# City of York Council

# Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Local Plan

Information to support an assessment under Regulation 61 of the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010* (as amended)

AMEC Environment & Infrastructure UK Limited

September 2014 (DRAFT)

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# Executive Summary

Regulation 102 of the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010* (as amended) (the 'Habitats Regulations') states that if a land-use plan is "*(a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects); and (b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site*" then the plan-making authority must "*…make an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of that site's conservation objectives*" before the plan is given effect. The process by which Regulation 102 is met is known as Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

As with Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) it is accepted best-practice for the HRA of strategic planning documents to be run as an iterative process alongside the plan development, with the emerging policies or options continually assessed for their possible effects on European sites and modified or abandoned (as necessary) to ensure that the subsequently adopted plan is not likely to result in significant effects on any European sites, either alone or 'in combination' with other plans.

CYC's Local Plan has drawn on the abandoned Core Strategy evidence base, which included a draft HRA. The draft Local Plan and Preferred Options were supported by a preliminary HRA produced by CYC[1] in 2013 (the 'Preferred Options HRA'), which concluded that emerging Local Plan would not have any significant adverse effects on any European sites as a result of its adoption and implementation, assuming that the strategy, policies and allocations of the Preferred Options stage were adopted and that mitigation and avoidance measures recommended by the HRA process were employed in the final plan. Consultation with NE indicated that further information on some aspects of the assessment may be necessary to support a conclusion of 'no adverse effects', particularly in relation to indirect effects on the Lower Derwent Valley SPA associated with development and increased disturbance of the Heslington Tillmire SSSI.

The HRA of the Local Plan submission has reviewed the available data and the

The assessment concluded that the Local Plan will have no significant effects (alone or in combination) on Kirk Deighton SAC, Skipworth Common SAC, the Humber Estuary SAC, the Humber Estuary SPA or the Humber Estuary Ramsar due to either an absence of impact pathways; policy controls within the plan that can be relied on to ensure significant effects are avoided; or external controls (such as the water resources planning process) that account for the growth aspects of the plan and with which the plan is consistent.

Potential significant effects as a result of increased recreational pressure were identified for Strensall Common SAC and the Lower Derwent Valley SAC, Lower Derwent Valley SPA and Lower Derwent Valley Ramsar.

Strensall Common SAC has three strategic allocations and several smaller allocations fully or partly within 5km of the site boundary, potentially providing 7458 homes over the lifetime of the plan and beyond; most of these homes

[1] CYC (2013) *Habitats Regulations Assessment: Local Plan Preferred Options*. Report by the City of York Council, York.

will be within the distance typically travelled by car for 'casual' recreation (such as dog walking) based on studies at other sites. However, only three small allocations will be within 2km. Several factors are likely to limit the exposure of the interest features to additional recreational pressure, notably the access arrangements and controls (managed by the MOD and the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust). Policies within the Local Plan will ensure the provision of adequate greenspace to prevent development significantly increasing visitor pressure, although policy enhancements are recommended to improve the performance of these. It is therefore concluded that the Local Plan will have no adverse effects on this SAC.

With regard to the Lower Derwent Valley sites, the level of development proposed within 5km is substantially less than for Strensall Common (accounting also for development in neighbouring districts) and is predominantly associated with one strategic site, Windthorpe. The potential for this allocation to have indirect effects on the SPA features via impacts on the Heslington Tillmire SSSI has been explored through breeding and wintering bird surveys, and regional bird data analysis; this has concluded that there is no evidence of a significant link between the Heslington Tillmire SSSI and the Lower Derwent Valley SPA. As with Strensall Common, several factors will limit the exposure of the SAC, SPA and Ramsar interest features to additional recreational pressure, notably the existing access and management arrangements; these can be enhanced through planning policy. Furthermore, policies within the Local Plan will ensure the provision of adequate greenspace to prevent the Windthorpe allocation significantly increasing visitor pressure, although policy enhancements are recommended to improve the performance of these. It is therefore concluded that the Local Plan will have no adverse effects on Lower Derwent Valley sites.

# Contents

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 The City of York Council Local Plan

The City of York Council (CYC) decided to prepare a Local Plan in 2012 following two significant changes in national planning policy:

- the government decision to revoke the Regional Spatial Strategies, including the Regional Strategy for Yorkshire and Humber[2]; and
- the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which replaced the previous Planning Policy Statements and Local Development Framework.

These changes substantially altered the requirements for local planning policy documents. As a result, a draft Core Strategy that had been prepared by CYC was withdrawn from Examination in Public in June 2012 and a decision to produce an NPPF-compliant Local Plan was made.

The CYC Local Plan will provide strategic planning guidance, development control policies and site allocations for the City of York and its surrounding areas. It builds on the assessment work previously undertaken for the Core Strategy and has been in development since the withdrawal of this document in 2012. The plan has gone through several developmental phases, including the identification of 'Preferred Options' (2013) and a 'Further Sites Consultation' (2014), aimed at identifying priorities for York, a spatial strategy and principles, and suitable areas for sustainable development. The draft Local Plan will be submitted for public consultation in September 2014.

## 1.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment

Regulation 102 of the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010* (as amended) (the 'Habitats Regulations') states that if a land-use plan is "*(a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site*[3] *or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects); and (b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site*" then the plan-making authority must "*…make an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of that site's conservation objectives*" before the plan is given effect.

[2] The *Regional Strategy for Yorkshire and Humber (Partial Revocation) Order 2013* came into force on 22nd February 2013.

[3] Strictly, 'European sites' are: any Special Area of Conservation (SAC) from the point at which the European Commission and the UK Government agree the site as a 'Site of Community Importance' (SCI); any classified Special Protection Area (SPA); any candidate SAC (cSAC); and (exceptionally) any other site or area that the Commission believes should be considered as an SAC but which has not been identified by the Government. However, the term is also commonly used when referring to potential SPAs (pSPAs), to which the provisions of Article 4(4) of Directive 2009/147/EC (the 'new wild birds directive') apply; and to possible SACs (pSACs) and listed Ramsar Sites, to which the provisions of the Habitats Regulations are applied a matter of Government policy (NPPF para. 118) when considering development proposals that may affect them. "European site" is therefore used in this report in its broadest sense, as an umbrella term for all of the above designated sites. Additional information on European site designations is provided in Appendix A.

The process by which Regulation 102 is met is known as Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)[4]. An HRA determines whether there will be any 'likely significant effects' (LSE) on any European site as a result of a plan's implementation (either on its own or 'in combination' with other plans or projects) and, if so, whether these effects will result in any adverse effects on the site's integrity.

Regulation 102 essentially provides a test that the final plan must pass; there is no statutory requirement for HRA to be undertaken on draft plans or similar developmental stages (e.g. issues and options; preferred options). However, as with Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) it is accepted best-practice for the HRA of strategic planning documents to be run as an iterative *process* alongside the plan development, with the emerging policies or options continually assessed for their possible effects on European sites and modified or abandoned (as necessary) to ensure that the subsequently adopted plan is not likely to result in significant effects on any European sites, either alone or 'in combination' with other plans. This is undertaken in consultation with Natural England (NE) and other appropriate consultees. It is therefore important to recognise that the strategic HRA is as much about guiding the development of the plan (and demonstrating that this has been done) as it is about (ultimately) assessing its effects.

## 1.3 HRA of the CYC Local Plan

### 1.3.1 Previous reporting and assessment

CYC's Core Strategy (as part of the Local Development Framework) was in development until 2012 and was supported by an HRA; this HRA concluded that the Core Strategy would not have any significant adverse effects on any European sites, although as the Core Strategy was not adopted the conclusions of this HRA were not formally confirmed through the examination process.

The Local Plan has drawn on the Core Strategy evidence base and proposals through its development. As noted, it is accepted best-practice for the HRA of strategic planning documents to be undertaken alongside the plan development, and this approach has been adopted for the emerging CYC Local Plan. The draft plan and Preferred Options were supported by a preliminary HRA produced by CYC[5] in 2013 (the 'Preferred Options HRA'); this preliminary assessment concluded that the emerging Local Plan would not have any significant adverse effects on any European sites as a result of its adoption and implementation, assuming that the strategy, policies and allocations of the Preferred Options stage were adopted and that mitigation and avoidance measures recommended by the HRA process were employed in the final plan.

The Preferred Options, and its preliminary HRA, were subject to a consultation process in late 2013; the consultation response from NE indicated that further information on some aspects of the assessment may be

[4] The term 'Appropriate Assessment' has been historically used to describe the process of assessment; however, the process is now more accurately termed 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' (HRA), with the term 'Appropriate Assessment' limited to the specific stage within the process; see also Box 1.

[5] CYC (2013) *Habitats Regulations Assessment: Local Plan Preferred Options*. Report by the City of York Council, York.

necessary to support a conclusion of 'no adverse effects', assuming that the adopted plan followed the Preferred Options. NE's concerns focused on:

- the absence of an 'in combination' assessment; and
- the suitability of mitigation measures identified for possible adverse effects that were identified.

Specific issues with specific European sites were not identified, although correspondence with NE and the RSPB identified some concerns regarding indirect effects on the Lower Derwent Valley SPA associated with development and increased disturbance of the Heslington Tillmire SSSI.

### 1.3.2 This report

Since the Preferred Options consultation CYC has been gathering additional evidence to support its plan, including survey data for sites potentially affected by some allocations. CYC is therefore preparing to publish the consultation draft of its Local Plan in September 2014.

CYC has commissioned AMEC E&I UK Ltd to assist with the HRA of its Local Plan. This report summarises AMEC's assessment of the Local Plan against the conservation objectives of any European sites that may be affected, and summarises the iterative HRA process that has been undertaken to support the plan development and ensure that it meets the requirements of Regulation 102. **This report draws on the data gathering and assessment work previously completed for the 'Preferred Options HRA', and must be read in conjunction with this document**: where possible, information from the 'Preferred Options HRA' is cross-referenced to minimise repetition and to allow the report to focus on the assessment of effects and mitigation.

# 2. Approach

## 2.1 Overview

An HRA involves determining whether there will be any LSEs on any European sites as a result of a plan's implementation (either on its own or 'in combination' with other plans or projects) and, if so, whether it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effects on the sites' integrity. European Commission guidance[6] suggests a four-stage process for HRA, although not all stages will always be required (see Box 1).

**Box 1 Stages of Habitats Regulations Assessment**

**Stage 1 – Screening:**

This stage identifies the likely impacts upon a European Site of a project or plan, either alone or 'in combination' with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant.

**Stage 2 – Appropriate Assessment:**

Where there are likely significant effects, this stage considers the effects of the plan or project on the integrity of the relevant European Sites, either alone or 'in combination' with other projects or plans, with respect to the sites' structure and function and their conservation objectives. Where it cannot be concluded that there will be no adverse effects on sites' integrity, it is necessary to consider potential mitigation for these effects.

**Stage 3 – Assessment of Alternative Solutions:**

Where adverse effects remain after the inclusion of mitigation, this stage examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of European Sites.

**Stage 4 – Assessment Where No Alternative Solutions Exist and Where Adverse Impacts Remain:**

This stage assesses compensatory measures where it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI). The EC guidance does not deal with the assessment of IROPI.

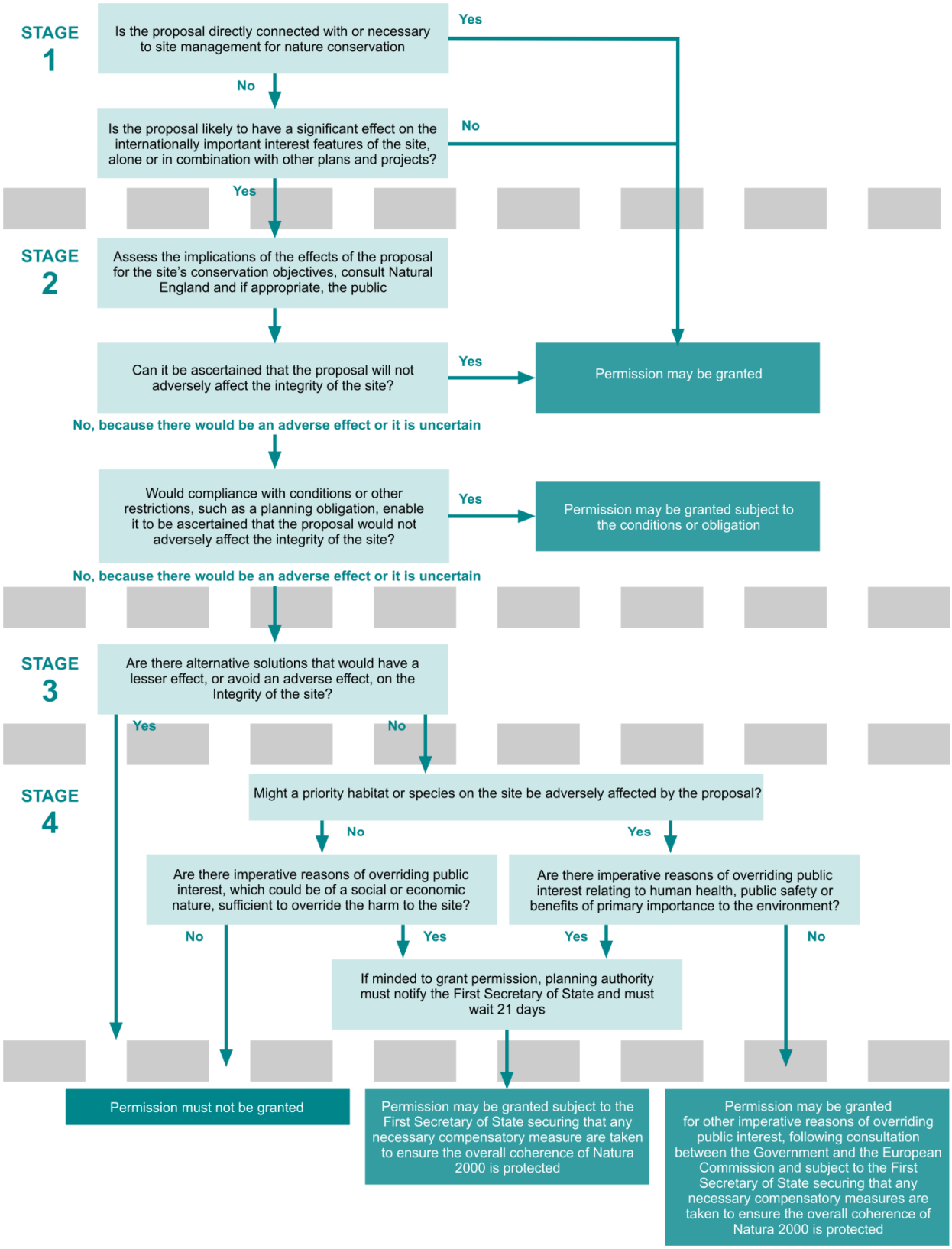
HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT (HRA)

The approach summarised in Box 1 works well at the project-level where the scheme design is usually established and possible effects on European sites can be assessed (usually quantitatively) using a linear stepwise process. In contrast, land-use plans and similar strategies present a number of distinct challenges for HRA and rigid application of the 'staged' approach to assessment suggested by Box 1 is not always appropriate. It is preferable for sustainable policies to be developed from the beginning of the plan-making process rather than HRA being a purely retrospective assessment exercise towards the end. Furthermore, the HRA is ultimately a test that the final document must pass, and there is no statutory requirement for the developmental phases of the plan (e.g. 'issues and options' or the subsequent 'preferred options') to undergo HRA themselves. Therefore, it is important to recognise that the *process* of strategic HRA is as much about guiding the development of the plan (and demonstrating that effects on European sites have been considered appropriately) as it is about (ultimately) assessing its effects. The process is summarised in Figure 1.1.[7]

[6] *Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC* (EC 2002).

