



Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Statement

Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan

February 2023

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended) provide protection for sites that are of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species. The network consists of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Both types can also be referred to as European Sites. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that Ramsar sites should be afforded the same level of protection and refers to SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites as 'Habitat Sites'.

1.2 The requirement to undertake Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) of development plans is set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended including through EU Exit legislation). It is also a requirement of Regulation 32 schedule 2 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended). In order to proceed to referendum a Neighbourhood Plan must meet a series of 'basic conditions', which include that it does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

1.3 Regulation 105 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended including through EU Exit legislation) states:

'Where a land use plan:

(a) Is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and

(b) Is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site, The plan-making authority for that plan must, before the plan is given effect, make an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of that site's conservation objectives.'

1.4 The HRA is therefore undertaken in stages and should conclude whether or not a proposal or policy in the Plan would adversely affect the integrity of any sites.

Stage 1: Determining whether a plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site. This needs to take account of the likely impacts in combination with other relevant plans and projects. This assessment should be made using the precautionary

principle. The screening assessment must reflect the outcomes of the 2018 judgement of the Court of Justice of the European Union¹, which has ruled that where mitigation is necessary this must be identified through an Appropriate Assessment.

Stage 2: Carrying out Appropriate Assessment and ascertaining the effect on site integrity. The effects of the plan on the conservation objectives of sites should be assessed, to ascertain whether the plan has an adverse effect on the integrity of a European site.

Stage 3: Identifying mitigation measures and alternative solutions. The aim of this stage is to find ways of avoiding or significantly reducing adverse impacts, so that site integrity is no longer at risk. If there are still likely to be negative impacts, the option should be dropped, unless exceptionally it can be justified by imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

- 1.5 The Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan is being produced by Lowestoft Town Council. A Draft Neighbourhood Plan has been produced and this screening assessment considers whether there are likely to be significant effects on protected European sites and whether a full Appropriate Assessment will be required.
- 1.6 The Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan will need to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. East Suffolk Council is covered by two Local Plans, the East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan adopted September 2020 and the East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan adopted March 2019. The relevant local plan for the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan area is the East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan 2019.
- 1.7 The Waveney Local Plan was subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment as part of its production. Where screening identified a likely significant effect, an Appropriate Assessment was undertaken and mitigation measures identified were incorporated within the Local Plan, resulting in a conclusion that the plan will not lead to any adverse effects on Habitat sites within and in the vicinity of

¹ C-323/17 – People over Wind, Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta

the (then) Waveney District. The Local Plan Appropriate Assessment identified recreational disturbance particularly from dog walkers as the main significant effect. The Council has therefore subsequently produced a Recreational Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) and requires payment towards mitigation from residential developments within 13km of the protected Habitat sites.

2. Protected sites covered by this screening report

- 2.1 Sites included in this assessment are listed in Table 1. This includes all sites that are within 20km of the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan area (for consistency with the distances applied within the HRA of the Waveney Local Plan and adopting the precautionary approach). The locations of the sites are shown on maps in Appendix 2 and the Qualifying Features and Conservation Objectives of the sites are contained in Appendix 3, along with a summary of the pressures and threats as documented in the Appropriate Assessment for the Local Plan.

Table 1: Relevant Habitat protected sites

Name
Benacre to Easton Barents Lagoons SAC
The Broads SAC
Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SAC
Benacre to Easton Barents SPA
Broadland SPA
Minsmere-Walberswick SPA
Broadland Ramsar Site
Minsmere-Walberswick Ramsar Site
Breydon Water SPA
Breydon Water Ramsar Site
Great Yarmouth North Denes SPA
Southern North Sea SAC
Outer Thames Estuary SPA

