



Bentley Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2036: Regulation 14 Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Draft

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA): Screening Report, and Appropriate Assessment – December 2020







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Glossary of Acronyms

AA	Appropriate Assessment
BDC	Babergh District Council
DC	District Council
DPD	Development Plan Document
EA	Environment Agency
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
Ha	Hectare
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IFCA	Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority
IRZ	Impact Risk Zone (for SSSIs)
Km	Kilometre
LPA	Local Planning Authority
NDP/NP	Neighbourhood Development Plan / Neighbourhood Plan
NE	Natural England
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PRoW	Public Right of Way
RAMS	Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SIP(s)	Site Improvement Plans(s)
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Specific Scientific Interest
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System
ZOI	Zone of Influence



1. Introduction

1.1 The Purpose of This Report

This report screens to determine whether the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan requires a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with Article 6(3) and (4) of the EU Habitats Directive and with Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. A Stage 1 HRA is required when it is deemed that likely adverse significant effects may occur on protected Habitats (European) Sites as a result of the implementation of a plan/project, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

1.2 The Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Draft

The main purpose of the Plan is to set out and identify the best ways to direct local planning towards community wants and needs, while protecting the natural environment and cultural assets, ensuring a more sustainable future for the community. The Regulation 14 draft Neighbourhood Development Plan will set out planning policies for Bentley Parish and within the confines of the Neighbourhood Plan boundary as defined (see Appendix 1).

Once formally 'made' or 'adopted', a Neighbourhood Plan carries the same legal weight as Local Development Plans adopted up by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), in this case Babergh District Council.



2. Legislative Background

2.1 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Under the provisions of the EU Habitats Directive and translated into English law by the Habitats Regulations (*The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended*), a competent authority must carry out an assessment of whether a plan or project will significantly affect the integrity of any Habitats Site, in terms of impacting the site's conservation objectives.

The first stage of HRA is the screening assessment of the impacts of a land use proposal against the conservation objectives of Habitats sites. Specifically, it is to ascertain whether or not a proposal (either alone or in combination with other proposals) would potentially damage the internationally designated features of that site. European sites are also known as Natura 2000 sites and Habitats Sites in the NPPF (2019).

This HRA Screening Report has been undertaken in order to support the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan which is being produced by Bentley Parish Council in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The area covered by the Plan is shown in Appendix 1.

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, state that submitted Plans need to be accompanied by a statement explaining how the proposed Plan meets the 'basic conditions' set out in Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. These basic conditions include a requirement to demonstrate how the Plan is compatible with EU obligations, which includes the need to undertake a HRA.

In line with the Court judgement (CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17), mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a screening assessment to decide whether a plan or project is likely to result in significant effects on a Habitats Site.

On 23 June 2016, the United Kingdom (UK) held a referendum and voted to leave the European Union (EU). On 29 March 2017 the Prime Minister triggered Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union, which commenced a period of negotiations regarding the UK's exit from the EU. On 26 June 2018 The European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 received Royal Assent and work to prepare the UK statute book for Brexit has begun. The European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 will make sure that UK laws continue to operate following the UK's exit. There is no immediate change to legislation or policy affecting national infrastructure. Relevant EU Directives have been transposed into UK law and those are unchanged until amended by Parliament. There the requirements for HRA under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) remain in place.



3. HRA Screening

3.1 Habitat Regulations Assessment of Development Plans

This section forms a plan level Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening report as required by Regulation 63 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

This section of this Report aims to:

- Identify the Habitats sites within 20km of the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan area.
- Summarise the reasons for designation and Conservation Objectives for each site to be considered in this assessment.
- Screen the Bentley Neighbourhood Development Plan for its potential to impact upon a Habitats site.
- Assess the potential for in combination effects from other projects and plans in the area.
- Identify if there are any outstanding issues that need further investigation.

3.2 Court Judgements and their consideration in this Report

3.2.1 CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17

As previously mentioned, in line with the Court judgement (CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17), mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a screening assessment to decide whether a plan or project is likely to result in significant effects on a Habitats Site.

This HRA Screening Report does not therefore consider mitigation measures within the assessment of Likely Significant Effects resulting from the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan.

3.2.2 CJEU Holohan C- 461/17

This Court judgement now imposes more detailed requirements on the competent authority for any plans or projects at Appropriate Assessment stage:

1. [...] an 'Appropriate Assessment' must, on the one hand, catalogue the entirety of habitat types and species for which a site is protected, and, on the other, identify and examine both the implications of the proposed project for the species present on that site, and for which that site has not been listed, and the implications for habitat types and species to be found outside the boundaries of that site, provided that those implications are liable to affect the conservation objectives of the site.
2. [...] the competent authority is permitted to grant to a plan or project consent which leaves the developer free to determine subsequently certain parameters relating to the



construction phase, such as the location of the construction compound and haul routes, only if that authority is certain that the development consent granted establishes conditions that are strict enough to guarantee that those parameters will not adversely affect the integrity of the site.

3. [...] where the competent authority rejects the findings in a scientific expert opinion recommending that additional information be obtained, the 'Appropriate Assessment' must include an explicit and detailed statement of reasons capable of dispelling all reasonable scientific doubt concerning the effects of the work envisaged on the site concerned.

Within this Stage 1 HRA Screening report, the assessment will determine the requirement for whether or not a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is needed for the Bentley Neighbourhood Development Plan.

3.3 Habitats (European) Sites

'Habitats sites' is the term used in the NPPF (2019) to describe the network of sites of nature protection areas. The aim of the network is to assure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and Habitats.

The sites are designated under the European Union (EU) Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds) and the EU Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora).

The Birds Directive requires the establishment of Special Protection Areas (SPAs). The Habitats Directive similarly requires Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) to be designated for other species, and for Habitats. Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites) are also part of the Habitats (Sites) network. This is because all SPAs and SACs are comprised of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and all Ramsar sites in England are SSSIs. Together, SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites make up the Habitats Sites in England. The following offers a description and explanation of SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites.

3.3.1 Explanation of SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites

Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

SPAs are areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within EU countries. Example: Deben Estuary SPA is internationally important for wintering waterfowl. *Legislation: EU Birds Directive.*

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

SACs are areas designated to protect habitat types that are in danger of disappearance, have a small natural range, or are highly characteristic of the region; and to protect species that are endangered, vulnerable, rare, or endemic. Example:



Waveney and Little Ouse Valley Fens for calcareous fens, *Molinia* meadows and Desmoulin's whorl snail *Legislation: EU Habitats Directive*.

Ramsar Sites (Wetlands of International Importance)

Ramsar Sites are designated to protect the biological and physical features of wetlands, especially for waterfowl Habitats. Example: Redgrave and South Lopham Fens is an extensive example of lowland base-rich valley, remarkable for its lack of fragmentation which supports many rare and scarce invertebrates, including a population of the fen raft spider *Dolomedes plantarius*. Ramsar sites often overlap with SACs and SPAs and UK planning policy determines that they should be accorded the same importance when developments are proposed. *Legislation: Ramsar Convention (1971) – Wetlands of International Importance*.

3.3.2 Habitats Sites to be considered

There are 13 Habitats sites (SPA/SAC/Ramsar) which lie within 20 km of Bentley parish and are shown on the map in Appendix 2.

Table 1: Habitats Sites within 20km of the development

SPA	SAC	Ramsar
Stour and Orwell Estuaries	Hamford Water	Stour and Orwell Estuaries
Deben Estuary	Essex Estuaries	Deben Estuary
Colne Estuary		Colne Estuary
Hamford Water		Hamford Water
Abberton Reservoir		Abberton Reservoir
Sandlings		

After consideration of potential impact pathways and Zones of Influence for recreational disturbance as confirmed on MAGIC website www.magic.gov.uk, the Plan area lies within the 13km Zone of Influence for the Stour & Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site but outside the 8km evidenced ZOI for Hamford Water SPA, SAC and Ramsar site. Natural England agreed that Habitats sites in Essex were not within scope of the Suffolk Coast RAMS for Babergh DC Ref 186522 25 May 2016 and measures cannot be secured outside of the area of jurisdiction of Babergh District Council or a strategic mitigation scheme.

It was therefore concluded that just two **Habitats** sites (Stour & Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site) should be assessed for any likely significant effects resulting from the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Draft. Any mitigation considered necessary would need to be secured at application stage in line



with policies in the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan and the HRA Appropriate Assessment as the competent authority for planning decisions.

3.3.3 Conservation Objectives

Information on each of the above Habitats sites has been obtained from the Natural England website.

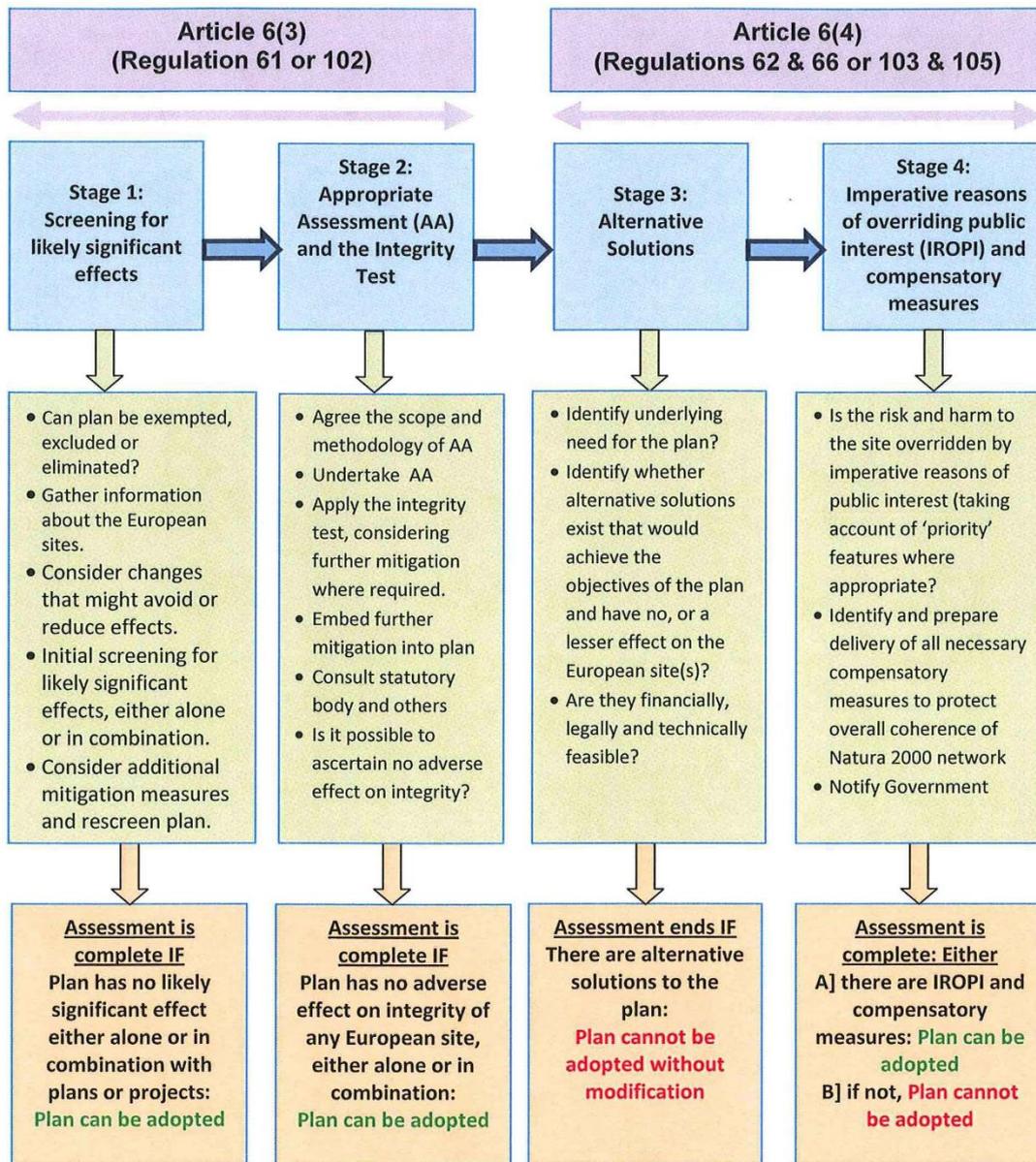
The justification for the importance of each Habitats site and the reasons for designation - the Conservation Objectives and Designation Features - for each site are included in Appendix 3. It also reflects the Supplementary Advice for Conservation Objectives which describes the range of ecological attributes that are most likely to contribute to a site's overall integrity and key vulnerabilities to consider within Habitats Regulations assessments.