[7] Note, from a strict procedural perspective the 'screening' and 'appropriate assessment' stages can only be formally applied to the finalised plan, and not to its various phases or iterations; therefore the term 'screening' is used advisedly.

**Figure 1.1 Habitats Regulations Assessment Process**



## 2.2 Guidance

The following guidance has been used to during the review and assessment of the CYC Local Plan:

- DTA Publications (2013) *The Habitats Regulation Handbook* [online]. Available at: http://www.dtapublications.co.uk/handbook/. Accessed 11.11.13.
- SNH (2012) *Habitats Regulations Appraisal of Plans: Guidance for plan-making bodies in Scotland.* Scottish Natural Heritage / David Tyldesley Associates.
- Tyldesley D (2010). *Draft Guidance for Plan Making Authorities in Wales: The Appraisal of Plans Under the Habitats Directive*. David Tyldesley and Associates, for the Countryside Council for Wales;
- DCLG (2006). *Planning for the Protection of European Sites: Appropriate Assessment. Guidance for Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents. Department for Communities and Local Government*, HMSO, London;
- English Nature, (1997-2001). *Habitats Regulations Guidance Notes 1-9*, Natural England, Peterborough;
- European Commission, (2002). *Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*. European Commission, Brussels;
- European Commission, (2001). *Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites. European Commission*, Brussels;
- European Communities, (2007). *Managing Natura 2000 sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/433/EEC*. European Commission, Brussels.

## 2.3 Summary of approach

### 2.3.1 Screening and appropriate assessment

The principles of 'screening' are applied to the emerging plan or its components (i.e. policies and allocations) to allow the assessment stage to focus on those aspects that are most likely to have potentially significant or adverse effects on European sites, as well as shape the emerging strategy. Screening aims to determine whether the plan will have any 'likely significant effects' (LSE) on any European site as a result of its implementation. It is intended to be a coarse filter for identifying effects (positive and negative) that may occur, to allow the assessment stage to focus on the most important aspects. A plan should be considered 'likely' to have an effect if the competent authority is unable (on the basis of objective information) to exclude the possibility that the plan could have significant effects on any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects; an effect will

be 'significant' if it could undermine the site's conservation objectives. CYC is the competent authority for the purposes of the Habitats Regulations[8], and is therefore responsible for completing the HRA.

Screening can be used to 'screen-out' European sites and plan components from further assessment, if it is possible to determine that significant effects are unlikely (e.g. if sites or interest features are clearly not vulnerable (exposed and / or sensitive) to the outcomes of a plan due to the absence of any reasonable impact pathways). For the CYC plan, the screening process has been used on the plan 'as a whole'; on the European sites themselves; and on the key components of the plan (the policies and allocations). The screening takes account of measures included in the plan to avoid significant effects. The appropriate assessment stage provides a more detailed examination of policies or allocations where the effects are likely to be significant, or they are uncertain. Note that undertaking an appropriate assessment does not necessarily imply a conclusion of 'significant effects' for those sites / aspects that are 'screened in' since controls within the plan (i.e. policy measures) will also operate to minimise these effects and in many cases the assessment is completed due to a residual uncertainty; rather, it allows for the assessment of effects to focus on those issues that are potentially important.

### 2.3.2 'In combination' assessment

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires that the potential effects of the plan on European sites must also be considered 'in combination with other plans or projects'. The 'in combination' assessment must also consider within-plan effects (i.e. between policies or allocations). Consideration of 'in combination' effects is not a separate 'assessment', but is integral to the screening and appropriate assessment stage and development of avoidance/ mitigation measures. There is limited guidance available on the scope of the 'in combination' element, particularly which plans should be considered. However, the assessment should not necessarily be limited to plans at the same level in the planning hierarchy and there is consequently a wide range of plans that could have potential 'in combination' effects with the CYC plan due to its regional scale. There is also limited guidance on the mitigation that may be appropriate if a European site is already being significantly affected by other plans; this is possible, since some plans will pre-date the requirement for HRA of plans, and therefore cannot be relied on to have no significant effect in their own right.

The plans identified by the SA have provided the basis for the assessment of 'in combination' effects; these plans were reviewed to identify any potential effects and these were then considered (as necessary) within the screening or appropriate assessment. The assessment did not generally include national strategies, national policy or legislation since the Local Plan must be compliant with these. It is considered that in combination effects are most likely in respect of other regional and sub-regional development plans and strategies. The plans considered 'in combination', and the results of the screening, are summarised in Appendix C. Completion of the 'in combination' assessment is directly related to the policy wording, and it will often be possible to remove any risk of 'in combination' effects through careful construction of the policy (inclusion of 'avoidance measures' during policy development).

[8] As the decision maker with jurisdiction for determining the application.

### 2.3.3 Mitigation and Avoidance

The development of avoidance or mitigation measures is key to the HRA and plan development process. Avoidance measures are those that are incorporated into the plan during its development to prevent significant effects on European sites occurring; mitigation measures are used where significant effects are identified in order to prevent adverse effects on a site's integrity.

Avoidance or mitigation measures should aim to reduce the probability or magnitude of impacts on a European site until 'no likely significant effects' are anticipated, and will generally involve usually the development and adoption of (for example) wording changes or additional policies. Measures must be specific and targeted, and likely to work: it is not appropriate to re-state existing legislation or policy, such as by adding "*and must have no significant effect on any European site*" (or similar) to every policy. The avoidance or mitigation should also account for the limited influence that the CYC can exert on non-planning issues, and should not generally exceed requirements set by national planning policy or guidance.

# 3. Scope of Assessment and Baseline Summary

## 3.1 Study Area and Data Sources

The spatial scope of any HRA should be based on the likely environmental outcomes of the plan and its 'zone of influence'; and the interest features of the European sites and their potential vulnerabilities[9]. It is therefore not usually appropriate to employ 'arbitrary' spatial buffers to determine those European sites that should be considered within an HRA. However, as distance is a strong determinant of the scale and likelihood of most effects the considered use of a suitably precautionary search area as a starting point for the screening (based on a thorough understanding of both the development and European site interest features) has some important advantages. Using buffers allows the systematic identification of European sites using GIS, so minimising the risk of sites or features being overlooked, and also ensures that sites where there are no reasonable impact pathways can be quickly and transparently excluded from any further screening or assessment. It also has the significant advantage of providing a consistent point of reference for consultees following the assessment process, allowing the 'screening' to focus on the potential effects, rather than on explaining why certain sites may or may not have been considered in relation to a particular aspect of the plan.

**This study considers potential effects on all European sites within 15km of the CYC boundary, together with any additional downstream sites that may be hydrologically linked** to the plan's zone of influence. This is considered to be a suitably precautionary starting point for the assessment of the plan. The sites listed in Table 3.1 are therefore included in the assessment (see also Figure 3.1).

**Table 3.1 European sites within study area**

| Site | Approximate location relative to CYC area |
|---|---|
| Humber Estuary Ramsar | Approximately 17km south of CYC boundary; approximately 37km downstream along R. Ouse |
| Humber Estuary SAC | Approximately 17km south of CYC boundary; approximately 37km downstream along R. Ouse |
| Humber Estuary SPA | Approximately 17km south of CYC boundary; approximately 37km downstream along R. Ouse |
| Kirk Deighton SAC | Approximately 11.5km west of CYC boundary |
| Lower Derwent Valley Ramsar | Within CYC boundary (south east corner) |
| Lower Derwent Valley SAC | Within CYC boundary (south east corner) |
| Lower Derwent Valley SPA | Within CYC boundary (south east corner) |
| River Derwent SAC | Runs along the CYC eastern boundary between Stamford Bridge and East Cottingworth |
| Skipwith Common SAC | Approximately 4km south of CYC boundary |
| Strensall Common SAC | Within CYC boundary (north east corner) |

[9] The vulnerability of an interest feature will depend on its 'sensitivity' and 'exposure' to a potential effect.

Data on the European site interest features, their distribution, and their sensitivity to potential effects associated with the plan were obtained from various sources and reports, including the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and Natural England (NE) websites (citations; boundaries; etc); site condition was estimated using the NE condition assessments for corresponding SSSI units, where this information was available[10]. Additional information on particular sites or features was obtained from other sources where available, including the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS).

## 3.2 European sites

The interest features of the European sites within the study area, and the current factors affecting them, are summarised in Table 3.2. A summary of the Conservation Objectives is provided in the next section. It should be noted that there are many factors currently affecting the sites over which the local plan will have no or little influence: analysis of the available European site data indicates that the most common reasons for an 'unfavourable' condition assessment of the component SSSI units are inappropriate management of some form (e.g. over- or undergrazing, scrub control, water-level management etc.) or secondary effects from agriculture (e.g. local drainage, run-off, grazing pressure etc.). The potential mechanisms by which the Local Plan could affect these sites are discussed in Section 3.3. Note that the Humber Estuary sites (Humber Estuary SAC; Humber Estuary SPA; Humber Estuary Ramsar) and the Lower Derwent Valley sites (Lower Derwent Valley SAC; Lower Derwent Valley SPA; Lower Derwent Valley Ramsar) are respectively grouped together for presentation purposes due to the similarity of the factors and processes affecting them.

[10] Note that that the boundaries of the component SSSI units (which the condition assessments relate to) do not always match the European site boundaries exactly (i.e. the SSSIs are usually larger) and it is not always possible to split SSSI units to determine the precise quanity of the European site (or interest feature) that is in each condition category.

**Table 3.2 European sites and interest features within 15km of CYC boundary** *(see also Appendix B)*

| Site and interest features | Summary of current threats and potential vulnerabilities to outcomes of CYC Local Plan |
|---|---|
| **Humber Estuary sites** | |
| **Humber Estuary SAC**<br>Annex I Features:<br>Estuaries*; Intertidal mudflats and sandflats*; Subtidal sandbanks; Coastal lagoons; *Salicornia* and other annuals; Atlantic salt meadows; Embryonic shifting dunes; Shifting dunes with marram (white dunes); Grey dunes, Dunes with sea-buckthorn.<br>Annex II Features:<br>Sea lamprey; River Lamprey; Grey seal.<br>**Humber Estuary SPA**<br>Article 4.1 qualification:<br>Bittern (B, W); Marsh harrier (B); Avocet (B, W); Little tern (B); Hen harrier (W); Bar-tailed godwit (W); Golden plover (W); Ruff (P).<br>Article 4.2 Qualification:<br>Shelduck (W); Dunlin (W,P); Knot (W,P); Black-tailed godwit (W,P); Redshank (W,P); an internationally important assemblage of birds (W)<br>**Humber Estuary Ramsar**<br>Criterion 1: Representative example of a near-natural estuary with dune systems and humid dune slacks, estuarine waters, intertidal mud and sand flats, saltmarshes, and coastal brackish/saline lagoons.<br>Criterion 3: Supports second largest grey seal *Halichoerus grypus* colony in England at Donna Nook. The dune slacks at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe are the most north-easterly natterjack toad *Bufo calamita* breeding site in the UK.<br>Criterion 5: 153,934 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1996/97-2000/2001).<br>Criterion 6: Species/populations occurring at levels of international importance: Bar-tailed godwit; Golden plover; Shelduck; Dunlin; Knot; Black-tailed godwit; Redshank.<br>Criterion 8: Important migration route for river lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis* and sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus* between coastal waters and their spawning areas. | The Humber is a muddy, macro-tidal estuary, fed by a number of rivers including the Rivers Ouse, Trent and Hull. It is the second largest coastal plain Estuary in the UK and supports a full range of saline conditions from the open coast to the limit of saline intrusion on the tidal rivers of the Ouse and Trent. Suspended sediment concentrations are naturally high, and are derived from a variety of sources, including marine sediments and eroding boulder clay along the Holderness coast. Wave exposed sandy shores are found in the outer/open coast areas of the estuary.<br>With regard to the SAC features, the primary features (Estuaries and Intertidal mudflats and sandflats) are found throughout the main body of the estuary, along with other estuarine features (Subtidal sandbanks; Atlantic salt meadows). The inner estuary supports extensive areas of reedbed with areas of mature and developing saltmarsh backed by grazing marsh in the middle and outer estuary. The dune features are largely found in the outer estuary. The fish species include river lamprey and sea lamprey which breed in the River Derwent; Grey seals are largely restricted to the outer estuary and breeding colonies at Donna Nook.<br>Approximately one-third of the estuary is exposed as mud- or sand-flats at low tide, and these support a range of benthic communities that are an important feeding resource for wintering birds and passage migrants (especially geese, ducks and waders). The extensive reedbeds of the inner estuary provide breeding habitat for Bittern and Marsh harrier; the outer estuary supports large tern colonies in the summer.<br>The Ramsar site is largely coincident with the SAC or SPA, and the interest features are effectively the same as those of the SPA and SAC (with the exception of natterjack toad in the outer dunes).<br>The Humber Estuary is subject to the impacts of human activities (past and present) as well as ongoing processes such as sea level rise and climate change. Key issues include coastal squeeze, impacts on the sediment budget, and geomorphological structure and function of the estuary (due to sea level rise, flood defence works, dredging, and the construction, operation and maintenance of ports, pipelines and other infrastructure), changes in water quality and flows, pressure from additional built development, and damage and disturbance arising from access, recreation and other activities. Coastal squeeze is being addressed through the development and implementation of the Humber Flood Risk Management Strategy. Diffuse pollution is being addressed through a range of measures including implementation of the Waste Water Framework Directive and Catchment Sensitive Farming initiatives. |

