

## **Selby Site Allocations Development Plan Document Preferred Options**

Appropriate Assessment Screening based on Methodological  
Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats  
Directive 92/43/EEC – Screening for Appropriate Assessment  
Screening for Appropriate Assessment

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# Appropriate Assessment Screening based on Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC – Screening for Appropriate Assessment Screening for Appropriate Assessment

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## Quality Assurance – Approval Status

This document has been prepared and checked in accordance with Waterman Group's IMS (BS EN ISO 9001: 2008 and BS EN ISO 14001: 2004)

Issue	Date	Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
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## Comments

### Our Markets



Property & Buildings



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Environment



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A. Correspondence from York Natural England

## 1. Background

- 1.1. Waterman Energy Environment & Design has been commissioned by SDC to undertake a screening for an Appropriate Assessment under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 of the Preferred Options for their Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD).
- 1.2. Selby District Council (SDC) is preparing a series of DPDs and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) required under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which will form part of the new 'Local Development Framework' (LDF). The Council's current programme for development plan production is set out in their Local Development Scheme (2010). When adopted, the new style plans will replace those policies in the Selby District Local Plan, which are 'saved' under transitional legislation until they are replaced by the LDF.
- 1.3. The Submission Version Core Strategy DPD sets out the long-term spatial vision, objectives and strategy for the District and provides a framework for delivering development for the period up to 2026. It will translate and conform to national Planning Policy Guidance (PPG), Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and to the Yorkshire and Humber Plan which is the current regional spatial policy.
- 1.4. SDC previously consulted on Core Strategy Issues and Options in May 2006 and Core Strategy Further Options in November 2008. Following further public consultation on the Consultation Draft Core Strategy during February and March 2010 SDC, prepared a revised version of the Core Strategy for Submission to the Secretary of State for independent Examination. The Submission Version of the Core Strategy was submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination in May 2011.
- 1.5. All other DPDs and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) within the Selby District LDF, including the Site Allocations DPD will conform to the Core Strategy. In particular, Policy CP1 in the Selby District Submission Version Core Strategy, May 2011, sets out the broad spatial development strategy for Selby District. Policy CP2 of the Core Strategy sets out the proposed scale and distribution of housing.
- 1.6. The overall housing need was set out in the Yorkshire and Humber Plan. The studies and evidence which supported the preparation of the Yorkshire and Humber Plan have been reviewed by SDC and are considered to remain valid. As such, the housing figures sets out in the Yorkshire and Humber Plan have been carried forward for the SDC LDF, including the Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPD. It states that Selby District should accommodate 4,864 new dwellings, once the existing commitments have been removed.
- 1.7. In terms of locating this housing requirement, the Submission Version of the Core Strategy DPD has identified the broad location of development for the next 15 years: it identifies Selby as the Principal Town, and Sherburn-in-Elmet and Tadcaster as the Local Service Centres. These three settlements will accept the majority of the required growth over the coming years as they already have the services and facilities to accommodate this growth. In addition, a strategic housing site is also proposed at Olympia Park. The proposed housing allocations for each of these sites are set out below:
  - 1,000 dwellings on the Strategic Site at Olympia Park;
  - 1,336 dwellings for Selby;
  - 498 dwellings for Sherburn-in-Elmet; and
  - 457 dwellings for Tadcaster.

- 1.8. Some of the larger villages (referred to as 'Designated Service Villages') have a range of daily needs services and facilities, and are capable of accommodating some small scale development.
- 1.9. As such, it is proposed that 1,573 houses will be distributed between these Designated Service Villages. These 1,573 houses will be distributed between the following villages: Appleton Roebuck; Barlby/Osgodby; Brayton; Brotherton/Byram; Carlton; Cawood; Church Fenton; Eggborough/Whitley; Fairburn; Hambleton; Hemingbrough; Kellington; Monk Fryston/Hillam; North Duffield; Riccall; South Milford; Thorpe Willoughby; and Ulleskelf.
- 1.10. The Core Strategy also sets out the requirements for employment land, including the designation of a strategic employment site at Olympia Park.
- 1.11. The Site Allocation DPD, as with all DPDs and SPDs within the Selby District LDF, will need to conform to the Core Strategy. The Site Allocation DPD will identify site specific allocations for housing (including gypsy and traveller sites), employment land as well as related policies and requirements.

### **Core Strategy Appropriate Assessment**

- 1.12. The Core Strategy (Consultation Draft) was subject to screening for an Appropriate Assessment in February 2010. This found that that a full Appropriate Assessment of the Core Strategy was required to assess the impacts on: The Lower Derwent Valley SAC, Ramsar and SPA designations; Skipworth Common SAC; and The Humber Estuary SAC, Ramsar and SPA designations. The potential likely impacts identified as arising from the Core Strategy (and from in combination effects from other plans or projects) were changes in the quality and extent of habitats and in the number and distribution of species that comprise the Natura 2000 designations as a result of increase in visitor numbers to publicly accessible areas of the designations, as well as impact from proposed wind farms.
- 1.13. Full Appropriate Assessment was undertaken of the Core Strategy Submission Version in December 2010. The potential impacts arising from the Core Strategy were identified as being:
  - An increase in housing allocations situated within 5km which could lead to increased visitor pressure to countryside sites including those covered by the Natura 2000 designations listed in Section 3 below;
  - An increase in economic activities that would encourage tourism generally and hence have the potential to indirectly result in increased visitor pressure to countryside sites, including the sites covered by the Natura 2000 designations listed above; and
  - If wind energy sites are encouraged (as per Core Strategy Policy CP14) and are situated in areas where they could affect bird populations which are designated features of the above Natura 2000 sites, this may have the potential to result in adverse effects.
- 1.14. The Appropriate Assessment of the Core Strategy Submission Version concluded that it is unlikely that any impacts arising from the implementation of the Submission Version Core Strategy (and impacts arising from in combination effects from other plans or projects) would have an adverse effect on the designated sites. It was considered unlikely the new housing and economic growth would result in significant increases in visitor numbers. This is because the majority of existing visitors are enthusiasts attracted by the sites biodiversity, and not mass recreation that would be likely to attract a large increase in visitors.

- 1.15. However any effects from an increase in visitors are likely to be confined to changes in the quality and extent of habitats and in the number and distribution of species that comprise the Natura 2000 designations, which could arise from an increase in visitor numbers to publicly accessible areas of the designations.
- 1.16. Consultation with the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and Natural England found that there is no current data on the visitor numbers for the Natura 2000 Sites, but it was thought that none of the designated sites are at saturation point. As such it was recommended that in order to monitor the future effects, further surveys and analysis of visitor numbers should be undertaken. Data relating to the condition of the Natura 2000 Sites should be included in SDC's Annual Monitoring Report.
- 1.17. There is also the potential for bird populations that form part of both Ramsar and SPA designations within the Lower Derwent Valley and Humber Estuary being adversely affected by bird strike from wind turbines if these are sited on migratory routes. This could arise through the enactment of Policy CP14 which promotes renewable energy projects. However Policy CP14 of the Submission Version Core Strategy puts emphasis on the design and location of renewable energy and low-carbon energy generation within the development proposals. Such developments would be subject to individual Environmental Impact Assessment (including AA where necessary), should these have the potential to impact on Natura 2000 sites, and would therefore also need to be assessed independently once details are known.
- 1.18. As such it is unlikely that if proposals for wind farms follow the appropriate planning policy and legislative requirements any of the Natura 2000 sites would be impacted upon (this would include the consideration of in-combination effects from neighbouring Core Strategies).

### **Site Allocations DPD Appropriate Assessment**

- 1.19. Waterman Energy Environment & Design have been commissioned by SDC to undertake a screening for an Appropriate Assessment under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 of the Preferred Options for their Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD).
- 1.20. As stated above, the Site Allocation DPD will identify site specific allocations for housing (approximately 1,573) within the Designated Service Villages and the other settlements, employment land and land required for other needs such as infrastructure as well as related policies and requirements. Essentially the DPD proposes sites that would be suitable for new housing and employment that are in addition to the strategic sites included within the Core Strategy. The Site Allocation DPD will be in accordance with the Core Strategy Submission Version.
- 1.21. An Appropriate Assessment screening exercise was undertaken in December 2010 of the Site Allocations DPD Issues and Options report. At the Issues and Options stage approximately 271 potential allocations were considered within villages across the district of Selby (162 of which were within 5km of a Natura 2000 site). This screening exercise has now been updated to consider the Site Allocations DPD Preferred Options. The Preferred Options include 80 proposed allocated sites (18 of which are within 5km of a Nature 2000 site, with these sites including a total allocation of 482 houses plus 2.78ha of employment land). In addition, the screening exercise takes into account the information now available in the Appropriate Assessment of the Core Strategy Submission Version.



- 1.22. The screening assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the European Commission's 'Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 sites - methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6 (3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC', hereafter termed Appropriate Assessment. The format used for the screening is given in Annex 2 of the guidance and has been followed in the compilation of this assessment.