3.4 Method and Approach

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, state that submitted Plans need to be accompanied by a statement explaining how the proposed Plan meets the 'basic conditions' set out in Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. These basic conditions include a requirement to demonstrate how the Plan is compatible with EU obligations, which includes the need to undertake a HRA screening report; this is necessary to ensure the making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a Habitats (European site or a European offshore marine site), either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.



Outline of the four stage approach to the assessment of plans under the Habitats Regulations



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Figure 1: Outline of the Four Stage Approach to the Assessment of Plans under the Habitats Regulations



3.4.1 Stage 1: HRA screening

This screening stage identifies if alternatives are needed because any policies or projects will have an impact on a Habitats Site, amendments need to be made in Neighbourhood Development Plans. Table 4 identifies the different categories assigned to each policy in the plan: Category A identifies those policies or projects that may not result in a Likely Significant Effect and are considered to have No Negative Effect. Category B identifies those policies or projects that will have No Likely Significant Effect. Category C identifies those policies or projects that might have Likely Significant Effect and thus upon a European Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

Each of the policies in the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan has been screened to identify whether they would have any impact on a Habitats Site and allocated to a category as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Screening categorisation

Category A: No negative effect
Policies or projects that will not be likely to have any negative effect on a Habitats site.
Category B: No Likely Significant Effect
Policies or projects that could have an effect but would not be likely to have a likely significant effect on a Habitats site alone or in combination. This conclusion could only be reached if the effects, even in combination and taking the precautionary principle into account, are considered trivial.
Category C: Likely Significant Effect
Policies or projects which are predicted to have a likely significant effect on a Habitats Site either on its own or in combination with other plans and projects and require revision or further assessment (Appropriate Assessment).

3.4.2 Potential impacts of the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan on Habitats Sites

There are a wide range of potential impacts from development which can be summarised as -

- Land take by developments;
- Impact on protected species found within but which travel outside the protected sites (functionally linked land) may be relevant where development could result in effects on qualifying interest species within the Habitats site, for example through the loss of feeding grounds for an identified species.
- Increased disturbance, for example from recreational use resulting from new housing development and / or improved access due to transport infrastructure projects;
- Changes in water availability, or water quality as a result of development and increased demands for water treatment, and changes in groundwater regimes due to increased impermeable areas;
- Changes in atmospheric pollution levels due to increased traffic, waste management facilities etc. Pollution discharges from developments such as industrial Developments, quarries and waste management facilities.



Each policy in the neighbourhood plan will therefore be assessed against the above criteria in the table below.

Table 3: Assessment of potential impacts

Nature of potential impact	How the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan (alone or in combination with other plans and project) could affect a Habitats site?	Why these effects are/ not considered likely to be significant?
Land take by development	Although the Plan area contains land within the 13km Zone of Influence (ZOI) of the 2 Habitats sites within scope of this HRA screening report, no development is allocated on designated land.	N/A
Impact on protected species outside the protected sites	The Plan area does not contain any functionally linked land for use by designated features of the Habitats sites.	N/A
Recreational pressure and disturbance	HRA / AA work undertaken at the Local Plan level indicates that there could be a potential pathway for development in the Plan area to impact on the SPA & Ramsar sites within the scope of the HRA as the Parish lies within the Zones of Influence. The Plan also does allocate land for residential development within ZOIs of Suffolk Coast RAMS or the Essex Coast RAMS.	<p>Allocated site BEN 3 already has consent under B/17/00003 and was subject to bespoke HRA screening at application stage (prior to People over Wind judgement). Natural England's consultation response (Ref 2197640 21 July 2017) was no objections, subject to appropriate mitigation being secured.</p> <p>Allocated site BEN 4 is included as a site allocated in the Babergh & Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan and, therefore, already screened in for further assessment at Stage 2 AA by the 2019 Local Plan HRA including Appropriate Assessment. It is not now possible to consider mitigation at HRA screening stage.</p>
Water quantity and quality	<p>Bentley Parish is served by the Bentley STW which discharges into a drain connecting with Stutton Brook after approximately 1.8km, before eventually flowing into the Stour Estuary east of Seafeld Bay.</p> <p>Drainage of surface water predominately to soakaway, is no longer considered adequate, and the area allocated for</p>	<p>The Plan allocations are within an Impact Risk Zone as shown on Magic maps but residential development of this scale does not trigger consultation with Natural England with regard to any significant impacts on the designated features as discharges from mains sewer are unlikely to pose a risk at this location.</p> <p>Surface water discharge/drainage is unlikely to pose a risk at this location.</p>



Nature of potential impact	How the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan (alone or in combination with other plans and project) could affect a Habitats site?	Why these effects are/ not considered likely to be significant?
	development is prone to surface water flooding events. However, no direct drainage pathways are linked to Stutton Brook.	It is therefore considered that this impact pathway can be screened out from further assessment. No significant effects from the Neighbourhood Plan impacts on water quantity or quality are considered likely either alone or in combination.
Changes in air & noise pollution levels	It is considered that there is no pathway for development to result in pollution impacts.	N/A

3.5 Results of HRA Screening of Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Policies

The HRA Screening exercise explores whether there will be any Likely Significant Effect resulting from the Plan's policies. These Policies are:

- Policy BEN 1 - Spatial Strategy
- Policy BEN 2 - Housing Development
- Policy BEN 3 - Land at Oakleigh, Capel Road
- Policy BEN 4 - Land at the Fruit Farm, Capel Road
- Policy BEN 5 - Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites
- Policy BEN 6 - Housing Mix
- Policy BEN 7 - Measures for New Housing Development
- Policy BEN 8 - Development Design
- Policy BEN 9 - Flooding and Sustainable Drainage
- Policy BEN 10 - Renewable Energy in Developments
- Policy BEN 11 - Parking Standards
- Policy BEN 12 - Development Affecting the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Policy BEN 13 - Protecting Bentley's Landscape Character
- Policy BEN 14 - Protecting Habitats and Wildlife Corridors



- Policy BEN 15 - Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation
- Policy BEN 16 - Dark Skies and Street Lighting
- Policy BEN 17 - Heritage Assets
- Policy BEN 18 - Buildings of Local Significance
- Policy BEN 19 - Sustainable Transport Infrastructure and Services
- Policy BEN 20 - Protecting Existing Services and Facilities
- Policy BEN 21 - Sport and Recreation Facilities
- Policy BEN 22 - Local Green Spaces
- Policy BEN 23 - Communications Technology
- Policy BEN 24 - Broadband
- Policy BEN 25 - Infrastructure Delivery.

This section considers each policy in turn and the results of the screening exercise is recorded in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of findings from the HRA screening

Policy	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effect on a Habitats Site?	Recommendations
<p>Policy BEN 1 – Spatial Strategy</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan area will accommodate development commensurate with Bentley’s designation as a Hinterland Village in the adopted Babergh Core Strategy and emerging Joint Local Plan. The focus for new development will be within the Settlement Boundary, as defined on the Policies Map (within the Bentley NDP document).</p> <p>Proposals for development located outside the Settlement Boundary will only be permitted for those that are essential for the operation of existing businesses, agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other exceptional uses, where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that there is an identified local need for the proposal; and ii) it cannot be satisfactorily located within the Settlement Boundaries. 	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>
<p>Policy BEN 2 – Housing Development</p> <p>This Plan provides for around 58 additional dwellings to be developed in the Neighbourhood Plan area between 2018 and 2036. This growth will be met through:</p>	<p>Yes, Category C</p>	<p>It is not considered sufficient to rely on a general policy aimed at protecting Habitats sites.</p>



<p>i the implementation of planning permissions that had not been completed as at 1 April 2018; and</p> <p>ii site allocations identified in Policies BEN 3 and BEN 4 in the Plan and on the Policies Map; and</p> <p>iii small brownfield “windfall” sites and infill plots within the Settlement Boundary that come forward during the plan period and are not identified in the Plan; and</p> <p>iv in exceptional circumstances, dwellings outside the Settlement Boundary where it can be demonstrated that the dwelling is essential for the operation of agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other exceptional uses for which it can satisfactorily be demonstrated that it needs to be located in the countryside.</p> <p>In addition, proposals for the conversion of redundant or disused agricultural barns outside the Settlement Boundary into dwellings will be permitted where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for extension, significant alteration or reconstruction; and b) the proposal is a high-quality design and the method of conversion retains the character and historic interest of the building; and c) the proposal would lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting of the building, and the creation of a residential curtilage and any associated domestic paraphernalia would not have a harmful effect on the character of the site or setting of the building, any wider group of buildings, or the surrounding area. 		<p>Instead, explicit caveats need to be included where there may be conflicts between a general policy to protect Habitats sites from development and another policy. However, measures that have been added primarily to mitigate the effects on a habitats site cannot be considered at HRA screening stage.</p> <p>Further assessment is triggered for predicted recreational disturbance impacts in combination with other plans and projects.</p>
<p>Policy BEN 3 – Land at Oakleigh, Capel Road</p> <p>A site of 0.96 hectares at Oakleigh, south of Capel Road and as identified on Map 5 (the Bentley NDP document) and the Policies Map is allocated for around 16 dwellings including up to 35% affordable housing.</p> <p>Development shall be carried out in accordance with the current planning permission (reference B/17/00003) unless an amended scheme is subsequently approved. Any amended proposal must demonstrate how it satisfies the development principles set out in the Plan.</p>	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p> <p>This allocated site has consent for residential development already in place. The bespoke HRA screening report (Place Services, 2017) for the approved application B/17/00003 required mitigation for recreational impacts. Prior to commencement, the financial contributions required by the bespoke HRA and Natural England’ formal consultation</p>



		response will be triggered for payment to the LPA.
<p>Policy BEN 4 – Land at the Fruit Farm, Capel Road</p> <p>A site of 1.16 hectares at the Fruit Farm, north of Capel Road and as identified on Map 7 (the Bentley NDP document) and the Policies Map is allocated for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i around 15 dwellings including up to 35% affordable housing; ii allotments; iii pedestrian and cycle access onto Case Lane; and iv parking for the allotments. <p>Proposals should also enable traffic calming on Capel Road and an extension of the footway to link the site with the village centre.</p> <p>Housing proposals should provide a mix of sizes in accordance with Policy BEN 6 as well as a mix of houses and bungalows.</p> <p>Proposals that include an element of self-build housing will be supported.</p> <p>A contribution to the Suffolk Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy will be necessary and residents of the new properties should be provided with leaflets about the local public rights of way network. Additional dog-waste bins shall also be provided.</p>	Yes, Category C	<p>Although specific text has been embedded in this policy to secure delivery of mitigation measures by Suffolk Coast RAMS for predicted recreational impacts, measures that have been added primarily to mitigate the effects on a Habitats site cannot be considered at HRA screening stage.</p> <p>Further assessment is triggered for predicted recreational disturbance impacts in combination with other plans and projects.</p>
<p>Policy BEN 5 – Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites</p> <p>Proposals for the development of small-scale affordable housing schemes, including entry level homes for purchase (as defined by paragraph 71 of the NPPF) on rural exception sites outside the Settlement Boundaries, where housing would not normally be permitted by other policies, will be supported where there is a proven local need and provided that the housing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. remains affordable in perpetuity; and ii. is for people that are in housing need because they are unable to buy or rent properties in the village at open-market prices; and iii. is offered, in the first instance, to people with a demonstrated local connection, as defined by the Babergh Choice Based 	Yes, Category C	<p>It is not considered sufficient to rely on a general policy aimed at protecting Habitats sites. Instead, explicit caveats need to be included where there may be conflicts between a general policy to protect Habitats sites from development and another policy.</p> <p>However measures that have been added</p>



<p>Lettings Scheme. Where there is no need, a property should then be offered to those with a demonstrated need for affordable housing in neighbouring villages.</p> <p>These restrictions should be delivered through a legal agreement attached to the planning consent for the housing. Applications for such development will be considered in relation to the appearance and character of the surrounding area, the potential impact on residential amenity and highway safety.</p> <p>To be acceptable, proposals should demonstrate that a local need exists which cannot be met by applying normal planning policy for the provision of affordable homes in association with market housing.</p> <p>Any application for affordable housing in respect of this policy should be accompanied by a detailed need and the accommodation proposed should contribute to meeting this proven need.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances, a small number of market homes will be permitted where it can be demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) that no other means of funding the construction of the affordable homes is available; and b) the market housing is subsidiary to the affordable housing element of the proposal and the amount of market housing required is, as demonstrated through a viability assessment, the minimum required to deliver the affordable housing. <p>Where sites for affordable housing in the countryside are brought forward with an element of market housing, both housing tenures should be built to the same design standards and contribute towards the character of the area.</p>		<p>primarily to mitigate the effects on a Habitats site cannot be considered at HRA screening stage.</p> <p>Further assessment is triggered for predicted recreational disturbance impacts in combination with other plans and projects.</p>
<p>Policy BEN 6 – Housing Mix</p> <p>In all housing developments of ten or more homes, there shall be an emphasis on providing a higher proportion of two bedroomed homes within the scheme, unless it can be demonstrated that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) the particular circumstances relating to the tenure of the housing dictates otherwise; or ii) the latest publicly available housing needs information for the Plan area identify a need for a different mix. <p>The provision of bungalows will also be supported where</p>	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>