| Site and interest features | Summary of current threats and potential vulnerabilities to outcomes of CYC Local Plan |
|---|---|
| **Lower Derwent Valley sites** | |
| **Lower Derwent Valley SAC**<br>Annex I Features:<br>Lowland hay meadows*; Alluvial forests<br>Annex II Features:<br>Otter<br>**Lower Derwent Valley SPA**<br>Article 4.1 qualification:<br>Corncrake (B+); Ruff (B+,W); Spotted crake (B+); Bewick's swan (W); Bittern (W+); Golden plover (W);<br>Article 4.2 Qualification:<br>Shoveler (B-); Wigeon (W-); Teal (W); an internationally important assemblage of birds (W)<br>**Lower Derwent Valley Ramsar**<br>Criterion 1: One of the most important examples of traditionally managed species-rich alluvial flood meadow in the UK.<br>Criterion 2: Rich assemblage of wetland invertebrates including 16 species of dragonfly and damselfly; 15 British Red Data Book species; and (uniquely in the UK) the leafhopper Cicadula ornata.<br>Criterion 4: Important site for passage migrants in spring, notably Ruff and Whimbrel.<br>Criterion 5: Assemblages of international importance: 31942 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003) in winter.<br>Criterion 6: Species/populations occurring at levels of international importance: Wigeon, Teal. | The floodplain of the lower reaches of the River Derwent SAC is dominated by the Lower Derwent Valley SAC, Lower Derwent Valley SPA and Lower Derwent Valley Ramsar. The Lower Derwent Valley SAC supports the largest area of high-quality traditionally managed lowland hay meadows (mainly corresponding to MG4 *Alopecurus pratensis – Sanguisorba officinalis* grassland) in the UK. Ecological variation is well-developed, particularly in the transitions between this grassland type and other types of wet and dry grassland, swamp and fen vegetation, and there is an area of damp alder woodland at Thornton Ellers adjoining marsh and tall fen communities.<br>The traditionally managed lowland hay meadows of the Lower Derwent Valley SAC, the River Derwent SAC, and the associated wetland habitats (including fens, swamps, valley mires, wet woodland and other freshwater habitats lying adjacent to the River Derwent, Pocklington Canal and The Beck) support a diverse range of waterbirds throughout the year, and these sites are partly or entirely co-incident with the Lower Derwent Valley SPA. In winter the site supports large numbers of swans, ducks and waders, as well as Bittern, whilst in summer the floodplain supports breeding waders, Corncrake and Spotted Crake. The character and species composition of the grassland, fen and swamp communities is largely controlled by topography, differences in the extent of winter flooding and by the type of agricultural management.<br>The Ramsar site is coincident with the Lower Derwent Valley SAC (i.e. it does not include the River Derwent itself), and most of the interest features are effectively the same as those of the SPA and SAC (with the exception of the invertebrate interest).<br>The designated sites of the Derwent system have been historically affected by water level issues (due to abstraction and control regimes) and water quality. The main threats to the Lower Derwent Valley SAC are associated with management and water levels / flooding: although most MG4 lowland hay meadow communities are associated with floodplains, they are not inundation communities and excess water associated with high water tables is considered a greater threat to the community than soil dryness (Wheeler *et al.* 2004). Water levels in general are an issue in the Valley and this is being addressed by a collaborative project between Natural England, the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water. Proposals are being developed to change river flows to improve the operation of Barmby Barrage on the River Derwent, which are aimed at improving drainage from the SACs during medium to high flows and improving passage for lamprey species. Recreational disturbance is also identified as a potential issue for the SPA due to increased house building adjacent to the site. There is an extant planning permission for the extraction of coal by deep mining, which has been reviewed by the Minerals Planning Authority and an appropriate compensation/mitigation package has been agreed by the MPA/English Nature and the holder of the permission.<br>Trials are in progress on East Cottingwith flood meadow to will help to inform any management changes required to protect the integrity of the lowland hay meadows.<br>The site will be sensitive to a range of issues although the main current concerns are water quantity (flooding); water level management: habitat management; water quality; and recreational pressure. |

| Site and interest features | Summary of current threats and potential vulnerabilities to outcomes of CYC Local Plan |
|---|---|
| **River Derwent SAC** | |
| Annex I Features:<br>Watercourses with *Ranunculus*-type vegetation<br>Annex II Features:<br>River Lamprey*; Sea lamprey; Bullhead; Otter | The River Derwent SAC is primarily designated for its population of River Lamprey: only the lower reaches between Ryemouth and the confluence with the Ouse are designated, reflecting the spawning distribution of this species in the Derwent system. However, the designated section supports diverse communities of aquatic flora and fauna also, including flora uncommon in Northern Britain and a diverse fish community. River and sea lamprey populations spawn in the lower reaches. The main issues affecting the SAC have been identified as excess fine sedimentation, physical modification, lack of shading and shelter in the river and its bankside and barriers to migratory fish passage. The Environment Agency and Natural England are developing a restoration plan to help the River Derwent SSSI move towards favourable condition. This includes a range of actions including fencing off sections trampled by stock to allow vegetation growth, investigation into the potential for fish passes and improving riparian and marginal habitats by increasing tree cover. A ramp is being installed at Barmby Barrage to help lamprey movement into the river. |
| **Kirk Deighton SAC** | |
| Annex II Features:<br>Great crested newt | Small site with ponds within heavily grazed pasture; water levels in main pond fluctuate considerably but support a large population of great crested newts. Site condition is principally affected by management of the pond and surrounding habitats; ELS/HLS agreement is now in place to fence main breeding pond and smaller pond within SSSI to improve breeding conditions. Site will be sensitive to: management; changes in water quality; local development affecting habitats. |
| **Skipwith Common SAC** | |
| Annex I Features:<br>Wet heaths*; Dry heaths* | Approximately 300ha site supporting extensive areas of wet and dry heath (M16 *Erica tetralix – Sphagnum compactum* wet heath and H9 *Calluna vulgaris – Deschampsia flexuosa* heath), with transition habitats including open water, fen and swamp. The site has had historical management issues resulting in scrub encroachment, although a management agreement is now in place. The site has open public access, although this access is not currently identified as affecting the interest features and waymarked trails are used to manage this. |
| **Strensall Common SAC** | |
| Annex I Features:<br>Wet heaths*; Dry heaths* | Approximately 570ha site supporting extensive areas of wet and dry heath (M16 *Erica tetralix – Sphagnum compactum* wet heath and H9 *Calluna vulgaris – Deschampsia flexuosa* dry heath), with complex mosaics of wet heath and transition habitats. The site is used for training by the MOD, but this is not thought to compromise the interest of the site. The main issue currently affecting habitats is a lack of management and hence scrub encroachment; this is being controlled through management agreements with the MOD and their tenants. Public access via PRoWs and Permissive Paths is permitted when training is not taking place, and is subject to an integrated management plan agreed between the MOD, NE and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust; the absence of open access limits the exposure of the interest features to effects associated with visitor pressure. |

## Conservation objectives

The conservation objectives for all of the sites have been revised by NE in recent years to increase consistency of assessment and reporting. As a result, the overarching conservation objectives for all sites are effectively the same:

For SACs:

- *With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and/or species for which the site has been designated (the 'Qualifying Features'...), and subject to natural change; 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* [as applicable to each site];
  - *the extent and distribution of the qualifying natural habitats;*
  - *the extent and distribution of the habitats of qualifying species;*
  - *the structure and function (including typical species) of the qualifying natural habitats;*
  - *the structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species;*
  - *the supporting processes on which the qualifying natural habitats rely;*
  - *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.*

For SPAs:

- *With regard to the SPA and the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified (the 'Qualifying Features'...), and subject to natural change; ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring:*
  - *the extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features*
  - *the structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features*
  - *the supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely*
  - *the population of each of the qualifying features, and,*
  - *the distribution of the qualifying features within the site.*

The conservation objectives for Ramsar sites are taken to be the same as for the corresponding SACs / SPAs (where sites overlap). The conservation objectives are considered when assessing the potential effects of plans and policies on the sites; information on the sensitivities of the interest features also informs the assessment.

## 3.3 Outcomes of Local Plan and Impact Pathways

Analysis of the available European site data indicates that the most common reasons for 'unfavourable' condition are secondary effects from agriculture and inappropriate management of some form. The CYC Local Plan will have little direct influence on these factors, and therefore the assessment focuses on the main environmental aspects that the Local Plan is likely to influence.

The main pathways by which the

- allocations for development which have indirect effects on European sites;
- policies which direct dev

The main environmental aspects, and the pathways by which the Local Plan could affect European sites, are summarised in the following sections together with available baseline data on those aspects to inform the assessment. European sites that are particularly vulnerable to a particular aspect (i.e. sensitive and likely to be exposed due to the Local Plan) are identified.

### 3.3.1 Recreational pressure

Many European sites will be vulnerable to some degree of impact as a result of recreational pressure, although the effects of recreational pressure are complex and very much dependent on the specific conditions and interest features at each site: for example, some bird species are more sensitive to disturbance associated with walkers or dogs than others; some habitats will be more sensitive to trampling or mechanical disturbance than others; some sites will be more accessible than others.

The most typical mechanisms for recreational effects are through direct damage of habitats, or disturbance of certain species. Damage will most often be accidental or incidental, but many sites are particularly sensitive to soil or habitat erosion caused by recreational activities and require careful management of recreational activities to minimise any effects – for example, through provision and maintenance of 'hard paths' (boardwalks, stone slabs etc.) and signage to minimise soil erosion along path margins.

Disturbance[11] of species due to recreational activities can also be a significant problem at some sites, although the relationship (again) is highly variable and depends on a range of factors including the species, the time of year and the scale, type and predictability of disturbance. Most studies have focused on the effects on birds, either when breeding or foraging. For example, a long term monitoring project by Natural England on the Thanet Coast has found that turnstones (a shoreline-feeding waterbird) are particularly vulnerable to disturbance from dogs, which interrupts their feeding behaviour and can prevent them from gaining sufficient body fat for overwintering or migration. Similarly, Finney et al. (2005) noted that re-surfacing the Pennine Way significantly reduced the impact of recreational disturbance on the distribution of breeding golden plover, by encouraging walkers to remain on the footpath. In contrast, some species are largely unaffected by human disturbance (or even benefit from it) which can

[11] In this case, literal disturbance by human activity; in ecology, 'disturbance' is a more complex concept used in models of ecosystem equilibrium.

result in local or regional changes in the composition of the fauna. The scale, type and predictability of disturbance is also important; species can become habituated to some disturbance (e.g. noise) particularly if it is regular or continuous. Unpredictable disturbance is most problematic.

Furthermore, most recreational activities with the potential to affect European sites are 'casual' and pursued opportunistically (e.g. walking, walking dogs, riding) rather than structured (e.g. organised group activities or trips to specific discrete attractions), which ensures that it can be harder to quantify or predict either the uptake or the impacts of these activities on European sites and (ultimately) harder to control or manage. It also means it is difficult to explore in detail all of the potential aspects of visitor pressure at the strategic level. However it is possible for plans and strategies to influence recreational use of European sites through the planning process, for example by increasing the amount of green-space required within or near developments if potentially vulnerable European sites are located nearby.

With regard to sites within the study area, all will be vulnerable to recreational pressure to some extent, although the most vulnerable to the outcomes of the CYC plan will be **Strensall Common SAC and the Lower Derwent Valley SPA / Ramsar**. It should be noted that there are no detailed data available on visitor numbers at these sites but various studies from other similar sites demonstrate a wide range of typical travel distances which can be used as a proxy.

Several studies have used site-specific questionnaire surveys to identify visitor catchments and characterise the typical use of a site. The results of these can then be used to identify 'buffer zones' within which new development would be considered likely to have significant effects on a site, unless appropriately mitigated. Although distance and journey time are major factors influencing recreational use of a site, generic distances for recreational buffer zones are not generally appropriate; there is, however, limited consistency between studies when it comes to rationalising buffer zone size, largely due to the site-specific variables that are factored in to the assessment.

Natural England, as part of its input to the County Durham Plan, has noted that it adopts a '75% rule' to determine significance, whereby recreational buffers are based on the distance within which 75% of visits are made to the site (i.e. taking account of frequency of visits as well as distance travelled); for the Durham Coast SAC, Northumbria Coast SPA / Ramsar and Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA / Ramsar this distance was 6km.

Other studies have identified or used those distances within which approximately 70 - 75% of visitors live when considering recreational buffer areas. Some examples are summarised in Table 3.3, although note that these are necessarily selective as not all studies considering visitor pressure have necessarily reported percentiles; however, they provide some good examples for European sites that have similarities to sites near York, including the presence of nearby urban areas.