## 2. Scope of the Assessment

- 2.1. In the first instance each DPD allocation was reviewed and assessed in terms of:
  - Its potential to have an adverse effect on Natura 2000 sites; and
  - The geographic extent over which policies could be reasonably anticipated to have the potential to cause adverse effects on Natura 2000 sites.
- 2.2. The following Natura 2000 sites were identified as occurring within 20km of Selby district (refer to Figure 1 Designated Sites (**E5072-102\_GR\_DS\_1A**) for locations):
  - The Lower Derwent Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Ramsar and Special Protection Area (SPA) designations;
  - Skipwith Common SAC;
  - The Humber Estuary SAC, Ramsar and SPA designations;
  - Kirk Deighton SAC;
  - Thorne and Hatfield Moors SAC;
  - Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA; and
  - Strensall Common SAC.
- 2.3. The list of Natura 2000 sites was sent to the York Natural England team for comment (refer to **Appendix A**) who agreed that the list covered all sites that would be potentially affected by the Site Allocations DPD and would therefore be screened for a full Appropriate Assessment.
- 2.4. Details of the above Natura 2000 designations were obtained from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) website and were used to populate the descriptions required in the Appropriate Assessment screening matrix in Section 3 of this report.
- 2.5. Due to the size of the DPD allocations which are generally for small scale housing allocations less than 100 dwellings and small scale employment designations, it was considered that developments beyond 5km of each Natura 2000 sites would be very unlikely to have any direct or indirect impact on designated sites. Therefore only sites that lie within 5km of a Natura 2000 site were considered in this screening assessment.
- 2.6. A list of DPD allocations considered in relation to the Natura 2000 sites is provided in the screening matrix in Section 3 of this report.
- 2.7. In addition to the potential for adverse effects on the above Natura 2000 sites that could arise from the DPD allocations, in accordance with the methodological guidance, the assessment considers the potential for 'cumulative effects' which could arise when the allocations are enacted in combination with other plans or projects. The screening assessment therefore also considers the potential cumulative effects arising from the SDC Core Strategy and major planning applications, as well as existing and forthcoming development policy in the neighbouring local authorities, in particular York City Council and East Riding of York Council. A request to SDC was made for details of any major extant planning permissions so that these could also be considered (a criteria of greater than 20 dwellings, 1,000m<sup>2</sup> of employment space and major infrastructure was used to select the relevant permissions). Six extant planning applications were identified, as listed in Section 3 of this report. Clearly it would not be relevant (or practical) to consider details of every single extant planning consent but it is necessary to consider the potential for 'in combination effects' that could arise from existing consents for major residential or commercial developments, or other major infrastructure plans or projects.



### **3. Appropriate Assessment Screening Matrix**

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**Brief description of the  
Natura 2000 sites****Lower Derwent Valley SAC (UK 0030253)**

The Lower Derwent Valley in north-east England contains a greater area of high-quality examples of lowland hay meadows than any other UK site and encompasses the majority of this habitat type occurring in the Vale of York. The abundance of the rare narrow-leaved water-dropwort *Oenanthe silaifolia* is a notable feature. Traditional management has ensured that ecological variation is well-developed, particularly in the transitions between this grassland type and other types of wet and dry grassland, swamp and fen vegetation.

**Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site:** Lowland hay meadows (*Alopecurus pratensis*, *Sanguisorba officinalis*).

**Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site:**

Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*) \* Priority feature.

No Annex II species are a primary reason for selection of this site but otter *Lutra lutra* is present as a qualifying feature.

**Current threats**

There is an extant planning permission for the extraction of coal by deep mining. This has been reviewed under Regulation 50 by the Minerals Planning Authority (MPA) and an appropriate compensation/mitigation package has been agreed by the MPA/Natural England and the holder of the permission. This is to take account of potential changes to topography, soil water relations and flooding patterns and duration as a result of subsidence. Water levels in general are an issue in the Valley and this is being addressed by a collaborative project between Natural England, Environment Agency and the local water company, Yorkshire Water.

**Lower Derwent Valley Ramsar (UK 11037)**

This site is also designated as a Ramsar site as the Lower Derwent Valley represents one of the most important examples of traditionally managed species-rich alluvial flood meadow habitat remaining in the UK. The river and these flood lands play a substantial role in the hydrological and ecological functioning of the internationally important Humber basin. The site has a rich assemblage of wetland invertebrates including 16 species of dragonfly and damselfly, 15 British Red Data Book wetland invertebrates as well as a leafhopper (*Cicadula ornata*) for which Lower Derwent Valley is the only known site in Great Britain.

The site also qualifies as a staging post for passage birds in spring. Of particular note are the nationally important numbers of ruff, (*Philomachus pugnax*) and whimbrel, (*Numenius phaeopus*).

The qualifying criteria for which the Ramsar is listed are summarised below:

**Ramsar criterion 1** - The site represents one of the most important examples of traditionally managed species-rich alluvial flood meadow habitat remaining in the UK. The river and flood meadows play a substantial role in the hydrological and ecological

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functioning of the Humber Basin.

**Ramsar criterion 2** - The site has a rich assemblage of wetland invertebrates including 16 species of dragonfly and damselfly, 15 British Red Data Book wetland invertebrates as well as a leafhopper, *Cicadula ornata* for which Lower Derwent Valley is the only known site in Great Britain.

**Ramsar criterion 4** - The site qualifies as a staging post for passage birds in spring. Of particular note are the nationally important numbers of ruff, *Philomachus pugnax* and whimbrel, *Numenius phaeopus*.

**Ramsar criterion 5** - Assemblages of international importance:

Species with peak counts in winter:

- 31,942 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003).

**Ramsar criterion 6** – species/populations occurring at levels of international importance.

**Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation):**

Species with peak counts in winter:

- Eurasian wigeon *Anas penelope*, NW Europe 8,350 individuals, representing an average of 2%;
- of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9 - 2002/3); and
- Eurasian teal *Anas crecca*, NW Europe 4200 individuals, representing an average of 1% of the population (5 year peak mean 1998/9 - 2002/3).

#### **Lower Derwent Valley SPA (UK9006092)**

**Qualifications under Article 42 (79/409 EEC): (figures based on percentage of GB populations base on 5 year man peak counts):**

- Overwintering birds: - bewick swan *Cygnus columbianus bewickii* 0.7%, ruff *Philomachus pugnax* 19%, golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria* 2.4%;
- Breeding birds: - Shovler *Anas clypeata* 5%, teal *Anas crecca* 1.5%, wigeon *Anas Penelope* 6.7%; and
- Supports an internationally important assemblage of 40,616 wildfowl.

*Threats/ vulnerability*

- Eutrophication risk due to agricultural run-off and domestic sewage residues are currently being investigated by Natural England (NE) to determine the scale and effect before preventative measures can be formulated;

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- Water abstraction and the associated tidal barrage are thought to adversely affect water levels and qualities on the site. This is being investigated through a joint project between NE, Environment Agency (EA) and the private water company;
  - Coal mining takes place adjacent to the site. The potential effects of this are monitored with mitigation where necessary via a Section 106 planning agreement; and
  - Recreational disturbance is increasing due to increased house building adjacent to the site.

#### **Skipwith Common SAC (UK0030276)**

The northern Atlantic wet heath at Skipwith Common is the most extensive of its type in the north of England. The M16 *Erica tetralix* – *Sphagnum compactum* wet heath is dominated by cross-leaved heath and purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea*. There is a small population of marsh gentian *Gentiana pneumonanthe*. The wet heath is part of transitions from open water, fen, reed and swap to (4030) European dry heaths and other habitats. The site has great ornithological and entomological importance.

Skipwith Common is one of the only two extensive areas of open heathland remaining in the Vale of York, the other being Strensall Common. The dry heath element is an example of H9 *Calluna vulgaris* – *Deschampsia flexuosa* heath dominated by heather. The area has entomological and ornithological importance, with nearly 80 species of birds recorded, including European nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*.

***Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site*** - (4010) Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*, (4030) European dry heaths.

***Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site*** - not applicable.

***Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site*** - not applicable.

***Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection*** - not applicable.

#### *Threats/vulnerability*

Skipwith Common is in private ownership but has open public access. The site is peripheral to any commercial farming enterprise and consequently has suffered a lack of management over the last decade, which has resulted in scrub encroachment at the expense of heathland communities. Natural England are currently working with the owners of the site to ensure that appropriate management is put in place to maintain the existing interest of the site. A management agreement is in place and a large-scale heathland regeneration project for the site is being pursued. There is also an extant permission for deep coal mining. This has previously been reviewed to assess impact on the features of interest at Skipwith Common. As a result of this review a compensation/mitigation package has been agreed with the Minerals Planning Authority/Natural England.