<p>the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the area in the vicinity of the site. Proposals that would result in dwellings of greater than two storeys will not be supported.</p>		
<p>Policy BEN 7 – Measures for New Housing Development</p> <p>All new dwellings shall achieve appropriate internal space through adherence to the latest Nationally Described Space Standards.</p> <p>Dwellings should also make adequate provision for the covered storage of all wheelie bins and cycles. Cycle parking provision shall be in accordance with the adopted cycle parking standards.</p> <p>Proposals that include affordable housing will be required to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) it is designed so that it is “tenure blind” (so that it is indistinguishable from open market housing) either on site or, where schemes do not include on-site open market housing, the wider area; and ii) where appropriate, small clusters of affordable housing are distributed around the larger site. 	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>
<p>Policy BEN 8 – Development Design</p> <p>Planning applications must, as appropriate to the proposal, demonstrate how they meet the general design principles set out in paragraph 7.5 of this Plan and satisfy the requirements of the Development Design Checklist in Appendix B of the Bentley NDP and take account of the Bentley Design Guide (November 2019).</p> <p>In addition, proposals will be supported where they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Maintain and preserve the existing quiet and tranquil atmosphere of Bentley and enhance the character of the village and its setting; b) do not affect adversely the amenities nearby residents by reason of noise, smell, vibration, overshadowing, loss of light, other pollution (including light pollution), or volume or type of vehicular activity generated, and/or residential amenity unless adequate and appropriate mitigation can be implemented; c) produce designs that respect and address the character, scale, height and density of the locality; d) do not result in the loss or damage of the vegetated edges of the village centre defined in the 	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>



<p>Landscape Appraisal and on the Policies Map;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e) reflect the qualities and character of the setting of the village within a high quality rural landscape, as identified in the Bentley Landscape Character Appraisal, and do not result in the loss of “Vegetated Green Edge” as identified on the Policies Map; f) ensure that there is no detrimental impact on the key features of important views identified on the Policies Map; g) provide open space, in accordance with adopted standards, and grass verges appropriate to the location and size of the development; h) as appropriate, include external front and rear gardens designed to take account of the context of the development, including the character of the surrounding area; i) incorporate measures to protect and enhance biodiversity, with regard to the emerging Environment Bill, and to consider the NPPF requirement for measurable net gain in biodiversity, preserving trees, hedgerows, and other wildlife corridors, and including measures such as the installation of swift bricks on every new house; j) prevent water runoff that would add to or create surface water flooding; k) incorporate grey water recycling and rainwater and stormwater harvesting; l) where appropriate, make adequate provision for the covered storage of wheelie bins out of sight from public view within each plot or, alternatively in developments of more than one dwelling, and provide for screened/obscured communal bin collection areas within the development; and m) will not generate additional vehicles on a designated Quiet Lane such that it would result in that Lane carrying average vehicle movements in excess of 1,000 a day and/or 85th percentile speeds in excess of 35 mph. 		
<p>Policy BEN 9 - Flooding and Sustainable Drainage</p> <p>Proposals for all new development will be required to submit schemes, appropriate to the scale of the proposal, detailing how on-site drainage will be managed so as not to cause or exacerbate surface water and fluvial flooding elsewhere. Examples include rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling, and run-off and water management such as Sustainable Drainage</p>	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>



<p>Systems (SDS) or other natural drainage systems where easily accessible maintenance can be achieved.</p>		
<p>Policy BEN 10 - Renewable energy in developments</p> <p>Proposals that incorporate current best practice in energy conservation will be supported where such measures are designed to be integral to the building design and minimise any detrimental impact on the building or its surroundings. Development proposals should accord with the following energy hierarchy (in order of preference):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Minimise energy demand; 2. Maximise energy efficiency; 3. Utilise renewable energy; 4. Utilise low carbon energy; 5. Utilise other energy sources. <p>Proposals should, unless it can be adequately demonstrated to be unviable or impracticable:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Incorporate best practice in energy conservation be designed to achieve maximum achievable energy efficiency through the use of high quality, thermally efficient building materials and which are energy efficient in their manufacturing, transport, and building processes; b) Maximise the benefits of solar gain in site layouts and orientation of buildings; c) Incorporate other renewable energy systems such as Ground Sourced Heat Pumps or Air Sourced Heat Pumps; d) Provide energy storage facilities; and e) Avoid fossil fuel-based heating systems. 	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>
<p>Policy BEN 11 – Parking Standards</p> <p>Development proposals should maintain or enhance the safety of the highway network ensuring that all vehicle parking is designed to be integrated into the site without creating an environment dominated by vehicles.</p> <p>In residential developments, all one, two and three bedroom dwellings shall provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) a minimum of 2 parking spaces per dwelling, within the curtilage of the dwelling; and ii) within developments of 4 or more dwellings, additional guest spaces amounting to an additional half-space per dwelling with 3 bedrooms or more to be provided within the development site. 	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>



<p>Dwellings of four or more bedrooms and other non-residential developments shall meet the latest adopted parking standards.</p> <p>Cabling for electric vehicle charging provision should be fitted to each dwelling, in line with Suffolk parking standards.</p> <p>All new non-residential development should include electric vehicle EV charging provision in accordance with the minimum standards in the current Suffolk Parking Guidelines.</p>		
<p>Policy BEN 12 – Development Affecting the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</p> <p>The Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is identified on the Policies Map. Development will not be permitted where it would have a significant adverse impact on the natural beauty and special qualities of, and which cannot be adequately mitigated.</p> <p>Development proposals within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or within its setting, should be informed by landscape and visual impact assessment to assess and identify potential impacts and to identify suitable measures to avoid or mitigate these impacts. Proposals should include measures that enable a scheme to be well integrated into the landscape and enhance connectivity to the surrounding green infrastructure and Public Rights of Way network. Development proposals which have the potential to impact upon the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or other sensitive landscapes should be informed by landscape appraisal, landscape and visual impact assessment and landscape mitigation.</p>	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>
<p>Policy BEN 13 – Protecting Bentley’s Landscape Character</p> <p>Proposals must, proportionate to the proposal, demonstrate how the landscape characteristics of the site and its vicinity have been considered in preparing the scheme.</p> <p>Proposals that result in any of the following will not be supported unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the resultant impact on the landscape character, referenced to the Landscape Character Appraisal, can be mitigated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of abrupt edges to development with little vegetation along the settlement edge; or 	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The loss or erosion of the Vegetated Built Edge, recorded in the Landscape Appraisal and identified on the Policies Map; or • Development on upper valley slopes that will be visually intrusive; or • Housing estates with single housing types; or • Erosion of rural lane character through introduction of new development, signage, kerbs and new junctions; or • Development which, due to its location, alters the small scale and predominately linear pattern of the village on the edge of the plateau; or • Development which masks the subtle changes in topography at the edge of the plateau; or • Introduction of individual dwellings which do not reflect the scale or detailing of vernacular of properties in the area; or • Introduction of street lighting or unnecessary signage; or • Fragmentation of lanes due to the introduction of new access routes which can physically interrupt the edges, grass verges and embankments; or • Proliferation of individual dwellings along rural lanes within the wider Parish, particularly where this creates linear development. 		
<p>Policy BEN 14 - Protecting Habitats and Wildlife corridors</p> <p>Proposals that are likely to have an adverse impact on protected habitats, including the Valued Landscape area identified in Map 10 and the Policies Map, will not normally be permitted except where it can satisfactorily be demonstrated that the benefits of the development clearly outweigh any adverse impact.</p> <p>Except in exceptional circumstances, development proposals should avoid the loss of, or substantial harm to, important trees, hedgerows and other natural features such as ponds.</p> <p>Where such losses or harm are unavoidable:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) the benefits of the development proposal must be demonstrated clearly to outweigh any impacts; and ii) suitable mitigation measures, that may include equivalent or better replacement of the lost features, will be required. <p>It is expected that the mitigation proposals will form an integral part of the design concept and layout of any development scheme, and that development will be</p>	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>



<p>landscape-led and appropriate in relation to its setting, context and ongoing management.</p> <p>Where new access is created, or an existing access is widened through an existing hedgerow, a new hedgerow of native species shall be planted on the splay returns into the site to maintain the appearance and continuity of hedgerows in the vicinity.</p> <p>Development proposals will be supported where they provide a net gain in biodiversity through, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the creation of new natural habitats including ponds; b) the planting of additional native trees and hedgerows, and; c) restoring and repairing fragmented biodiversity networks. 		
<p>Policy BEN 15 – Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation</p> <p>All residential development within the zones of influence of European sites will be required to make a financial contribution towards mitigation measures, as detailed in the Suffolk Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS), to avoid adverse incombination recreational disturbance effects on European sites.</p>	No, Category A	Amend the text to refer to the Suffolk Coast RAMS and “the integrity of the Habitats (European) sites” as referred to in NPPF 2019.
<p>Policy BEN 16 – Dark Skies and Street Lighting</p> <p>While ensuring that new developments are secure in terms of occupier and vehicle safety, dark skies are to be preferred over streetlights. Any future outdoor lighting systems should have a minimum impact on the environment by being downward focussed and motion sensitive, not extend past the property boundary, and minimise light pollution and adverse effects on wildlife and subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a highway safety, b the needs of particular individuals or groups, or c security. <p>Schemes should reduce the consumption of energy by promoting efficient outdoor lighting technologies, keeping the night-time skies dark and reducing glare.</p>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
<p>Policy BEN 17 - Heritage Assets</p> <p>To ensure the conservation and enhancement of the Village’s heritage assets, proposals must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. preserve or enhance the significance of the 	No, Category A	No specific recommendations



<p>heritage assets of the Village, their setting, and the wider built environment;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. retain buildings and spaces, the loss of which would cause harm to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area; c. contribute to the Village’s local distinctiveness, built form, and scale of its heritage assets, as described in the AECOM Design Guidelines, through the use of appropriate design and materials; d. be of an appropriate scale, form, height, massing, alignment, and detailed design which respects the area’s character, appearance, and its setting; e. demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the asset and of the wider context in which the heritage asset sits, alongside an assessment of the potential impact of the development on the heritage asset and its context; and f. provide clear justification, through the submission of a heritage statement, for any works that could harm a heritage asset yet be of wider substantial public benefit, through detailed analysis of the asset and the proposal. <p>Proposals will not be supported where the harm caused as a result of the impact of a proposed scheme is not justified by the public benefits that would be provided.</p> <p>Where a planning proposal affects a heritage asset, it must be accompanied by a Heritage Statement identifying, as a minimum, the significance of the asset, and an assessment of the impact of the proposal on the heritage asset. The level of detail of the Heritage Statement should be proportionate to the importance of the asset, the works proposed and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance and/or setting of the asset.</p>		
<p>Policy BEN 18 – Buildings of Local Significance</p> <p>The retention and protection of local heritage assets and buildings of local significance. Including buildings, structures, features and gardens of local interest, must be appropriately secured.</p> <p>Proposals for any works that would lead to the loss of, or substantial harm to, a building of local significance should be supported by an appropriate analysis of the significance of the asset.</p>	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>



Appendix D identifies Buildings of Local Significance which are identified on the Policies Map (Bentley NDP).		
<p>Policy BEN 19 - Sustainable Transport infrastructure and services</p> <p>Proposals must demonstrate that safe walking and cycling links to key local services and community facilities including the village pub and shop exist or are capable of being created as part of the development.</p>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
<p>Policy BEN 20 – Protecting existing services and facilities</p> <p>Proposals that would result in the loss of valued facilities or services, as identified on the Policies Map and which support the local community (or premises last used for such purposes) will only be permitted where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. it can be demonstrated that the current use is not economically viable and is not likely to become viable. Supporting financial evidence should be provided including any efforts to advertise the premises for sale for a minimum of 12 months; and b. it can be demonstrated, through evidenced research, that there is no local demand for the use and that the building/site is not needed for any alternative social, community or leisure use; or c. alternative facilities and services are available, or replacement provision is made, of at least equivalent standard, in a location that is accessible to the community it serves with good access by public transport or by cycling or walking. 	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
<p>Policy BEN 21 -Sport and Recreation Facilities.</p> <p>Proposals for the provision, enhancement and/or expansion of amenity, sport or recreation open space or facilities, as identified on the Policies Map, will be permitted subject to compliance with other Policies in the Development Plan. Development which will result in the loss of existing amenity, sport or recreation open space or facilities will not be allowed unless:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. it can be demonstrated that the space or facility is surplus to requirements as measured against the local planning authority's standards for the particular location, and the proposed loss will not result in a shortfall during the Development Plan period; or b. replacement for the space or facilities lost is made available, which is of at least equivalent 	No, Category A	No specific recommendations