3. Draft Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan

- 3.1 Lowestoft Town Council is producing a Neighbourhood Plan for Lowestoft Neighbourhood area, in order to set out the vision, objectives and policies for the development of the town up to 2036, within the context of East Suffolk - Waveney Local Plan 2019. This HRA screening assessment initially reviewed an emerging draft of Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan in May 2021 during its production and has now been amended to reflect the latest iteration of the draft Neighbourhood Plan, dated September 2022.
- 3.2 The Draft Neighbourhood Plan includes a range of policies covering the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan area. A number of policies relate to the full Neighbourhood Plan area whilst others are area/location specific. The Plan does not allocate specific sites for residential development but does support them. Furthermore, the plan also includes specific policies relating to specific sites, which are included in the local plan, including two sites for culture and visitor-related uses (Policy SW1 –Seafront Pavilion Site and Policy SW2 – Seafront Ness Point). The Neighbourhood Plan area also encompasses a number of other Local Plan allocations.
- 3.3 The policies in the Draft Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan are listed in Table 2 below. An assessment of whether each policy is likely to have a significant effect on European protected sites is included in section 5 of this report.

Table 2: List of Neighbourhood Plan policies

Policy ref	Policy Title
SW1	Seafront Pavilion Site
SW2	Seafront Ness Point
SW3	Kirkley Waterfront Sites
ETC1	Lowestoft Town Centre and Historic High Street
ETC2	Historic Town Hall Regeneration
ETC3	Enterprise, Employment and Tourism
LH1	Residential Development
LH2	Former Lowestoft Hospital Site
LH3	Residential Mix and Standards
EP1	Design and Character

EP2	Green Infrastructure, Urban Green Space and Biodiversity
EP3	Port Development
EP4	North Lowestoft Conservation Area
EP5	Local Heritage
EP6	Strategic Green Landscape
EP7	Local Green Space
EP8	Recreational and Sports Spaces
FSW6	Mitigating Flood Risk
TM1	Balanced Transport Provision
SE1	Local Energy Schemes

4. Other Plans and Projects

- 4.1 Regulation 105 of the 2017 Regulations (as amended) requires consideration to be given to whether a Plan will have an effect either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.
- 4.2 As noted in the introduction, the other key plan is the Local Plan. The East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan was adopted in March 2019. The adopted Local Plan sets out the broad scale and distribution of development across the area of East Suffolk formerly covered by Waveney District Council. The Local Plan was subject to an Appropriate Assessment as part of its production.
- 4.5 The Draft Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan policies interpret the strategy and policies of the Local Plan at a local level. The policies contained in the Draft Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan are proposed to provide locally specific, criteria-based policy guidance for the determination of planning applications.
- 4.6 Policy WLP1.1 (Scale and Location of Growth) of the Local Plan states that 56% of housing growth (approx. 5,206 dwellings) will take place in the Lowestoft area. Much of this requirement is anticipated to be met through strategic allocations in the Local Plan. The Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan does not include any residential site allocations but supports the delivery of new dwellings in and around the Town Centre, including the conversion of upper floors above retail units.

- 4.7 A screening process considered each policy in the Local Plan and concluded whether significant effects were likely and if Appropriate Assessment was needed. The Appropriate Assessment subsequently considered the following themes - recreation pressure from new residential development, recreation pressure from tourism, urbanisation effects in close proximity, air quality from increased road traffic, water quality and resources and biodiversity net gain. Mitigation measures were identified within the Appropriate Assessment and were incorporated within the final Local Plan, resulting in a conclusion that the plan will not lead to any adverse effects on Habitat sites within and in the vicinity of the Waveney Local Plan area.
- 4.8 The Council has subsequently produced a Recreational Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) and requires payment towards mitigation of likely significant effects from residential developments within 13km of Habitat sites.

5. Assessment of likely effects of the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan on Habitat Sites

- 5.1 Table 3 below considers each policy of the Draft Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan in relation to whether there is potential for a likely significant effect on Habitat Sites. This constitutes Stage 1 as set out under paragraph 1.4 above. Consideration is given to the characteristics and location of the Habitat Sites. The policies are considered within the context of the Local Plan policies which they must be in general conformity with, and which have themselves been subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment, as set out in section 4 above.

