	None – This policy outlines requirements for development to improve the resilience from coastal flooding and risks. This policy will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
EV19: Managing Ground Instability in New Development	None – This policy outlines requirement for development to avoid risks from land instability and how to demonstrate this. This policy will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
Section 5: Community			
C1: High Quality Design for New Development	None – This policy sets out the requirement for development to be designed and constructed in a sustainable manner.	N/A	No
C2: Improving our Public Realm	None – This policy relates to enhancing the public realm during development proposals and will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
C3: Improving Our Health and Wellbeing	None – This policy relates to improving the health and wellbeing of residents and will not directly result in development	N/A	No

C4: Health Hub and St Mary's Hospital (land allocated on policies map)	Health Care and Care-related employment Assisted living and independent living complexes Residential development (key worker, affordable and open market housing)	Non-physical disturbance (lighting and noise) Air pollution Recreational pressure Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	Yes. This policy will permit the development of a Health Hub and St Mary's Hospital. This will include for employment and residential development, including for key workers, affordable and open market housing. This will contribute to changes in travel, recreational pressure and water demand. Depending on the location this may all contribute to non-physical disturbance to European sites within 500m.
C5: Facilitating Independent Living	None – This policy relates to ensuring the delivery of a range of accommodation types and tenures that enable people to live independently and will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
C6: Providing Annex Accommodation	Yes – This policy sets out the requirements for residential extensions and annexes for existing housing.	N/A	No - this policy will result in small scale development that will not result in likely significant effect on European sites.
C7: Delivering Locality Hubs Land has been allocated at Pyle Street Community Hub, Newport and The Heights/Barracks Community Hub, Sandown.	Yes – This policy outlines the plan for delivering locality hubs at 3 locations which will include leisure, health and wellbeing support, as well as some residential development.	N/A	No - this policy will result in small scale development that will not result in likely significant effect on European sites.

C8: Facilitating a Blue Light Hub	Yes – this policy outlines the plan for creating a 'blue light hub' in the Newport Area, shared between ambulance, police and fire services.	N/A	No - this policy will result in small scale development that will not result in likely significant effect on European sites.
C9: Education Provision	Yes – This policy encourages the provision of new, replacement and extended or altered schools and incorporation of new schools.	N/A	No - this policy will result in small scale development that will not result in likely significant effect on European sites.
C10: Supporting Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Technologies	Yes - This policy sets out the requirement for the provision of renewable and low carbon energy developments.	Loss of offsite functional habitat Non-physical disturbance (lighting and noise) Air pollution Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	Yes. This policy permits renewables development. This will contribute to effects, including loss of offsite functional habitat, non-physical disturbance, air pollution and water abstraction/treatment.
C11: Lowering Carbon and Energy Consumption in New Development	None – This policy sets out the requirement for new development to incorporate design features that deliver a reduction in carbon emissions.	N/A	No
C12: Utility Infrastructure Requirements for New Development	None – This policy sets out the requirement for new developments to consider utility infrastructure	N/A	No
C13: Maintaining Key Utility Infrastructure	None – This policy sets out the requirement for new developments to	N/A	No

	maintain and/or improve existing key utility infrastructure and will not directly result in development.		
C14: Providing Social and Community Infrastructure	None – This policy encourages the retention, enhancement and maintenance of existing community facilities and incorporation of new facilities and will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
C15: Community-led Planning	None – This policy relates to encouraging community involvement in planning and will not directly result in development	N/A	No
Section 6: Growth			
G1: Our Approach Towards Sustainable Development and Growth	None – This policy outlines what the council will consider as sustainable development and growth during the plan period.	N/A	No
G2: Priority Locations for Development and Growth	Yes – This policy identifies the priority locations for development and growth within the island.	Loss of offsite functional habitat Non-physical disturbance (lighting and noise) Air pollution Recreation Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	Yes. This policy identifies the priority locations for development and growth within the island and therefore contributes to to effects, including loss of offsite functional habitat, non-physical disturbance, air pollution, recreation and water abstraction/treatment.

G3: Developer Contributions	None – This policy outlines the requirement for necessary infrastructure which will support high quality development and will not result in actual development itself.	N/A	No
G4: Managing Viability	None – This policy is in relation to the viability assessment for proposed developments and will not result in development itself.	N/A	No
G5: Ensuring Planning Permissions are Delivered	None – The policy outlines the requirement for consented proposals to be delivered at the earliest opportunity and ensuring any planning conditions are discharged. This policy will not result in development itself.	N/A	No
Section 7: Housing			
H1: Planning for Housing Delivery	Yes – This makes provision for 7,290 net additional dwellings over the plan period.	Loss of offsite functional habitat Non-physical disturbance (lighting and noise) Air pollution Recreational pressure Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	Yes. This policy defines the overall quantum of housing development that will be proposed as part of the plan and therefore will contribute to effects, including loss of offsite functional habitat, non-physical disturbance, air pollution, recreation and water abstraction/treatment.