<p>quantity and quality, and in a suitable location to meet the needs of users of the existing space or facility.</p> <p>Any replacement provision should take account of the needs of the settlement where the development is taking place and the current standards of open space and sports facility provision adopted by the local planning authority.</p> <p>Where necessary to the acceptability of the development, the local planning authority will require developers of new housing, office, retail and other commercial and mixed development to provide open space including play areas, formal sport/recreation areas, amenity areas and where appropriate, indoor sports facilities or to provide land and a financial contribution towards the cost and maintenance of existing or new facilities, as appropriate. These facilities will be secured through the use of conditions and/or planning obligations.</p> <p>Clubhouses, pavilions, car parking and ancillary facilities must be of a high standard of design and internal layout. The location of such facilities must be well related and sensitive to the topography, character and uses of the surrounding area, particularly when located in or close to residential areas. Proposals which give rise to intrusive floodlighting will not be permitted.</p>		
<p>Policy BEN 22 – Local Green Spaces</p> <p>The following Local Green Spaces are designated in the Plan and identified on the Policies Map (Bentley NDP):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 School Playing Field 2 Play Area 3 The Copse (off Station Road) 4 Land behind Village Hall 5 Silver Leys Green 6 War Memorial 7 Highfields Green <p>Development on these sites will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Permitted development rights, including the operational requirements of infrastructure providers are not affected by this designation.</p>	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>
<p>Policy BEN 23 – Communications Technology</p> <p>Proposals from mobile phone network operators to improve mobile coverage will be supported where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. the apparatus is designed and sited to minimise intrusion and visual impact; 	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>



<p>ii. the numbers of radio and telecommunications masts are kept to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network; and</p> <p>iii. proposals have been sited and designed to minimise the impacts on the rural character of Bentley, having particular regard to the landscape character of the area and the important views identified on the Policies Map, and on the setting of the AONB.</p> <p>New masts will not be permitted in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.</p>		
<p>Policy BEN 24 - Broadband</p> <p>New development (residential, employment and commercial) will be expected to contribute towards the provision of infrastructure suitable to enable the delivery of highspeed broadband services in the village. As a minimum, suitable ducting to industry standards should be provided to the public highway that can accept fibre optic cabling or other emerging technology. Other forms of infrastructure, such as facilities supporting mobile broadband and Wi-Fi, should be included where possible and viable.</p>	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>
<p>Policy BEN 25 – Infrastructure Delivery</p> <p>Planning permission will only be granted where the infrastructure necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms is available or capable of being made available before the development is occupied. The nature scale and phasing of any additional and necessary planning obligations sought will be related to the form of the development and its potential impact upon the surrounding area.</p>	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>

3.5.1 Recommendations

There are no impact pathways likely to result in Likely Significant Effects from the Plan alone.

However, there are recommendations for the site allocation policy BEN 4 and other housing related policies in this draft Neighbourhood Plan as they have been assigned to Category C due to predicted impacts from the Plan in combination with other plans and projects.

It is not considered sufficient to rely on a general policy aimed at protecting Habitats sites e.g. Policy BEN 14. Explicit caveats need to be included where there may be conflicts between a general policy to protect Habitats sites from development and another policy. However, this is embedded mitigation



which cannot be considered at HRA screening stage; the CJEU *People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta* C-323/17 ruling indicates that measures that have been added primarily to mitigate the effects on a Habitats site cannot be considered at the screening stage.

Further Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is therefore required under the UK Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-submission Draft may only be made after having ascertained that it will not result in adverse effect on integrity of the Habitats Sites within scope of this assessment. Predicted recreational disturbance impacts in combination with other plans and projects are considered in Section 4 Appropriate Assessment. This stage is an iterative process as measures can be incorporated in order to be able to ascertain that there is no significant adverse effect on the integrity, before re-screening and making a final assessment.



4. Appropriate Assessment and Considering the Integrity Test

4.1 Introduction to Appropriate Assessment

The Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Draft is, without mitigation, predicted to result in Likely Significant Effect from the Plan in combination with other plans and projects. This is for a single impact pathway: Recreational disturbance from residential development.

The second stage of HRA is to undertake an 'Appropriate Assessment' of the implications of the plan (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) and establish whether there may be an Adverse Effect on Integrity (AEOI) of any Habitats sites in view of their Conservation Objectives. The process undertaken for the Appropriate Assessment is set out in this Chapter.

The Appropriate Assessment should be undertaken by the competent authority and should assess all aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan which can by themselves, or in combination with other plans and projects, affect the sites' Conservation Objectives. The assessment must consider the implications for each qualifying feature of each potentially affected Habitats Site. Key vulnerabilities are set out in Appendix III and the Site Improvement Plans (SIPs) were used to obtain this information. Site Improvement Plans have been developed for each Habitats Site in England as part of the 'Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 sites (IPENS)'. The Site Improvement Plans provide a high level overview of the issues (both current and predicted) affecting the condition of the designation features of the site(s) and outlines the priority measures required to improve the condition of the features. These can be found at:

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/5458594975711232>.

In order to identify potential in combination effects, other plans and projects which may affect the Habitats Sites need to be identified.

This should involve an 'Appropriate Assessment' of the implications of the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Draft, in relation to predicted recreational disturbance impacts, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, in order to establish whether there may be an *Adverse Effect on the Integrity* of any Habitats Sites in view of their Conservation Objectives.

This stage is to undertake objective scientific assessment of the implications of the Neighbourhood Plan on the Qualifying Features of the listed Habitats Sites using the best scientific knowledge in the field. It should apply the best available techniques and methods to assess the extent of the effects of the Neighbourhood Plan on the integrity of the Habitat Sites. The description of the site's integrity and the impact assessment should be based on the best possible indicators specific to the Habitat Sites' qualifying features, which can also be useful in monitoring the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan's implementation.

The Appropriate Assessment should assess all aspects of the Plan which can by themselves, or in combination with other plans and projects, affect the Conservation Objectives of one or more Habitats site. The assessment



must consider the implications for each qualifying feature of each potentially affected Habitats site. The focus of the appropriate assessment is therefore on the species and / or the habitats for which the Habitats site is designated.

The best scientific knowledge should be used when carrying out the Appropriate Assessment in order to enable the competent authority to conclude with certainty that there will be no *Adverse Effect on the Integrity* of any Habitats site.

It is important that the Appropriate Assessment provides a better understanding of potential effects and can therefore assist in the identification of mitigation measures where possible to avoid, reduce or cancel significant effects on Habitats sites which could be applied when undertaking the 'integrity test'. All mitigation measures built into the Plan can be taken into account. The Appropriate Assessment is an iterative process, re-assessing changes and new or different mitigation measures before making its final conclusion. It must be clear which mitigation measures are being relied upon in order to meet the integrity test.

The integrity test must apply the precautionary principle. However, plan assessments are less precise than project assessments, and so it is important for the assessment process to eliminate the prospect of adverse effects integrity insofar as it is possible, given the level of specificity of this Neighbourhood Plan.

Natural England should be formally consulted on this document.

4.2 Approach and Methodology of the Appropriate Assessment

The potential Likely Significant Effects considered at Screening Stage are now carried forward for consideration at Appropriate Assessment. The policies and their potential to have adverse effects on any Habitats site through a variety of impact pathways are now considered in more detail, for example habitat loss or deterioration, disturbance, direct and indirect effects; extent of the effects (habitat area, species numbers or areas of occurrence); importance and magnitude (e.g. considering the affected area or population in relation to the total area and population size).

Key vulnerabilities of each Habitats Site are set out in Appendix III using the relevant Site Improvement Plans. Site Improvement Plans have been developed for each Habitats (Natura 2000) Site in England as part of the 'Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 sites (IPENS)' but they do not include Ramsar sites. Each Site Improvement Plan provides a high-level overview of the issues (both current and predicted) affecting the condition of the Natura 2000 features on the site(s) and outlines the priority measures required to improve the condition of the features. These can be found at:

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6149691318206464>

Additional information is also provided for each site on the Designated Sites website and this information has been interrogated.

4.2.1 Use of Mitigation Measures

All mitigation measures built into the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Draft can now be taken into account at Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment.



At this stage, other policies of the Plan can be considered in order to mitigate some of the predicted Likely Significant Effects which have been identified. This stage is an iterative process as avoidance and reduction measures can be incorporated in order to be able to avoid the potential impacts identified in the Appropriate Assessment or reduce them to a level where they will no longer adversely affect the site's integrity.

Monitoring will be required as part of the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Draft where residual effects are identified.

4.2.2 Applying the Integrity Test

Following the Appropriate Assessment and the consideration of all mitigation measures, the competent authority needs to make a judgement on whether any of the policies will have an *Adverse Effect on Integrity* on any Habitats Site either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. This test incorporates the precautionary principle.

4.2.3 Embedding Mitigation

Babergh District Council, as the competent authority, should consider the manner in which the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Draft is to be implemented and any mitigation measures which could be relied upon when deciding whether it would have an Adverse Effect on Integrity, including when and how they can be embedded into the Neighbourhood Plan.

4.3 Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment for Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-submission Draft

The only impact pathway to consider from the Plan alone is recreational disturbance where site allocations are for more than 50 houses. At application stage, Annex 1 of Natural England's advice to the LPA triggers the need for mitigation by way of provision of access to suitable alternative natural greenspace to meet daily recreational needs.

The competent authority, in this case Babergh DC therefore needs to apply the Integrity test needs to the Plan alone and it can now consider mitigation measures to assess if the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-submission Draft can avoid AEOI on the Habitats sites screened in at Stage 1 HRA. These are Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site.

Once mitigation has been considered for impacts from the Plan alone, Babergh DC then needs to apply the Integrity test needs to the Plan in combination with other plans and projects and it can now consider mitigation measures to assess if the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-submission Draft can avoid AEOI on the Habitats sites screened in at Stage 1 HRA. These are Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site.



4.3.1 Mitigation measures

As a precautionary approach is required in order to conclude that the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-submission Draft will not lead to AEOI either alone or in combination, mitigation measures are necessary and these need to be embedded in the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-submission Draft to avoid impacts from the single pathway of recreational disturbance at the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site from residential development (see Appendix IV).

Considering the potential impacts from the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-submission Draft alone, this impact pathway is considered below with mitigation recommended.

4.3.2 Recreational disturbance from residential development

Wetland birds are vulnerable to disturbance, albeit some birds can become habituated to some kinds of disturbance, usually where the source of disturbance occurs in a predictable way. However, it will vary according to the species concerned.

At Screening stage the following Habitats Sites were listed as having the potential for Likely Significant Effects as a result of recreational disturbance from residential development in combination with other plans and projects:

- Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar

At Screening stage the following Policies were listed as having the potential for Likely Significant Effects as a result of recreational disturbance:

- Policy BEN 2 – Housing Development
- Policy BEN 4 - Land at The Fruit Farm, Capel Road
- Policy BEN 5 – Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites

In 2016, Natural England identified the Suffolk coast as a priority for strategic and proactive planning engagement and mitigation. This was due to the high numbers of dwellings that were likely to come forward for each Local Plan alone and also in combination within the relevant Local Plans by 2038 to meet projected housing needs. The concern was the potential recreational impacts that these new residents could have upon the Habitats sites.

Natural England proposed a strategic approach to LPAs and recommended identifying the scale of the disturbance and implementing measures to mitigate impacts through the preparation of a Suffolk Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS).

Based on existing evidence of visitor pressures, Natural England advised that the Councils should work together to prepare the Strategy. Natural England's advice was that the Local Plans must have a clear policy commitment to producing a Mitigation Strategy, with a clear timeframe for its completion. This should be by the time the Local Plan is adopted to ensure any developments coming forward as part of the plan have certainty that there are mitigation measures which can be implemented as soon as the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan is live.