**Table 3.3 Travel distances for ~70 – 75% of visitors recorded by previous studies**

| Study | European sites and key issues | Summary |
|---|---|---|
| Solent Disturbance and Mitigation Project<br>(Fearnley et al. 2010) | Solent Maritime SAC<br>Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA<br>Pagham Harbour SPA<br>Chichester and Langstone Harbours Ramsar<br>Pagham Harbour Ramsar<br>(Coastal sites; major urban areas; disturbance of birds) | Half of all visitors arriving on foot lived within 0.7km; half of all visitors arriving by car lived more than 4km away.<br>Average travel distance (excluding holidaymakers): 5.04km. 75% of visits from postcodes within 5.6km. |
| Thames Basin Heaths<br>(Liley et al. 2005) | Thames Basin Heaths SPA<br>(Heathland sites; urban areas; disturbance of birds) | 70% of visitors travel 5km or less to access sites |
| Whitehall and Bordon Ecotown<br>(EPR 2012) | Wealden Heaths SPA<br>Shortheath Common SAC<br>Woolmer Forest SAC<br>Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham SAC<br>Thursley and Ockley Bogs Ramsar site<br>(Heathland and woodland sites; urban areas; disturbance of birds; damage to heath) | Average travel distance: 6.7km.<br>70% of visitors travel 4.3km or less to access sites.<br>70% distance value for following component sites:<br>- Frensham Common: 10.7km<br>- Kingsley Common: 7.4km<br>- Bramshott Common: 4.5km<br>- Woolmer Forest: 3.4km<br>- Longmoor Enclosure: 3.2km<br>- Ludshott Common: 2.9km<br>- Broxhead Common: 2.1km<br>- Hogmoor Inclosure: 0.9km<br>- Shortheath Common: 0.6km<br>- Bordon Enclosure: 0.5km |
| Ashdown Forest<br>(UE / University of Brighton 2009) | Ashdown Forest SPA<br>(Heathland sites; urban areas; disturbance of birds) | 76% of visitors travel 5km or less to access sites |

For most sites, the distance that 70 – 75% of visitors travel is typically less than 6 – 7km. Given that most studies have demonstrated that reported visit frequency increases with proximity to a site, it is reasonable to assume that the '75% distance' for visits to most sites is likely to be less than this. However, it is important to recognise that visitor behaviour is complex and generalised statistics can hide important variations in the use of a site (for example, the 75% distance is likely to vary depending on the access point surveyed; this may be particularly relevant for larger sites such as the Lower Derwent SPA). Any derived buffers must be applied cautiously as the precise distance will depend on the site: a remote upland European site favoured by recreational walkers will probably have a substantially larger 75% distance for visits than, say, the Solent Maritime SAC that is adjacent to Southampton.

Secondary buffers are also sometime identified to reflect the variation in visitor behaviour, particularly for those that live in close proximity to a site; for example, the studies supporting the County Durham Plan adopted a 400m buffer also, since 59% of respondents living within the 0 – 400 metre buffer were high risk users, i.e. visit the coast

between one and three times a day. This HRA has identifies all allocations within 6km of a site for possible recreational impacts.

### 3.3.2 Urbanisation

Urbanisation is generally used as a collective term covering a suite of often disparate risks and impacts that occur due to increases in human populations near protected sites. Typically, this would include aspects such as fly-tipping or vandalism, although the effects of these aspects again depend on the interest features of the sites: for example, predation of some species by cats is known to be sizeable[12] and can be potentially significant for some European sites. Recreational pressure is arguably one type of effect associated with urbanisation, although is usually considered separately as it is less closely associated with proximity: as a broad guide urbanisation effects are more likely when developments (etc) are within 1 km of a designated site, whereas people will typically travel further for recreation. Where sensitive sites are involved development buffers of around 500m are typically used to minimise the effects of urbanisation: for example, the Natural England has identified a 400m zone around the Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA within which housing development should not be located due to the potential effects of urbanisation (particularly the risk of chick predation by cats, which cannot be mitigated). None of the condition assessments for European sites within the study area identify this as a particular issue and in reality there is sufficient distance between most sites and the nearest settlement boundaries for this to not be a significant threat, with the notable exception of Strensall Common SAC and Strensall Village. The Local Plan can minimise the effects of this through appropriate allocation.

### 3.3.3 Atmospheric Pollution

A number of pollutants have a negative effect on air quality; however, the most significant and relevant to habitats and species (particularly plant species) are the primary pollutants sulphur dioxide ($SO_2$, typically from combustion of coal and heavy fuel oils), nitrogen oxides (NOx, mainly from vehicles) and ammonia ($NH_3$, typically from agriculture), which (together with secondary aerosol pollutants[13]) are deposited as wet or dry deposits. These pollutants affect habitats and species mainly through acidification and eutrophication. Acidification increases the acidity of soils, which can directly affect some organisms but which also promotes leaching of some important base chemicals (e.g. calcium), and mobilisation and uptake by plants of toxins (especially metals such as aluminium). Air pollution contributes to eutrophication within ecosystems by increasing the amounts of available nitrogen (N)[14]. This is a particular problem in low-nutrient habitats, where available nitrogen is frequently the limiting factor on plant growth, and results in slow-growing low-nutrient specialists being out-competed by faster growing species that can take advantage of the increased amounts of available N.

[12] Woods, M. *et al*. 2003. Predation of wildlife by domestic cats *Felis catus* in Great Britain. *Mammal Review* **33 (2)**: 174-188

[13] Secondary pollutants are not emitted, but are formed following further reactions in the atmosphere; for example, $SO_2$ and $NO_x$ are oxidised to form $SO_4^{2-}$ and $NO_2^-$ compounds; ozone is formed by the reaction of other pollutants (e.g. NOx or volatile organic compounds) with UV light; ammonia reacts with $SO_4^{2-}$ and $NO_2^-$ to form ammonium ($NH_4^+$).

[14] Nitrogen that is in a form that can be absorbed and used by plants.

**Table 3.4 Main Air Pollutants, Pathways and Effects**

| Pollutant | Pathway | Summary of Effects |
|---|---|---|
| Ammonia ($NH_3$) | Primarily from agriculture through decomposition of animal manure and slurry. | Emissions contribute to acidification and (particularly) eutrophication. |
| Nitrogen oxides ($NO_x$) | All combustion processes produce oxides of nitrogen ($NO_x$) in air; road transport is the main source, followed by the electricity supply industry. $NO_x$ emissions have decreased with increased fuel efficiency and catalytic converters | Emissions contribute to acidification and eutrophication; contribute to formation of secondary particles and ground level ozone. |
| Sulphur Dioxide ($SO_2$) | Sulphur dioxide is released when fuels containing sulphur are burnt, especially coal and heavy fuel oils. The energy industry was the primary source, although this has decreased as use of coal has decreased. | $SO_2$ dissolves readily in water to form an acid which contributes to acidification of soils and water. |

Overall in the UK, there has been a significant decline in SOx and NOx emissions in recent years and a consequent decrease in acid deposition; in England, $SO_x$ and $NO_x$ have declined by 90% and 65% respectively since 1990 (NAEI 2014), the result of a switch from coal to gas and nuclear for energy generation, and increased efficiency and emissions standards for cars. These emissions are generally expected to decline further in future years, although use of coal may begin to increase in the power generation sector in the long-term. In contrast, emissions of ammonia have remained largely unchanged: they have declined by 20% in England since 1990 (NAEI 2014), but have remained largely stable since 2008 (1% decrease from 2008 – 2011; 2.8% increase from 2011 – 2012).

The effect of $SO_x$ and $NO_x$ decreases on ecosystems has been marked, particularly in respect of acidification; the key contributor to acidification is now thought to be deposited nitrogen, for which the major source (ammonia emissions) has not decreased significantly. Indeed, although it is estimated that the proportion of UK semi-natural ecosystems that exceed the critical loads for eutrophication will decline from 40% to 32% by 2010 (NEGTAP 2001), eutrophication from N-deposition (again, primarily from ammonia) is now considered the most significant air quality issue for many habitats.

The UK Air Pollution Information System (APIS) has been interrogated to identify those European sites and features where critical loads[15] for nutrient-N deposition and acidification are met or exceeded. APIS provides a comprehensive source of information on air pollution and the effects on habitats and species and although there are limitations to the data (see SNIFFER 2007), particularly related to the scale at which data can be modelled, this provides the best basis for assessing the impacts of air emissions in the absence of site-by-site monitoring data. Table 3.5 summarises the APIS data for European sites with features that are sensitive to air quality in the study area. All other sites are either not sensitive to air emissions, or do not have the CL exceeded. It should be noted that CL values are generally provided for habitats rather than species, and that watercourses are not included as eutrophication of most watercourses due to air emissions is negligible compared to run-off from agricultural land.

[15] 'Critical Loads' are the threshold level for the deposition of a pollutant above which harmful indirect effects can be shown on a habitat or species, according to current knowledge (APIS 2009).

**Table 3.5 Summary of APIS Interrogation**

| Site | Air quality sensitive features | Over CL? | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Acid | N |
| Humber Estuary SAC | Estuaries | n/a | ++ |
| | Coastal lagoons | n/a | ++ |
| | *Salicornia* and other annuals | n/a | ++ |
| | Atlantic salt meadows | n/a | ++ |
| | Embryonic shifting dunes | n/a | ++ |
| | Shifting dunes with marram (white dunes) | n/a | ++ |
| | Grey dunes | + | ++ |
| | Dunes with sea-buckthorn | + | n/a |
| Lower Derwent Valley SAC | Lowland hay meadows | n/a | ++ |
| Strensall Common SAC | Wet heaths | + | ++ |
| | Dry heaths | + | ++ |
| Skipworth Common SAC | Wet heaths | ++ | ++ |
| | Dry heaths | ++ | ++ |

CL Critical load

Acid Acidification

N Eutrophication

n/a Critical load not set for feature / feature not sensitive

\+ minimum CL for that habitat is exceeded

++ maximum CL for that habitat is exceeded

The proposals within the plan may indirectly contribute to local air pollution and wider diffuse pollution, but quantifying these effects is difficult. In practice, the principal source of air pollution associated with the plan will be associated with changing patterns of vehicle use due to the promotion of new development and housing sites (since the plan does not provide for any new significant point-sources). The Department of Transport's *Transport Analysis Guidance*[16] states that "*beyond 200m, the contribution of vehicle emissions from the roadside to local pollution levels is not significant*" and therefore this distance is used to determine the potential significance of any local effects associated with the plan. With regard to the sites in Table 3.5, only Lower Derwent Valley SAC and Strensall Common SAC are within the CYC boundary, or within 200m of it. Strensall Common has no A- or B-roads within 200m of the boundary; within the CYC area, Lower Derwent Valley SAC has one B-road within 200m (B1228).

More broadly, the plan proposals may indirectly contribute to wider diffuse pollution within and beyond the CYC boundary, in combination with other developments, plans and programmes. There is limited guidance on the assessment of diffuse pollution, although NE have previously indicated to Runnymede Borough Council that the

[16] http://www.dft.gov.uk/webtag/documents/expert/unit3.3.3.php#013; accessed 15/06/14

HRA of its local plan "*can only be concerned with locally emitted and short range locally acting pollutants*" as wider diffuse pollution is beyond the control or remit of the authority. This is arguably correct, since trans-boundary air pollution can only be realistically addressed by legislation or higher-tier plans, policies or strategies. As a result, any assessment must focus on the development of suitable mitigating policy that will minimise the contribution of plan-supported development to overall diffuse pollution.

### 3.3.4 Water resources and flow regulation

The exploitation and management of water resources is connected to a range of activities, most of which are not directly controlled or influenced by the Local Plan; for example, agriculture, flood defence, recreation, power generation, fisheries and nature conservation. Much of the water supply to water-resource sensitive European sites is therefore managed through specific consenting regimes that are independent of the Local Plan.

It is clear that development promoted or supported by the Local Plan is likely to increase demand for water, which could indirectly affect some European sites. When assessing the potential effects of increased water demand it is important to understand how the public water supply (PWS) system operates and how it is regulated with other water-resource consents. Yorkshire Water (YW) is responsible for supply to the York area, which is within its Grid Surface Water Zone (Grid SWZ). The Grid SWZ is a large conjunctive use zone which makes up over 99% of the YW supply area; water resources in the zone are largely integrated, which (theoretically) allows abstraction volumes to be shared between different areas according to demand; this improves the resilience of the system but also means that future development within York cannot necessarily be connected to a specific source. However, Yorkshire Water currently abstract water from the Derwent (above Sutton Lock near Elvington and Loftsome Bridge) and the Ouse to serve Leeds, Hull, Wakefield, Sheffield and York.

Under the Water Act 2003 all water companies must publish a Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) that sets out their strategy for managing water resources across their supply area over the next 25 years. WRMPs use calculations of Deployable Output (DO) to establish supply/demand balances; this enables them to identify those Water Resource Zones (WRZs) with potential supply deficits over the planning period[17]. The calculations account for any reductions in abstraction that are required to safeguard European sites[18] and so the WRMP process (with

[17] Forecasts are completed in accordance with the Water Resources Planning Guidelines (published by the Environment Agency) and take into account (inter alia) economic factors (economic growth, metering, pricing), behavioural factors (patterns of water use), demographic factors (population growth, inward and outward migration, changes in occupancy rate), planning policy (LPA land use plans), company policies (e.g. on leakage control and water efficiency measures) and environmental factors, including climate change. The WRMP therefore accounts for these demand forecasts based on historical trends, an established growth forecast model and through review of local and regional planning documents.

[18] For example, sustainability reductions required by the Review of Consents (RoC) or the Environment Agency's Restoring Sustainable Abstractions (RSA) programme. It should be noted that, under the WRMP process, the RoC changes (and non- changes to licences) are considered to be valid over the planning period. This means that the WRMP (and its underlying assumptions regarding the availability of water and sustainability of existing consents) is compliant with the RoC and so the WRMP can only affect European sites through any new resource and production-side options it advocates to resolves deficits, and not through the existing permissions regime.

other regulations) helps ensure (as far as is achievable) that future changes in demand will not affect any European sites[19].

YW have accounted for the growth predicted by CYC and other LPAs in its forecasting, and have identified a potential supply-demand deficit in the Grid SWZ from 2018/19 onwards. The forecast deficit in 2018/19 is 2.67Ml/d, increasing to 108.65Ml/d by 2039/40, which is largely due to the modelled effects of climate change. YW will meet this predicted deficit through a combination of leakage reduction; water efficiency; and the development of new and existing sources (three groundwater sources and a raw water transfer from the River Ouse). The WRMP has been subject to HRA, which has concluded that the preferred options will have no significant effect on any European sites, including those water-resource sensitive sites within the CYC Local Plan study area (including the **Humber Estuary suite of sites; the Lower Derwent Valley suite of sites; and the River Derwent SAC**). The WRMP provides the best estimate of future water resource demand, and therefore it is reasonable to assume that the growth predicted within the CYC plan can be accommodated without significant effects on any European sites due to PWS abstractions. Furthermore, since the WRMP explicitly accounts for the growth predicted by CYC and other LPAs, 'in combination' effects between the Local Plan and the WRMP are unlikely to occur. Having said that, the Local Plan can obviously help manage demand and promote water efficiency measures through its policy controls.