H2: Sites Allocated for Housing	Yes – This policy outlines the provision of allocated residential or residential-mixed use development on the Island.	Loss of offsite functional habitat Non-physical disturbance (lighting and noise) Air pollution Recreational pressure Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	Yes. This policy is the overarching policy for housing allocations and therefore will contribute to effects, including loss of offsite functional habitat, non-physical disturbance, air pollution, recreation and water abstraction/treatment.
KPS1: Key Priority Site 1: HA39 Camp Hill	Yes – This policy makes provision for housing at Camp Hill	Air pollution Recreational pressure Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	Yes. This policy makes provision for residential development at Camp Hill and will therefore contribute to effects, including air pollution, recreation and water abstraction/treatment.
KPS2: Key Priority Site 2: HA44 Newport Harbour	Yes – This policy makes provision for housing at previously developed land at Newport Harbour.	Loss of offsite functional habitat Non-physical disturbance (lighting and noise) Air pollution Recreational pressure Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	Yes. This policy makes provision for residential development at Newport harbour and will therefore contribute to effects, including loss of offsite functional habitat, non-physical disturbance, air pollution, recreation and water abstraction/treatment.
H2: Housing Development General Requirements	None – This policy outlines requirements for housing and housing-led mixed-use development to be sustainable and to have a high-	N/A	No

	quality design. This policy will not directly result in development.		
H4: Infill Opportunities outside Settlement Boundaries	Yes – This policy will result in small-scale infill development between existing housing.	N/A	No - this policy will result in small scale development that will not result in likely significant effect on European sites.
H5: Delivering Affordable Housing	None – This policy outlines requirements for proposed development to provide affordable housing and will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
H6: Housing in the countryside	None – This policy sets out requirements for proposed isolated dwellings in the countryside and will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
H7: Rural and First Homes Exception Sites	None – This policy sets out requirements for the provision of rural and first home exception sites and will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
H8: Ensuring the Right Mix of Housing	None – This policy sets out the requirements for ensuring the right mix of housing is provided for each development proposed and will not directly result in development itself.	N/A	No

H9: New Housing on Previously Developed Land	Yes – This policy sets out the requirements for new housing proposed on previously development land.	N/A	No
H10: Self and Custom Build	None – This policy sets out requirements for the provision of self and custom build housing as part of proposed development and will not directly result in development itself.	N/A	No
H11: Planning for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople provision	No – This policy outlines requirement for pitches for gypsy and traveller use and plots for travelling showpeople. However, no sites have yet to be identified as part of the plan and as such should any sites come forward these should be subject to HRA (if required) as part of any planning application.	N/A	No
Section 8: Economy			
E1: Supporting and Growing our Economy	Yes – This policy makes provision for 29.2ha of employment land over the plan period.	Loss of functional offsite habitat Non-physical disturbance (lighting and noise) Air pollution Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	Yes. This policy defines the overall quantum of employment development that will be proposed as part of the plan and therefore will contribute to effects, including loss of functional offsite habitat, non-physical disturbance, air pollution and water abstraction/treatment.

EA1: Employment Allocation Land to the east of Pan Lane	Yes – This policy makes provision for employment land east of Pan Lane.	Air pollution Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	Yes. This policy makes provision for employment development at land east of Pan Lane and will therefore contribute to effects, including air pollution and water abstraction/treatment.
EA2: Employment allocation at Nicholson Road, Ryde	Yes – This policy makes provision for employment land at Nicolson Road.	Loss of functional offsite habitat Air pollution Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	Yes. This policy makes provision for employment land at Nicolson Road and therefore may contribute to effects, including loss of functional offsite habitat, air pollution and water abstraction/treatment.
EA3: Employment allocation at Somerton Farm, Cowes	Yes – This policy makes provision for employment land at Somerton Farm, Cowes.	Loss of functional offsite habitat Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	Yes. This policy makes provision for employment land at Somerton Farm, Cowes and therefore may contribute to effects, including loss of functional offsite habitat, air pollution and water abstraction/treatment.
EA4: Employment allocation at Kingston, East Cowes	Yes – This policy makes provision for employment land at Kingston, East Cowes.	Loss of functional offsite habitat Non-physical damage and loss Air pollution Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	Yes. This policy makes provision for employment land at Kingston, East Cowes and therefore may contribute to effects, including loss of functional offsite habitat, non-physical damage and loss, air pollution and water abstraction/treatment.
EA5: Employment allocation at Lowtherville, Ventnor	Yes – This policy makes provision for employment land at Lowtherville.	Non-physical damage and loss Air pollution	Yes. This policy makes provision for employment land at Lowtherville and therefore may contribute to effects,

		Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	including non-physical damage and loss, air pollution and water abstraction/treatment.
EA6: Employment allocation at Sandown Airport, Sandown	Yes – This policy makes provision for employment land at Sandown Airport, Sandown.	Loss of functional offsite habitat Non-physical damage and loss Air pollution Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	Yes. This policy makes provision for employment land at Sandown Airport, Sandown and therefore may contribute to effects, including loss of functional offsite habitat, non-physical damage and loss, air pollution and water abstraction/treatment.
E2: Sustainable Economic Development	None – this policy relates to the sustainable economic development and will not directly result in development itself.	N/A	No
E3: Upskilling the Island	None – this policy relates to the improving employment skills and will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
E4: Supporting the Rural Economy	Yes – this policy makes provision for development in rural locations.	Loss of functional offsite habitat Non-physical damage and loss Air pollution Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	Yes. This policy makes provision for development in rural locations and therefore may contribute to effects, including loss of functional offsite habitat, non-physical damage and loss, air pollution and water abstraction/treatment.
E5: Maintaining Employment Sites with Water Access	None – this policy relates to maintaining existing employment	N/A	No

	sites and will not directly result in development.		
E6: Proofing Digital Infrastructure	None – this policy relates to improving digital infrastructure and will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
E7: Supporting and Improving our Town Centres	Yes – this policy makes provision for development in town centres.	Loss of functional offsite habitat Non-physical damage and loss Air pollution Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	Yes. This policy makes provision for development in town centres in close proximity to European sites and therefore may contribute to effects, including loss of functional offsite habitat, non-physical damage and loss, air pollution and water abstraction/treatment.
E8: Supporting the Evening Economy	None – this policy relates to supporting an increase in the evening economy but will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
E9: Supporting High Quality Tourism	None – this policy relates to encouraging sustainable growth in relation to tourism and will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
E10: The Bay Tourism Opportunity Area	Yes – this policy support development in Bay Tourism opportunity area.	Loss of functional offsite habitat Non-physical damage and loss Air pollution Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	Yes. This policy makes provision for development in Bay Tourism Opportunity Area and therefore may contribute to effects, including loss of functional offsite habitat, non-physical damage and loss, air

			pollution and water abstraction/treatment.
E11: Ryde Tourism Opportunity Zones	Yes – this policy support development in Ryde Tourism opportunity area.	Loss of functional offsite habitat Non-physical damage and loss Air pollution Change in water quantity and increased water pollution	Yes. This policy makes provision for development in Ryde Tourism Opportunity Area and therefore may contribute to effects, including loss of functional offsite habitat, non-physical damage and loss, air pollution and water abstraction/treatment.
Section 9: Transport			
T1: A Better Connected Island	Yes - This policy sets out plans to improve key infrastructure, such as a new shared path routes and improvements to key road junctions.	N/A	No - this policy will result in small scale development that will be designed to provide alternative means of travel to the car and to reduce the impact on air quality and climate change and as such will not result in likely significant effect on European sites.
T2: Supporting Sustainable Transport	None – This policy sets out requirements for proposals to provide sustainable transport choices and provide alternative means of travel to the car.	N/A	No
T3: Cross-Solent Transport	None - This policy sets out requirements for proposals that maintain the current routes and	N/A	No

	methods of crossing the Solent and will not directly result in development.		
T4: Supporting Our Rail Network	None - This policy sets out the requirements for proposals to maintain and improve the existing railway infrastructure and will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
T5: Electric Vehicle Charging Points	None – This policy relates to supporting the use of low emission vehicles and facilitating the installation of electric vehicle charging points and will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
T6: Parking Provision in New Development	None – This policy relates to the requirement for proposals to make provision for parking and will not directly result in development.	N/A	No
Chapter 10: Delivery, Monitoring and Review			
N/A	N/A	N/A	No

Appendix C
Screening matrix

Isle of Wight Island Planning Strategy
August 2021

Appendix D

Review of other plans and projects for in-combination effects

District level Local Plans (strategic issues / 'core strategies) providing for development

Christchurch and East Dorset Joint Core Strategy	
Plan Owner/Competent Authority:	Christchurch Borough Council and East Dorset District Council
Related Work HRA/AA:	Christchurch and East Dorset Joint Core Strategy Habitats Regulations Assessment
Notes on Plan Documents:	Plan adopted April 2014. ■ Development provided for include 8,490 new homes and 80 ha of employment land between 2013 and 2028. *Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole are currently working on a joint local plan. A Regulation 18 Issues and Call for Sites consultation took place between 7th October – 18th November 2019.*

Conclusions on potential effects of relevance to European sites within scope of HRA of the Isle of Wight Local

Plans

The HRA Appropriate Assessment ruled out any adverse effects on European sites. The following types of potential likely significant effect were identified:

Habitat loss: Policy KS9 and KS10: There was an element of uncertainty at the screening stage, in regards to these policies and whether proposed development and inclusion of cycle and walking routes would result in habitat loss at Dorset Heath SAC, Dorset Heathlands SPA/Ramsar, River Avon SAC, and Avon Valley SPA/Ramsar. It is recommended that habitat loss does not occur from proposals and if that is unavoidable then appropriate compensation should be implemented.

