



Habitats Regulations Assessment  
Screening Report of the Draft  
Rushmere St Andrew  
Neighbourhood Plan

December 2021

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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). 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) states:

'Where a land use plan:

(a) Is likely to have a significant effect on a European sites 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 Habitat 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 Union<sup>1</sup>, 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 Habitat 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 Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan is being produced by Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council. This report considers whether there are likely to be significant effects on protected Habitat Sites and where a full Appropriate Assessment may be required.
- 1.6 The Rushmere St Andrew 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 Waveney Local Plan adopted March 2019. The relevant local plan for the Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan area is the East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan.
- 1.7 The Suffolk Coastal 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

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

the vicinity of the (then) Suffolk Coastal District. The Local Plan Appropriate Assessment identified recreational disturbance particularly from dog walkers as the main significant effect. The Council has therefore produced a Recreational Disturbance 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 report

- 2.1 Sites included in this assessment are listed in Table 1. This includes all sites that are within 20km of the Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan area (for consistency with the distances applied within the HRA of the Suffolk Coastal 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 Suffolk Coastal Local Plan.

**Table 1: Relevant Habitat Site**

<b>Name</b>
Alde-Ore and Butley Estuaries SAC
Dew's Pond SAC
Orfordness – Shingle Street SAC
Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SAC
Staverton Park and The Thicks, Wantisden SAC
Southern North Sea SAC
Alde-Ore Estuary SPA
Deben Estuary SPA
Minsmere- Walberswick SPA
Outer Thames Estuary SPA
Sandlings SPA
Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA
Alde-Ore Estuary Ramsar
Deben Estuary Ramsar
Minsmere- Walberswick Ramsar
Stour and Orwell Estuaries Ramsar

### 3. Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan

- 3.1 Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council is producing a Neighbourhood Plan for Rushmere St Andrew, in order to set out the vision, objectives and policies for the development of the parish up to 2036, within the context of the East Suffolk Council- Suffolk Coastal Local Plan.
- 3.2 The Neighbourhood Plan includes a range of policies covering the Rushmere St Andrew 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 any new sites for development.
- 3.3 The policies in Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan are listed in Table 2 below. An assessment of whether each policy is likely to have a significant effect on Habitat Site is included in section 5 of this report.

**Table 2: List of Neighbourhood Plan policies**

RSA1	Planning Strategy
RSA2	Land at Humber Doucy Lane
RSA3	Protection of Landscape Character and Important Views
RSA4	Protection of Trees, Hedgerows and Other Natural Features
RSA5	Settlement Gaps
RSA6	Local Green Spaces
RSA7	Non-designated Heritage Assets
RSA8	Rushmere Village Special Character Area
RSA9	Design Considerations
RSA10	Village Services and Facilities
RSA11	Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities
RSA12	Public Rights of Way

## 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 Local Plan sets out the broad scale and distribution of development across the area of East Suffolk formerly covered by Suffolk Coastal District. This was subject to an Appropriate Assessment as part of its production.
- 4.5 The Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan policies interpret the strategy and policies of the Local Plan at a local level. The policies contained in the Draft Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan are proposed to provide locally specific, criteria-based policy guidance for the determination of planning applications.
- 4.6 Policy SCLP12.1 of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan does not allocate a minimum housing figure to the Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan area and the draft Neighbourhood Plan does not include any site allocation policies. The Local Plan does however include an allocation within the Neighbourhood Plan area - Policy SCLP12.24: Land at Humber Doucy Lane. This site consists of around 9.9ha of land to the east of Humber Doucy Lane and is identified to come forward in conjunction with land identified in the Ipswich Local Plan. The area of land allocated within the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan policy is allocated for approximately 150 dwellings.
- 4.7 A screening process considered each policy in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and concluded whether significant effects were likely and if an 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 (then) Suffolk Coastal District.