Table 3: Likely significant effects of the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan

Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat Sites	Habitat sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect (LSE) identified?	AA needed?
SW1	Seafront Pavilion Site the East Point Pavilion site on the south beach seafront is allocating these sites for certain uses for any development and is intended to support tourism and the visitor economy. This includes performance, display, exhibition, recreation, and other tourism and visitor-related uses. The aim of the policy is to achieve exemplar design, to create a positive symbol of an area transforming. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified. The seafront Pavilion site is allocated within the Local Plan and is covered by wider strategic policies. Peto Square Leisure Area promotes growth of leisure uses such as public houses and restaurants. Relevant Local Plan Policies are WLP2.3 – Peto Square, WLP8.18 – New Town Centre Use Development, WLP8.19 – Vitality and Viability of Town Centres.	None	None	No
SW2	Seafront Ness Point this policy allows for a visitor centre associated with the Ness which could include exhibition space, interpretation, café, shop and related facilities. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified. This is primarily a design policy and is intended to improve the visitor experience. Local Plan policy WLP2 .1- WLP2.1 - Central and Coastal Lowestoft Regeneration considers	None	None	No

	sites within the settlement boundaries and this site is located within the wider Lowestoft settlement boundary.			
SW3	Kirkley Waterfront this policy sets design criteria for this site which is allocated for residential and employment uses under ES (W)LP policy WLP2.4. The NP policy does not allocate additional sites for development and any strategic mitigation measures (e.g. contributions to the Suffolk Coast RAMS) are already secured through the adopted Local Plan policy and the references to RAMS in paragraph 9.6 of the NP. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.	None	None	No
ETC1	Lowestoft Town Centre and Historic High Street this policy seeks the refurbishment or extension of sites and buildings in and around the Town Centre and historic High Street. Ground floor street frontage must retain or create shops or other active frontages. Whilst residential uses will be supported for upper levels or peripheral sites or the reuse of listed buildings, the policy does not allocate sites for such development and the requirement for any contributions to strategic mitigation measures (e.g. the Suffolk Coast RAMS) is considered to be covered by policy WLP8.34 of the adopted ES (W)LP and the adopted Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) SPD. Reference to the requirements of the RAMS strategy is also included in paragraph 9.6 of the NP. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.	None	None	No

ETC2	Historic Town Hall Regeneration this policy seeks to change the use of the town hall to a creative hub including an enterprise hub, meeting and workspace, a café and other uses to support creative and knowledge-based businesses and activities. The policy does not encourage residential use of the site however while this is a change of use policy, the new use is unlikely to significantly change the footfall/ pattern of use of the building and therefore no impact and no impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.	None	None	No
ETC3	Enterprise, Employment and Tourism this policy states that new business and enterprise uses will be supported in sustainable locations. The policy includes the requirement (criteria 2) that proposals have no adverse impacts on the local environment. No impact pathways Habitat sites are therefore identified.	None	None	No
LH1	Residential Development this policy states that in addition to the sites allocated in the Local Plan, new residential development will be supported in sustainable locations including sites in the town centre as set out in policy ETC1 including the conversion and adaptation of upper levels above shop and commercial units; development of infill sites within existing residential areas; and redevelopment of existing residential buildings. The policy does not allocate sites for development and the requirement for any contributions to strategic mitigation measures (e.g. the Suffolk Coast RAMS) is considered to be covered by policy WLP8.34 of the adopted ES (W)LP and	None	None	No

	the adopted Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) SPD. Reference to the requirements of the RAMS strategy is also included in paragraph 9.6 of the NP. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.			
LH2	Former Lowestoft Hospital Site this policy is intended to compliment policy WLP 2.8, setting out development principles for the refurbishment of the historic building complex and removal of previous inappropriate additions. As it deals with matters of detailed design no impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.	None	None	No
LH3	Residential mix and Standards this policy seeks to establish a residential mix to reflect the latest evidence of local need and ensure the provision of suitable housing for elderly residents. The policy also requires that new housing development promotes biodiversity. The policy does not in itself promote additional development and will not therefore lead to impact pathways on Habitat sites.	None	None	No
EP1	Design and Character this policy states that development must be locally distinctive and sustainable and must respond to the topography, landscape, heritage, boundaries and other features of the site and local context. The policy also requires that new housing development promotes biodiversity. The policy does not in itself promote additional development and will not therefore lead to impact pathways on Habitat sites.	None	None	No