### 3.3.5 Water quality

The Humber River Basin Management Plan (EA 2009) predicts that by 2015 most rivers will be of good chemical quality with the exception of the River Ouse from Naburn to Sillingfleet. Furthermore, the chemical status of groundwater aquifers is 'good' in the west and 'poor' in the east of the NCA with the groundwater status in the Vale of York (in the Yorkshire Ouse, Nidd and Swale' priority catchment) identified as suffering from groundwater failures in 2001-2005 at certain locations due to a need for action on pesticide.

[19] Calculations of DO include for Target Headroom (precautionary 'over-capacity' in available water) to buffer any unforeseen variation in predicted future demand; the WRMP is also reviewed on a five-yearly cycle to ensure it is performing as expected and to account for any variations between predicted and actual demand.

Table 3.6 summarises the percentage of the rivers in each catchment relevant to York that meet good ecological, biological or chemical status.

**Table 3.6 Water quality in key catchments**

| River Basin | % at good ecological status or potential | | % assessed at good or high biological status | | % at good chemical status | | % at good status overall | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2009 | 2015 target | 2009 | 2015 target | 2009 | 2015 target | 2009 | 2015 target |
| Yorkshire Derwent | 11 | 14 | 5 | 11 | 33 | 33 | 11 | 14 |
| Swale, Use, Nidd & Upper Ouse | 28 | 28 | 48 | 48 | 67 | 100 | 28 | 28 |
| Wharfe and Lower Ouse | 14 | 16 | 32 | 35 | 50 | 50 | 14 | 16 |

The Humber River Basin Management Plan notes the following key issues for each of these catchments:

**Table 3.7 Key issues in river basins relevant to the CYC Local Plan**

| River Basin | Key issues from Humber River Basin Management Plan |
|---|---|
| Yorkshire Derwent | Physical modification due to flood protection and land drainage are key reasons for failures in the catchment. Point source discharges for water industry sewage works and trade also play a key role in determining the status of rivers and lakes in this catchment. |
| Swale, Use, Nidd & Upper Ouse | Point source discharges from industry sewage works, water industry storm discharges and diffuse pollution from agriculture are key reasons for failures in the catchment. Physical modifications due to water storage and supply, urbanisation and land drainage also play a key role in determining the status of rivers and lakes in this catchment. |
| Wharfe and Lower Ouse | Diffuse pollution from agriculture and point source discharges from water industry sewage works are key reasons for failures in the catchment. Physical modification for water storage and supply and flood protection along with industry point source discharges also play a key role in determining the status of rivers and lakes in this catchment. |

Most waterbodies and watercourses in Yorkshire are affected to some extent by point and diffuse sources of pollutants, notably nitrates and phosphates. Point sources are usually discrete discharge points, such as wastewater treatment works (WTW) outfalls, which are generally managed through specific consenting regimes that are independent of the Local Plan; in contrast, diffuse pollution is derived from a range of sources (e.g. agricultural run-off; road run-off) that cannot always be easily traced or quantified. Development promoted or supported by the Local Plan is likely to increase demand on wastewater treatment works, and potentially increase run-off which could indirectly affect some European sites. However, it should be noted that this is only likely to be an 'in combination' quantum of development effect: the CYC plan does not promote any developments that are individually likely to result in significant effects and the planning process should allow for timely delivery of additional treatment capacity.

Yorkshire Water has provided consultation guidance to CYC on the capacity of its treatment works, to help identify where additional capacity and investment may be required ahead of development; this is summarised in

Table 3.8:

**Table 3.8 Wastewater treatment works (WWTW) capacity over plan period based on Yorkshire Water assessment**

| WWTW | Downstream European sites | YW capacity update 2013 |
|---|---|---|
| Haxby Walbutts | Humber Estuary sites | There is capacity at Haxby Walbutts for the level of growth proposed over the plan period |
| Elvington | River Derwent SAC<br>Lower Derwent Valley sites<br>Humber Estuary sites | There is no capacity at Elvington and the level of growth in the catchment will trigger a requirement for investment in the works. Sites allocated in this catchment will have to be phased to coordinate with any investments required at the WwTW |
| Naburn | Humber Estuary sites | There is significant capacity at Naburn for the level of proposed growth however investment will be needed in the later stages of the plan period to accommodate the numbers proposed over the whole plan period. Phasing will be required to ensure sites are delivered alongside necessary upgrades to the WwTW. This is particularly important with the strategic site at Whinthorpe New Settlement (ST15) |
| Rawcliffe York | Humber Estuary sites | There is limited capacity at Rawcliffe and the level of growth over the plan period (medium to long term) in the catchment will trigger a requirement for investment in the works. Sites allocated in this catchment will have to be phased to coordinate with any investements required at the WwTW. This is particularly important with the strategic site at Land North of Clifton Moor (ST14) |
| Rufforth | Humber Estuary sites | There is capacity at Rufforth for the level of growth proposed over the plan period |
| Wheldrake | River Derwent SAC<br>Lower Derwent Valley sites<br>Humber Estuary sites | There is capacity at Wheldrake for the level of growth proposed over the plan period |

Run-off from impermeable surfaces can have considerable effects on waterbodies and watercourses, and is a notable issue in both urban and rural areas. Development has traditionally sought to capture and divert rain and run-off to the nearest watercourse or treatment facility as quickly as possible, and extensive drainage networks have been developed to facilitate this. However, as developed areas have increased so the total volumes and flow rates of run-off have increased also. This has two principal effects: firstly, impermeable surfaces provide very little resistance to the mobilisation and transport of pollutants within run-off; and secondly, flow rates and volumes often exceed the capacity of the receiving drains or watercourses, causing localised flooding or the operation of combined sewer overflows (CSOs)[20]. The effect of run-off from developed areas can mitigated or reduced by the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and by increasing the area of permeable surfaces (both natural and artificial) within developed areas. These measures offer effective attenuation by reducing the volumes of surface

[20] All sewerage pipes have a certain capacity, determined by the size of the pipe and the receiving WTW. At times of high rainfall this capacity can be exceeded, with the risk of uncontrolled bursts. CSOs provide a mechanism to prevent this, by allowing untreated sewerage to mix with surface water run-off when certain volumes are exceeded. This is then discharged to the nearest watercourse.

run-off. They also increase the retention of pollutants and, in the case of some SuDS, can allow for treatment of pollutants.

With regard to European sites, those most vulnerable to water quality impacts will be the Humber Estuary sites (the ultimate downstream receptor); the River Derwent SAC and the Lower Derwent Valley sites will also be vulnerable to development within the catchment (particularly as Elvington WWTW is likely to require uprating) although it is worth noting that the relative contribution of the CYC area to the Derwent catchment is small and the levels of development proposed here are limited. Since the water quality effects of the plan are ultimately either controlled by existing consents regimes (which must undergo HRA) or have diffuse 'in combination' effects that are difficult to quantify any assessment must focus on the development of suitable mitigating policy that will minimise the impacts of plan-supported development on water quality.

### 3.3.6 Flooding and water level management

The implementation of the European Floods Directive (Directive 2007/60/EC) in England and Wales is being co-ordinated with the Water Framework Directive. Catchment Flood Management Plans (prepared by the Environment Agency) and Shoreline Management Plans (prepared by coastal Local Authorities and the Environment Agency) set out long term policies for flood risk management. The delivery of the policies from these long term plans will help to achieve the objectives of this and the River Basin Management Plans.

The much of the CYC area is high flood risk and development supported by the Local Plan could exacerbate this. As noted, run-off from impermeable surfaces can have considerable effects on waterbodies and watercourses, meaning that flow rates and volumes often exceed the capacity of the receiving drains or watercourses, causing localised flooding and contributing to regional flood events. The effect of run-off from developed areas can mitigated or reduced by the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and by increasing the area of permeable surfaces (both natural and artificial) within developed areas.

With regard to European sites, all sites that are not conditioned to flood events will be sensitive to increased flooding; however, most European sites within the study area are outside of the relevant flood zones or unlikely to be sensitive to potential changes in flooding associated with the Local Plan. The main exception to this is the **Lower Derwent Valley sites**, where some flooding is critical to the condition of the interest features but excessive or unseasonal flood events can result in serious degradation. Water levels in general are an issue for these sites and this is being addressed by a collaborative project between Natural England, the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water. Proposals are being developed to change river flows to improve the operation of Barmby Barrage on the River Derwent, which are aimed at improving drainage from the SAC during medium to high flows. The Local Plan should therefore avoid contributing to the existing flooding / water level management issues at this site.

### 3.3.7 Effects on critical habitats outside of European sites

The provisions of the Habitats Regulations ensure that 'direct' (encroachment) effects on European sites as a result of land use change (i.e. the partial or complete destruction of a European site) are extremely unlikely under normal circumstances, and this will not occur as a result of the CYC Local Plan. However, many European interest

features (particularly animal species) may use or be reliant on non-designated habitats outside of a European site during their life-cycle. Developments some way from a European site can therefore have an effect if its interest features are reliant on the habitats being affected by the development.

With regard to the European sites within the study area this is only potentially an issue for the **Lower Derwent Valley SPA** (bird species); the **River Derwent SAC** (river lamprey); the **Humber Estuary SAC** (river lamprey); and **Kirk Deighton SAC** (great crested newts).

# 4. Screening

## 4.1 European sites

All European sites within 15km of the CYC boundary have been included in the scope of the HRA (see Section 3.1). Often, however, sites within a study area can be excluded from further assessment at an early stage ('screened out') because the plan or project will self-evidently have either 'no effect' on these sites, or 'no significant effect' (i.e. the interest features are not sensitive to likely effects of plan or project; or are not likely to be exposed to those effects due to the absence of any reasonable impact pathways). The following sections provide a brief summary of the screening of the European sites and their interest features based on the baseline data summarised above. It should be noted that this aspect of the screening process is a low bar, with sites, aspects or features only 'screened out' if they will self-evidently be unaffected by the CYC plan (i.e. it is aiming to identify those aspects that will clearly have 'no effect' or 'no significant effect' (alone or in combination) due to an absence of impact pathways). It does not necessarily imply a conclusion of 'significant effects' for those sites that are 'screened in' since controls within the plan (i.e. policy measures) will also operate to minimise these effects (these are considered in the next section); rather, it allows for the assessment of effects to focus on those issues that are potentially important.

### 4.1.1 Humber Estuary sites

The Humber estuary is over 30km downstream of the CYC boundary and is fed by a number of rivers including the Rivers Ouse, Trent and Hull. Key issues include coastal squeeze, impacts on the sediment budget, and geomorphological structure and function of the estuary (due to sea level rise, flood defence works, dredging, and the construction, operation and maintenance of ports, pipelines and other infrastructure), changes in water quality and flows, pressure from additional built development, and damage and disturbance arising from access, recreation and other activities. However, effects on the SAC, SPA and Ramsar are only likely via impacts on the River Ouse or River Derwent.

**Table 4.1 Summary of site screening based on impact pathways**

| Aspect | Screening summary | Consider further? |
|---|---|---|
| Recreational pressure | Site over 20km from nearest CYC allocation, and further from key areas likely to be vulnerable to visitor pressure. People from York will visit the estuary but the development of York is unlikely to result in a measurable increase in recreational pressure on the site, alone or in combination. | No |
| Urbanisation | No CYC development proposals within 500m of the site, therefore CYC plan wil have no effect via this pathwa. | No |
| Atmospheric pollution | Some features vulnerable to diffuse atmospheric pollution and eutrophication, although the CYC plan will have no meanignful influence on use of roads within 200m ofthe site. Effects on air quality at this site as a result of the CYC plan will not be significant and are not considered futher. | No |
| Water resources | Several interest features are vulnerable to water resource permissions and growth within the CYC area is likely to increase water demands. These are likely to be manageable, based on the YW plan but this aspect is considered further. | Yes (in combination) |
| Water quality | Several interest features are vulnerable to water quality growth within the CYC area is likely to put pressure on water quality within the Ouse and the Derwent. These are likely to be manageable, based on data from YW plan but this aspect is considered further. | Yes (in combination) |
| Flooding / water management | Some features are sensitve to flooding and water levels changes although this is only likely to be an in combination issue for the CYC plan. | Yes (in combination) |
| Effects on mobile species | Site supports mobile species but these are not thought to be reliant on habitats within the CYC area that could be affected by the plan, with the exception of river lamprey using the River Derwent SAC; this aspect is considered with regard to that site. | No |

### 4.1.2 Kirk Deighton SAC

It is considered that **Kirk Deighton SAC** can be excluded from further assessment as there are no reasonable mechanisms by which the CYC Local Plan could affect this site. The site is approximately 11.5km from the CYC boundary and is designated for its population of great crested newts; this species tends to remain within ~250m or less[21] of their natal pond, and NE recognises that impacts on populations of this species are unlikely for development (etc.) over 500m from a pond[22]. The CYC plan will have no influence on development (etc.) near this SAC, and indirect effects (e.g. increased visitor pressure) will not operate due to the distances involved and the absence of public access. **The CYC Local Plan will therefore have 'no effects' on the Kirk Deighton SAC or its interest features, and so this site will not be considered further within the HRA**. Note, because there will be 'no effects' on this site (as opposed to 'no significant effects') the Local Plan cannot operate 'in combination' with other plans or proposals to affect this site.

[21] 250m is the upper limit over which great crested newts typically disperse (Langton T *et al.,* 2001. *Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook*. Froglife, Suffolk.

[22] English Nature (2001) The Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines. English Nature, Peterborough.

### 4.1.3 Lower Derwent sites

The designated sites of the Derwent system have been historically affected by water level issues (due to abstraction and control regimes) and water quality. The main threats to the Lower Derwent Valley SAC are associated with management and water levels / flooding. Water levels in general are an issue in the Valley and this is being addressed by a collaborative project between Natural England, the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water. Recreational disturbance has been identified as a potential issue for the SPA, and the watercourse is used for abstraction and wastewater discharges. However, the location of the site on the margins of the CYC area ensures that many potential impact pathways are limited.