Physical disturbance/damage: Policy CN3: proposes development directly adjacent to the Avon SPA/Ramsar and within close proximity to the Avon Valley SPA/Ramsar, Dorset Heaths SAC and Dorset Heathlands SPA/Ramsar are likely to result on significant effects, as a result of recreational pressure. Equally, Policy KS10: proposes improvements to the A35, which could have an adverse impact on the River Avon SAC and Avon Valley SPA/Ramsar, due to physical disturbance and damage. Policies relating to gypsy and traveller sites and rural exception sites also haves the potential to cause significant adverse impacts as a result of development within 500m of the Dorset Heaths SAC, Dorset Heathlands SPA/Ramsar site, River Avon SAC and/or Avon Valley SPA/Ramsar site. It has been concluded that there will be no significant impacts to the European sites, as long as mitigation proposed in Policies ME1 and ME2.

Recreational disturbance: Policy CN3: the close proximity of proposed development to Dorset Heaths SAC, Dorset Heathlands SPA/Ramsar site, the River Avon SAC, Avon Valley SPA/Ramsar site and the New Forest SAC/SPA/Ramsar were considered to have adverse effects, in regards to increased visitor pressure. The provision of mitigation from Policies ME1, ME2 and ME3 was considered adequate in preventing adverse effects on the European sites.

Noise, vibration and light pollution: New Forest SAC/SPA/Ramsar site, Dorset Heathlands SPA and Avon Valley SPA/Ramsar site are all vulnerable to significant adverse effects. However, the provision of mitigation from Policies ME1 and ME2 can rule out any significant effects on European sites. Air pollutions: Dorset Heaths SAC, Dorset Heathlands SPA/Ramsar site, the River Avon SAC, Avon

Christchurch and East Dorset Joint Core Strategy
Valley SPA/Ramsar site and the New Forest SAC/SPA/Ramsar site were considered to be affected by likely significant effects. It was concluded that it was unlikely for there to be significant adverse effects, as long as appropriate mitigation was implemented. In combination plans: It is concluded that there will be no adverse effects on European sites, including Dorset Heaths SAC and Dorset Heathlands/Ramsar site if recommendations made within the HRA are implemented.

Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy	
Plan Owner/Competent Authority:	Bournemouth Borough Council
Related Work HRA/AA:	Pre-Submission Consultation Document Habitats Regulations Assessment Report (July 2011) Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats and Regulations Assessment: Supplementary Statement based on Proposed Main Modifications (May 2012)
Notes on Plan Documents:	Core Strategy (adopted October 2012) *Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole are currently working on a joint local plan. A Regulation 18 Issues and Call for Sites consultation took place between 7th October – 18th November 2019.*
Conclusions on potential effects of relevance to European sites within scope of HRA of the Isle of Wight Local Plan Overall the HRA concluded that there would be no adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites resulting from the Bournemouth Plan either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. The supporting statement on the proposed modifications also concluded that there would be no likely significant effects on European sites resulting from proposed modifications. The HRA identifies the following potential risks to European sites: Physical loss of habitat: Potential adverse effects on the Dorset Heathlands SPA/ Ramsar Site were identified from physical loss of habitat on development sites whose locations are unknown. HRA concludes these effects are ruled out by CS31: Heathland. Pressure on recreation space: Potential adverse effects on Dorset Heathlands SPA/Ramsar complex were identified due to potential for increased pressure on amenity space. These effects were ruled on due to a separate study forecasting lower visitor pressure in inland areas (where heathlands are located), implementation of policies within CS31, CS29 CS33, as well as mitigation measures within the Heathland Planning Framework. Potential adverse effects on the River Avon SAC/Avon Valley SPA and Ramsar site were also identified from in combination effects with neighbouring authority plans. However, these effects were ruled out due mitigation measures in other Core Strategies. Air Pollution: Potential adverse effects on the Dorset Heaths SAC and Dorset Heathlands SPA/Ramsar were identified due to a positive trend of NOx emissions in some parts of the heaths. However these effects where ruled out by the HRA as implementation of mitigation measures outlined	

Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy
in the LTP3 should ensure adverse effects on the integrity of the Dorset Heathlands SPA/Ramsar and SAC are avoided. Noise pollution: Potential adverse effects were identified for the Dorset Heathlands SPA/Ramsar site from noise caused by new development on development sites whose location are currently unknown, as well as noise generated from vehicle traffic. These effects are ruled out due to policy CS12, CS14, CS35 and mitigation measures set out in LTP3. Light pollution: Potential adverse effects on the Dorset Heathlands SPA/Ramsar Site were identified due to potential light pollution from development on sites whose locations are currently unknown. These effects are ruled out due to policy CS31 which requires mitigation measures where adverse impacts are unavoidable. In combination effects: HRA concludes that there are unlikely to be adverse effects on European Sites as long as mitigation measures set out in the Bournemouth Core Strategy, Christchurch and East Dorset Core Strategy (2010) and the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole LTP3 are implemented.

New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016-2036	
Plan Owner/Competent Authority:	New Forest District Council
Related Work HRA/AA:	Regulation 19 Submission Draft Document Habitats Regulations Assessment (January 2018) Addendum to HRA of Submission Draft: Assessment of proposed main modifications (April 2019)
Notes on Plan Documents:	The Local Plan was adopted in August 2019 and replaces the former Core Strategy. It sets out to deliver 800 dwellings in the period up to 2036.
Conclusions on potential effects of relevance to European sites within scope of HRA of the Isle of Wight Local Plan Overall, the HRA concluded that there would be no adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites resulting from the New Forest Plan either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. The addendum to the HRA of the submission draft for also concluded that there would be no adverse effect on European sites resulting from proposed modifications. The HRA identifies the following potential risks to European sites: Air quality: Initial screening unable to rule out likely significant air quality effects in combination on Dorset Heaths SAC and Dorset Heathlands Ramsar site; New Forest SAC, SPA and Ramsar site; Solent Maritime SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site. A separate air quality assessment and ecological assessment carried out the assessment of potential air quality effects for the New Forest National Park and New Forest District Local Plans. Traffic collision risk: The HRA screening was unable to rule out likely significant traffic collision risk effects on the New Forest SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites on a precautionary basis due to the lack of	

New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016-2036
suitable traffic growth forecast. Appropriate Assessment concluded that adverse effects on the integrity of European sites as a result of traffic collision risk will be avoided. In combination effects: Therefore, in combination effects with the Isle of Wight Plan can be ruled out.

New Forest District Local Plan 2016-2036	
Plan Owner/Competent Authority:	New Forest District Council
Related Work HRA/AA:	Proposed Submission Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment (June 2018)
Notes on Plan Documents:	The Local Plan was adopted in July 2020. The Plan seeks to provide at least 10,420 additional homes in the period up to 2036, within at least 6,000 homes on strategic allocations and at least 800m homes on sites of 10 or more within or adjacent to the defined towns and large villages. The plan will also provide sufficient land to meet an identified need for 126,000 sqm of employment floorspace.
Conclusions on potential effects of relevance to European sites within scope of HRA of the Isle of Wight Local Plan Overall, the HRA concluded that, due to effective avoidance and reduction measures set out, the New Forest District Local Plan would not have adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The HRA identified the following potential risks to European sites: Direct loss or physical damage to European sites: In relation to Policy 23, which supports commercial and port-related development at Marchwood Port, it was considered that enhancement of port operations may include extended jetties and/or dredging in the channel within the Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site. However, it was considered during Appropriate Assessment that the policy could be implemented without significant adverse effects, given appropriate safeguards during its design and construction. Additionally, it was also deemed that it could be possible to defer to a development specific HRA as the port related development is not fundamental to the delivery of the Local Plan Part 1. Loss or damage to offsite supporting habitat for qualifying bird populations: Prior to consideration of mitigation, it was not possible to rule out the potential for adverse effects on the integrity of qualifying SPA/Ramsar bird populations from the following strategic site allocations in combination with one another: SS 4 The former Fawley Power Station; SS 12 Land to the south of Derritt Lane, Bransgore; SS 13 Land at Moortown Lane, Ringwood, and SS 15 Land at Snails Lane, Ringwood. In response, therefore, the allocation policies for each of these strategic sites requires site specific bird surveys to confirm their contribution to in-combination loss of supporting habitat to internationally designated species and to be mitigated as required. This provides the necessary level of certainty that the loss of habitat associated with these site allocations will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of the European Sites and it was considered acceptable to defer this evidence gathering until the	