The Suffolk Coast RAMS partner LPAs agreed that a strategic solution to mitigate the impacts of recreational disturbance from Local Plans was a sensible approach to take the support of Natural England. As a consequence, the Suffolk Coast RAMS has been adopted by Babergh DC so this strategic approach to support the Local Plans and its implementation will deliver effective measures to avoid and mitigate for recreational disturbance from planned housing growth.

Natural England's advice to the LPAs included Annex 1 relating to the need for mitigation for recreational impacts for applications for more than 50 dwellings:

Annex 1 – Natural England's recommendations for larger scale residential developments within the Suffolk Coast RAMS zone of influence (50 units +, or equivalent, as a guide)

Developments of this scale should include provision of well-designed open space/green infrastructure, proportionate to its scale. Such provisions can help minimise any predicted increase in recreational pressure to the Habitats Sites by containing the majority of recreation within and around the development site boundary away from European sites. We advise that the Suitable Accessible Natural Green Space (SANGS) guidance here can be helpful in designing this; it should be noted that this document is specific to the SANGS creation for the Thames Basin Heaths, although the broad principles are more widely applicable. As a minimum, we advise that such provisions should include:

- *High-quality, informal, semi-natural areas*
- *Circular dog walking routes of 2.7 km within the site and/or with links to surrounding public rights of way (PRoW)*
- *Dedicated 'dogs-off-lead' areas*
- *Signage/information leaflets to householders to promote these areas for recreation*
- *Dog waste bins*
- *A commitment to the long term maintenance and management of these provisions*

It is therefore considered that relevant residential development of more than 50 dwellings in Bentley requires mitigation to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Habitats sites within scope through increased recreational pressure, when considered alone.

It is recommended that Policies BEN2 and BEN4 are amended to refer to this advice on greenspace for residential development of more than 50 units to avoid adverse effect on integrity on the Stour & Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site.

Formal revised interim advice issued to Babergh District Council by Natural England (22 June 2017 Ref 218775) identified that, in combination with other plans and projects, all residential development within the 13km Zone of Influence (ZoI) for the Suffolk Coast RAMS would, without mitigation, be likely to result in a significant effect on a number of Habitats Sites.



The housing policies allocate land within the zone of influence (ZoI) for the Suffolk Coast RAMS and the development falls within the following development types:

- New dwellings of 1+ units (excludes replacement dwellings and extensions)
- Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs)
- Student Accommodation
- Residential care homes and residential institutions (excludes nursing homes)
- Residential caravan sites (excludes holiday caravans and campsites)
- Gypsies, travellers and travelling show people plots

Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils are two of the 4 Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) which are partners are responsible for the delivery of the Suffolk Coast RAMS. This has identified a detailed programme of strategic mitigation measures which are to be funded by developer contributions for residential development schemes as identified above.

4.4 Other Plans & Projects

There are five relevant Plan level HRAs that have been carried out by Babergh DC or other organisations and these have been found, not to have an adverse effect on the integrity of Habitats sites being assessed in-combination with other plans and projects. There are no Projects considered to be relevant to this section.

In the context of this HRA, as the Regulation 14 draft Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan does allocate sites for development and as, without mitigation measures for predicted recreational impacts, there will be a likely significant effect in combination with other plans and projects.

Table 5: Other plans or projects considered for in combination effects

Statutory Body	Title of HRA or Project	Findings of HRA or Project	Potential for in combination effects
Mid Suffolk District Council	Core Strategy Habitats Regulations Assessment (Appropriate Assessment) October 2007)	The HRA found no likely significant effects from the Plan on the Breckland SAC/SPA and Waveney and Little Ouse Valley Fens SAC.	It is considered that in combination likely significant effects are not predicted.
St Edmundsbury Borough Council	Core Strategy HRA screening (2010)	The HRA found no potential for in combination effects as no other current plans or projects that are likely to lead to significant effects on the Breckland SAC/SPA or the Waveney and Little Ouse Valley Fens SAC	It is considered that in combination likely significant effects are not predicted



		have been identified, or where impacts have been identified they have been adequately mitigated.	
Babergh District Council	Habitat Regulations Assessment of Core Strategy 2011	The Core Strategy aims to minimise impacts on the Orwell and Stour estuaries, a European-designated site which supports species that	It is considered that in combination likely significant effects are not predicted.
Suffolk Coastal District Council	Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan at Final Draft Plan Stage (Dec 2018)	It is recommended that the Suffolk authorities should be mindful of the potential issue for impacts from air quality and plan for more detailed analysis of risks across the county, to inform the next plan reviews. This should include air quality modelling that incorporates a specific consideration of potential deposition rates within 200m of European sites.	<p>Potential risk of traffic emissions to Habitats sites with features sensitive to air pollution.</p> <p>Recommendation that the Council commits to working with neighbouring authorities to gather more data to inform future Local Plan reviews.</p>
Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Councils	Babergh & Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment including Appropriate Assessment (Place Services, June 2019)	Embedded mitigation measures for projects will need to be considered in project level HRA/AA reports and secured by way of any planning consent. The Babergh & Mid Suffolk Districts Joint Local Plan is not predicted to have any adverse effect on integrity (AEOI) on any Habitats Sites.	It is considered that in combination likely significant effects are not predicted.

Formal revised interim advice issued to Babergh District Council by Natural England (22 June 2017 Ref 218775) identified that, in combination with other plans and projects, all residential development within the



13km Zone of Influence (Zoi) for the Suffolk Coast RAMS would, without mitigation, be likely to result in a significant effect on a number of Habitats Sites.

The housing policies allocate land within the zone of influence (Zoi) for the Suffolk Coast RAMS and the development falls within the following development types:

- New dwellings of 1+ units (excludes replacement dwellings and extensions)
- Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs)
- Student Accommodation
- Residential care homes and residential institutions (excludes nursing homes)
- Residential caravan sites (excludes holiday caravans and campsites)
- Gypsies, travellers and travelling show people plots

Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils are two of the 4 Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) which are partners are responsible for the delivery of the Suffolk Coast RAMS. This has identified a detailed programme of strategic mitigation measures which are to be funded by developer contributions for residential development schemes as identified above.

4.5 Embedding mitigation into the Plan

Babergh District Council is committed to ensuring that new residential development and any associated recreational disturbance impacts on Habitats (European designated) sites is avoided and mitigated to demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

Although there is some embedded mitigation in the Plan, there is a need for amendments to the text for housing policies. It is not sufficient to rely on a general policy aimed at protecting Habitats sites. Instead, explicit caveats need to be included where there may be conflicts between a general policy to protect Habitats sites from development and another policy.



Table 6: Results of embedding mitigation within the policy text of Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-submission Draft

Policy	Mitigation proposed	With proposed mitigation embedded in the policy text, can adverse effects on integrity of the identified Habitats Sites be avoided?
Policy BEN 2: Housing Development	Amend supporting text and strengthen Policy text to explicitly ensure that there will be no AEOI. Annex 1 advice on greenspace needs to be met for development of more than 50 units and Project level AA will be required at application stage.	No adverse effects on site integrity with mitigation embedded.
Policy BEN 4: Land at The Fruit Far, Chapel Road	Amend supporting text and strengthen Policy text to explicitly ensure that there will be no AEOI. Annex 1 advice on greenspace needs to be met for development of more than 50 units and Project level AA will be required at application stage.	No adverse effects on site integrity with mitigation embedded.
Policy BEN 5: Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites	Amend supporting text and strengthen Policy text to explicitly ensure that there will be no AEOI. Annex 1 advice on greenspace needs to be met for development of more than 50 units and Project level AA will be required at application stage.	No adverse effects on site integrity with mitigation embedded.

4.6 Re-applying the integrity test

It can therefore be concluded that, with mitigation secured and implemented through the Suffolk Coast RAMS, there will be no adverse effect on integrity as a result of recreational disturbance from Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Draft from the Plan in combination with other plans and projects.



5. Recommendations

The Habitats Sites that have been considered within this HRA are:

- Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA and
- Stour and Orwell Estuaries Ramsar;

Potential impact pathways between the above Habitats Sites and the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-submission Draft have been identified, considered and assessed for predicted recreational disturbance in combination with other plans and projects.

With regards to **recreational disturbance**, all residential development within the Plan area is predicted to result in additional recreational impacts from increased visitor pressure on the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site. In 2016, Natural England proposed a strategic approach to LPAs and recommended identifying the scale of the disturbance and implementing measures to mitigate impacts through the preparation of a joint Suffolk Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS). This strategic mitigation scheme has now been adopted by Babergh DC (November 2019) to support the Babergh & Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan and, any residential development coming forward, will thereby also support the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-submission Draft.

This AA has recommended a number of wording amendments to the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-submission Draft. These include the following types of changes:

- Recommended policy wording changes particularly with reference to Annex 1 of Natural England's advice in relation to greenspace requirements for development of more than 50 units.
- Recommend strategic mitigation is required (e.g. Suffolk Coast RAMS) for residential allocation policies for sites within the 13km Zone of Influence as well as site-based mitigation.
- No change but this AA identifies the need for project level HRAs at application stage to secure mitigation for recreational disturbance.

Where policies do not identify specific locations, set a fixed level of development, or the potential for significant effects relates to the possibility of development coming forward in a particular location, or with particular characteristics is likely, the risks may be simply avoided with straightforward clarifications, which remove any uncertainty.

The recommendations to amend or add text to the policy include an explanation of how the policy should be implemented to avoid Adverse Effect on Integrity of the Stour & Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site. This does not exclude the need for project level HRA but enables a conclusion of no adverse effects on integrity at the Plan level, because the identified risks to Habitats sites have been removed. Project level HRA provides a means of checking for any further risks unforeseen at the Plan level, and for developing project specific mitigation measures in greater detail within a project level AA. Clarification to remove AEOI can be achieved by adding to the supporting text e.g. "strategic projects may require joint working by public bodies to ensure the requirements of Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) are met."

The recommendations from the Appropriate Assessment are precautionary, to ensure that the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-submission Draft identifies clear mitigation needs and protects the Habitats sites from any project level impacts.



6. Conclusion

This Habitat Regulations Assessment, including Appropriate Assessment, considers the impacts arising from the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Draft.

The HRA Screening stage identified that, without mitigation, further consideration was required at the Appropriate Assessment stage to determine whether the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Draft, either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects, would adversely affect the integrity of Habitats sites as a result of various potential impact pathways, i.e.; recreational disturbance

In applying the HRA Test 2 –the integrity test at AA stage - based on the development type and proximity to Habitats (European) sites, mitigation needs to be embedded in the Plan in relation to residential developments of more than 50 dwellings to avoid impacts from recreational disturbance from the Plan *alone*..

The predicted *in combination effects* resulting from other plans or projects has also been assessed and avoidance and/or mitigation measures have been considered. Embedded mitigation measures for projects will need to be considered in project level HRA/AA reports and secured by way of a legal agreement attached to any planning consent. Therefore, there will be no need for further assessment for this Neighbourhood Plan.

Subject to Natural England's review, this HRA Screening Report including Appropriate Assessment concludes that the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Draft is not predicted, with mitigation secured, to result in any Adverse Effect on the Integrity of the Habitats sites in scope, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.