**Table 4.2 Summary of site screening based on impact pathways**

| Aspect | Screening summary | Consider further? |
|---|---|---|
| Recreational pressure | Site is over 5km from the nearest CYC allocation, but the SPA interest features (in particular) are thought to be potnentially vulnerable to increased visitor pressure. | Yes |
| Urbanisation | No CYC development proposals are within 500m of the site and therefore CYC plan will have no effect via this pathway. | No |
| Atmospheric pollution | Some features vulnerable to diffuse atmospheric pollution and eutrophication, although eutrophication via agricultural run off and flood water is overwhelmingly more significant than air pollution. Within the CYC area, the Lower Derwent Valley SAC has one B-road within 200m (B1228) and therefore effects on air quality at this site as a result of the CYC plan will not be significant and are not considered futher. | No |
| Water resources | Several interest features are vulnerable to water resource permissions and growth within the CYC area is likely to increase water demands. These are likely to be manageable, based on the YW plan but this aspect is considered further. | Yes (in combination) |
| Water quality | Several interest features are vulnerable to water quality growth within the CYC area is likely to put pressure on water quality within the Ouse and the Derwent. These are likely to be manageable, based on data from YW plan but this aspect is considered further. | Yes (in combination) |
| Flooding / water management | Flooding and water management is the major issue for the Derwent Valley, and this is considered further. | Yes (in combination) |
| Effects on mobile species | Site supports mobile species which may be reliant on habitats within the CYC area that could be affected by the plan, notably Heslington Tillmire SSSI; this aspect is considered with regard to that site. | Yes |

### 4.1.4 River Derwent SAC

The River Derwent SAC is primarily designated for its population of River Lamprey, although the designated section supports diverse communities of aquatic flora and fauna also. The main issues affecting the SAC have been identified as excess fine sedimentation, physical modification, lack of shading and shelter in the river and its bankside and barriers to migratory fish passage. The Environment Agency and Natural England are developing a restoration plan.

**Table 4.3 Summary of site screening based on impact pathways**

| Aspect | Screening summary | Consider further? |
|---|---|---|
| Recreational pressure | Although closely linked to the Lower Derwent Valley recreational pressure is not thought to be affecting this site and the features are not especially vulnerable. | No |
| Urbanisation | No CYC development proposals within 500m of the site, therefore CYC plan are unlikely to have effects via this pathway. | No |
| Atmospheric pollution | Features are not considered vulnerable to eutrophication from air pollution as eutrophication via agricultural run off and flood water is overwhelmingly more significant. | No |
| Water resources | Several interest features are vulnerable to water resource permissions and growth within the CYC area is likely to increase water demands. These are likely to be manageable, based on the YW plan but this aspect is considered further. | Yes (in combination) |
| Water quality | Several interest features are vulnerable to water quality growth within the CYC area is likely to put pressure on water quality within the Ouse and the Derwent. These are likely to be manageable, based on data from YW plan but this aspect is considered further. | Yes (in combination) |
| Flooding / water management | Some features are sensitve to flooding and water levels changes although this is only likely to be an in combination issue for the CYC plan. | Yes (in combination) |
| Effects on mobile species | Site supports mobile species which may make use of tributaries within the CYC area and outside of the SAC. | Yes |

### 4.1.5 Skipwith Common SAC

Skipwith Common SAC is approximately 5km from the CYC boundary and over 6.5km from the nearest allocations. There are no physical linkages to the York area or reasonable impact pathways, and it is considered that potential effects on the site are only possible via recreational pressure, in combination with other plans. The assessment is summarised in Table 4.4

**Table 4.4 Summary of site screening based on impact pathways**

| Aspect | Screening summary | Consider further? |
|---|---|---|
| Recreational pressure | Site over 6.5km from nearest CYC allocation, but potentially vulnerable in combination with other plans e.g. Selby District Plan. | Yes (in combination) |
| Urbanisation | No development proposals within 500m of the site; will not be affected by urbanisation pressures. | No |
| Atmospheric pollution | Features vulnerable to diffuse atmospheric pollution and eutrophication; no major roads within 200m and outside CYC boundary and therefore effects on air quality at this site as a result of the CYC plan will not be significant and are not considered futher. | No |
| Water resources | Wet heath is sensitive to groundwater levels but these will not be affected by the CYC plan either directly or indirectly; there are no hydrological linkages with the PWS abstractions from the Ouse and Derwent and therefore the site will not be affected by the plan proposals. | No |
| Water quality | Site features are vulnerable to changes in local water quality / site drainage, although this will not be influenced or affected by plan proposals; the effects of water quality changes on this site as a result of the CYC plan are therefore not considered futher. | No |

| Aspect | Screening summary | Consider further? |
|---|---|---|
| Flooding / water management | Features are sensitve to flooding although the site is outside the floodplains of the Ouse and Derwent and therefore the local plan will have no effect on the frequency of flooding (etc.) at this site. Water management is a site-specific issue. | No |
| Effects on mobile species | Site does not support any mobile interest features. | No |

### 4.1.6 Strensall Common

Strensall Common SAC is a large site designated for its extensive areas of wet and dry heath, which is used for training by the MOD. The main issue currently affecting habitats is a lack of management and hence scrub encroachment; this is being controlled through management agreements with the MOD and their tenants. The site is within the CYC boundary and has a number of potential allocations within 5 – 10 km; however, the main risks associated with the plan are likely to be limited to recreational pressure.

**Table 4.5 Summary of site screening based on impact pathways**

| Aspect | Screening summary | Consider further? |
|---|---|---|
| Recreational pressure | There are around 11 allocations within approximately 5km of the site, which may increase visitor pressure at the site. | Yes |
| Urbanisation | No alocations or development proposals within 500m of the site; unlikely to be affected by urbanisation pressures. | No |
| Atmospheric pollution | Features vulnerable to diffuse atmospheric pollution and eutrophication; no major roads within 200m and therefore effects on air quality at this site as a result of the CYC plan will not be significant. | No |
| Water resources | Wet heath is sensitive to groundwater levels but these will not be affected by the CYC plan either directly or indirectly; there are no hydrological linkages with the PWS abstractions from the Ouse and Derwent (or groundwater abstractions) and therefore the site will not be affected by the plan proposals. | No |
| Water quality | Site features are vulnerable to changes in local water quality / site drainage, although this will not be influenced or affected by plan proposals; the effects of water quality changes on this site as a result of the CYC plan are therefore not considered futher. | No |
| Flooding / water management | Features are sensitve to flooding although the site is outside the floodplains of the Ouse and Derwent and therefore the local plan will have no effect on the frequency of flooding (etc.) at this site. Water management is a site-specific issue. | No |
| Effects on mobile species | Site does not support any mobile interest features. | No |

## 4.2 Site Allocations

The proposed site allocations have been reviewed for their potential to affect any European sites; the allocations and their distance to the nearest European site are summarised in Appendix C. In summary, most allocations are unlikely to result in significant effects **on their own**, assuming that normal policy safeguards are employed, due to an absence of reasonable impact pathways. However, the location and size of some strategic allocations is such that significant effects on sites 'alone' cannot necessarily be excluded, particularly with regard to recreational pressure; other sites are close enough to European sites to also have the potential for significant effects, requiring bespoke mitigation within the plan rather than general protective policies. These sites are summarised in Table 4.6 and Table 4.7.

**Table 4.6 CYC allocations within 2km of European site**

| Allocation | | Size (ha) | Homes | Popn. equiv | European site | Distance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H26 | Land at Dauby Lane, Elvington, York | 4.05 | 114 | 263 | River Derwent SAC | 1.0km |
| H27 | Land at Brecks Lane, Strensall | 4.00 | 102 | 235 | Strensall Common SAC | 0.5km |
| H28 | Land to north of North Lane, Wheldrake | 3.15 | 88 | 203 | Lower Derwent Valley SAC / SPA / Ramsar | 1.4km |
| H30 | Amalgomated sites South of Strensall | 2.53 | 71 | 164 | Strensall Common SAC | 0.5km |
| H32 | The Tannery, Strensall | 2.22 | 47 | 109 | Strensall Common SAC | 1.0km |
| H39 | North of Church lane Elvington | 0.92 | 29 | 67 | River Derwent SAC | 0.3km |
| H49 | Station Yard Wheldrake | 3.89 | 108 | 249 | Lower Derwent Valley SAC / SPA / Ramsar | 1.5km |

**Table 4.7 Large strategic allocations (>200 homes) within 6km of European site**

| Allocation | | Size (ha) | Homes | Popn. equiv | European site | Distance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ST7 | Land east of Metcalfe lane | 113.28 | 1800 | 4140 | Strensall Common SAC | 5.6km |
| ST8 | Amalgomated sites North of Monks Cross | 52.28 | 1400 | 3220 | Strensall Common SAC | 2.6km |
| ST9 | Land North of Haxby | 33.48 | 747 | 1719 | Strensall Common SAC | 2.5km |
| ST11 | New Lane | 13.76 | 400 | 920 | Strensall Common SAC | 4.2km |
| ST14 | Land north of Clifton Moor | 157.09 | 2800 | 6440 | Strensall Common SAC | 5.3km |
| ST15 | Whinthorpe | 392.58 | 4680 | 10764 | Lower Derwent Valley SAC / SPA / Ramsar | 5.8km |

### 4.2.1 Quantum of development

All sites have the potential to operate 'in combination' and so have 'quantum of development' effects; these are most likely to occur in respect those aspects that operate regionally, notably water resources and water quality.

## 4.3 Policies

Policies may have effects in their own right, or they may be used to control potential effects or prevent them occurring. A policy should be considered 'likely' to have an effect if the competent authority is unable (on the basis of objective information) to exclude the possibility that the plan could have significant effects on any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects; an effect will be 'significant' if it could undermine the site's conservation objectives. However, it is important that the policy assessment focuses on effects that are objectively possible, rather than just imaginable; furthermore, it is not appropriate for policies to simply re-state existing legislation.

When considering the likely effects of a policy, it is recognised that some policy 'types' cannot result in impacts on any European sites. Different guidance documents suggest various classification and referencing systems to help identify those policies that can be safely screened out; the general characteristics of these policy types are summarised in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8 Policy 'types' that can usually be screened out**

| Broad Policy Type | Notes |
|---|---|
| General statements of policy / aspiration | The European Commission recognises* that plans or plan components that are general statements of policy or political aspirations cannot have significant effects; for example, general commitments to sustainable development. |
| General design / guidance criteria or policies that cannot lead to or trigger development | A general 'criteria based' policy expresses the tests or expectations of the plan-making body when it comes to consider proposals, or relates to design or other qualitative criteria which do not themselves lead to development (e.g. controls on building design); however, policies with criteria relating to specific proposals or allocations should not be screened out. |
| External plans / projects | Plans or projects that are proposed by other plans and are referred to in the plan being assessed for completeness (for example, Highways Agency road schemes; specific waste development proposals promoted by a County Minerals and Waste Plan). |
| Environmental protection policies | Policies designed to protect the natural or built environment will not usually have signifcant or adverse effects (although they may often require modification if relied on to provide sufficient safeguards for other policies). |
| Policies which make provision for change but which could have no conceivable effect | Policies or proposals the which cannot affect a European site (no impact pathways and hence no effect; for example, proposals for new cycle path several kilometres from the nearest European site) or which cannot undermine the conservation objectives, either alone or in combination, if impact pathways exist (no significant effect). |

* EC, 2000, Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC April 2000 at 4.3.2

It must be noted that it is inappropriate to apply a policy classification tool uncritically to all policies of a certain type: there will obviously be some occasions when a policy or similar may have potentially significant effects,

despite being of a 'type' that would normally be screened out. The criteria in Table 4.1 were applied critically to the screening of the draft policies within the Local Plan to identify the following policy groups:

- '**No effect**' policies: policies that will have 'no effect' (i.e. policies that, if included as drafted, self-evidently would not have any effect on a European site due to the type of policy or its operation; for example, a policy controlling town centre shop signage; a policy setting out sustainable development criteria that developments must meet). Note that 'no effect' policies cannot have in combination effects.

- '**No likely significant effect**' policies: policies where impact pathways exist but the effects will not be significant (alone or in combination)

- '**Uncertain effect**' policies: policies where the precise effects on European sites (either alone or in combination) are uncertain, and hence additional investigation (appropriate assessment) or policy modification is required. Note that further investigation will often demonstrate that there is no significant effect or allow suitable mitigation or avoidance measures to be identified to ensure this.

- '**Likely significant effect**' policies: policies which are likely to have a significant effects (either alone or in combination) and hence which require additional investigation (appropriate assessment) or policy modification. Note that 'likely significant effect' policies are more likely to require that the policy be amended, abandoned or re-worked to avoid significant effects.

### 4.3.1 Overarching protective policies

The screening of the draft policies accounts for overarching or cross-cutting protective policies that may potentially be relied on to ensure that some other policies do not have significant effects, particularly those that promote or support development but which do not specify the scale or location of that development. Note that these policies will not automatically be sufficient to prevent significant effects for all policies, and some policies may require bespoke measures to ensure that significant effects do not occur.

### 4.3.2 Policy review

The review of the draft policies is summarised in Table 4.10. This review is designed to assist CYC in the development of the policies and any appropriate mitigation or avoidance measures; whilst suggestions for policy changes or amendments are made, it should be recognised that these are not intended to be prescriptive and a number of approaches for ensuring 'no significant effects' may be acceptable (for example, a policy with a potential significant effect could be abandoned; or modified; or cross-referenced to an over-riding protective policy). The colour coding used in the table is as follows:

**Table 4.9 Colour coding for initial review of policies**

| | |
|---|---|
| | No LSE – policy will not or cannot affect any European sites and can therefore be screened out (subject to brief review of final policy) |
| | No LSE, but amendments recommended; policies that will not affect any European sites but which could be enhanced or strengthened |
| | Policy requires changes to avoid significant effects (e.g. minor re-wording; referencing mitigating policies), or effects are uncertain. |
| | Significant effects likely; policy should be abandoned or re-worked to include specific mitigation (may apply to groups of policies) |

Note that the inclusion of a policy in the 'red' or 'yellow' categories does not mean that significant effects are certain since in many instances the assessment reflects an uncertainty that needs to be explored through further assessment (so it would be possible to undertake an appropriate assessment stage and still conclude (following a further screening) that there will be no significant effects). For some policies or allocations a more detailed 'appropriate assessment' stage may be required, even if there is some confidence that identified mitigation will be successful in avoiding significant effects, to demonstrate that the potential effects have been suitably considered. The recommendations are suggested changes only: in most instances there will be a number of different ways in which the goals of the policy can be met with suitable wording changes. The review also included an assessment of 'in combination' effects between policies. In summary, the vast majority of the draft policies were categorised as 'no effect' or 'no significant' effect policies.