EP2	Green Infrastructure, Urban Green Space and Biodiversity this policy requires that developments avoid adverse biodiversity impacts and deliver biodiversity net gain. The policy also sets criteria for new urban greenspaces which seeks to make them attractive for recreational use, this will help encourage recreational users away from Habitat sites. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.	None	None	No
EP3	Port Development this policy recognises the importance of the port and seeks that any development balances environmental impacts and takes opportunities to improve the site, it's boundary and environs. The policy does not in itself propose any specific development. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.	None	None	No
EP4	North Lowestoft Conservation Area this policy requires that development within or adjacent to North Lowestoft Conservation Area must preserve or enhance its character or appearance and special architectural interest, this includes maintaining and complementing key characteristics of the area. The policy sets criteria for development within the Conservation Area but does not allocate sites for development. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.	None	None	No


EP5	Local Heritage this policy states that development should take opportunities to preserve, enhance and reuse non-designated above-ground heritage assets and avoid harming below-ground non-designated heritage. The policy provides protection for heritage assets and does not in itself promote additional development therefore no impact pathways to Habitat sites are identified.	None	None	No
EP6	Strategic Green Landscape this policy requires that development must not harm the character of this area or harm its amenity, accessibility, recreational or environmental value. The policy seeks to protect the strategic green landscape area and therefore no impact pathways to Habitat sites are identified.	None	None	No
EP7	Local Green Space this policy identifies Local Green Spaces and states that developments should take the opportunity to enhance them. The policy also states that small-scale development may be supported in exceptional circumstances where it directly supports the community use of the space. The policy seeks to protect local greenspaces and keep them available for public use which will help encourage recreational users away from Habitat sites. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.	None	None	No

EP8	Recreational and Sports Spaces this policy identifies formal recreational and sports spaces and states that development must take the opportunity to enhance, and have no significant adverse impact on their accessibility, amenity or safety. The policy seeks to protect existing recreational and sports spaces and keep them available for public use which will help encourage recreational users away from Habitat sites. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.	None	None	No
FSW6	Mitigating Flood Risk states this policy states that development must have no adverse impact on the risk of flooding and associated impacts on people, property and the local environment. Development will be refused if it reduces significantly the ability of existing drainage and flood attenuation areas to alleviate flooding. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.	None	None	No
TM1	Balanced Transport Provision this policy seeks to ensure that development that generates additional journeys must incorporate a balanced and sustainable provision of transport options, meeting the following requirements proportionate to the scale and nature of the scheme and that the needs of pedestrians and cyclists must be prioritised. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.	None	None	No

SE1	<p>Local Energy Schemes this policy states that local energy schemes will be supported subject to the siting, scale and appearance of the scheme causing no significant adverse visual impact, there being no significant adverse impacts on the amenities of residential properties, including noise, pollution, vibration or, in the case of wind turbines, shadow flicker and finally there would be no significant adverse impact on the local environment, having regard to other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. The policy does not allocate sites for such developments and includes the requirement that there is no significant adverse impact on the local and natural environment. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.</p>	None	None	No
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6. Summary and conclusions

- 6.1 The Draft Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan will provide policy which will be used for determining planning applications alongside the East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan. It includes locally specific criteria-based policies to be used for the determination of planning applications within the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan area and the identification of location specific Local Green Spaces and Non-Designated Heritage Assets.
- 6.2 The Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared to be in general conformity with the relevant policies in the adopted Local Plan, and also considers the relevant policies of the aforementioned Local Plan.
- 6.3 Screening of the policies in the draft Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan has not identified any Likely Significant Effects on protected Habitat Sites alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

Signed: 

Dated: 09/02/2023

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Appendix 1: Sources of background information

- Habitats Regulations Assessments for the Waveney Local Plan:
www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-local-plans/local-plans/adoption-documents-inspectors-reports-and-previous-stages/