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### **The Humber Estuary SAC (UK30170)**

The Humber is the second-largest coastal plain estuary in the UK, and the largest coastal plain estuary on the east coast of Britain. It is a muddy, macro-tidal estuary, fed by the Rivers Ouse, Trent, Hull, Ancholme and Graveney. Habitats within the Humber Estuary include (1330) Atlantic salt meadows and a range of sand dune types in the outer estuary, together with subtidal sandbanks (H1110) Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time, extensive intertidal mudflats (H1140) Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide, glasswort beds (H1310) *Salicornia* and other annuals colonising mud and sand, and (1150) coastal lagoons. As salinity declines upstream, reedbeds and brackish saltmarsh communities fringe the estuary. Significant fish species include (1,099) river lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis* and (1,095) sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus* which breed in the River Derwent, a tributary of the River Ouse.

**Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site** – (1130) Estuaries, (1140) Mudflats and sand flats not covered by seawater at low tide.

**Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site -**

(1110) Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time, (1150) Coastal lagoons \* Priority feature, (1310) *Salicornia* and other annuals colonising mud and sand, (1330) Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima*), (2110) Embryonic shifting dunes, (2120) Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* ('white dunes'), (2130) Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation ('grey dunes') \* Priority feature, (2160) Dunes with *Hippophae rhamnoides*.

**Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site** - Not applicable.

**Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection** – (1095) Sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*, (1099) River lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis*, 1364 Grey seal *Halichoerus grypus*.

### **Humber Estuary Ramsar (UK 11031)**

The Humber Estuary is the largest macro-tidal estuary on the British North Sea coast. It drains a catchment of some 24,240km<sup>2</sup> and is the site of the largest single input of fresh water from Britain into the North Sea. It has the second-highest tidal range in Britain (max 7.4m) and approximately one-third of the estuary is exposed as mud or sand flats at low tide. The inner estuary supports extensive areas of reedbed with areas of mature and developing saltmarsh backed in places by limited areas of grazing marsh in the middle and outer estuary. On the north Lincolnshire coast the saltmarsh is backed by low sand dunes with marshy slacks and brackish pools. The Estuary regularly supports internationally important numbers of waterfowl in winter and nationally important breeding populations in summer.

The qualifying criteria for which the Ramsar is listed are summarised below:

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**Ramsar Criterion 1** - The site is a representative example of a near-natural estuary with the following component habitats: dune systems and humid dune slacks, estuarine waters, intertidal mud and sand flats, saltmarshes, and coastal brackish/saline lagoons.

**Ramsar Criterion 3** - The Humber Estuary Ramsar site supports a breeding colony of grey seals *Halichoerus grypus* at Donna Nook. It is the second largest grey seal colony in England and the furthest south regular breeding site on the east coast. The dune slacks at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on the southern extremity of the Ramsar site are the most north-easterly breeding site in Great Britain of the natterjack toad *Bufo calamita*.

**Ramsar criterion 5** - Assemblages of international importance: (based on 5 year peak mean 1996/97-2000/2001):

- 153,934 waterfowl, non-breeding season; and
- 153,934 waterfowl species with peak counts in winter.

**Ramsar criterion 6 – species / populations occurring at levels of international importance** (based on 5 year mean peak 1996-2000):

- Eurasian golden plover, *Pluvialis apricaria* ssp *albifrons* 17,996 individuals, passage, representing an average of 2.2% of the population;
- Red knot, *Calidris canutus* ssp *islandica* 18,500 individuals, passage, representing an average of 4.1% of the population; and
- Common redshank, *Tringa tetanus* ssp *britannica* 4,632 individuals, wintering, representing an average of 3.6% of the population (5 year peak mean 1996/7-2000/1).

Qualifying species/populations (as identified at designation):

*Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:* (based on 5 year mean peak counts 1996 -2000):

- European golden plover, *Pluvialis apricaria* ssp *altifrons* 17,996 individuals, representing an average of 2.2% of the population;
- Red knot, *Calidris canutus* ssp *islandica*, (wintering) 18,500 individuals, representing an average of 4.1% of the population;
- Dunlin, *Calidris alpina* ssp *alpina*, 20,269 individuals, representing an average of 1.5% of the population;
- Black-tailed godwit, *Limosa limosa* ssp *islandica*, 915 individuals, representing an average of 2.6% of the population; and
- Common redshank, *Tringa tetanus* ssp *totanus*, 7,462 individuals, representing an average of 5.7% of the population.

*Species with peak counts in winter:* (based on 5 year mean peak counts 1996/7 -2000/1):

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- Common shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* 4,464 individuals, representing an average of 1.5% of the population;
  - European golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria* ssp *altifrons* 30,709 individuals, representing an average of 3.8% of the population;
  - Red knot *Calidris canutus* ssp *islandica*, 28,165 individuals, representing an average of 6.3% of the population;
  - Dunlin *Calidris alpina* ssp *alpina*, 22,222 individuals, representing an average of 1.7% of the population;
  - Black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa* ssp *islandica*, 1,113 individuals, representing an average of 3.2% of the population; and
  - Bar-tailed godwit *Limosa lapponica* ssp *lapponica*, 2,752 individuals, representing an average of 2.3% of the population.

**Ramsar criterion 8** - The Humber Estuary acts as an important migration route for both river lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis* and sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus* between coastal waters and their spawning areas.

#### **Humber Estuary SPA (UK 9006111)**

**Qualifications under article 41 (79/409 EEC): (figures based on percentage of GB populations base on 5 year man peak counts)**

During the breeding season the area regularly supports:

- Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* 10.5% of the population in Great Britain (2000-2002);
- Marsh harrier *Circus aeruginosus* 6.3% of the population in Great Britain (1998-2002);
- Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* 8.6% of the population in Great Britain (1998-2002); and
- Little tern *Sterna albifrons* 2.1% of the population in Great Britain (1998-2002).

Over winter the area regularly supports:

- Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* 4% of the population in Great Britain (1998/9 to 2002/3);
- Hen harrier *Circus cyaneus* 1.1% of the population in Great Britain (1997/8 to 2001/2);
- Bar-tailed godwit *Limosa lapponica* 4.4% of the population in Great Britain (1996/7 to 2000/1);
- Golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria* 12.3% of the population in Great Britain (1996/7 to 2000/1); and
- Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* 1.7% of the population in Great Britain (1996/7 to 2000/1).

On passage the area regularly supports:

- Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* 1.4% of the population in Great Britain (1996-2000).
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**Qualifications under article 42 (79/409 EEC): (figures based on percentage of GB populations base on 5 year man peak counts)**

Over winter the area regularly supports:

- Dunlin *Calidris alpina alpina* 1.7% of the population (1996/7 to 2000/1);
- Red knot *Calidris canutus* 6.3% of the population 91996/7 to 2000/1);
- Bar tailed godwit *Limosa limosa islandica* 3.2% of the population (1996/7 to 2000/1);
- Shellduck *Tadorna tadorna* 1.5% of the population (1996/7 to 2000/1); and
- Red shank *Tringa tetanus* 3.6% of the population (1996/7 to 2000/1).

On passage the area regularly supports:

- Dunlin *Calidris alpina alpina* 1.5% of the population (1996-2000);
- Red knot *Calidris canutus* 4.1% of the population(1996-2000);
- Bar-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa islandica* 2.6% of the population (1996-2000); and
- Redshank *Tringa tetanus* 5.7% of the population (1996-2000).

**Article 4.2 qualification (79/409/EEC): An internationally important assemblage of birds AN**

In the non-breeding season the area regularly supports:

- 153,934 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1996/7 to 2000/1).

*Threats / vulnerability*

The Humber Estuary is subject to the impacts of human activities (past and present) as well as on-going processes such as sea level rise and climate change. Management intervention is therefore necessary to enable the estuary to recover and to secure the ecological resilience required to respond to both natural and anthropogenic change. Key issues include coastal squeeze, impacts on the sediment budget, and geomorphological structure and function of the estuary (due to sea level rise, flood defence works, dredging, and the construction, operation and maintenance of ports, pipelines and other infrastructure), changes in water quality and flows, pressure from additional built development, and damage and disturbance arising from access, recreation and other activities. Coastal squeeze is being addressed through the development and implementation of the Humber Flood Risk Management Strategy. All proposals for flood defence, development, dredging, abstractions and discharges which require consent from any statutory body, and land use plans which may have impacts upon the site are subject to assessment under the

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Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (the “Habitats Regulations”). Diffuse pollution will be addressed through a range of measures including implementation of the Waste Water Framework Directive and Catchment Sensitive Farming initiatives. Other issues are addressed via a range of measures including regulation of on-site land management activities and implementation of the Humber Management Scheme, developed by all relevant statutory bodies to assist in the delivery of their duties under the Habitats Regulations.

**Kirk Deighton SAC UK0030178**

Great crested newts *Triturus cristatus* breed in a large pond set in a depression in grazed pasture. This main breeding pond has a water level that fluctuates widely, sometimes leading to pond desiccation. As a result, there is relatively little aquatic vegetation but egg-laying occurs and recruitment is successful intermittently; however, a large population is present, demonstrating this species ability to thrive in temporary pond sites. Newts range across an area comprising pasture with old hedgerows.

***Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site*** - Not applicable.

***Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site*** - Not applicable.

***Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site*** – (1166) Great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*

*Threats / vulnerability*

- Heavy livestock poaching;
- Physical damage (erosion, habitat fragmentation, siltation hydrological change (water level and flow rate));
- Introduction of predatory fish;
- Biological disturbance;
- Agricultural, transport and industrial runoff/discharge water quality);
- Water abstraction;
- Transport industry; and
- Non-toxic contamination (nutrient enrichment), physical damage (siltation, fragmentation of habitat), toxic contamination.

**Strensall Common SAC UK0030284**

Strensall Common, together with Skipwith Common, is an example of acidic lowland heath in northern England. The wet

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element is well-represented by M16 *Erica tetralix* – *Sphagnum compactum* wet heath, although its extent has been reduced by drainage. It is a noted locality for marsh gentian *Gentiana pneumonanthe*, narrow buckler-fern *Dryopteris carthusiana* and long-leaved sundew *Drosera intermedia*.

Strensall Common, with Skipwith Common, is one of only two extensive areas of open heathland remaining in the Vale of York. There is a complex mosaic of (4010) **Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*** and dry heath elements. The H9 *Calluna vulgaris* – *Deschampsia flexuosa* dry heath is noted for petty whin *Genista anglica* and bird's-foot *Ornithopus perpusillus*.

*Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site* - (4010) **Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix***, (4030) **European dry heaths**.

***Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site*** - Not applicable.

***Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site*** - Not applicable.

***Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection*** - Not applicable.

Strensall Common is used for military training but this does not currently compromise the interest of the site. Scrub encroachment is a problem and Natural England are currently working with Defence Estates and their tenant to ensure scrub does not expand further at the expense of the heathland communities. To this end Natural England have a management agreement with the tenant of the land.

#### *Threats / vulnerability*

- Poor muirburn management;
- Physical loss (removal), damage (habitat fragmentation), accidental fires;
- Physical loss (smothering by scrub encroachment);
- Physical loss (removal), physical damage (erosion, habitat fragmentation, non-toxic contamination (nutrient enrichment));
- Lack of scrub management;
- Overgrazing by sheep;
- Physical damage (erosion and fragmentation, accidental fires);
- Recreational pressure;
- Golf course management; and

- Toxic contamination (herbicides).

#### **Thorne Moor SAC UK0012915**

Thorne Moor is England's largest area of raised bog, lying a few kilometres from the smaller Hatfield Moors, both within the former floodplain of the rivers feeding the Humber estuary (Humberhead Levels), and includes the sub-components Goole Moors and Crowle Moors. Although recent management has increased the proportion of (7110) active raised bog at Thorne Moors, the inclusion of Goole Moors, where peat-extraction has now ceased, means that the site is still predominantly degraded raised bog. The restored secondary surface is rich in species of (7110) Active raised bogs with bog-mosses *Sphagnum* spp., cottongrasses *Eriophorum angustifolium* and *E. vaginatum*, heather *Calluna vulgaris*, cross-leaved heath *Erica tetralix*, round-leaved sundew *Drosera rotundifolia*, cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccos* and bog-rosemary *Andromeda polifolia*.

***Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site*** – (7120) degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration.

***Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site*** - Not applicable.

***Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site*** - Not applicable.

***Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection*** - Not applicable.

#### *Threats / vulnerability*

- Peat cutting;
- Water abstraction;
- Physical damage / erosion;
- Hydrological change;
- Habitat fragmentation;
- Scrub invasion;
- Fires; and
- Habitat disturbance / trampling.

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**Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA UK9005171**

***Qualifications under article 41 (79/409 EEC): (figures based on percentage of GB populations base on 5 year man peak counts)***

- Supports 1.9% of the UK breeding population of nightjar.

*Threats / vulnerability*

Thorne and Hatfield Moors form an extensive lowland raised mire system. Outside of the areas that are currently being worked for peat, the main threats to the nightjar's habitat come from lack of management and re-wetting operations. The former is being addressed by a programme of scrub clearance work to create a mosaic with open areas of various sizes; the latter by incorporating information on nightjars' requirements and previous patterns of usage of the site into National Nature Reserve management plans, to ensure that future management takes account of both the raised mire and nightjar interests. On the parts of the site that are still worked for peat, any impacts on the nightjar's habitat or behaviour will be addressed as part of the review of extant permissions under the relevant provisions of the Habitats Regulations.

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### Assessment Criteria

Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in the combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site.

The Site Allocations DPD is considered to have the potential to affect the Natura 2000 sites by virtue of:

- A) An increase in housing allocations situated within 5km which could lead to increased visitor pressure to countryside sites including those covered by the Natura 2000 designations listed above; and
- B) Could result in an increase in tourism generally and hence have the potential to indirectly result in increased visitor pressure to countryside sites, including the sites covered by the Natura 2000 designations listed above.

The following site allocations were found to occur within 5km of the Natura 2000 sites:

- Land North of Kapuni, Green Lane, North Duffield (NDUF 003) (allocated for 15 dwellings). Located 1.1km to the east of Skipwith Common SAC and 1km to the west of Lower Derwent Valley Ramsar/SAC/SPA;
  - East of York Road, North Duffield (NDUF 006) and Gothic Farm Main Street, North Duffield (NDUF IO D) (joint allocation for 29 units, allotments, play area and sports field). Located 1.5km to the west of Skipwith Common SAC and 0.35km to the west of Lower Derwent Valley Ramsar/SAC/SPA;
  - Land between A19 and York Road, Riccall (RICC 002) (allocated for 13 dwellings). Located 1.9km to the west of Skipwith Common SAC;
  - Land Rear of 31 York Road, Riccall (RICC 003) and Land North of Riccall (RICC 004) (joint allocation for mixed use, comprising 99 dwellings and light employment). Located 2.1km to the north west of Skipwith Common SAC;
  - Dunelm Farm, Riccall (RICC 005) (allocated for 15 dwellings). Located 2.1km to the west of Skipwith Common SAC;
  - Turnhead, York Road, Barlby (BARL 001) and Turnhead Farm, York Road, Barlby (BARL 002) (joint allocation for 156 dwellings). Located 2.1km to the south west of Skipwith Common SAC;
  - Tindall's Farm, Sand Lane, Osgodby (BARL 003) (allocated for 48 dwellings). Located 2.9km south west of Skipwith Common SAC;
  - Corner Farm, South Duffield Road, Osgodby (BARL 004) (allocated for 12 units). Located 3.1km south west of Skipwith Common SAC;
  - Selby Garden Centre, Hull Road, Osgodby (BARL 005) (0.6 hectare site allocated for 18 dwellings, employment and light industrial use). Located 3.1km south west of Skipwith Common SAC;
  - Depot and Silos, Barlby Road (BARL 014) (allocated for 1.18 hectares of employment use). Located 4.2km south west of Skipwith Common SAC;
  - North of Hull Road, Hemingbrough (HEMB 002), The Old Brick Works, Hemingbrough (HEMB 003), Land At Northfield Road, Hemingbrough (HEMB 004) and Land adjacent Willowdene, Hemingbrough (HEMB IO E) (joint allocation for a 1 hectare
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employment development to provide light commercial/industrial use). Located 2.5km to the south west of Lower Derwent Valley Ramsar/SAC/SPA; and

- Land East of Hemingbrough Primary School, School Road, Hemingbrough (HEMB 007) and Land at South Hemingbrough (HEMB IO A) (joint allocation for 77 dwellings). Located 2.8km to the south west of Lower Derwent Valley Ramsar/SAC/SPA.

In addition to the Site Allocations DPD, the assessment will need to consider the potential for in-combination effects from the following polices and extant planning consents:

#### ***Selby District Core Strategy Policies***

*Policy CP1 Spatial Development Strategy* - identifies which towns and villages should be the focus for new housing, employment, retail, commercial, and leisure facilities and set out principals which will be applied in permitting development in these areas. This identifies strategic development sites in order to meet the future needs in Selby.

*Policy CP2 The Scale and Distribution of Housing* - sets out the distribution of new housing allocations across each of the towns and villages identified.

*Policy CP10 Rural Diversification* - provides details of how proposals for rural diversification will be supported that entail the extension or re-use of existing premises, farm diversification enterprises, or recreation and tourism activity.

*Policy CP14 Renewable Energy* - states that the Council will support new sources of renewable energy generation provided that development proposals can demonstrate that the wider environmental, economic and social benefits outweigh harm caused to the environment and local amenity, and impacts on local communities are minimised.