**Table 4.10 Summary of review of draft policies**

| Policy | | Effects | | Rationale / Recommendations | Sites specifically vulnerable |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Alone | In combination* | | |
| DP1 | York Sub Area | No effects | - | General statement of policy / aspirations. | None |
| DP2 | Sustainable Development | No effects | - | General statement of policy / aspirations.<br>Could be strengthened to indicate that development adversely affecting designated nature conservation sites is not considered sustainable, e.g. New bullet: "**avoiding adverse effects on our network of designated nature conservation sites**". Important given presumption in favour of Sustainable Development in NPPF. | None |
| DP3 | Sustainable Communities | No effects | - | General design / guidance criteria. | None |
| DP4 | Approach to Development Management | No effects | - | General statement of policy / aspirations.<br>Sets out how CYC will approach development management | None |
| SS1 | Delivering Sustainable Growth for York | Uncertain | Uncertain | States a quantum of development. Possible impacts on regional scale issues including water resources / water quality etc | All sites |
| SS2 | The Role of York's Green Belt | No significant effect | None | Protective policy; no effects likely.<br>May indirectly displace development closer to some European sites than would otherwise be the case but the effects of this can be avoided through the allocations process. | Non |
| SS3 | The Creation of an Enduring Green Belt | No significant effect | No significant effect | Long term protective policy. | None |
| SS4 | York City Centre | No significant effect | No significant effect | Directs development away from European sites by promoting city centre development and therefore significant effects unlikely; . | None |
| SS5 | Whinthorpe | Uncertain | Uncertain | Potential effects on Lower Derwent sites due to possible functional linkages with Heslington Tillmire SSSI and indirect visitor pressure. | Lower Derwent Valley sites; River Derwent SAC |

| Policy | | Effects | | Rationale / Recommendations | Sites specifically vulnerable |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Alone | In combination* | | |
| SS6 | East of Metcalfe Lane | Uncertain | Uncertain | Within 4.5km of Strensall Common SAC; possible increase in visitor pressure. Includes requirement for greenspace | Strensall Common SAC |
| SS7 | Clifton Gate | Uncertain | Uncertain | Within 5km of Strensall Common SAC; possible increase in visitor pressure. Includes requirement for greenspace | Strensall Common SAC |
| SS8 | Land North of Monks Cross | Uncertain | Uncertain | Within 2.5km of Strensall Common SAC; possible increase in visitor pressure. Includes requirement for greenspace | Strensall Common SAC |
| SS9 | York Central | No significant effect | Quantum of development | Directs development away from European sites, but 'quantum of development' effects possible with other allocation policies. | Humber Estuary sites; Lower Derwent Valley sites; River Derwent in respect of water resources / water quality and capacity |
| SS10 | Castle Piccadilly | No significant effect | Quantum of development | Directs development away from European sites, but 'quantum of development' effects possible with other allocation policies.. | Humber Estuary sites; Lower Derwent Valley sites; River Derwent in respect of water resources / water quality and capacity |
| EC1 | Provision of Employment Land | No significant effect | Quantum of development | See allocations assessment. In summary, it is unlikely that any of the allocations will individually result in significant effects on any European site (and there are safeguards within the Plan to prevent this), but the overall quantum of development may increase pressure on some sites. | Humber Estuary sites; Lower Derwent Valley sites; River Derwent in respect of water resources / water quality and capacity |
| EC2 | Economic Growth in the Health and Social Care Sectors | No significant effect | Quantum of development | As for EC1 | Humber Estuary sites; Lower Derwent Valley sites; River Derwent in respect of water resources / water quality and capacity |
| EC3 | Loss of Employment Land | No effects | - | General design / guidance criteria. | - |
| EC4 | Business and Industrial Uses within Residential Areas | No effects | - | General statement of policy / aspirations. | - |
| EC5 | Tourism | No effects | - | General statement of policy / aspirations. | - |
| EC6 | Rural Economy | No significant effect | None | General statement of policy / aspirations. | - |

| Policy | | Effects | | Rationale / Recommendations | Sites specifically vulnerable |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Alone | In combination* | | |
| R1 | Retail Hierarchy and Sequential Approach | No significant effect | No significant effect | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Directs retail development to existing centres; otherwise, sets criteria for considering out of town retail. | None |
| R2 | District Centres, Local Centres and Neighbourhood Parades | No significant effect | No significant effect | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Directs retail development to existing centres; otherwise, sets criteria for considering retail proposals, including protection of natural environment | None |
| R3 | York City Centre Retail | No significant effect | No significant effect | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Directs retail to York City Centre. | None |
| R4 | Out of Centre Retailing | No significant effect | No significant effect | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Sets criteria for considering out of town retail. | - |
| H1 | Housing Allocations | Yes | Yes | Some larger strategic allocations could affect sites on their own due to recreational pressure | Strensall Common SAC; Lower Derwent Valley sites; River Derwent SAC |
| H2 | Density of Residential Development | Yes | Yes | Potential effects linked to size of site an hence population increase; Some larger strategic allocations could affect sites on their own due to recreational pressure | Strensall Common SAC; Lower Derwent Valley sites; River Derwent SAC |
| H3 | Balancing the Housing Market | No effect | - | General statement of policy / aspirations re. mix of housing types | - |
| H4 | Housing Mix | No effect | - | General statement of policy / aspirations re. mix of housing types | - |
| H5 | Promoting self build | No effect | - | Policy encouraging self-build on allocated sites | - |
| H6 | Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites | Uncertain | Uncertain | Possible effects as allocations, alone or in combination; consider with other allocations. Impacts due to visitor pressure. | Strensall Common SAC; Lower Derwent Valley sites; River Derwent SAC |
| H6 | Student Housing | No significant effect | No significant effect | Directs development towards campus locations | - |
| H7 | Houses in Multiple Occupation | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria re HMOs. | - |

| Policy | | Effects | | Rationale / Recommendations | Sites specifically vulnerable |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Alone | In combination* | | |
| H8 | Affordable Housing | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria re affordable housing requirements / thresholds | - |
| CF1 | Community Facilities | No effect | - | General statement of policy / aspirations. | - |
| CF2 | Built Sports Facilities | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Sets criteria for development of sports facilities; identifies expansion of existing sites but these are not near European sites. | - |
| CF3 | Childcare Provision | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Sets criteria for new childcare provision; not site specific | - |
| CF4 | Healthcare and Emergency Services | No effect | | General statement of policy / aspirations.<br>General statement of support / protection of health services. | - |
| ED1 | University of York Campuses | No significant effect | Quantum of development | Directs development to university campuses; will not affect any European sites alone although may contribute to general 'quantum of development effects'. | Humber Estuary sites; Lower Derwent Valley sites; River Derwent in respect of water resources / water quality and capacity |
| ED2 | Heslington West Campus | No significant effect | Quantum of development | Directs development to university campuses; will not affect any European sites alone although may contribute to general 'quantum of development effects'. | Humber Estuary sites; Lower Derwent Valley sites; River Derwent in respect of water resources / water quality and capacity |
| ED3 | Heslington East Campus | No significant effect | No significant effect | Development has already received planning permission, which has considered potential effects on European sites. | - |
| ED4 | Lord Mayor's Walk Campus | No significant effect | Quantum of development | Site is within city; development will not affect any European sites alone but may contribute to general quantum of development issues. | Humber Estuary sites; Lower Derwent Valley sites; River Derwent in respect of water resources / water quality and capacity |
| ED5 | York St. John University Expansion | No significant effect | Quantum of development | Sites within city; policy requires compliance with other policies including environmental protection policies. | Humber Estuary sites; Lower Derwent Valley sites; River Derwent in respect of water resources / water quality and capacity |

| Policy | | Effects | | Rationale / Recommendations | Sites specifically vulnerable |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Alone | In combination* | | |
| ED6 | Preschool, Primary and Secondary Education | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Sets criteria for new school provision; not site / quantum specific. | - |
| ED7 | Further and Higher Education | No significant effect | Quantum of development | Sites within city; policy requires compliance with other policies including environmental protection policies. Proposals are site specific. | Humber Estuary sites; Lower Derwent Valley sites; River Derwent in respect of water resources / water quality and capacity |
| ED8 | Community Access to Sports and Cultural Facilities on Education Sites | No effect | - | General statement of policy / aspirations.<br>Statement of policy re. public access to education facilities | - |
| D1 | Landscape and Setting | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Sets criteria / expectations for landscaping and setting but could be strengthened to specify protection of designated sites as a landscape goal e.g. ***x). demonstrate how significant effects on designated nature conservation sites will be avoided through design and landscaping provision.*** | |
| D2 | Placemaking | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Sets criteria / expectations for 'placemaking' and refers to housing density, but could be strengthened to include more specific reference to the natural environment. | - |
| D3 | Extensions and Alterations to Existing Buildings | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Criteria for extensions / alterations to existing buildings | - |
| D4 | Conservation Areas | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Criteria for development affecting Conservation Areas | - |
| D5 | Listed Buildings | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Criteria for development affecting listed buildings. | - |
| D6 | York City Walls and St. Mary's Abbey Walls | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Criteria for development affecting York walls | - |

| Policy | | Effects | | Rationale / Recommendations | Sites specifically vulnerable |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Alone | In combination* | | |
| D7 | Archaeology | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Criteria for development affecting archaeology and protection of remains | - |
| D8 | Historic Parks and Gardens | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Criteria for development affecting historical parks and gardens | - |
| D9 | City of York Historic Environment Record | No effect | - | General statement of policy / aspirations.<br>Requirement to maintain monitoring record | - |
| D10 | The Significance of Non-Designated Heritage Assets | No effect | - | General statement of policy / aspirations.<br>Protection of non-designated heritage features | - |
| D11 | Shopfronts | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Criteria for shopfronts and changes to these. | - |
| D12 | Advertisements | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Criteria for advertisements. | - |
| D13 | Security Shutters | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Criteria for security shutters. | - |
| GI1 | Green Infrastructure | No effect | - | General statement of policy / aspirations.<br>Delivery of green infrastructure. | - |
| GI2 | Biodiversity and Access to Nature | No effect | - | Protective Policy.<br>Includes criteria for protecting designated sites from additional access; recommend that policy is enhanced to refer to functioning of sites, e.g. i) ensure the retention, ***functional integrity***, enhancement and appropriate management of features of geological, geomorphological, paleoenvironmental or biological interest, and address the requirements of the current Biodiversity Audit and Action Plan; | - |

| Policy | | Effects | | Rationale / Recommendations | Sites specifically vulnerable |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Alone | In combination* | | |
| GI3 | Trees | No effect | - | Protective Policy.<br>Protection / criteria for trees / hedges | - |
| GI4 | Green Infrastructure Network | No effect | - | Protective Policy.<br>Policy protection could be enhanced "***create and/or enhance 'stepping stones' and new Green Corridors that improves links between nature conservation sites and other open space where appropriate, taking into account the interest features of those sites and existing visitor pressure***". | - |
| GI5 | Protection of Open Space | No effect | - | Protective Policy / criteria.<br>Protects existing greenspace and sports pitch provision, and requires additional provision | - |
| GI6 | New Open Space and Recreation Provision | No significant effect | No significant effect | General design / guidance criteria; allocated greenspace will not have any significant effects (e.g. displacement etc).<br>Policy will not have significant effects in itself but may need to be strengthened to indicate a potential requirement for greenspace provision to help reduce recreational impacts on sites, e.g. "***The precise type of on-site provision required will depend on the size and location of the proposal; the existing open space provision in the area (excluding sites designated for their nature conservation value); and the existing pressures on natural greenspace within 10km of the proposal***". | - |
| GB1 | Development in the Green Belt | No significant effect | No significant effect | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Criteria for development in greenbelt - does not directly promote development in these areas, but suggest strengthening with additional clause: ***iv) it will not adversely affect designated nature conservation sites within or associated with the greenbelt*** | - |
| GB2 | Development in Settlements "Washed Over" by the Green Belt | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Criteria for development within defined boundaries of existing settlement | - |

| Policy | | Effects | | Rationale / Recommendations | Sites specifically vulnerable |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Alone | In combination* | | |
| GB3 | Reuse of Buildings | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Criteria for the development / re-use of buildings | - |
| GB4 | "Exception" Sites for Affordable Housing in the Green Belt | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Criteria for exception sites for affordable housing in greenbelt; permits development in certain circumstances. | - |
| CC1 | Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation | No significant effect | No significant effect | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Contains allocations for potential solar, although these are too far from any Euro sites to have an effect; remainder of policy contains safeguards. | None |
| CC2 | Sustainable Design and Construction | No significant effect | No significant effect | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Criteria for sustainable development of all homes. | - |
| ENV1 | Air Quality | No effect | - | General statement of policy / aspirations.<br>Statement of policy re. air quality assessments for development; could be strengthened to refer to protected sites, e.g.: "***Development will only be permitted if the impact on air quality is acceptable and mechanisms are in place to mitigate adverse impacts and reduce further exposure to poor air quality. This will help to protect human health and air-quality sensitive designated nature conservation sites***. | - |
| ENV2 | Managing Environmental Quality | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Managing development to avoid environmental impacts on communities | - |
| ENV3 | Land Contamination | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Criteria / requirements for development that may include contaminated land; requires risk assessments etc. | - |

| Policy | | Effects | | Rationale / Recommendations | Sites specifically vulnerable |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Alone | In combination* | | |
| ENV4 | Flood Risk | No significant effect | No significant effect | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Criteria for development that may have flood risk, and mitigation of this; includes clauses that will protect designated sites that may be vulnerable to flooding (e.g. Lower Derwent Valley). | - |
| ENV5 | Sustainable Drainage | No significant effect | No significant effect | General design / guidance criteria for sustainable drainage<br>Suggest amendment to strengthen policy:<br>"For new development on greenfield sites, surface water flows arising from the development, once it is complete (and including any intermediate stages), shall be no higher than the existing rate prior to development taking place, unless it can be demonstrated that is not reasonably practicable to achieve this ***and that this will have no adverse effects on any water-level or water-quality sensitive environmental receptors."*** | - |
| WM1 | Sustainable Waste Management | No significant effect | No significant effect | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Generally sets parameters / general policy for waste management; assumes development of new waste sites in conjunction with the Waste Plan, which is not yet completed, therefore possible i/c? | - |
| WM2 | Sustainable Minerals Management | No significant effect | No significant effect | . Provision for new minerals driven / passed to WMP, protective clauses included in policy. Ditto safeguarding, although this is a non effect | - |
| T1 | Sustainable Access | No effect | - | General statement of policy.<br>Policy aiming to increase sustainable travel and reduce car use. | - |
| T2 | Strategic Public Transport Improvements | No significant effect | No significant effect | The specific schemes identified by the plan are unlikely to have any effect on Euro sites as >500m from site. Other schemes set out in the Local Transport Plan 2011-2031 (LTP3) and subsequent investment programmes (not shown on the Proposals Map) which has been subject to HRA (i.e. derived from another plan). | - |
| T3 | York Railway Station and Associated Operational Facilities | No effect | - | Proposals for York Railway Station | - |