Special Areas of Conservation



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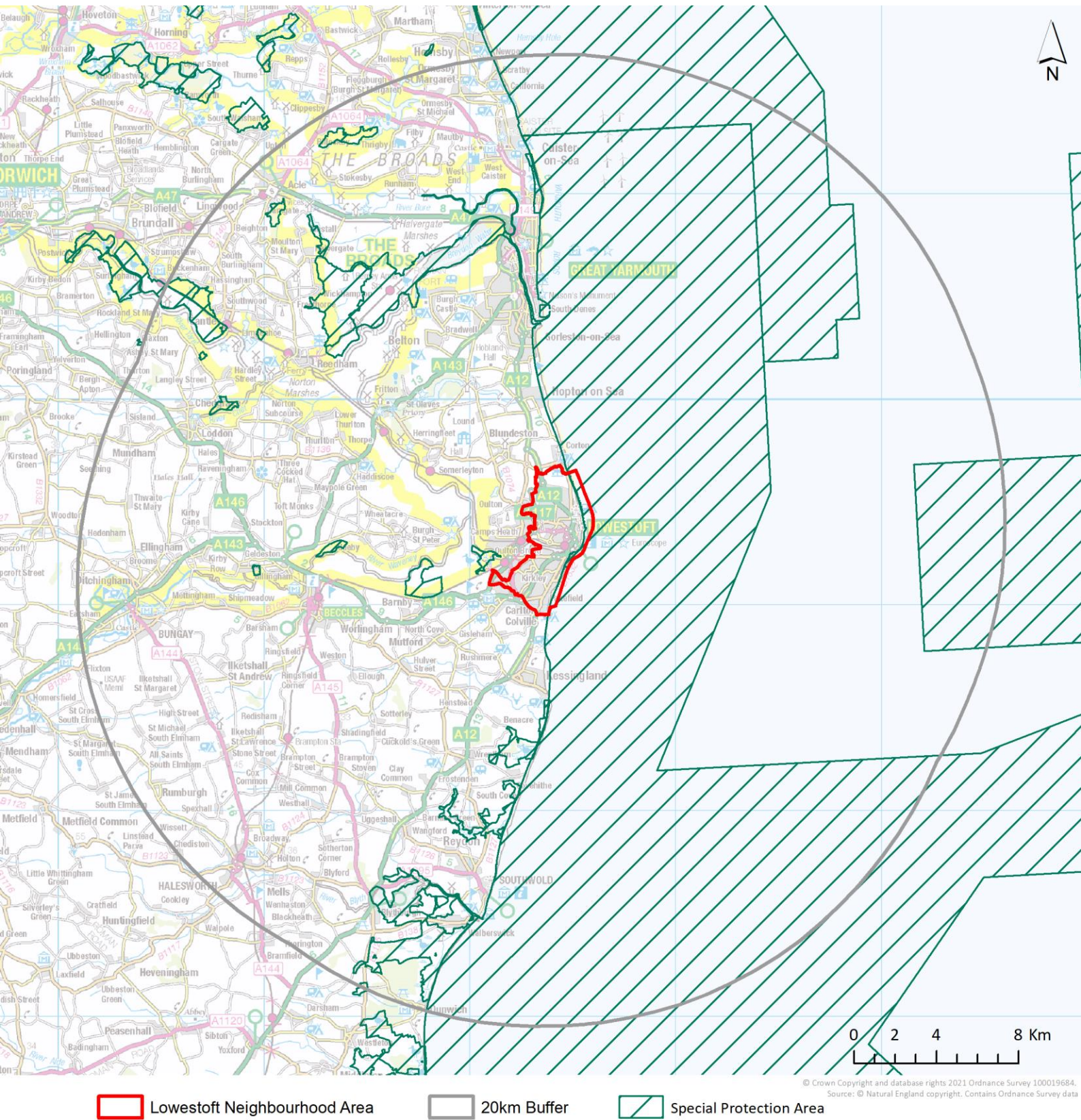
☐ Lowestoft Neighbourhood Area

 20km Buffer

Source: © N

 Special Areas of Conservation

Special Protection Areas



 Lowestoft Neighbourhood Area

 20km Buffer

 Special Protection Area

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Appendix 3: Relevant European protected sites