New Forest District Local Plan 2016-2036
development management stage. As such, it was considered that the potential for adverse effects on any European sites could be ruled out. Urban edge effects: In the context of the New Forest the most important types of urban edges to consider were cat predation and increased fly-tipping. However, neither Marchwood Port nor any of the strategic site allocations are within 400m of Dorset Heaths SAC, Dorset Heathlands SPA, Dorset Heathlands Ramsar site, The New Forest SAC, New Forest SPA, New Forest Ramsar site. As such, it was considered that adverse effects on the sites could be ruled out. Air quality: It was deemed that implementation of the NFDC Local Plan Part 1 and NFNPA Local Plan alone will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site. While there is no evidence of current negative effects from traffic related air pollution, uncertainty remains about whether in combination traffic growth and related air pollution could adversely affect the integrity of New Forest SAC, SPA and Ramsar site during the plan period. These concerns are addressed in the New Forest Air Quality Ecological Mitigation Plan. As such, it was concluded that adverse air quality effects on the integrity of European sites could be ruled out. Traffic collision risk: In the evidence review, it was concluded that road traffic growth does not inevitably lead to an increase in the risk of grazing animals in the New Forest being killed in traffic collisions. Since the roads presenting the highest collision risk have already been fenced and there is a broad range of other measures available with the potential to successfully manage risk, it was suggested that it should be possible to address a reversal without additional fencing. It was therefore concluded that the Local Plan Part 1 will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites. Recreation Pressure: It was concluded that reliance can be placed on the mitigation provided by Policy 10 of the Local Plan, the New Forest (outside of the National Park) Recreational Mitigation Strategy Review, and the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy to mitigate potential recreation pressure from development proposals in the Local Plan. Therefore, adverse effects on European sites through recreational pressure were ruled out. Water quantity: It was considered that potential effects on the River Itchen SAC would be mitigated by the Local Plan Part 1's adoption of higher water use efficiency standards in the Building Regulations. As such, adverse effects on European sites in relation to changes in water quality were ruled out. Water Quality: In relation to WwTW infrastructure to accommodate strategic allocations, it was deemed possible to rule out adverse effects on European sites. This is due to requirements for additional capacity at relevant WwTWs being set out in allocation policies for strategic sites. It was considered that *Policy 10: Mitigating the impacts of development on International Nature Conservation sites* adequately mitigates potential adverse effects arising from treated wastewater discharge in the Solent and the River Avon. Therefore, in-combination effects with the isle of Wight Local Plan can be ruled out.

Southampton Local Development Framework Core Strategy (Partial Review March 2015)	
Plan Owner/Competent	Southampton City Council

Southampton Local Development Framework Core Strategy (Partial Review March 2015)	
Authority:	
Related Work HRA/AA:	Core Strategy Habitats Regulations Assessment Summary Report
Notes on Plan Documents:	Plan adopted January 2010; partial review adopted March 2015. Development provided for includes 16,300 new homes, 110,000 sq m of office development and 97,000 sq m of industrial/warehouse development between 2006 and 2026.

Conclusions on potential effects of relevance to European sites within scope of HRA of Isle of Wight Local Plan

The following likely significant effects were identified:

Coastal Squeeze: this is likely to have a significant effect on the Solent and Southampton Water SPA/ Ramsar site and Solent Maritime SAC. The forthcoming North Solent Shoreline Management Plan is expected to be addressed and mitigate for the impacts of coastal squeeze.

Recreational disturbance: an increase in visitor numbers could potentially cause significant impacts on Solent and Southampton Water SPA/ Ramsar site, Solent Maritime SAC and the New Forest SAC/SPA/Ramsar site. A Solent Disturbance and Mitigation Study will be undertaken to identify the potential impacts of recreation. Appropriate mitigation measures can be devised from this.

Air pollution: could potentially cause significant impacts on Solent and Southampton Water SPA/ Ramsar site and Solent Maritime SAC and the New Forest SAC/SPA/Ramsar. There is potential for in combination effects with Draft South East Plan and Southampton Airport.

Tall buildings and flight/view lines: there is potential for likely significant effects Solent and Southampton Water SPA/ Ramsar, however there is insufficient information to assess this. Increased effluent discharge: has potential likely significant impact on Solent and Southampton Water SPA/ Ramsar,

Solent Maritime SAC, the New Forest SAC/ SPA/ Ramsar. There is potential for in combination effects with Draft South East Plan.

Increased water demand: this could cause likely significant effects on Solent and Southampton Water SPA/ Ramsar, Solent Maritime SAC, the New Forest SAC/ SPA/ Ramsar. This is also considered to be an adverse effect of the Draft South East Plan.

Noise/Light pollution: impacts are currently uncertain.

Fareham Borough Local Plan 2037 (Regulation 19 publication version, November 2020)	
Plan Owner/Competent Authority:	Fareham Borough Council
Related Work HRA/AA:	Screen and Appropriate Assessment Report for the Publication Plan

Fareham Borough Local Plan 2037 (Regulation 19 publication version, November 2020)	
Notes on Plan Documents:	The plan sets out to provide 8,389 new homes in the Borough during the plan period of 2021-2037. In terms of employment, the plan aims to provide 104,000 sq. m of new employment floorspace. Following changes to Planning Practice Guidance on housing need, a further consultation is taking place in summer 2021 on changes to the publications version of the Local Plan.