- 4.8 The (now superseded) 2013 Core Strategy was also previously subject to strategic level Appropriate Assessment which concluded that without mitigation there would be a significant effect on Habitat Sites, alone and in combination with other plans. The Appropriate Assessment of that Plan identified recreational disturbance particularly from dog walkers as the main significant effect. The Council subsequently produced a Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy and now requires payment towards mitigation of likely significant effects from residential developments within 13km of a Habitat Site. This approach continues to operate and was included within policies in the Local Plan, adopted in 2020.

## 5. Assessment of likely effects of the Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan on Habitat Sites

- 5.1 Table 3 below considers each policy of the Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan in relation to whether there is potential for a likely significant effect on protected 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. The screening has been carried out in relation to the Draft Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan (September 2021).

**Table 3: Likely significant effects of the Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Assessment of potential impact on habitat sites</b>	<b>Habitat Sites that could possibly be affected</b>	<b>Likely significant effect identified</b>	<b>AA needed?</b>
POLICY RSA1- PLANNING STRATEGY	<p>This policy sets out the overall development strategy for the Neighbourhood Plan area. It directs development to within the settlement boundary* and seeks to deliver development in line with the policy approach set out in the Local Plan. Development outside the settlement boundary will only be permitted where it accords with national and district level policies.</p> <p>Policy SCLP12.1 of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan does not allocate a minimum housing figure to the Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan area and the draft Neighbourhood Plan does not include any site allocation policies.</p> <p>This policy does not in itself promote additional development and will not therefore result in any likely significant effects.</p> <p>* NB- there are some discrepancies in the mapping of Settlement Boundaries in the Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan group have confirmed that these are errors that will be corrected to reflect the settlement boundary as shown in the Local Plan.</p>	None.	None.	No.
POLICY RSA2- LAND AT HUMBER DOUCY LANE	<p>This policy builds on Local Plan allocation policy SCLP12.24: Land at Humber Doucy Lane. This site consists of around 9.9ha of land to the east of Humber Doucy Lane and is identified to come forward in conjunction with land identified in the Ipswich Local Plan. The area of</p>	None.	None.	No.

Policy	Assessment of potential impact on habitat sites	Habitat Sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
	<p>land allocated within the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan policy is allocated for approximately 150 dwellings.</p> <p>Policy RSA2 adds detail to the Local Plan policy in relation to landscape requirements (including tree planting) and vehicular access.</p> <p>This policy does not in itself promote additional development, beyond what is already allocated in the Local Plan, and will not therefore result in any likely significant effects.</p>			
POLICY RSA3- PROTECTION OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND IMPORTANT VIEWS	<p>This policy seeks to conserve the landscape character of the Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan area. The policy requires development coming forward within the Neighbourhood Plan area to demonstrate consideration of the Rushmere Landscape Appraisal. The accompanying map identifies 17 important views into and out of Rushmere St Andrew to be given particular protection.</p> <p>The policy builds on SCLP10.4: Landscape Character of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan. The Habitats Regulation Assessment of the Local Plan identified no likely significant effects from policy SCLP10.4. Therefore policy RSA3 will not result in any likely significant effects.</p>	None.	None.	No.
POLICY RSA4- PROTECTION OF TREES, HEDGEROWS AND	<p>This policy seeks to avoid the loss of, or substantial harm to, important trees, hedgerows and other natural features such as ponds and watercourses. Where such losses or harm are unavoidable, the policy requires that the benefits of the development must outweigh the impacts, and that suitable mitigation measures are secured.</p>	None.	None.	No.