The remaining policies of the Core Strategy were not considered likely to have the potential to affect the Natura 2000 sites because:

- A) The other policies of the Core Strategy contain commitments designed to safeguard the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites; or
- B) Policies were directed at settlements situated over 5km from the Natura 2000 sites; or
- C) The policies were concerned with aspects of development that would not lead to any impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites.

The Core Strategy included proposed site allocations in the following settlements which are in proximity to designated sites:

- Strategic residential (Site D) and strategic employment (Site G), which are now combined to form a single strategic development site in the Core Strategy, both of which lie adjacent to Selby town. Located between 4 – 5km to the south west of Skipwith Common SAC;
- There are three existing Designated Service Villages within 5km of Skipwith Common SAC, these are; North Duffield, Riccall and Barlby; all of which are included within the Core Strategy; and



- There are two Designated Service Villages; North Duffield and Hemingbrough, within 5km of the Lower Derwent Valley Natura 2000 designations, both of which are included within the Core Strategy.

***Extant planning consents for major developments as defined below:***

a) Employment Commercial sites over 1,000 sq.m:

**CO/2004/0011 / 8/16/97R/PA** - Erection of a food retail unit at BOCM Olympia Mills, Barlby Road, Barlby, Selby, North Yorkshire. Approved – 05/12/2006 Expires – 04/12/2011 Floor area: - 1,292 sq.m (net sales area), 1,650 sq.m (gross sales area).

**2008/0557/OUT / 8/16/359C/PA** - Outline application for a mixed employment development of Business (B1), General Industry (B2) and Storage and Distribution (B8) use to include means of access and indicative landscaping on 5.42ha land at Barlby Road, Barlby, Selby, North Yorkshire. Approved 06/08/2008 Expires 05/11/2011.

**2011/0243/4FUL** – Retail development to provide an additional 2,240m<sup>2</sup> (GEA) of floor area to an existing food retail site on Portholme Road, Selby.

b) Residential sites of >20 dwellings:

**2005/0336/OUT / 8/19/1573/PA** - Outline application for residential development (including means of access) on 7.6ha land at Holme Lane / Coupland Road, Selby, North Yorkshire. Section 73 application (2006/0919/FUL/8/19/1573A/PA) for variation of condition no. 1 on previously approved outline application 2005/0336/OUT / 8/19/1573/PA to extend the period within which application for approval of Reserved Matters can be made. Approved – 24/06/2005 (approval date for original outline application). Expires – 23/06/2010 (extended date approved under Section 73 application).

**2006/0425/FUL / 8/19/1626/PA** - Erection of 123 residential dwellings and associated car parking and landscaping on land at Providence Mill, Holme Lane, Selby, North Yorkshire. Approved – 02/10/2006. Expires – 01/10/2009 (work has commenced).

c) Wind Farms

**CO/2002/0780 / 8/26/62/PA** - Erection of twelve wind turbines with associated tracks, crane hardstandings, anemometer, underground cables and switchgear house and compound for the purpose of producing electricity on land at Pease Farm & Rusholme Grange, Newland, Selby, North Yorkshire. Approved – 19/10/2006. Expires – 18/10/2011 (work has commenced).

**City of York Core Strategy Submission Draft** – sets out the spatial development strategy for the neighbouring district of City of Yorkshire

**East Riding of York Core Strategy** - sets out the spatial development strategy for the neighbouring district of East Riding of Yorkshire

Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of:

- Size and scale.
- Land takes distance from the Natura 2000 site or key features of the site resource requirements (water abstraction etc.) emissions (disposal to land, water or air).
- Excavation requirements.
- Transportation requirements.
- Duration of construction operation decommissioning etc. other.

### **Lower Derwent Valley SAC**

None of the potential site allocations within the Site Allocations DPD lie within or adjacent to the SAC and therefore direct impacts on the designated features are unlikely.

However, the following DPD allocations lie within 5km:

- Land North of Kapuni, Green Lane, North Duffield (NDUF 003) (allocated for 15 dwellings). Located 1.1km to the west of Lower Derwent Valley SAC;
- East of York Road, North Duffield (NDUF 006) and Gothic Farm Main Street, North Duffield (NDUF IO D) (joint allocation for 29 units, allotments, play area and sports field). Located 0.35km to the west of Lower Derwent Valley SAC;
- North of Hull Road, Hemingbrough (HEMB 002), The Old Brick Works, Hemingbrough (HEMB 003), Land at Northfield Road, Hemingbrough (HEMB 004) and Land adjacent Willowdene, Hemingbrough (HEMB IO E) (joint allocation for a 1 hectare employment development to provide light commercial/industrial use). Located 2.5km to the south west of Lower Derwent Valley SAC; and
- Land East of Hemingbrough Primary School, School Road, Hemingbrough (HEMB 007) and Land at South Hemingbrough (HEMB IO A) (joint allocation for 77 dwellings). Located 2.8km to the south west of Lower Derwent Valley SAC.

Given the small size of the allocations it is considered that none of these allocations individually or collectively would be likely to result in indirect effects such as a significant increase in visitor pressure arising from an increase in recreational use of publically accessible areas. However, there are other allocations and committed development further afield in Selby and nearby villages at distances over 5km. It is unlikely, but possible that there could be an increase in visitor pressure to those parts of the SAC that are publically accessible. For example, areas within the Lower Derwent Valley NNR and habitats situated adjacent to Public Rights of Way (PRoW) along the River at Bubworth lngs could be affected. This could lead to impacts arising from human disturbance on sensitive habitats that are Annex 1 features (such as lowland hay meadows and alder ash woodland) and to Annex 2 species that are vulnerable to disturbance, such as otter.

As detailed in the Appropriate Assessment of the Core Strategy, which was undertaken in December 2010, current management at the Lower Derwent Valley is undertaken by the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, Natural England, the Carstairs Countryside Trust and a number of private landowners.

Visitor numbers are not actively encouraged given the sensitive nature of the wildlife and habitats and the management approach is to provide quiet enjoyment of the reserve for those who visit. The Yorkshire Wildlife Trust expects visitor numbers to be reasonably low except during the winter bird migration season and if a rarity is seen at the reserve which would attract bird watchers.

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No accurate counts for visitor numbers have been undertaken therefore it is difficult to predict how large any increase in visitor numbers would need to be from increased housing and economic activity to have an adverse impact. However, visitor numbers are expected to be low for most of the year, but an impact from increased visitor numbers cannot be ruled out. Such an impact is considered to be unlikely though as the majority of visitors attracted to the site are bird watchers/wildlife enthusiasts and not mass recreation that is likely to attract a large increase in visitors from new housing and economic growth.

Wildlife monitoring of the Lower Derwent Valley already takes place with breeding bird surveys and Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) counts carried out at Wheldrake Ings and other sites in the valley. Although thought to be unlikely, if development under the Site Allocations DPD were to impact on the site a number of actions are available which could mitigate for this, including, wardens being present, boardwalk improvements, improvement of hides and signage, improved buffer zones, and improved car parking or support for other transport options in the valley. In addition comments from Natural England at the Core Strategy Appropriate Assessment screening stage encourage the provision of accessible green space for any new housing developments to reduce the pressure on designated sites. The provision of such green space is required by Core Strategy policies CP15 and 16.

Wildlife monitoring should continue at the site and SDC should include this monitoring data in their Annual Monitoring Report.

#### **Lower Derwent Valley Ramsar**

None of the potential site allocations within the Site Allocations DPD lie within or adjacent to the Ramsar and therefore direct impacts on the designated features are unlikely.

Comments made above relating to habitat disturbance from the potential for increased visitor pressure to publicly accessible areas of the SAC due to the proposed increase in local housing allocations would also apply to habitats that are listed in criterion 1 of the Ramsar. In addition to this, the comments made above are relevant to any increase in levels of disturbance experienced by bird species cited in criterions 1-6 that could occur within and adjacent to areas that are accessible to the public.

#### **Lower Derwent Valley SPA**

None of the potential site allocations within the Site Allocations DPD lie within or adjacent to the SPA and therefore direct impacts on the designated features are unlikely.

Potential impacts to bird populations that are qualifying populations of the SPA are the same as those described for the Ramsar above.

It should be noted that recreational disturbance to bird populations is cited as a threat to bird populations within the SPA designation document.