Name	Qualifying features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan at Final Draft Plan Stage (December 2018))
Special Areas of Conservation			
The Broads	<p>H7210# Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i></p> <p>S1016 <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>: Desmoulin's whorl snail</p> <p>H7230 Alkaline fens</p> <p>H6410 <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>)</p> <p>H91E0# Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, <i>Salicion albae</i>)</p> <p>H7140 Transition mires and quaking bogs</p> <p>H3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp</p> <p>H3150 Natural eutrophic lakes with <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrocharition</i>-type vegetation</p> <p>S1355 <i>Lutra lutra</i>: Otter</p> <p>S1903 <i>Liparis loeselii</i>: Fen orchid</p>	<p>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;</p> <p>The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species,</p> <p>The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats,</p> <p>The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species,</p> <p>The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely,</p> <p>The populations of qualifying species, and,</p> <p>The distribution of qualifying species within the site.</p>	<p>Water pollution, climate change, invasive species, siltation, inappropriate water levels, hydrological changes, water abstraction, change in land management, inappropriate ditch management, inappropriate scrub control, changes in species distributions, public access/disturbance, under-grazing, drainage, direct impact from 3rd party</p>

Name	Qualifying features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan at Final Draft Plan Stage (December 2018))
	S4056 Anisus vorticulus: Little ramshorn whirlpool snail		
Benacre to Easton	H1150# Coastal lagoons, A195(B) Sterna albifrons: Little tern A021(B) Botaurus stellaris: Great bittern A081(B) Circus aeruginosus: Eurasian marsh harrier	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, and, The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.	Public access/disturbance, water pollution, physical modification, changes in species distributions, fisheries (marine and estuarine).
Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths and Marshes	H4030 European dry heaths H1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines H1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks A052(B) Anas crecca: Eurasian teal A021(B) Botaurus stellaris: Great bittern A081(B) Circus aeruginosus: Eurasian marsh harrier	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, The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and,	Coastal squeeze, public access/disturbance, changes in species distributions, invasive species, inappropriate pest control, air pollution, water pollution, deer, fisheries (commercial marine and estuarine)

Name	Qualifying features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan at Final Draft Plan Stage (December 2018))
	A082(NB) Circus cyaneus: Hen harrier A224(B) Caprimulgus europaeus: European nightjar A056(B) Anas clypeata: Northern shoveler A056(NB) Anas clypeata: Northern shoveler A051(B) Anas strepera: Gadwall A051(NB) Anas strepera: Gadwall A132(B) Recurvirostra avosetta: Pied avocet A195(B) Sterna albifrons: Little tern A394(NB) Anser albifrons: Greater white-fronted goose	The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.	
Southern North Sea	Harbour Porpoise (phocoena phocoena)	To ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained and that it makes an appropriate contribution to maintaining Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) for harbour porpoise in UK waters.	N/A
Special Protection Areas			
Breydon Water (also Ramsar site)	Waterbird assemblage A037(NB) Cygnus columbianus bewickii: Bewick swan	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to	Shooting/scaring, change in land management, public access/disturbance,

Name	Qualifying features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan at Final Draft Plan Stage (December 2018))
	A132(NB) <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> : Pied avocet A140(NB) <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> : European golden plover A142(NB) <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> : Northern lapwing A151(NB) <i>Philomachus pugnax</i> : Ruff A193(B) <i>Sterna hirundo</i> : Common tern	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, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	hydrological changes, fisheries (marine and estuarine).
Broadland (also Ramsar site)	H7210# Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> S1016 <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> : Desmoulin's whorl snail H7230 Alkaline fens H6410 <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) H91E0# Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>)	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,	Water pollution, climate change, invasive species, siltation, inappropriate water levels, hydrological changes, water abstraction, change in land management, inappropriate ditch management, inappropriate scrub control, changes in species distributions, public access/disturbance, under-grazing, drainage, direct impact from 3rd party

Name	Qualifying features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan at Final Draft Plan Stage (December 2018))
	H7140 Transition mires and quaking bogs H3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp H3150 Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition-type vegetation S1355 Lutra lutra: Otter S1903 Liparis loeselii: Fen orchid S4056 Anisus vorticulus: Little ramshorn whirlpool snail	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.	
Benacre to Easton Bvents	H1150# Coastal lagoons, A195(B) Sterna albifrons: Little tern A021(B) Botaurus stellaris: Great bittern A081(B) Circus aeruginosus: Eurasian marsh harrier	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,	Public access/disturbance, water pollution, physical modification, changes in species distributions, fisheries (marine and estuarine).