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Assessment of potential impact on habitat sites</b>	<b>Habitat Sites that could possibly be affected</b>	<b>Likely significant effect identified</b>	<b>AA needed?</b>
OTHER NATURAL FEATURES	<p>The policy builds on SCLP10.1: Biodiversity and Geodiversity of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan. The Habitats Regulation Assessment of the Local Plan identified Likely Significant Effects through the HRA screening for policy SCLP10.1. Full Appropriate Assessment was undertaken and mitigation incorporated into the Local Plan.</p> <p>Policy RSA4 does not promote development and contributes towards the principles of the enhancement of the wider environment and therefore no likely significant effects are identified.</p>			
POLICY RSA5- SETTLEMENT GAPS	<p>This policy protects the open and undeveloped nature of the Settlement Gaps as identified on the Neighborhood Plan Policies Map.</p> <p>The policy builds on SCLP10.5: Settlement Coalescence of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan. The Habitats Regulation Assessment of the Local Plan identified no likely significant effects from policy SCLP10.5. Therefore policy RSA5 will not result in any likely significant effects.</p>	None.	None.	No.
POLICY RSA6: LOCAL GREEN SPACES	<p>This policy identifies and protects 14 Local Green Spaces as identified on the Neighborhood Plan Policies Map.</p> <p>The policy may have indirect positive effects on Habitat Sites by ensuring access to local green spaces, thereby reducing potential for increased pressure on Habitat Sites. Therefore no likely significant effects are identified.</p>	None.	None.	No.
POLICY RSA7- NON-	<p>The policy identifies 20 non-designated heritage assets, for retention and protection.</p>	None.	None.	No.

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Assessment of potential impact on habitat sites</b>	<b>Habitat Sites that could possibly be affected</b>	<b>Likely significant effect identified</b>	<b>AA needed?</b>
DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS	The policy builds on Policy SCLP11.6: Non-designated heritage assets of the Local Plan. The Habitats Regulation Assessment of Policy SCLP11.6 concluded no likely significant effects. This policy will not have a direct effect on any Habitat Sites and no likely significant effects are identified.			
POLICY RSA8- RUSHMERE VILLAGE SPECIAL CHARACTER AREA	<p>This policy identifies a ‘Special Character Area’ within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Within this area, the policy requires proposals to have regard to the need to preserve or enhance the significance of the heritage assets in or adjoining the area and consider how it enhances the distinct characteristics of the identified area.</p> <p>The policy builds on policies SCLP11.1: Design Quality and SCLP11.3: Historic Environment of the Local Plan. The Habitats Regulation Assessment of policies SCLP11.1 and SCLP11.3 concluded no likely significant effects. This policy will not have a direct effect on any Habitat Sites and no likely significant effects are identified.</p>	None.	None.	No.
POLICY RSA9- DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS	<p>This policy sets out a number of design criteria for new development in the Neighbourhood Plan area in order to reflect local character and contribute to a high quality, safe and sustainable environment.</p> <p>The policy builds on SCLP11.1: Design Quality of the Local Plan. The Habitats Regulation Assessment of Policy SCLP11.1 concluded no likely significant effects. This policy will not have a direct effect on any Habitat Sites and no likely significant effects are identified.</p>	None.	None.	No.

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Assessment of potential impact on habitat sites</b>	<b>Habitat Sites that could possibly be affected</b>	<b>Likely significant effect identified</b>	<b>AA needed?</b>
POLICY RSA10- VILLAGE SERVICES AND FACILITIES	<p>This policy identifies 11 services and facilities for protection. Individual retail premises not identified on the Policies Map are also covered by the provision of the policy. Proposals for enhancement of the identified facilities are generally supported through the policy, subject to there being no significant adverse impact on the natural and historic environment, infrastructure and the amenity of residents.</p> <p>The policy builds on SCLP8.1: Community Facilities and Assets of the Local Plan. The Habitats Regulation Assessment of Policy SCLP8.1 concluded no likely significant effects. This policy will not have a direct effect on any Habitat Sites and no likely significant effects are identified.</p>	None.	None.	No.
POLICY RSA11- OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION	<p>This policy supports the provision, enhancement and/or expansion of amenity, sport or recreation open space or facilities. The policy includes criteria in relation to parking provision against which such proposals will be considered. The policy also resists the loss of existing amenity, sport or recreation open space or facilities unless it can be demonstrated that it is surplus to requirements or that alternative provision is available. The policy also covers the provision of open space including play areas, formal sport/recreation areas, amenity areas and where appropriate, indoor sports facilities as part of new development and includes a number of criteria against which such proposals will be considered.</p>	None.	None.	No.