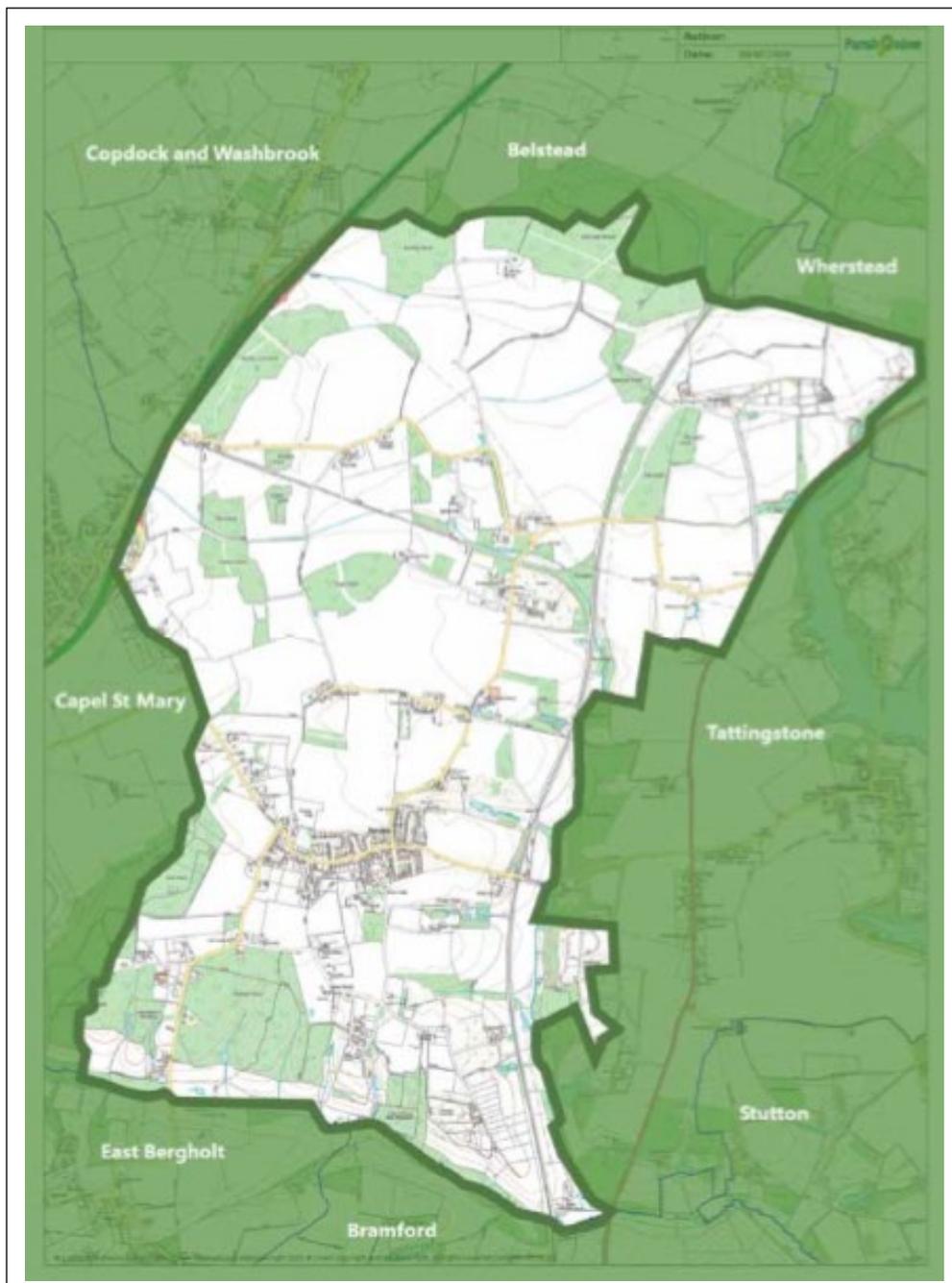
7. References

- Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Joint Local Plan (2018)
- Natural England Conservation objectives for European Sites: East of England Website:
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6581547796791296#content>
- Natural England Site Improvement Plans: East of England
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/4873023563759616>
- Place Services (June 2019) Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Joint Local Plan
Habitats Regulations Assessment including Appropriate Assessment
- Bentley Parish Council (2019) Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-Submission
Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan Regulation 14 Draft)



Appendix I

Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Area

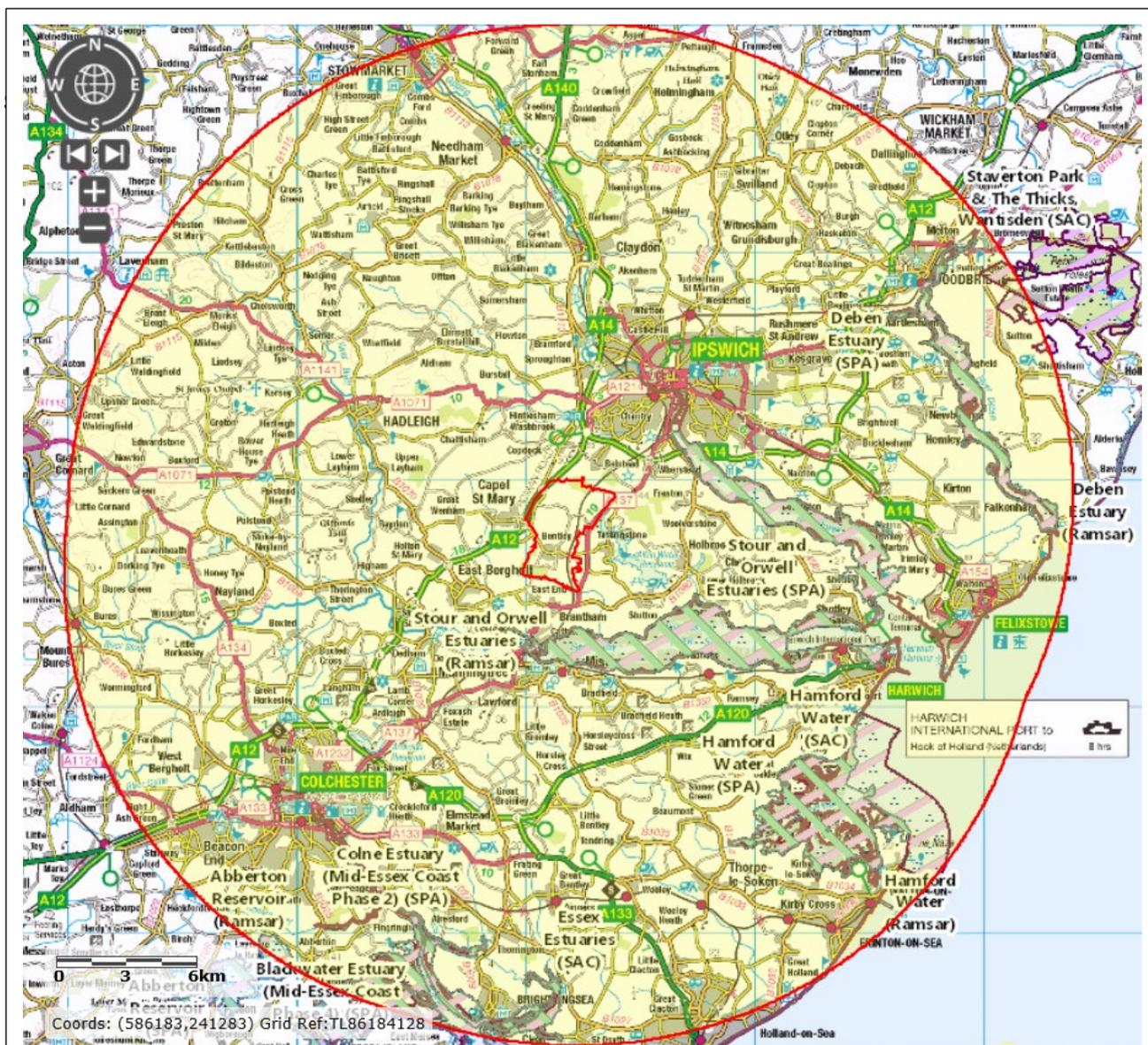


Source: Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Draft (Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Working Group, October 2020)



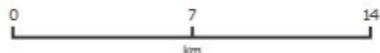
Appendix II

Bentley Parish and Habitats Sites within 20km



Legend

- Ramsar Sites (England)
- Special Areas of Conservation (England)
- Special Protection Areas (England)



Projection = OSGB36
 xmin = 566400
 ymin = 215000
 xmax = 668600
 ymax = 266700

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Appendix III

Characteristics of Habitats Sites

This appendix contains information about the Habitats Sites included in the scoping for this HRA. Information about each site's area, the site descriptions, qualifying features and pressures and threats are drawn from Natural England's Site Improvement Plans (SIPs) and the Standard Data Forms or Ramsar Information Sheets available from the JNCC website. Site conservation objectives are drawn from Natural England's website and are only available for SACs and SPAs. Supplementary Advice has also been added to describe the range of ecological attributes that are most likely to contribute to a site's overall integrity and key vulnerabilities to consider within Habitats Regulations assessments.



Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
The Stour and Orwell Estuaries <p>These estuaries straddle the eastern part of the Essex/Suffolk border in eastern England. The estuaries include extensive mud-flats, low cliffs, saltmarsh and small areas of vegetated shingle on the lower reaches. The mud-flats hold <i>Enteromorpha</i>, <i>Zostera</i> and <i>Salicornia</i> spp. The site also includes an area of low-lying grazing marsh at Shotley Marshes on the south side of the Orwell. In summer, the site supports important numbers of breeding Avocet <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>, while in winter they hold major concentrations of waterbirds, especially geese, ducks and waders. The geese also feed, and waders roost, in surrounding areas of agricultural land outside the SPA. The site has close ecological links with the Hamford Water and Mid-Essex Coast SPAs, lying to the south on the same coast.</p>				
Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA EU Code: UK9009121	3676.92	Qualifying Species: Annex I species: Over winter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hen Harrier <i>Circus cyaneus</i> Over winter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> • Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i> • Grey Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> • Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i> 	With regard to the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified ("the Qualifying Features" listed below); Avoid the deterioration of the Habitats of the qualifying features, and the significant disturbance of the qualifying features, ensuring the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes a full contribution to achieving the aims of the Birds Directive.	Coastal squeeze : Coastal defences are present along most of the Orwell coastline to mitigate for impacts from climate change, such as rising sea level. Unless changes are made to the management of the coastline, Habitats supporting qualifying SPA birds will be lost or degraded through coastal squeeze, sedimentation and reduced exposure. Public access/disturbance : Stour and Orwell Estuaries is subject to land- and water-based activities, including boating and water sports; walking; bait-digging; fishing; wildfowling; and



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i> • Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> • Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> • Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i> <p>Waterbird assemblages::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> • Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i> • Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> • Grey Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> • Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i> • Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> • Redshank <i>Tringa tetanus</i> • Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> 	<p>Subject to natural change, to maintain or restore:</p> <p>The extent and distribution of the Habitats of the qualifying features;</p> <p>The structure and function of the Habitats of the qualifying features;</p> <p>The supporting processes on which the Habitats of the qualifying features rely;</p> <p>The populations of the qualifying features;</p> <p>The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.</p>	<p>military overflight training. These activities are likely to impact Habitats supporting breeding and overwintering water birds. A better understanding of which species and Habitats are most susceptible; which types of activity are most disturbing; and which locations and times of year are most sensitive is required to ensure the Estuaries are appropriately managed.</p> <p>Changes in species distribution:</p> <p>Declines in the number of bird species present at Orwell coastline have occurred. This is likely to be the result of changes in population and distribution on an international scale, due to climate change.</p> <p>Invasive species:</p> <p>An increase in <i>Spartina anglica</i> may be affecting the growth of <i>Spartina maritima</i>, a key habitat feature for qualifying bird roosting and feeding areas of saltmarsh and mudflat.</p> <p>Planning permission- general:</p> <p>The issue of development in combination with other factors is not fully understood. To ensure</p>
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- Great Crested Grebe
Podiceps cristatus
- Curlew *Numenius arquata*
- Dark-bellied Brent Goose
Branta bernicla bernicla
- Wigeon *Anas Penelope*
- Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*
- Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*
- Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*
- Knot *Calidris canutus*
- Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*.

Further information can be found via Natural England's [Supplementary Advice](#).

management is appropriate to the SPA a better understanding of the sensitivities relating to each habitat, species and location to different types of development is required. Difficult issues highlighted by the SIP include; a) Assessing the cumulative effects of numerous, small and often 'non- standard' developments. b) Development outside the SPA boundary can have negative impacts, particularly on the estuaries' birds. c) Assessing the indirect, 'knock-on' effects of proposals. d) Pressure to relax planning conditions on existing developments.

Air pollution- impact from atmospheric nitrogen deposition:

Atmospheric nitrogen deposition exceeds the relevant critical loads for coastal dune Habitats used by breeding terns and hence there is a risk of harmful effects.