Conclusions on potential effects of relevance to European sites within scope of HRA of Isle of Wight Local Plan

Overall, it was considered that the Fareham Local Plan would not result in likely significant effects on European sites due to mitigation outlined within the plan.

The Screening process considered potential for likely significant effects on European sites from the following impact pathways, which in some cases were then considered in Appropriate Assessment:

Atmospheric pollution – The HRA concluded that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of River Itchen SAC, Solent Maritime SAC, the New Forest SAC/SPA/Ramsar, Portsmouth Harbour SPA/Ramsar, Solent and Dorset Coast SPA or Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar as a result of atmospheric pollution, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects

Coastal Squeeze – No likely significant effects through coastal squeeze were identified for Solent Maritime SAC, Portsmouth Harbour SPA/Ramsar, Solent and Dorset Coast SPA or Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

Disturbance – It was concluded that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA/Ramsar, Portsmouth Harbour SPA/Ramsar or Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar as a result of strategic disturbance, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects

Water abstraction -

Water pollution - The HRA deemed that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of Solent Maritime SAC or Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar as a result of water pollution, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects

Site specific impacts – The HRA suggested that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of Solent Maritime SAC, Portsmouth Harbour SPA/Ramsar, Solent and Dorset Coast SPA or Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar as a result of site specific impacts, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

The Gosport Borough Local Plan 2011-2029 (Adopted October 2015)	
Plan Owner/Competent Authority:	Gosport Borough Council
Related Work HRA/AA:	Habitat Regulations Assessment of Gosport Borough Local Plan

The Gosport Borough Local Plan 2011-2029 (Adopted October 2015)	
Notes on Plan Documents:	The plan sets out to provide 3,060 new homes in the Borough during the plan period of 2011-2029. In terms of employment, the plan aims to provide 84,000 sq. m of new employment floorspace.

Conclusions on potential effects of relevance to European sites within scope of HRA of Isle of Wight Local Plan

The HRA could not conclude no likely significant effect in relation to the following European Sites and as such were considered further at Appropriate Assessment:

- Portsmouth Harbour SPA/Ramsar – in relation to air pollution, disturbance, site specific and coastal squeeze.
- Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA/Ramsar in relation to disturbance and site-specific impacts.
- Solent and Southampton Water SPAs/Ramsar – in relation to disturbance and site-specific impacts.
- New Forest SPA – in relation to disturbance.

At the appropriate assessment, it was concluded that there would be no adverse effect on integrity provided the recommendations outlined in the HRA are included in the plan and implemented successfully.

Havant Borough Core Strategy (Adopted March 2011), Havant Borough Local Plan Allocations (2014) and g Havant Borough Local Plan 2036	
Plan Owner/Competent Authority:	Havant Borough Council
Related Work HRA/AA:	Havant Borough Council Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Statement
Notes on Plan Documents:	The Core Strategy sets out to provide 6,300 new homes in the Borough during the plan period of 2006-2026. In terms of employment, the plan aims to provide 162,000 sq. m of new employment floorspace. The Local Plan, which will replace the Core Strategy once adopted, sets out to provide 10,773 new dwellings and 12,575 sq. m of new employment floorspace during the plan period up to 2036.

Conclusions on potential effects of relevance to European sites within scope of HRA of Isle of Wight Local Plan

The HRA Screening Statement concluded that there was potential for impacts from recreational disturbance, air pollution and indirect habitat loss to European sites as a result of proposed development in the plan. However, the HRA concluded that there would be no likely significant effect provided avoidance and mitigation measures are implemented. This HRA report was completed prior to the People over Wind judgement and an appropriate assessment would not be required.

Portsmouth Core Strategy (adopted January 2012), Portsmouth City Local Plan (2006).	
Plan Owner/Competent Authority:	Portsmouth City Council
Related Work HRA/AA:	Habitat Regulations Assessment for the Portsmouth Core Strategy.
Notes on Plan Documents:	The Core Strategy sets out to provide up to 12,754 new homes in the Borough during the plan period of 2006-2027. In terms of employment, the plan aims to provide 243,000 sq. m of new employment floorspace.

Conclusions on potential effects of relevance to European sites within scope of HRA of Isle of Wight Local Plan

The HRA Report demonstrates that there will be no adverse effects on the ecological integrity of any European site as a result of the Portsmouth Core Strategy in relation to the following impact types:

- Water abstraction.
- Waste water pollution.