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Assessment of potential impact on habitat sites</b>	<b>Habitat Sites that could possibly be affected</b>	<b>Likely significant effect identified</b>	<b>AA needed?</b>
	The policy may have indirect positive effects on Habitat Sites by ensuring access to local recreation opportunities, thereby reducing potential for increased pressure on Habitat Sites. Therefore no likely significant effects are identified.			
POLICY RSA12- PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY	<p>This policy supports the enhancement of the existing Public Rights of Way network in the Neighbourhood Plan area.</p> <p>The policy may have indirect positive effects on Habitat Sites by ensuring access to local recreation opportunities, thereby reducing potential for increased pressure on Habitat Sites. Therefore no likely significant effects are identified.</p>	None.	None.	No.

## 6. Summary and conclusions

- 6.1 The Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan will provide policies which will be used for determining planning applications alongside the East Suffolk Council- Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, 2020. It includes locally specific criteria based policies to be used for the determination of planning applications. The Plan does not allocate any land for development.
- 6.2 The Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared to be in general conformity with the relevant policies in the East Suffolk Council- Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, September 2020.
- 6.3 Natural England were consulted on a draft of this Screening Statement as statutory nature conservation body. Their response is contained in Appendix 4.
- 6.4 Screening of the policies in the draft Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan has not identified any Likely Significant Effects on protected Habitat Sites.

Signed:



Dated: 30<sup>th</sup> December 2021

Desi Reed  
Planning Policy and Delivery Manager  
East Suffolk Council

## Appendix 1: Sources of background information

- Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan at Final Draft Plan stage (December 2018)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy for Ipswich Borough, Babergh District, Mid Suffolk District and East Suffolk Councils (May 2019)
- East Suffolk Council- Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, September 2020