#### **Skipwith Common SAC**

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None of the potential site allocations within the Site Allocations DPD lie within or adjacent to the SAC and therefore direct impacts on the designated features are unlikely. However, the following DPD allocations lie within 5km:

- Land North of Kapuni, Green Lane, North Duffield (NDUF 003) (allocated for 15 dwellings). Located 1.1km to the east of Skipwith Common SAC;
- East of York Road, North Duffield (NDUF 006) and Gothic Farm Main Street, North Duffield (NDUF IO D) (joint allocation for 29 units, allotments, play area and sports field). Located 1.5km to the west of Skipwith Common SAC;
- Land between A19 and York Road, Riccall RICC 002 (allocated for 13 dwellings). Located 1.9km to the west of Skipwith Common SAC;
- Land Rear of 31 York Road, Riccall (RICC 003) and Land North of Riccall (RICC 004) (joint allocation for mixed use, comprising 99 dwellings and light employment). Located 2.1km to the north west of Skipwith Common SAC;
- Dunelm Farm, Riccall (RICC 005) (allocated for 15 dwellings). Located 2.1km to the west of Skipwith Common SAC;
- Turnhead, York Road, Barlby (BARL 001) and Turnhead Farm, York Road, Barlby (BARL 002) (joint allocation for 156 dwellings). Located 2.1km to the south west of Skipwith Common SAC;
- Tindall's Farm, Sand Lane, Osgodby (BARL 003) (allocated for 48 dwellings). Located 2.9km south west of Skipwith Common SAC;
- Corner Farm, South Duffield Road, Osgodby (BARL 004) (allocated for 12 units). Located 3.1km south west of Skipwith Common SAC;
- Selby Garden Centre, Hull Road, Osgodby (BARL 005) (0.6 hectare site allocated for 18 dwellings, employment and light industrial use). Located 3.1km south west of Skipwith Common SAC; and
- Depot and Silos, Barlby Road (BARL 014) (allocated for 1.18 hectares of employment use). Located 4.2km south west of Skipwith Common SAC.

Given the small size of the allocations it is considered that none of the allocations individually or collectively would be likely to result in indirect effects such as a significant increase in visitor pressure arising from an increase in recreational use of publically accessible areas of Skipwith Common. However, there are other allocations and committed deployment further afield in Selby and nearby villages at distances over 5km that, when considered in combination with the above DPD allocations, may result in an increase in visitor pressure to those parts of the SAC that are publicly accessible. Given that the Common is a National Nature Reserve (NNR) it should be assumed that many areas will be accessible to the public. This could lead to impacts arising from human disturbance on sensitive habitats that are Annex 1 features (such as the wet and dry heaths) and to species for which the Common is particularly important such as nightjar.

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As detailed in the Appropriate Assessment of the Core Strategy, which was undertaken in December 2010, it is considered by Natural England that visitor numbers are not necessarily at 'saturation point' but they would not be actively looking to increase the number of visitors to the site. No accurate counts for visitor numbers have been undertaken therefore it is difficult to predict how large any increase in visitor numbers would need to be from increased housing and economic activity to have an adverse impact. However a large increase in visitor numbers is considered to be unlikely as the majority of visitors the site attracts are wildlife enthusiasts and not mass recreation that is likely to attract a large increase in visitors from new housing and economic growth.

Although thought to be unlikely, if development under the Site Allocations DPD were to impact on the Site a number of actions are available which could mitigate for this, including, maintenance of existing site infrastructure such as footpaths. In addition comments from Natural England at the Core Strategy Appropriate Assessment screening stage encourage the provision of accessible green space for any new housing developments to reduce the pressure on designated sites. The provision of such green space is required by Core Strategy policies CP15 and 16. Wildlife monitoring should continue at the Site and SDC should include this monitoring data in their Annual Monitoring Report.

### **The Humber Estuary SAC**

None of the proposed allocations within the Site Allocations DPD lie within or adjacent to the SAC and therefore direct impacts on the designated features are unlikely.

There are no settlements with housing allocations within the Site Allocations DPD that lie within 5km of the SAC, although due to the presence of the Trans-Pennine Trail along the banks of the Humber, it is possible that land adjacent to designated habitats may experience more visitors as a result of increases in housing allocations in and around Selby. In addition, the Annex 1 habitats which could be present in sections of the River along the Trans-Pennine Trail would be intertidal mud and sand flats which are unlikely to experience visitor disturbance and therefore would not be likely to be affected.

River lamprey and sea lamprey which are Annex 2 species of the SAC would not be affected by any of the DPD allocations and although grey seal is listed as an Annex 2 species, populations are likely to occur in habitats closer to the coast which would be outside the potential 'zone of influence' affected by any of the potential DPD allocations owing to the physical distance from any of the allocations to areas where annex species are likely to be located within the SAC.

As detailed in the Appropriate Assessment of the Core Strategy, which was undertaken in December 2010, as for Skipworth Common SAC it is considered by Natural England that visitor numbers are not necessarily at 'saturation point' but they would not be actively looking to increase the number of visitors to the site. No accurate counts for visitor numbers have been undertaken therefore it is difficult to predict how large any increase in visitor numbers would need to be from increased housing and economic activity to have an adverse impact. However a large increase in visitor numbers is considered to be unlikely as the majority of visitors the site attracts are wildlife enthusiasts and not mass recreation that is likely to attract a large increase in visitors from new housing and economic growth.

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Although thought to be unlikely, if development under the Site Allocations DPD were to impact on the Site a number of actions are available which could mitigate for this, including, maintenance of existing site infrastructure such as footpaths. In addition comments from Natural England at the Core Strategy Appropriate Assessment screening stage encourage the provision of accessible green space for any new housing developments to reduce the pressure on designated sites. The provision of such green space is required by Core Strategy policies CP15 and 16. Wildlife monitoring should continue at the Site and SDC should include this monitoring data in their Annual Monitoring Report.

### **Humber Estuary Ramsar**

None of the DPD allocations lie within or adjacent to the Ramsar and therefore direct impacts on the designated features are unlikely. There are no allocations within the DPD that lie within 5km of the Ramsar, although due to the presence of the Trans-Pennine Trail along the banks of the Humber, it is possible that land within and adjacent to the Ramsar may experience more visitors as a result an increase in population levels arising from an overall increase in housing within the district as a result of allocations within the Site Allocations DPD Allocation and Core Strategy.

Whilst this would not be likely to affect the integrity of habitats it may have the potential to increase levels of disturbance experienced by bird species cited in criterions 1-6 which may be present in habitats adjacent to the Trans-Pennine Trail. Many of the species listed in the Ramsar citation are wading bird and wildfowl that are vulnerable to visual disturbance. As detailed above, although thought to be unlikely, if development under the Site Allocations DPD were to impact on the site a number of actions are available which could mitigate for this, including, maintenance of existing site infrastructure such as footpaths. In addition comments from Natural England at the Core Strategy Appropriate Assessment screening stage encourage the provision of accessible green space for any new housing developments to reduce the pressure on designated sites. The provision of such green space is required by Core Strategy policies CP15 and 16. Wildlife monitoring should continue at the Site and SDC should include this monitoring data in their Annual Monitoring Report.

As well as potential impacts arising from increased visitor pressure, if the enactment of policy CP14 within the Core Strategy supporting new sources of renewable energy results in additional wind energy sites being situated in areas that could affect bird populations cited in the Humber Estuary Valley Ramsar criteria, this could lead to an adverse effect, either alone or in combination with another consented wind farm scheme currently under construction at Newland situated some 3.5km km to the east. However, it is considered that given the size and location of the proposed site allocations, large scale wind turbines would not be appropriate and consequently this impact is not considered to be significant. In addition, such wind turbine developments would be likely to be subject to individual Environmental Impact Assessment (including AA where necessary) and would therefore also need to be assessed independently once details are known. Policy CP14 puts emphasis on the design and location of renewable energy and low-carbon energy generation within the development proposals. As such it is unlikely that if proposals for wind turbines follow the appropriate planning policy and legislative requirements any of the Natura 2000 sites would be impacted upon (this would include the consideration of in-combination effects from neighbouring Core Strategies). In addition policy CP15 enforces the sustainability of the natural environment by safeguarding national and local protected sites and

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ensuring that development seeks to produce a net gain in biodiversity.

**Humber Estuary SPA**

None of the site allocations within the Site Allocations DPD lie within or adjacent to the Ramsar and therefore direct impacts on the designated features are unlikely.

Potential impacts to bird populations that are qualifying populations of the SPA are the same as those described for the Ramsar above. It should be noted that recreational disturbance to bird populations is cited as a threat to bird populations.

**Kirk Deighton SAC**

None of the DPD allocations lie within 5km of this site, nor do any of the sites identified within the Core Strategy. Also as the site is not publically accessible, indirect impacts such as those that could arise from public use of this site are not likely to occur and therefore no direct or indirect impacts are predicted.

**Strensall Common SAC**

None of the DPD allocations lie within 5km of the site, nor do any of the sites identified within the Core Strategy. Also as this Common is not publically accessible, indirect impacts such as those that could arise from public use of the Common are not likely to occur and therefore no direct or indirect impacts are predicted.

**Thorne Moor SAC**

None of the DPD allocations lie within 5km of this site, nor do any of the sites identified within the Core Strategy.

Given the physical distance of this site to any of the potential allocations it is very unlikely that any either alone or in combination would lead to an increase in visitor pressure to parts of the SAC that are publically accessible such as those within the NNR.

**Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA**

Comments above also apply to the Thorne and Hatfield SPA.

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Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of:

- Reduction of habitat area.
- Disturbance to key species.