Inappropriate coastal management:

Due to the presence of existing hard sea defences, such as sea walls there is little scope for adaptation to rising sea levels. Any freshwater Habitats behind failing seawalls are likely to be inundated by



				<p>seawater, which would result in the loss of this habitat within the SPA.</p> <p>Fisheries- Commercial and estuarine:</p> <p>Commercial fishing activities can be very damaging to inshore marine Habitats and the bird species dependent on the communities they support. Any 'amber or green' categorised commercial fishing activities in Habitats Marine Sites are assessed by Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority (IFCA). This assessment takes into account any in-combination effects of amber activities and/or appropriate plans or projects.</p>
<p>Stour and Orwell Estuaries Ramsar site</p> <p>EU Code: UK11067</p>	3676.92	<p>Ramsar criterion 2</p> <p>Contains seven nationally scarce plants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stiff saltmarsh-grass <i>Puccinellia rupestris</i> • Small cord-grass <i>Spartina maritime</i> 	None available.	<p>Similar to Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA (See above).</p> <p>A key threat identified by RIS was erosion.</p> <p>Erosion:</p> <p>Natural coastal processes exacerbated by fixed sea defences, port development and maintenance dredging. Erosion is being tackled through sediment replacement for additional erosion that can be</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perennial glasswort <i>Sarcocornia perennis</i> • Lax-flowered sea lavender <i>Limonium humile</i> • Eelgrasses <i>Zostera angustifolia</i>, <i>Z. marina</i> and <i>Z. noltei</i>. <p>Ramsar criterion 5</p> <p>Assemblages of international importance; species with peak counts in winter; 63,017 waterfowl.</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 6</p> <p>Species/ populations occurring at levels of international importance:</p> <p>Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common redshank , <i>Tringa totanus totanus</i> • Species with peak counts in winter: 		<p>attributed to port development and maintenance dredging. A realignment site has been created on-site to make up for the loss of habitat due to capital dredging. General background erosion has not been tackled although a Flood Management Strategy for the site is being produced.</p>
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- Dark-bellied brent goose, *Branta bernicla bernicla*
- Northern pintail , *Anas acuta*
- Grey plover , *Pluvialis squatarola*
- Red knot , *Calidris canutus islandica*
- Dunlin , *Calidris alpina alpina*
- Black-tailed godwit , *Limosa limosa islandica*
- Common redshank , *Tringa totanus tetanus*

The Deben Estuary

The Deben Estuary lies within Suffolk Coastal District at the southern border of Suffolk. The estuaries include extensive mud-flats, low cliffs, saltmarsh and small areas of vegetated shingle on the lower reaches. The mud-flats hold *Enteromorpha*, *Zostera* and *Salicornia spp.* In summer, the site supports important numbers



of breeding Avocet while in winter they hold major concentrations of waterbirds, especially geese, ducks and waders. The geese also feed, and waders roost, in surrounding areas of agricultural land outside the SPA.

<p>Deben Estuary SPA</p> <p>EU Code: UK9009261</p>	<p>978.93</p>	<p>Qualifying Species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dark-bellied brent goose <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i> (Non-breeding); • Pied avocet , <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> (breeding) <p>Further information can be found via Natural England's Supplementary Advice.</p>	<p>With regard to the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified ("the Qualifying Features" listed below);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid the deterioration of the habitats of the Qualifying Features, and the significant disturbance of the qualifying features, ensuring the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes a full contribution to achieving the aims of The Birds Directive. • Subject to natural change, to maintain or restore: • The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features; 	<p>Coastal squeeze:</p> <p>The Deben Estuary coastline is undergoing widespread decline in the quality of saltmarsh, and an increase in lower marsh habitats at the expense of mid and upper marsh vegetation communities. This is likely due to impacts from climate change, such as rising sea level. Unless changes are made to the management of the coastline, Habitats supporting qualifying SPA birds will be lost or degraded through coastal squeeze, sedimentation and reduced exposure.</p> <p>Public access/disturbance:</p> <p>The Deben Estuary is subject to land and water-based activities, including boating and water sports; walking; wildfowling; and low flying aircrafts. These activities are likely to impact Habitats supporting breeding and overwintering water birds. A better understanding of which species and Habitats are most susceptible; which types of activity are most</p>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features; • The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely; • The populations of the qualifying features; • The distribution of the qualifying features within the site. 	<p>disturbing; and which locations and times of year are most sensitive is required to ensure the Estuaries are appropriately managed</p> <p>Changes in species distribution:</p> <p><i>Spartina anglica</i> is encroaching onto estuarine muds. This may reduce bird roosting and feeding areas of saltmarsh and mudflat.</p> <p>Air Pollution- Impacts of atmospheric nitrogen deposition:</p> <p>Modelled aerial deposits of nitrogen within Deben Estuary exceed the threshold limit above which the diversity of saltmarsh vegetation begins to be altered (possibly to reed) and adversely impacted. This is likely being caused by in combination impacts from land spreading and land use practices with high nutrient inputs e.g. outdoor pig farms.</p> <p>Water Pollution:</p> <p>Inappropriate water quality may impact on the supporting habitats of SPA birds. Eutrophication may</p>
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				<p>be having an influence on reed growth and saltmarsh composition.</p> <p>Increased flood events could lead to habitat change/loss of diversity. Nutrient run off from farming operations could exacerbate the issue. Further monitoring and management of key issues are required.</p> <p>Fisheries: Commercial marine estuarine – In combination impacts from fisheries in European Marine Sites need to be monitored and appropriately managed to avoid potential threats to site condition.</p>
<p>Deben Estuary Ramsar site</p> <p>EU Code: UK11017</p>	978.93	<p>Ramsar criterion 2</p> <p>Supports a population of the mollusc <i>Vertigo angustior</i> (Habitats Directive Annex II (S1014); British Red Data Book Endangered). Martlesham Creek is one of only about fourteen sites in Britain where this species survives</p>	None available	<p>Similar to Deben Estuary SPA (See above).</p> <p>A key threat identified by RIS was erosion.</p> <p>Erosion:</p> <p>English Nature provides advice to the Environment Agency and coastal local authorities in relation to flood and coastal protection management. This will inform the development of the Suffolk Estuaries strategies and the second generation shoreline management plan.</p>



		<p>Ramsar criterion 6 - species/populations occurring at levels of international importance:</p> <p>Species with peak counts in winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dark-bellied brent goose, <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i>, <p>Noteworthy fauna:</p> <p>Species currently occurring at levels of national importance:</p> <p>Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black-tailed godwit , <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> • Common greenshank, <i>Tringa nebularia</i> <p>Species with peak counts in winter:</p>		
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bean goose , <i>Anser fabalis fabalis</i>, • Common shelduck , <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> • Pied avocet , <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> • Spotted redshank , <i>Tringa erythropus</i>, • Common redshank , <i>Tringa totanus totanus</i>, <p>Nationally important species occurring on the site:</p> <p>Invertebrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Vertigo angustior</i> (Nationally Scarce) • <i>Vertigo pusilla</i> (Nationally Scarce) 		
<p>Essex Estuaries</p>				



The Mid-Essex Coast comprises an extensive complex of estuaries and intertidal sand and silt flats, including several islands, shingle and shell beaches and extensive areas of saltmarsh. The proposed SPA follows the boundaries of five SSSIs: the Colne Estuary, the Blackwater Estuary, Dengie, the River Crouch Marshes and Foulness.

<p><u>Essex</u> <u>Estuaries</u> <u>SAC</u></p> <p>EU Code: UK0013690</p>	<p>46109.95</p>	<p>Qualifying habitats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time; Subtidal sandbanks • Estuaries • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; Intertidal mudflats and sandflats. • Salicornia and other annuals colonizing mud and sand; Glasswort and other annuals colonising mud and sand 	<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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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>Coastal Squeeze:</p> <p>Coastal defences along much of the Essex coastline prevent intertidal habitats from shifting landward in response to rising sea levels. As a result, these habitats are being gradually degraded and reduced in extent, with knock-on effects on the waterbirds and other species they support. 'Managed realignment' schemes and additional intervention measures to create new areas of intertidal habitat and reduce erosion rates are being implemented but more will be needed to offset future losses. Grazing marshes in the area of the Mid Essex Coast SPAs are important for waterbirds and are also threatened by sea level rise because most are near or below mean high tide level, currently protected behind seawalls.</p> <p>Public access /disturbance:</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spartina swards (<i>Spartinion maritimae</i>); Cord-grass swards • Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) • Mediterranean and thermo-Atlantic halophilous scrubs (<i>Sarcocornetea fruticosi</i>) 		<p>Breeding and overwintering waterbirds are susceptible to human disturbance from a range of land- and water-based activities - including boating and watersports, walking, bait-digging, fishing and wildfowling - as well as low-flying aircraft. Some activities, such as powerboating, may produce physical disturbance to habitats.</p> <p>Planning permission: general – Several of the issues affecting the Essex Estuaries and the management of disturbance effects on the sites are related to each other, and addressing them is likely to require an improved overview of the relative sensitivities of different habitats, species and locations to different types of development.</p> <p>Changes in species distributions:</p> <p>Declines have occurred in the numbers of some of the waterbird species using the Essex Estuaries SIP area but these may be due to changes in their distributions or population levels at a national or continental scale, possibly linked to climate change.</p>
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				<p>Invasive species:</p> <p>An increase in Pacific oyster <i>Crassostrea gigas</i> settlement and colonisation within the European Marine Site (EMS) may result in areas of foreshore being covered in such numbers as to make them difficult to access and utilise as feeding grounds for overwintering birds. Invasive common cord grass may adversely affect other species and habitats, including feeding and roosting areas of SPA bird species.</p> <p>Fishing:</p> <p>Recreational bait digging may impact waterbirds e.g. by reducing prey availability, or damaging the intertidal mudflats and sandflats and associated communities. The extent of the activity and potential impacts on site features are not currently well understood. Certain forms of commercial fishing, e.g. bottom towed fishing gear; can be very damaging to inshore marine habitats and the bird species dependent on the communities they support.</p>
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				<p>Air Pollution- risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition:</p> <p>Atmospheric nitrogen deposition exceeds the relevant critical loads for coastal dune habitats used by breeding terns and hence there is a risk of harmful effects. However, on the Essex estuaries declines in the numbers of breeding terns appear to be due mainly to erosion of a man-made cockle-shingle bank (at Foulness) and to disturbance (elsewhere), rather than to over-vegetation of breeding areas caused by nitrogen deposition.</p>
<p>Hamford Water</p> <p>Hamford Water is a large, shallow estuarine basin comprising tidal creeks and islands, intertidal mud and sand flats, and saltmarsh supporting rare plants and internationally important species/populations of migratory waterfowl.</p>				
<p><u>Hamford Water SAC</u></p> <p>EU Code: UK0030377</p>	2187.21	<p>Qualifying species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fisher's estuarine moth <i>Gortyna borelii lunata</i> 	<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>Climate change:</p> <p>The overall vulnerability of this SAC to climate change has been assessed by Natural England (2015) as being high, taking into account the sensitivity, fragmentation, topography and management of its supporting habitats.</p>



		Further information can be found via Natural England's Supplementary Advice .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of the habitats of qualifying species • The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species • The supporting processes on which the habitats of qualifying species rely • The populations of qualifying species, and, • The distribution of qualifying species within the site. 	<p>Air Pollution:</p> <p>The supporting habitat of this feature is considered sensitive to changes in air quality. Exceedance of these critical values for air pollutants may modify the chemical status of the habitat's substrate, accelerating or damaging plant growth, altering its vegetation structure and composition (including food-plants) and reducing supporting habitat quality and population viability of this feature.</p> <p>Water quality:</p> <p>Hog's fennel grows along the banks of borrow-dykes and ditches and is therefore likely to be sensitive to changes in water quality. As Fisher's estuarine moth spends its pupal and some of its larval life cycle stage below ground it may be affected by ground water levels.</p> <p>Succession:</p> <p>Scrub encroaching is resulting in a loss of suitable grassland habitat for the moth. There are efforts to</p>
<p><u>Hamford Water SPA</u></p> <p>EU Code: UK9009131A</p>	2187.21	<p>Qualifying species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dark-bellied brent goose; <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i> (Non-breeding) • Common shelduck; <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> (Non-breeding) • Eurasian teal; <i>Anas crecca</i> (Non-breeding) 	<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;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features • The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features 	



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pied avocet; <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> (Non-breeding) • Ringed plover; <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> (Non-breeding) • Grey plover; <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> (Non-breeding) • Black-tailed godwit ; <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> (Non-breeding) • Common redshank; <i>Tringa totanus</i> (Non-breeding) • Little tern; <i>Sternula albifrons</i> (Breeding) <p>Further information can be found via Natural England's Supplementary Advice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	control and reduce scrub at the worst affected sites. Clearing scrub and restoring grassland will also provide opportunities for landward migration of hog's fennel and Fisher's estuarine moth, away from the threats of sea level rise.
Hamford Water Ramsar site	2187.21	<p>Ramsar criterion 6</p> <p>Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation):</p>	None Available	N/A



<p>EU Code: UK11028</p>		<p>Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ringed plover; <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> • Common redshank; <i>Tringa totanus tetanus</i> <p>Species with peak counts in winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dark-bellied brent goose; <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i> • Black-tailed godwit; <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> <p>Species/populations identified subsequent to designation for possible future consideration under criterion 6.</p> <p>Species with peak counts in winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grey plover; <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> (Non-breeding) 		
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Colne Estuary

Colne Estuary is a comparatively short and branching estuary, with five tidal arms which flow into the main river channel. The estuary has a narrow intertidal zone predominantly composed of flats of fine silt with mudflat communities typical of south-eastern estuaries. The estuary is of international importance for wintering Brent Geese and Black-tailed Godwit and of national importance for breeding Little Terns and five other species of wintering waders and wildfowl. The variety of habitats which include mudflat, saltmarsh, grazing marsh, sand and shingle spits, disused gravel pits and reedbeds, support outstanding assemblages of invertebrates and plants.