## Appendix 2: Locations of Habitat Sites

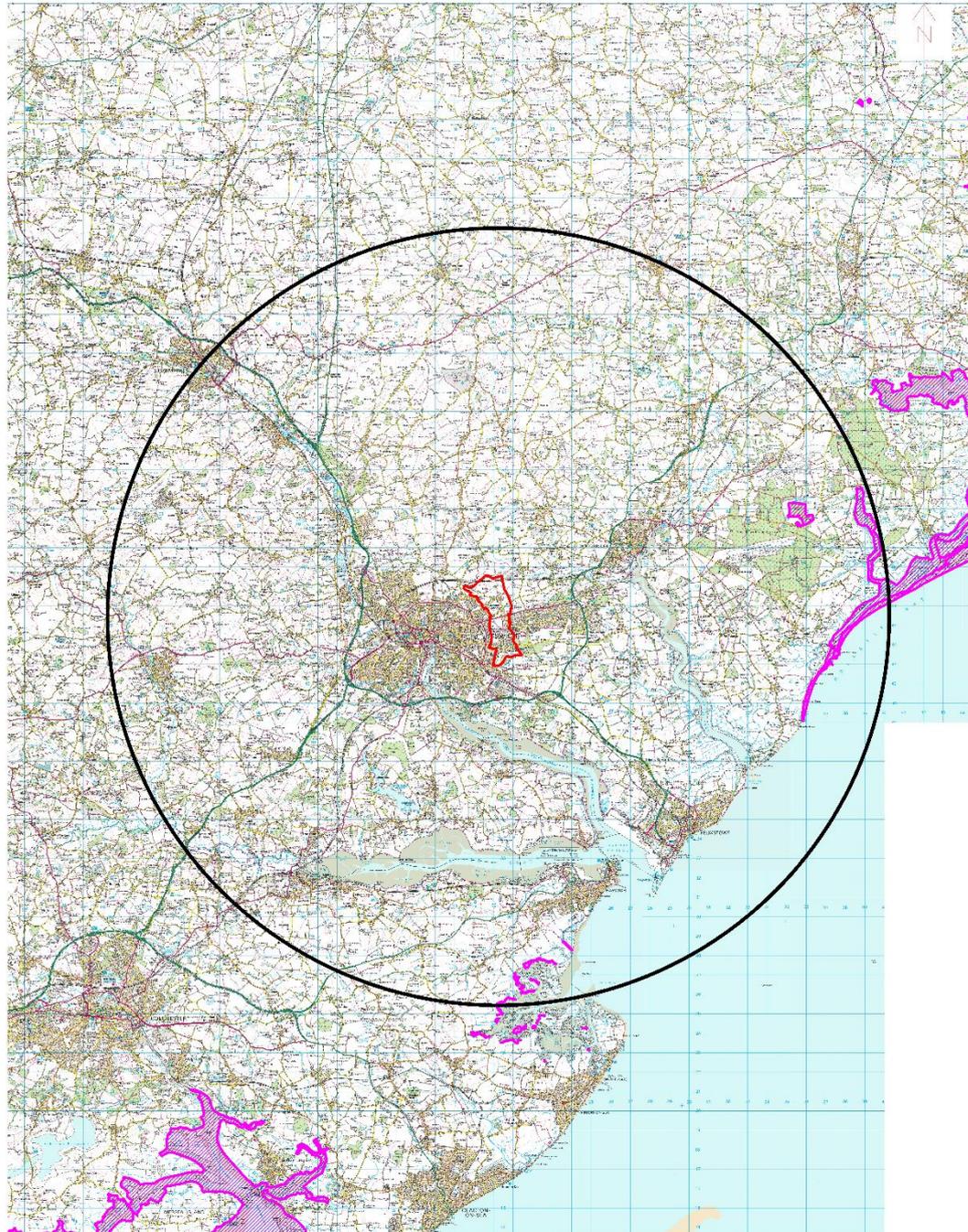
### Special Areas of Conservation

East Suffolk Council

Crown Copyright, East Suffolk Council  
Licence No LA 100019684 (2021)