No changes in terms of the geographic extent or type of habitats present on any of the Natura 2000 sites would be likely to arise from implementation of the Site Allocations DPD, either alone or in combination with the other plans or projects cited above.

Habitat quality in publicly accessible areas at Skipwith Common NNR and Derwent Valley NNR which lie within SAC and Ramsar designations is not likely to be affected by the implementation of the Site Allocations DPD, either alone or in combination with the other plans or projects. This issue has been considered in detail in the Core strategy Appropriate Assessment.

The implementation of the Site Allocations DPD, either alone or in combination with the other plans or projects, is not likely to change the levels of disturbance experienced by avifauna occurring in or adjacent to publicly accessible areas at Skipwith Common, Lower Derwent Valley and the Humber Estuary. This issue has been considered in detail in the Core Strategy Appropriate Assessment.

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Describe any impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in terms of:

- Interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site
- Interference with key relationships that define the function of the site.

As detailed above, no impacts are expected from implementation of the Site Allocations DPD, either alone or in combination with the other plans or projects cited above.



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Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:

- Loss fragmentation disruption.
- Disturbance change to key elements of the site.

As detailed above, no impacts are expected from implementation of the Site Allocations DPD, either alone or in combination with the other plans or projects cited above.

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Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the magnitude of impacts is not known.

As detailed above, no impacts are expected from implementation of the Site Allocations DPD, either alone or in combination with the other plans or projects cited above.

## 4. Conclusion








- 4.1. Given the size and location of the individual allocations proposed within the Site Allocations DPD, it is considered unlikely that any individually would have the potential to affect any of the Natura 2000 sites. When considering the proposed levels of housing to be provided in the Site Allocations DPD in combination with housing allocations proposed on the strategic site within the Core Strategy and those of existing consented schemes, it is possible that there would be a small risk of impacts due to increase visitation and disturbance to the following sites:
- The Lower Derwent Valley SAC, Ramsar and SPA designations;
  - Skipwith Common SAC; and
  - The Humber Estuary SAC, Ramsar and SPA designations.
- 4.2. This issue was considered in detail in the Appropriate Assessment undertaken for the Core Strategy, and given that the Site Allocations DPD is fully in accordance with the Core Strategy, the conclusions of the Core Strategy Appropriate Assessment are considered to remain valid.
- 4.3. It is unlikely that any impacts arising from the implementation of the Site Allocations DPD (and impacts arising from in combination effects from other plans or projects) would have an adverse effect on the designated sites. It is considered unlikely that a large increase in numbers would visit the sites from the new housing and economic growth. This is because the majority of existing visitors are enthusiasts attracted by the sites biodiversity and not mass recreation that would be likely to attract a large increase in visitors.
- 4.4. However any effects from an increase in visitors are likely to be confined to changes in the quality and extent of habitats and in the number and distribution of species that comprise the Natura 2000 designations, which could arise from an increase in visitor numbers to publicly accessible areas of the designations. Consultation with the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and Natural England has shown that there is no current data on the visitor numbers for the Natura 2000 Sites, but it was thought that none of the designated sites are at saturation point. As such it is recommended that in order to monitor the future effects, further surveys and analysis of visitor numbers should be undertaken. Data relating to the condition of the Natura 2000 Sites should be included in SDC's Annual Monitoring Report.
- 4.5. There is also the potential for bird populations that form part of both Ramsar and SPA designations within the Lower Derwent Valley and Humber Estuary being adversely affected by bird strike from wind turbines if these are sited on migratory routes. This could arise through the enactment of Policy CP14 which promotes renewable energy projects on site allocations of more than 10 dwellings of more than 1,000m<sup>2</sup> of non-residential floorspace. However Policy CP14 puts emphasis on the design and location of renewable energy and low-carbon energy generation within the development proposals. However, it is considered that given the size and location of the proposed site allocations, large scale wind turbines would not be appropriate and consequently this impact is not considered to be significant. In addition, any such wind turbine developments would be likely to be subject to individual Environmental Impact Assessment (including Appropriate Assessment where necessary) and would therefore also need to be assessed independently once details are known. As such it is unlikely that any of the Natura 2000 sites would be impacted upon by wind turbine developments resulting from the implementation of the Site Allocations DPD.

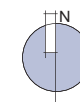
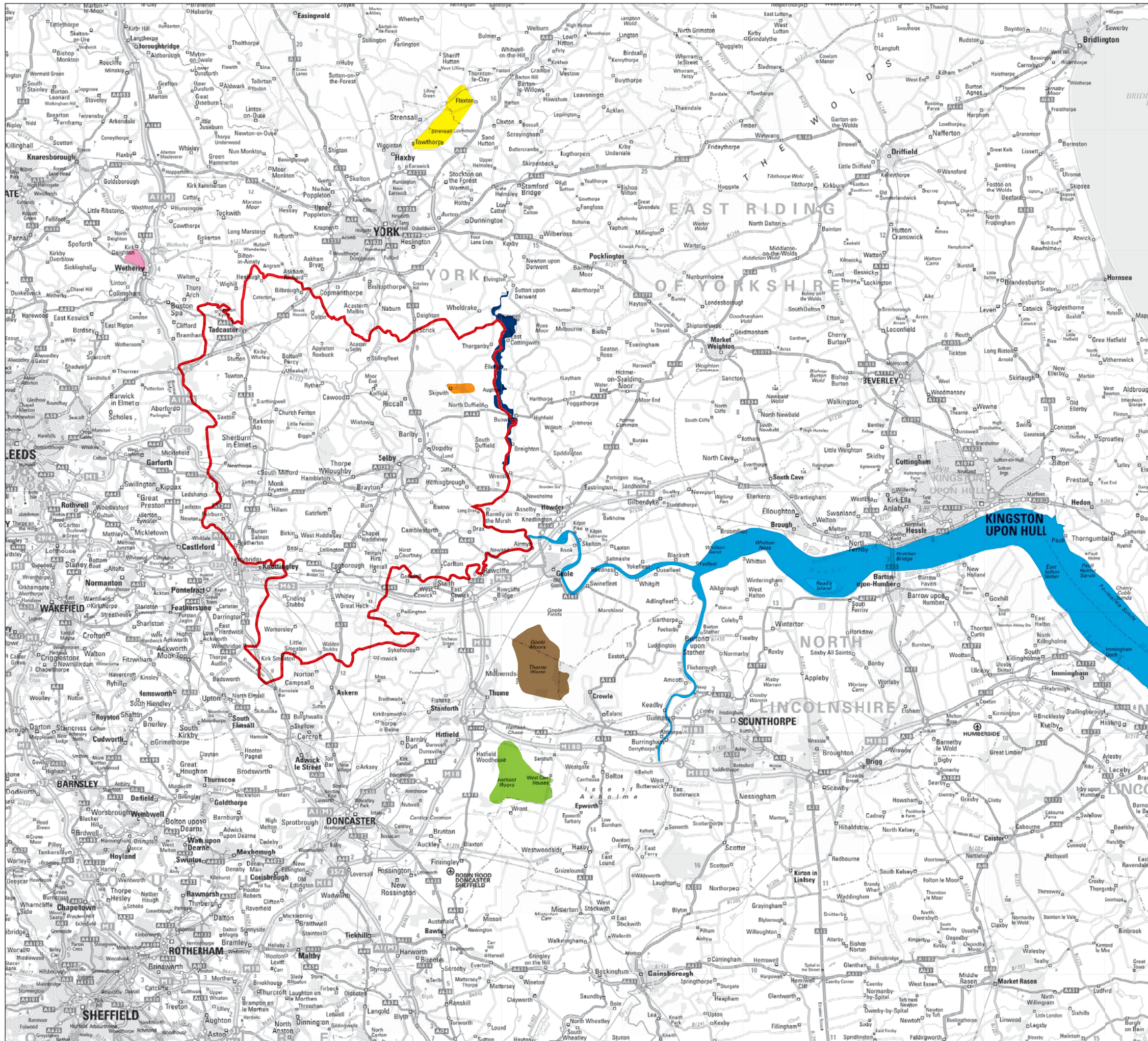
**Figure 1: Designated Sites (E5072-102\_GR\_DS\_1A September 2010)**





**Designated Sites**

-  Humber Estuary SAC Ramsar SPA
-  Thorne Moor SAC
-  Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA
-  Skipwith Common SAC
-  Lower Derwent Valley Ramsar SAC SPA
-  Strensall Common SAC
-  Kirk Deighton SAC



Project Details

E5072-102: Selby

Figure Title

Figure 1: Designated Sites

Figure Ref

E5072-102\_GR\_DS\_1A

Date

December 2010

File Location

\\nt-lng2weed\projects\5072102\graphics\ds\issued figures





## **APPENDICES**

### **A. Correspondence from York Natural England**

**From:** [McNeil, Jennifer A](#)  
**To:** [McNeil, Jennifer A](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment for Selby District Council DPD Allocations  
**Date:** 30 September 2010 09:50:08

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**From:** Walsh, James (NE) [mailto:James.Walsh@naturalengland.org.uk]  
**Sent:** 26 July 2010 11:08  
**To:** Moorcroft, John  
**Subject:** Re: Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment for Selby District Council DPD Allocations

Dear John

Thank you for your email regarding the above. The list of sites included in the table would appear to be include all relevant sites. We would also agree that the list of operations and potential ecological impacts is appropriate.