The report further demonstrates that adverse effects associated with the Core Strategy in relation to the following impact types can be overcome provided the avoidance and mitigation package is successfully adopted and implemented:

- Atmospheric pollution.
- Disturbance from recreation.
- Flood risk and coastal squeeze.
- Displacement and collision mortality risk from site-specific developments.

Major infrastructure projects

Aquind Interconnector	
Plan Owner/Competent Authority:	Aquind Limited
Related Work HRA/AA:	Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Aquind Interconnector project
Notes on Plan Documents:	AQUIND Interconnector (the 'Project') consists of the construction of a 2,000 MW bidirectional electrical power transmission link between the South Coast of England and Normandy in France and would facilitate the import and export of electricity between the UK and France. The Proposed Development includes that part of the Project located within the UK and the UK Marine Area, for which development consent is sought by the Application.

Aquind Interconnector

Conclusions on potential effects of relevance to European sites within scope of HRA of Isle of Wight Local Plan

Following consideration of likely significant effects the potential for adverse effects on the integrity of eleven UK designated sites (SACs and SPA/Ramsars) and eight French designated sites (SPAs, SACs) and a Ramsar in the Channels Islands was assessed. Effects considered included the following:

- Disturbance and displacement, indirect effects, and accidental spills and litter on ornithological features
- Pollution on Annex I habitats, migratory fish and marine mammal features
- Invasive species, sediment deposition, and increased suspended sediments on Annex I habitats
- Increased suspended sediments on migratory fish features.

It was concluded that the Proposed Development will not have an adverse effect on site integrity alone or in combination with other projects and plans.

Appendix E

Site Allocations within 2km of the Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA

Table 6.1 Housing allocations with 2km of the Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA.

Site Allocation	No. of Dwellings	Planning Permission Granted
Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar / Solent and Dorset Coast SPA		
Housing Allocations		
West Wight Regeneration Area		
HA005: Land to the east of Football Club, Camp Road	90	No
HA006: Heathfield Campsite, Heathfield Road	70	No
HA008: Church Field, Copse Lane	25	No
HA114: Land off Birch Close	50	No
West Medina Regeneration Area		
HA018: Green Gate Industrial Estate, Thetis Road	10	No
HA019: Medina Yard	535	Yes
HA020: Former Somerton Resevoir, Newport Road	146	No
HA022: Somerton Farm, Newport Road	130	No
HA025: Land rear of 84 Wyatts Lane	20	No
HA026: Land rear of Harry Cheek Gardens and Wyatts Lane	28	No
Newport Regeneration Area		
HA31: Various land adjacent to and east of Carisbrooke College	175	No
HA032: Land at Horsebridge Hill & Acorn Farm	115	No
HA033: Land west of Sylvan Drive	225	No
HA036: Land at Noke Common	100	No
HA037: Former Library HQ, land adjacent St Marys Hospital	25	No
HA039: Former HMP site	1200	No
HA044: Newport Harbour	250	No
HA110: Land at Moreys Timber Yard, Trafalgar Road	100	No

Site Allocation	No. of Dwellings	Planning Permission Granted
HA115: Former Polars Residential Home	100	No
East Medina Regeneration Area		
HA046: Land at Crossway	125	No
HA113: Land at Red Funnel	100	Yes
HA051: Palmers Farm, Brocks Copse Road	40	Yes
HA053: Land adjoining Lushington Hill & Hunters Way, Wootton	50	No
Ryde Regeneration Area		
HA055: Old Hosiden Besson site, Binstead Road	15	No
HA060: Westridge Cross Dairy and land to the north of Bullen Road, Ryde	474	No
HA062: Land off Quarry Road	30	No
HA112: Land at Harcourt Sands	128	Yes
HA116: Former St Marys Convent, High Street	25	No
HA064: Land north of Mill Road and east of High Street	100	No
HA065: Land east of Hillway Road and south of Steyne Road	80	No
Solent and Dorset Coast SPA (only)		
HA077: Winchester House, Sandown Road	20	No
HA078: Learning Centre, Berry Hill	30	No
HA079: 23 Carter Street, Sandown	16	Yes
HA080: Former Sandham Middle School site	84	No
HA081: Sandown Town Hall, Grafton Street	11	Yes

Table 6.2 Employment allocations with 2km of the Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site and Solent and Dorset Coast SPA.

Site Allocation (Employment)	Total area of employment land (ha)	Planning Permission Granted
Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar / Solent and Dorset Coast SPA		
EA1: Employment Allocation Land to the east of Pan Lane	3ha	No
EA2: Employment allocation at Nicholson Road, Ryde	14.6ha	No
EA3: Employment allocation at Somerton Farm, Cowes	1.9ha	No
EA4: Employment allocation at Kingston, East Cowes	6.2ha	No
Solent and Dorset Coast SAC (only)		
EA6: Employment allocation at Sandown Airport, Sandown	2.99ha	No