Special Areas of Conservation

1:175426



 Neighbourhood Plan Area

 20km Radius

 Special Areas of Conservation

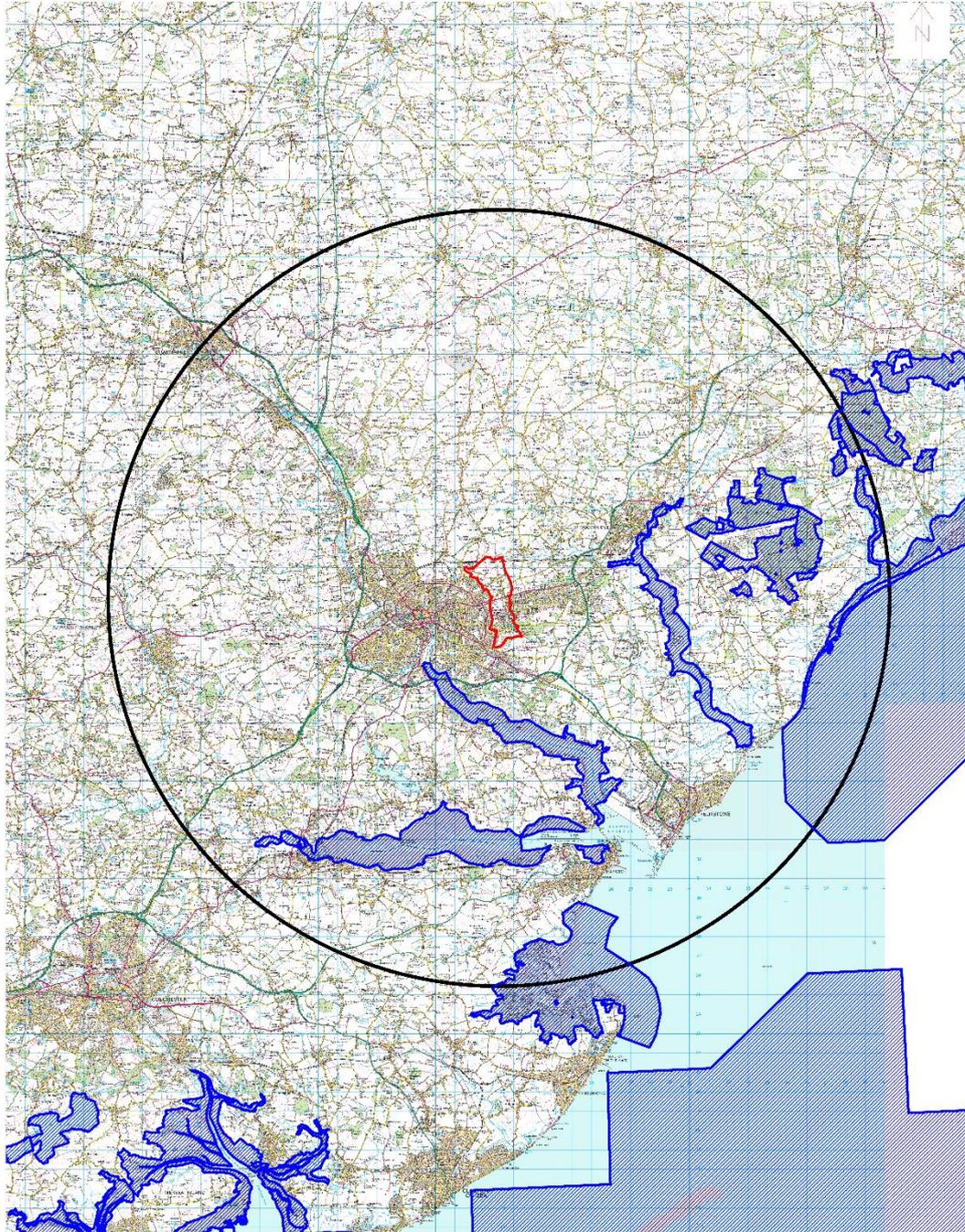
## Special Protection Areas

East Suffolk Council

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Special Protection Area

1:175426



## Ramsar Sites

East Suffolk Council

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Ramsar Sites

1:175426



 Neighbourhood Plan Area  20km Radius  Ramsar Site

## Appendix 3: Relevant Habitat 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))
<b>Special Areas of Conservation</b>			
Alde-Ore and Butley Estuaries	H1130:Estuaries H1140: Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; Intertidal mudflats and sandflats H1330: Atlantic salt meadows	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 supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.	Hydrological changes, public access/disturbance, inappropriate coastal management, coastal squeeze, inappropriate pest control, changes in species distributions, invasive species, air pollution, fisheries (commercial marine and estuarine) (Alde-Ore and Butley Estuaries SAC and Alde-Ore SPA)
Dew's Pond	S1166 Triturus cristatus: Great crested newt	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;	None identified.

		The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.	
Orfordness – Shingle Street	H1150: Coastal Lagoons H1210: Annual vegetation of drift lines H1220: Perennial vegetation of stony banks; Coastal shingle vegetation outside the reach of waves	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.	Not identified in Suffolk Coastal Final Draft Local Plan HRA.
Southern North Sea	1351: Phocoena phocoena	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.	Not identified in Suffolk Coastal Final Draft Local Plan HRA.
Staverton Park and The Thicks, Wantisden	H9190: Old acidophilous oak woods with Quercus robur on sandy plains; Dry oak-dominated woodland.	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	Woodland management, disease, atmospheric pollution.

		<p>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.</p>	
<p>Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SAC (also SPA and Ramsar site)</p>	<p>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 A081(B) <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>: Eurasian marsh harrier A082(NB) <i>Circus cyaneus</i>: Hen harrier A224(B) <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>: European nightjar A056(B) <i>Anas clypeata</i>: Northern shoveler A056(NB) <i>Anas clypeata</i>: Northern shoveler A051(B) <i>Anas strepera</i>: Gadwall A051(NB) <i>Anas strepera</i>: Gadwall A132(B) <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>: Pied avocet</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, The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and, The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.</p>	<p>Coastal squeeze, public access/disturbance, changes in species distributions, invasive species, inappropriate pest control, air pollution, water pollution, deer, fisheries (commercial marine and estuarine)</p>