As you may well already be aware, all Natura 2000 sites are also classified as SSSIs (split into a number of SSSI units for larger sites such as the Humber). Details of operations likely to damage the sites, and views about management, can be found on Natural England's website [here](#) by searching for the relevant SSSI. Operations likely to damage the site are likely to apply to the Natura 2000 designation as well, so it can be useful to cross check the information to ensure that all impacts are included.

I would be happy to provide further advice on the HRA as it progresses, and to comment on the draft screening assessment. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Kind regards

James Walsh

Lead Adviser  
Local Government Team  
Natural England  
Government Buildings  
Lawnswood  
Leeds  
LS16 5QT

Office: 0300 060 1832  
Mobile: 07887 625570

**From:** Moorcroft, John  
**Sent:** 08 July 2010 17:01  
**To:** 'govwest.yorkshumber@natrualengland.org.uk'  
**Cc:** Anderson, Kate E  
**Subject:** Habitats Regulations screening Assessment for Selby District Council DPD Allocations

Dear York Team,

Waterman Energy Environment and Design have been commissioned by Selby District Council to undertake a screening for an Appropriate Assessment under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 of the site options for their Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD). We propose to undertake the screening using the Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC using the format in Annex 2 of the guidance.

I have looked at the location of all the potential site allocations which are being considered for inclusion within the DPD (see attached map) and consider that the following Natura 2000 designations provided in the attached table will need to be included within the screening assessment. All of the sites lie within 20km of Selby. We would be grateful if you could let us know if you concur that the list of Natura 2000 sites we propose will be sufficient for this assessment. If you believe additional sites should be considered please could you inform us of these?

From the JNCC website, we have also listed within the table the type of operations likely to adversely affect each designation and potential impacts which could occur, and these will be used as a basis for considering the likely effects of each potential site allocation on each Natura 2000 site. We appreciate that the list provide by JNCC is not exhaustive and there may be other operations that require consideration. If there are other operations in respect of the Natura 2000 sites that you think will need to be considered, please could you advise?

We need to have the screening assessment completed by the end of July 2010, so it would be greatly appreciated if someone could come back to me in the next week to let me know if NE considers the proposed scope of our assessment to be acceptable.

Please feel free to give me a call if you would like to discuss any of the matters above. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely  
John Moorcroft  
Principal Ecology Consultant

Natura 2000 site within 20km of Selby.

Site

EU Code Broad nature of qualifying

Habitat types Qualifying features Operations Potential ecological

impacts  
Humber

Estuary SPA  
and RAMSAR  
(flats,  
marshes and  
coast) (also  
possible SAC  
with no listed  
qualifying  
features (EMS))  
15202.5 ha

[UK0030170](#) Estuary

SPA

Breeding Little tern, marsh harrier. Wintering

Bar-tailed godwit, bittern, golden plover, hen harrier

Passage migratory Redshank, sanderling Migratory wintering Gadwall, dunlin, knot, redshank, shelduck, teal

RAMSAR

Internationally important wetland assemblage:

- breeding grey seal
- passage, breeding and wintering birds
- - internationally

important assemblage of approx. 156,000

waterfowl annually Coastal development

(housing, commercial,

industry)

Loss and degradation of habitat, (toxic and nontoxic contamination, erosion, fragmentation, sedimentation,



etc) impacts on integrity of breeding and wintering population via disturbance (noise, trampling, presence)

#### Flood defence

Loss and degradation of

habitat, fragmentation, barrier effects, changes in hydrology (flow rate and water level)

#### Sewage discharge

(domestic and

industrial)

Eutrophication, sedimentation changes in turbidity and pH, salinity, indirect effects of reduced water quality on food resources

#### Recreation pressure

Impacts on integrity of breeding and wintering population via disturbance (noise, trampling, presence)  
Kirk Deighton

SAC

4.0 ha [UK0030178](#) Great crested

newt

Great crested newt

Heavy livestock poaching

Physical damage (erosion, habitat fragmentation, siltation)

Introduction of predatory fish Biological disturbance

#### Agricultural, transport

and industrial runoff/discharge water quality) Non-toxic contamination (nutrient enrichment), physical damage (siltation, fragmentation of habitat), toxic contamination

Water abstraction Physical damage (fragmentation of habitat), hydrological change  
(water level and flow rate)

Transport industry Atmospheric pollution and Deposition

Lower Derwent

Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar

915 ha

UK0012844 Lowland meadows,

Woodlands and fresh water

SAC

Lowland hay meadows (*Alopecurus pratensis*, *Sanguisorba officinalis*) Alluvial forests with *Alnus*

*glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*) (\*priority feature)  
Otter

SPA

Breeding Corncrake, ruff, spotted crane

Wintering Bewick's swan, bittern, golden plover, ruff Migratory wintering Teal

RAMSAR

Internationally important wetland assemblage:

- plants

- invertebrates

Coal extraction

Physical loss (removal and smothering), hydrological change (water level and flow rate)

Flood management and tidal barrage

hydrological change (water level and flow rate), physical damage (barrier effects and habitat fragmentation)

Domestic and industrial sewage outflow Non-toxic contamination (phosphorous enrichment)

Intensive agriculture

Physical loss (removal), physical damage (erosion, habitat fragmentation, siltation from agricultural runoff), toxic contamination of groundwater (sheep dipping), non-toxic contamination (nutrient enrichment)

Process industry

Non toxic contamination (acidification from sulphur

deposition)

Alteration of channel structure (canalisation, artificial barriers, etc)

Physical loss and damage (removal of and damage to riverside woodlands, barrier effects and habitat fragmentation), hydrological change (water level and flow rate)

Water abstraction

Hydrological change (water level and flow rate), physical damage (drying and habitat fragmentation)

Waste management

(landfill)

Physical loss (removal and smothering), nutrient deposition and acidification, hydrological change (water level and flow rate)

Coal mining

Physical loss (removal and smothering), hydrological change (water level and flow rate)

Housing development

(recreation pressure)

Physical damage (erosion and fragmentation, accidental fires); disturbance of nesting and/or over-wintering birds  
River

Derwent SAC

411.2 ha

[UK0030253](#) Meadows,

Woodlands and freshwater

Watercourses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitriche-Batrachion* vegetation. River lamprey, sea lamprey,

Bullhead Otter Flood management

hydrological change (water level and flow rate), physical damage (barrier effects and habitat fragmentation)

Nutrient enrichment

(sewage) Habitat loss (smothering)

Siltation (agricultural)

runoff)

Physical damage (barrier

effects, habitat fragmentation), physical loss (smothering)

Agricultural and

industrial outflow (incl.

sheep dip) toxic contamination of water, physical loss damage (barrier effects)

Alteration of channel

structure

Hydrological change (flow rate), physical loss and damage (erosion of silt beds)

Artificial barriers

Physical damage (barrier effects, habitat fragmentation)

Water abstraction

Hydrological change (water level and flow rate)

Waste management

Physical loss (removal and smothering), nutrient deposition and acidification, hydrological change (water level and flow rate)

Skipwith

Common

SAC

295.2 ha

[UK0030276](#) Moorland

and bog

Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*

European dry heaths

Scrub invasion

Physical loss (smothering by scrub encroachment)

Deep coal mining

Physical loss (removal and smothering), hydrological change (water level and flow rate)

Recreational pressure

Physical damage (erosion and fragmentation, accidental fires)

Strensall

Common

SAC

569.6 ha

[UK0030284](#) Moorland

and bog

Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*

European dry heaths

Poor muirburn management

Physical loss (removal), damage (habitat fragmentation), accidental fires

Lack of scrub management Physical loss (smothering by scrub  
encroachment)

Overgrazing by sheep

Physical loss (removal), physical damage (erosion, habitat fragmentation, non-toxic contamination (nutrient enrichment)

Recreational pressure

Physical damage (erosion and fragmentation, accidental fires)

Golf course management Toxic contamination (herbicides)

Thorne Moor SAC, and Thorn and Hatfield Moors SPA

SAC: 1909.4

ha

SPA: 2449.2

ha [UK0012915](#) Moorland and bog SAC

Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration

SPA

Breeding Nightjar

Peat cutting

Physical damage (loss), hydrological change (groundwater level and flow rate)

Water abstraction

hydrological change (groundwater level and flow rate)

Lack of scrub management

Physical loss (smothering by scrub

encroachment)

Recreational pressure

Physical damage (erosion and fragmentation, accidental fires), disturbance (noise, trampling, presence)

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