<p><u>Colne Estuary SPA</u></p> <p>EU code: UK9009243</p>	2701.43	<p>Qualifying species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dark-bellied brent goose; <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i> (Non-breeding) • Common pochard; <i>Aythya ferina</i> (Breeding) • Hen harrier; <i>Circus cyaneus</i> (Non-breeding) • Ringed plover; <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> (Breeding) • Common redshank; <i>Tringa totanus</i> (Non-breeding) 	<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;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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, 	<p>Coastal Squeeze:</p> <p>Coastal defences along much of the Essex coastline prevent intertidal habitats from shifting landward in response to rising sea levels. As a result, these habitats are being gradually degraded and reduced in extent, with knock-on effects on the waterbirds and other species they support. 'Managed realignment' schemes and additional intervention measures to create new areas of intertidal habitat and reduce erosion rates are being implemented but more will be needed to offset future losses. Grazing marshes in the area of the Mid Essex Coast SPAs are important for waterbirds and are also threatened</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little tern; <i>Sterna albifrons</i> (Breeding) • Waterbird assemblage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The distribution of the qualifying features within the site. 	<p>by sea level rise because most are near or below mean high tide level, currently protected behind seawalls.</p> <p>Public access /disturbance:</p> <p>Breeding and overwintering waterbirds are susceptible to human disturbance from a range of land- and water-based activities - including boating and watersports, walking, bait-digging, fishing and wildfowling - as well as low-flying aircraft. Some activities, such as powerboating, may produce physical disturbance to habitats.</p> <p>Planning permission- general:</p> <p>Several of the issues affecting the Essex Estuaries and the management of disturbance effects on the sites are related to each other, and addressing them is likely to require an improved overview of the relative sensitivities of different habitats, species and locations to different types of development.</p>
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				<p>Changes in species distributions:</p> <p>Declines have occurred in the numbers of some of the waterbird species using the Essex Estuaries SIP area but these may be due to changes in their distributions or population levels at a national or continental scale, possibly linked to climate change.</p> <p>Invasive species:</p> <p>An increase in Pacific oyster <i>Crassostrea gigas</i> settlement and colonisation within the European Marine Site (EMS) may result in areas of foreshore being covered in such numbers as to make them difficult to access and utilise as feeding grounds for overwintering birds. Invasive common cord grass may adversely affect other species and habitats, including feeding and roosting areas of SPA bird species.</p> <p>Fishing:</p>
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				<p>Recreational bait digging may impact waterbirds e.g. by reducing prey availability, or damaging the intertidal mudflats and sandflats and associated communities. The extent of the activity and potential impacts on site features are not currently well understood. Certain forms of commercial fishing, e.g. bottom towed fishing gear; can be very damaging to inshore marine habitats and the bird species dependent on the communities they support.</p> <p>Air Pollution- risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition:</p> <p>Atmospheric nitrogen deposition exceeds the relevant critical loads for coastal dune habitats used by breeding terns and hence there is a risk of harmful effects. However, on the Essex estuaries declines in the numbers of breeding terns appear to be due mainly to erosion of a man-made cockle-shingle bank (at Foulness) and to disturbance (elsewhere), rather than to over-vegetation of breeding areas caused by nitrogen deposition.</p>
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<p><u>Colne Estuary Ramsar Site</u></p>	<p>2701.43</p>	<p>Ramsar criterion 1</p> <p>The site is important due to the extent and diversity of saltmarsh present. This site, and the four other sites in the Mid-Essex Coast complex, includes a total of 3,237 ha, that represent 70% of the saltmarsh habitat in Essex and 7% of the total saltmarsh in Britain.</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 2</p> <p>The site supports 12 species of nationally scarce plants and at least 38 British Red Data Book invertebrate species.</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 3</p> <p>This site supports full and representative sequences of saltmarsh plant communities covering the range of variation in Britain.</p>	<p>None available</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>EU Code: UK11015</p>				



		<p>Ramsar criterion 5</p> <p>Assemblages of international importance; species with peak counts in winter; 32041 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003)</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 6</p> <p>Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation):</p> <p>Species with peak counts in winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dark-bellied brent goose; <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i>,• Common redshank; <i>Tringa totanus totanus</i>, <p>Species/populations identified subsequent to designation for</p>		
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		<p>possible future consideration under criterion 6.</p> <p>Species with peak counts in winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black-tailed godwit ; <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> 		
<p>Sandlings</p> <p>The Sandlings SPA lies near the Suffolk Coast between the Deben Estuary and Leiston. In the 19th century, the area was dominated by heathland developed on glacial sandy soils. During the 20th century, large areas of heath were planted with blocks of commercial conifer forest and others were converted to arable agriculture. Lack of traditional management has resulted in the remnant areas of heath being subject to successional changes, with the consequent spread of bracken, shrubs and trees, although recent conservation management work is resulting in their restoration. The heaths support both acid grassland and heather-dominated plant communities, with dependant invertebrate and bird communities of conservation value. Woodlark <i>Lullula arborea</i> and Nightjar <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i> have also adapted to breeding in the large conifer forest blocks, using areas that have recently been felled and recent plantation, as well as areas managed as open ground</p>				
Sandlings SPA	3,391.80	<p>Qualifying species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> European nightjar; <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>; (Breeding) 	<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;</p>	<p>Recreation pressure:</p> <p>The nature, scale, timing and duration of some human activities can result in the disturbance of birds at a level that may substantially affect their behaviour, and consequently affect the long-term</p>



<p>EU code: UK9020286</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Woodlark; <i>Lullula arborea</i> (Breeding) <p>Further information can be found via Natural England's Supplementary Advice.</p>	<p>The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features</p> <p>The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features</p> <p>The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely</p> <p>The population of each of the qualifying features, and,</p> <p>The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.</p>	<p>viability of the population. Such disturbing effects can for example result in changes to feeding or roosting behaviour, increases in energy expenditure due to increased flight, abandonment of nest sites and desertion of supporting habitat (both within or outside the designated site boundary where appropriate). This may undermine successful nesting, rearing, feeding and/or roosting, and/or may reduce the availability of suitable habitat as birds are displaced and their distribution within the site contracts. Disturbance associated with human activity may take a variety of forms including noise, light, sound, vibration, trampling, and presence of people, animals and structures. This may become more of an issue as the population recovers and if an increase in development locally leads to an increase in recreational pressure in the Sandlings.</p> <p>Air pollution:</p> <p>The structure and function of the habitats which support this SPA feature may be sensitive to changes in air quality. Exceeding critical values for air pollutants may result in changes to the chemical status of its habitat substrate, accelerating or</p>
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				damaging plant growth, altering vegetation structure and composition and thereby affecting the quality and availability of nesting, feeding or roosting habitats
Abberton Reservoir				
Abberton Reservoir is a large water storage reservoir lying about four miles south of Colchester. In numerical terms, Abberton is the most important reservoir in Great Britain for wintering wildfowl. It owes this position to its proximity to the coast and to the strict protection given to the site. Most of the SSSI is statutorily protected by the Wild Birds (Abberton Reservoir Sanctuary) Order 1967.				
Abberton Reservoir SPA EU code: UK9009141	718.31	Qualifying species: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A005 Podiceps cristatus; Great crested grebe (Non-breeding) • A017 Phalacrocorax carbo; Great cormorant (Breeding) • A036 Cygnus olor; Mute swan (Non-breeding) • A050 Anas penelope; Eurasian wigeon (Non-breeding) 	<p>For each individual species, maintain or restore as appropriate the size of the nonbreeding population at/to a size which is above the baseline for each species, whilst avoiding deterioration from its current level as indicated by the latest mean peak count or equivalent. The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features.</p> <p>Maintain the extent, distribution and availability of suitable breeding habitat which supports the feature in the</p>	<p>Siltation – high sediment load in reservoir inflow due to agricultural practices within catchment.</p> <p>Public access / disturbance – designated waterbirds are vulnerable to human disturbance but well controlled by Essex & Suffolk Water; occasional trespassing and disturbance by low flying aircraft.</p> <p>Planning permission: general – potential future threat to designated waterbirds if farmland providing supporting habitat close to the SPA were lost to development; requires further study.</p> <p>Changes in species distributions – unexplained decline in designated population of cormorant. Bird strike – death of designated mute swans and</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A051 Anas strepera; Gadwall (Non-breeding) • A052 Anas crecca; Eurasian teal (Non-breeding) • A056 Anas clypeata; Northern shoveler (Non-breeding) • A059 Aythya ferina; Common pochard (Non-breeding) • A061 Aythya fuligula; Tufted duck (Non-breeding) • A067 Bucephala clangula; Common goldeneye (Non-breeding) • A125 Fulica atra; Common coot (Non-breeding) • Waterbird assemblage <p>Further information can be found via Natural England's Supplementary Advice.</p>	<p>nonbreeding/wintering period (moulting, roosting, loafing, feeding).</p> <p>Maintain or, where necessary, restore concentrations and deposition of air pollutants to at or below the site-relevant Critical Load or Level values given for this feature of the site on the Air Pollution Information System (www.apis.ac.uk).</p> <p>Maintain the safe passage of birds moving between roosting and feeding areas.</p> <p>Maintain management or other measures (whether within and/or outside the site boundary as appropriate) necessary to maintain the structure, function and/or the supporting processes associated with the feature and its supporting habitats.</p> <p>Maintain the availability of key prey species at preferred prey sizes.</p>	<p>possibly other species from collision with overhead powerlines near reservoir.</p> <p>Water pollution – Water stored in the reservoir is high in nutrients (eutrophic) as it comes from intensively farmed catchment areas. Resulting algal blooms may include toxic blue-green algae that can kill wildfowl, though no significant mortality has been recorded. Historically, increased water from the reservoir led to low water levels although no decrease in wildfowl was attributed to this.</p> <p>Currently the water level of the main, eastern section is being raised by 3 metres to increase storage capacity. As part of the level-raising scheme, the original concrete banks have been removed and the shoreline re-profiled, creating extensive new areas of shallow wetland habitat for the site's waterfowl.</p> <p>The Water Company has a consultative committee which addresses conservation issues at all its sites, and the Abberton Reserve Committee (involving Essex Wildlife Trust and EN) addresses local issues.</p> <p>Air Pollution: risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition – The site is identified as at risk from air pollution as Nitrogen deposition levels exceed the</p>
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			<p>Maintain the availability of standing water at optimal depth.</p> <p>Where the supporting habitats of the SPA feature are dependent on surface water, maintain water quality and quantity at a standard which provides the necessary conditions to support the feature.</p> <p>Restrict the frequency, duration and/or intensity of disturbance of nesting, roosting, foraging, feeding, moulting and/or loafing birds so that the feature is not significantly disturbed.</p>	<p>site- relevant critical load for ecosystem protection. However, the site's Nitrogen load is likely to be dominated by levels in the water entering the reservoir (mainly from the distant Ouse catchment) rather than direct deposition.</p>
<p>Abberton Reservoir</p> <p>Abberton Reservoir is a large storage reservoir built in a long shallow valley. It is the largest freshwater body in Essex and is one of the most important reservoirs in Britain for wildfowl. It is less than 8 km from the coast and its primary role is as a roost for the local estuarine wildfowl population.</p>				
Abberton Reservoir Ramsar	718.31	<p>Qualifying species:</p> <p>Supports 23787 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003)</p>	N/A	Similar to Abberton Reservoir SPA (above).



<p>EU code: UK11001</p>		<p>including the following internationally important waterbird assemblage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gadwall, <i>Anas strepera strepera</i>; • Northern shoveler, <i>Anas clypeata</i>; • Eurasian wigeon, <i>Anas Penelope</i>; • Mute swan, <i>Cygnus olor</i> • Common pochard, <i>Aythya farina</i>; • Great cormorant, <i>Phalacrocorax carbo carbo</i>; • Eurasian teal, <i>Anas crecca</i>; • Tufted duck, <i>Aythya fuligula</i>; • Common coot, <i>Fulica atra atra</i>; • Pied avocet, <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>; • Ruff, <i>Philomachus pugnax</i>, 		
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Black-tailed godwit, <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>;• Spotted redshank, <i>Tringa erythropus</i>,• Common greenshank, <i>Tringa nebularia</i>,• Common goldeneye, <i>Bucephala clangula</i>		
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