	A195(B) <i>Sterna albifrons</i> : Little tern A394(NB) <i>Anser albifrons</i> : Greater white-fronted goose		
<b>Special Protection Areas</b>			
Alde-Ore Estuary (also Ramsar site)	A081: Eurasian marsh harrier (breeding) A132: Pied avocet (non-breeding) A132: Pied avocet (breeding) A151: Ruff (non-breeding) A162: Common redshank (non-breeding) A183: Lesser black-backed gull (breeding) A191: Sandwich tern (breeding) A195: 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.	Hydrological changes, public access/disturbance, inappropriate coastal management, coastal squeeze, inappropriate pest control, changes in species distributions, invasive species, air pollution, fisheries (commercial marine and estuarine) (Alde-Ore and Butley Estuaries SAC and Alde-Ore SPA)
Deben Estuary (also Ramsar site)	A046a: Dark bellied brent goose (non-breeding) A132: Pied avocet (non-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;	Coastal squeeze, disturbance to birds, water and air pollution.

		<p>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.</p>	
Outer Thames Estuary	<p>A001: Red-throated Diver (Non-breeding) A195: Common Tern (Breeding) A193: Little Tern (Breeding)</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Not identified in Suffolk Coastal Final Draft Local Plan HRA. SIP identifies fisheries.</p>
Sandlings	<p>A224: European nightjar (breeding) A246: Woodlark (breeding)</p>	<p>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;</p>	<p>Changes in species distributions, inappropriate scrub control, deer, air pollution, public access/disturbance.</p>

		<p>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.</p>	
<p>Stour and Orwell Estuaries (also Ramsar site)</p>	<p>A046a: Dark bellied brent goose (non-breeding) A054: Northern pintail (non-breeding) A132: Pied avocet (non-breeding) A141: Grey plover (non-breeding) A143: Red knot (non-breeding) A149: Dunlin (non-breeding) A156: Black-tailed godwit (non-breeding) A162: Common redshank (non-breeding) Waterbird assemblage</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Coastal squeeze, disturbance to birds, air pollution and new development.</p>

## Appendix 4: Natural England Consultation Responses

Date: 24 November 2021  
Our ref: 372569  
Your ref: Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan



East Suffolk Council  
[REDACTED]

Hornbeam House  
Crewe Business Park  
Electra Way  
Crewe  
Cheshire  
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

**BY EMAIL ONLY**

Dear Andrea McMillan

### **Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan**

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 27 October 2021 which was received by Natural England on 27 October 2021

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.

### **Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment and Screening Assessment in relation to Habitats Regulations Assessment**

It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) are concerned, that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in light of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended), is contained within the [National Planning Practice Guidance](#). The guidance highlights three triggers that may require the production of an SEA, for instance where:

- a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development
- the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan
- the neighbourhood plan may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

We have checked our records and based on the information provided, we can confirm that in our view the proposals contained within the plan will not have significant effects on sensitive sites that Natural England has a statutory duty to protect.

We are not aware of significant populations of protected species which are likely to be affected by the policies / proposals within the plan. It remains the case, however, that the responsible authority should provide information supporting this screening decision, sufficient to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected.

Notwithstanding this advice, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all potential environmental assets. As a result the responsible authority should raise environmental issues that we have not identified on local or national biodiversity action plan species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites or local landscape character, with its own ecological and/or landscape advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local landscape and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by this plan, before determining whether an SA/SEA is necessary.

Please note that Natural England reserves the right to provide further comments on the environmental assessment of the plan beyond this SEA/SA screening stage, should the responsible authority seek our views on the scoping or environmental report stages. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make.

**Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening**

Natural England agrees with the report's conclusions that the Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan would not be likely to result in a significant effect on any European Site, either alone or in combination and therefore no further assessment work would be required.

For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk).

Yours sincerely

Amy Knafler  
Consultations Team