Name	Qualifying features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan at Final Draft Plan Stage (December 2018))
		The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	
Great Yarmouth North Denes SPA	A195 <i>Sterna albifrons</i> ; Little tern (Breeding)	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, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	Inappropriate coastal management, coastal squeeze, public access/disturbance, hydrological changes, inappropriate scrub control, inappropriate pest control, invasive species, undergrazing, air pollution.
Minsmere to Walberswick (also Ramsar site)	H4030 European dry heaths H1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines H1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks A052(B) <i>Anas crecca</i> : Eurasian teal A021(B) <i>Botaurus stellaris</i> : Great bittern	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,	Coastal squeeze, public access/disturbance, changes in species distributions, invasive species, inappropriate pest control, air pollution, water pollution, deer, fisheries (commercial marine and estuarine)

Name	Qualifying features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan at Final Draft Plan Stage (December 2018))
	A081(B) Circus aeruginosus: Eurasian marsh harrier A082(NB) Circus cyaneus: Hen harrier A224(B) Caprimulgus europaeus: European nightjar A056(B) Anas clypeata: Northern shoveler A056(NB) Anas clypeata: Northern shoveler A051(B) Anas strepera: Gadwall A051(NB) Anas strepera: Gadwall A132(B) Recurvirostra avosetta: Pied avocet A195(B) Sterna albifrons: Little tern A394(NB) Anser albifrons albifrons: Greater white-fronted goose	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.	
Outer Thames Estuary	A001: Red-throated Diver (Non-breeding) A195: Common Tern (Breeding) A193: Little Tern (Breeding)	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;	Not identified in Waveney Local Plan HRA. SIP identifies fisheries.

Name	Qualifying features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan at Final Draft Plan Stage (December 2018))
		<p>The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features;</p> <p>The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely;</p> <p>The population of each of the qualifying features; and</p> <p>The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.</p>	

Appendix 4: Natural England Consultation Response

Date: 19 October 2022
Our ref: 409378
Your ref: Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan



Hornbeam House
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Ms. Seabrook

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Ms Seabrook

Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan – SEA and HRA screening report consultation

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 10 October 2022 which was received by Natural England on the same date.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Where Neighbourhood Plans could have significant environmental effects, they may require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) under the Environment Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended). Further guidance on deciding whether the proposals are likely to have significant environmental effects and the requirements for consulting Natural England on SEA are set out in the [planning practice guidance](#).

Planning practice guidance also outlines that if an appropriate assessment is required for your neighbourhood plan this will also engage the need for a SEA. One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the independent examiner is whether the neighbourhood plan is compatible with European obligations, including those under the SEA Directive. Where a SEA is required it should be prepared in accordance with [regulation 12](#) of the SEA Regulations.

Where a neighbourhood plan could potentially affect a '[habitats site](#)', it will be necessary to screen the plan in relation to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017), as amended (the 'Habitats Regulations'). Where likely significant effects are identified, it will be necessary to undertake an appropriate assessment of the neighbourhood plan and, if needed, identify and secure appropriate mitigation measures to ensure the plan does not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of the habitats site.

Natural England welcomes the Screening Reports which assess the requirement for SEA and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan.

I can confirm that Natural England agrees with the conclusions of the reports that it is not likely there will be significant environmental effects arising from the policies in the plan, which have not already been accounted for within the adopted local plan. Therefore, the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan does not require a SEA to be undertaken. Natural England also agrees that the Plan would be unlikely to result in any significant effect to European Sites, either alone or in combination, and therefore an appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations is not required.

Aside from this, Natural England have no specific comments at this stage. We would be happy to

comment further should the need arise. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

Joe Thompsett
Norfolk & Suffolk Team