| Policy | | Effects | | Rationale / Recommendations | Sites specifically vulnerable |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Alone | In combination* | | |
| T4 | Strategic Highway Network Capacity Improvements | No significant effect | No significant effect | None of the proposed schemes are near European sites or likely to directly affect them; the improvement of the A1237 is at least 2km from the Strensall Common and so significant effects would not be expected. | - |
| T5 | Strategic Cycle and Pedestrian Network Links and Improvements | No significant effect | No significant effect | Cycle route improvements; not near European sites | - |
| T6 | Development at or Near Public Transport Corridors, Interchanges and Facilities | No significant effect | No significant effect | Policy safeguards disused public transport corridors, and supports development near transport hubs where this does not affect the hub. York - Beverley line crosses the River Derwent, although it should be noted that the policy does not promote development of this, rather safeguards its corridor role | - |
| T7 | Demand Management | No effect | - | General statement of policy.<br>Policy re. parking standards | - |
| T8 | Minimising and Accommodating Generated Trips | No effect | - | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Requires transport assessments for new developments, and that these demonstrate how car travel will be minimised. | - |
| T9 | Freight Consolidation | No significant effect | No significant effect | Allocation. Allocates area for freight consolidation centre at Askham Bryan (no effects); other similar development supported (but not locationally specific) assuming certain criteria are met, including compliance with other policies. | - |
| T10 | Safeguarded Routes and Sites | No significant effect | No significant effect | Allocation. Safeguards sites for potential future transport development; no significant effects likely, although possible rail station at Strensall may increase visitor pressure (although policy does not promote this, only the safeguard). | - |
| C1 | Communications Infrastructure | No significant effect | No significant effect | General design / guidance criteria.<br>Criteria for new communications / phone masts etc; includes protective measures | - |

| Policy | | Effects | | Rationale / Recommendations | Sites specifically vulnerable |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Alone | In combination* | | |
| DM | Infrastructure and Developer Contributions | No effect | - | General statement of policy.<br>Statement of policy re. developer contributions to infrastructure including new green infrastructure | - |

# 5. Site Assessment

## 5.1 Overview

The following section reviews the likely effects of the CYC plan on the individual European sites (taking into account potential in combination effects where appropriate, particularly relating to the quantum of development), excluding those aspects that have been screened out. Additional data and interpretation is provided to allow for a reasonable assessment of the effects, and to identify appropriate mitigation which can be included within the plan to ensure that adverse effects do not occur. The section references the baseline data provided in Section 3.

## 5.2 Humber Estuary sites

### 5.2.1 Water resources

Most of the interest features associated with the Humber Estuary sites are sensitive (to some extent) to effects associated with water resource permissions. Many, however, are not exposed to the effects of PWS abstraction (at least by Yorkshire Water) due to their position within the estuary (for example, the dune systems of the outer estuary). As noted, most of Yorkshire Water's abstractions feed its conjunctive Grid Surface Water Zone (Grid SWZ), which means that water supply within the CYC area cannot necessarily be connected to a specific source, although much of the area's water supply is likely to be derived from the Derwent (above Sutton Lock near Elvington and Loftsome Bridge) and the Ouse.

Development supported or proposed by the CYC Local Plan will, together with all other Local Plans or Core Strategies, increase demand for PWS abstractions. The predicted increases in demand are planned for through the water companies' Water Resources Management Plans (WRMPs), which identify their strategy for managing water resources across their supply area over the next 25 years. The WRMPs take into account a range of information including demographic data and modelling, and local and regional planning documents, to identify predicted future growth and hence demand and potential deficits. LPAs are also consulted about their predicted growth scenarios. The WRMPs then identify schemes to meet any predicted deficits.

Importantly, the WRMPs are subject to HRA. This means that the water resource schemes that are identified to meet any predicted deficits are assessed for their potential effects on European sites, and so (by extension) the effects of plan-derived growth are indirectly assessed also.

YW's WRMP has been subject to HRA, which included consultation with NE and the EA. This concluded that the YW's preferred options will have no significant effect on any European sites, including those water-resource sensitive sites within the CYC Local Plan study area, alone or in combination with any other plans or programmes. The WRMP provides the best estimate of future water resource demand, and therefore it is reasonable to assume that the quantum of development accounted for by the CYC plan can be accommodated without significant effects on any European sites due to PWS abstractions, alone or in combination.

Having said that, the Local Plan can obviously help manage demand and promote water efficiency measures through its policy controls, and these can also be used to prevent local impacts (e.g. non-mains development using its own boreholes, although the distance of the CYC area from the Humber Estuary ensures that such local effects will not be significant). Indeed, the WRMP demand model has inbuilt assumptions regarding the water efficiency measures required for new homes, in accordance with the Code for Sustainable Homes. Policy CC2 in the Local Plan that will help minimise additional water-resource demands

### Conclusions / Recommendations

The anticipated growth of York can be accommodated without significant effects on the Humber Estuary sites due to water resource permissions; this is based on the modelling work undertaken for YW's WRMP, and the associated HRA. The policy review in Section 4 has identified areas where the drafted policies could usefully be strengthened to ensure that effects on European sites are avoided, and it is suggested that these amendments will provide the developmental safeguards required to ensure that the Humber estuary is not significantly affected by water resources issues. In addition, the following is recommended.

- Policy DP2: Sustainable Development; it is suggested that this be strengthened to indicate that development adversely affecting designated nature conservation sites is not considered sustainable, e.g. New bullet: "*avoiding adverse effects on our network of designated nature conservation sites*".
- Policy DP2: Sustainable Development; it is suggested that a new bullet be added to (iv) requiring that developers demonstrate that sufficient water resources or sewerage capacity is available or can be delivered ahead of development, e.g. "- *ensuring that sufficient water resources or wastewater treatment capacity is available or can be delivered ahead of need*"

## 5.2.2 Water quality

The Humber Estuary sites are the main downstream receptors for all of the watercourses in the CYC area, and most of the interest features associated with the main estuary will be vulnerable (i.e. sensitive and exposed) to any deterioration in water quality associated with the CYC plan; terrestrial features, such as the dune systems, will not be exposed. It is very unlikely that the CYC plan will have significant effects on the SAC / SPA / Ramsar interest features alone due to the distance downstream, the relative contribution of discharges from CYC to flows within the Humber; and the tidal flux. However, effects are possible in combination with other plans affecting the Humber catchment, notably other LPA development plans.

Development promoted or supported by the Local Plan is likely to increase demand on wastewater treatment works that discharge to tributaries of the Humber estuary, notably the Ouse and Derwent. Yorkshire Water has provided consultation guidance to CYC on the capacity of its treatment works, to help identify where additional capacity and investment may be required ahead of development; this is detailed in

Table 3.8 (Section 3). In summary:

- Naburn WWTW (River Ouse) – WWTW has significant capacity for the level of proposed growth in the short-medium term, although investment will be needed in the later stages of the plan period; this is particularly relevant to the strategic site at Whinthorpe (ST15);

- Rawcliffe York WWTW (River Ouse) – WWTW has limited capacity in the medium to long term; phasing of sites will be required, particular for the strategic site at Land North of Clifton Moor (ST14);

- Elvington WWTW (River Derwent) – WWTW has no capacity for proposed growth; development will need to be phased with WWTW upgrade.

The available capacity of these WWTWs is based on a range of factors, and the current consenting arrangements have been assessed for their effects on European sites as part of the Review of Consents (which required modifications to some treatment works, most of which were carried out during the AMP3 period). As a result, the capacity assessment accounts for the potential for European sites to be affected by the predicted future wastewater discharges. Any alteration of a consent would be subject to HRA by the EA. Provided the Local Plan requires that allocations are only delivered if additional treatment capacity is available (or due to be available) then significant effects on European sites would not be expected.

With regard to run-off, the Humber sites will not be directly affected and indirect 'quantum of development' effects are unlikely given the likely additional volumes from the CYC allocations relative to the current flow volumes in the estuary. The control measures within the plan (e.g. requirement for SuDS) will be sufficient to ensure that water quality in the Humber is not significantly affected.

## Conclusions / Recommendations

The anticipated growth of York can be accommodated without significant effects on the Humber Estuary sites due to water quality, assuming that the plan allows for the timely delivery of additional treatment capacity. The policy review in Section 4 has identified areas where the drafted policies could usefully be strengthened to ensure that effects on European sites are avoided, and it is suggested that these amendments will provide the developmental safeguards required to ensure that the Humber estuary is not significantly affected by water quality issues. In addition, the following is recommended.

- Policy DP2: Sustainable Development; it is suggested that this be strengthened to indicate that development adversely affecting designated nature conservation sites is not considered sustainable, e.g. New bullet: "*avoiding adverse effects on our network of designated nature conservation sites*".

- Policy DP2: Sustainable Development; it is suggested that a new bullet be added to (iv) requiring that developers demonstrate that sufficient water resources or sewerage capacity is available or can be delivered ahead of development, e.g. "- *ensuring that sufficient water resources or wastewater treatment capacity is available or can be delivered ahead of need*"

## 5.3 Lower Derwent Valley sites

### 5.3.1 Water resources

As per Section 5.2.1; the predicted growth of York is accounted for within YW's WRMP and will not have significant adverse effects on any European sites assuming that the policy protections included within the plan, and the amendments recommended in Section 5.2.2, are implemented.

### 5.3.2 Water quality

As per Section 5.2.2; the predicted growth of York is accounted for within YW's assessment of wastewater treatment capacity, and significant effects on the Lower Derwent Valley sites due to water quality deterioration can be avoided, assuming that the plan allows for the timely delivery of additional treatment capacity. The policy protections included within the plan, and the amendments recommended in Section 5.2.2, will be effective in preventing significant adverse effects on these sites.

### 5.3.3 Flooding / water level management

Flooding and water-level management are known to be significant issues affecting the Lower Derwent Valley sites, and are being addressed by a collaborative project between Natural England, the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water which includes improvements to the operation of Barmby Barrage on the River Derwent, as well as local water level management schemes (e.g. at East Cottingwith flood meadow). These are large-scale or catchment-wide issues that are largely beyond the influence of the CYC plan, although proposed development in the catchment may contribute (in combination) to local changes in run-off and flooding.

It should be noted, however, that the proposed level of development within the Derwent catchment (and hence the potential contribution to flooding due to run-off etc.) is small; the allocations in this area total around 20 ha. only, which will not result in significant alterations to the flooding regime, even if policy protections (such as the requirement for sustainable drainage (Policy ENV5) or requirement that developments do not increase flood risk (Policy ENV4)) are ignored. The CYC plan includes sufficient safeguards to ensure that significant effects as a result of changes to flooding or water level management regimes will not occur.

### 5.3.4 Recreational pressure

Damage of habitats or disturbance of species due to recreational activities can be a significant problem at some sites, although the relationship is highly variable and depends on a range of factors including the habitats, the species, the time of year and the scale, type and predictability of disturbance. With regard to the Lower Derwent Valley sites the main concerns are associated with the bird interest features of the SPA and Ramsar, and therefore the following section focuses on these receptors; however, the mitigation required for these features is likely to be suitable to minimise impacts on the SAC features also.

Human activity can affect birds either directly (e.g. through causing them to flee) or indirectly (e.g. through damaging their habitat). However, birds will also display a range of subtle behavioural responses that can have an energetic cost, through reduced food intake and / or increased energy expenditure. Broadly, disturbance can therefore result in reduced breeding success or increase mortality. At the population scale this can be significant.

## Allocations and population changes

Visitor survey data is not available for the Lower Derwent Valley sites and therefore it is necessary to use reasonable proxies to estimate the potential increase in visitor pressure on the site as a result of the population increases predicted by the CYC plan. To provide some context, the current population distribution near the Lower Derwent Valley sites, and the potential future distribution as a result of the CYC plan, was estimated using the 2011 Census data and the assumed housing levels for the allocations (see Table 5.1). This is inevitably a coarse approximation, constrained by the resolution of the census data[23], but is nevertheless useful when considering the possible magnitude of any increases in recreational pressure.

**Table 5.1 Approximate population distribution and allocations within 10km of the Lower Derwent Valley**

| Distance from site | ~Current population* | | CYC Allocations | | | Post-allocation populations** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All areas | CYC | No. | Homes | ~Popn.eq† | All areas | Increase | CYC | Increase |
| 0.5km | 17338 | 4820 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 17338 | 0% | 4820 | 0% |
| 1km | 18578 | 4820 | 2 | 143 | 329 | 18907 | 1.8% | 5149 | 6.8% |
| 2km | 20065 | 6060 | 4 | 339 | 780 | 20845 | 3.9% | 6840 | 12.9% |
| 3km | 26081 | 6060 | 4 | 339 | 780 | 26861 | 3.0% | 6840 | 12.9% |
| 4km | 34844 | 8905 | 5 | 383 | 881 | 35725 | 2.5% | 9786 | 9.9% |
| 5km | 47019 | 10437 | 7 | 499 | 1148 | 48167 | 2.4% | 11585 | 11.0% |
| 6km | 69341 | 15260 | 8 | 5179 | 11912 | 81253 | 17.2% | 27172 | 78.1% |
| 7km | 80924 | 19265 | 9 | 5409 | 12441 | 93365 | 15.4% | 31706 | 64.6% |
| 8km | 105326 | 34510 | 12 | 7679 | 17662 | 122988 | 16.8% | 52172 | 51.2% |
| 9km | 152316 | 55208 | 17 | 8594 | 19767 | 172083 | 13.0% | 74975 | 35.8% |
| 10km | 201895 | 88022 | 28 | 11414 | 26253 | 228148 | 13.0% | 114275 | 29.8% |

[23] The 2001 Census population data are reported by 'Lower Super Output Area' (LSOAs), geographical areas that were introduced in 2004 to improve the reporting of small area statistics. The LSOAs vary in size according to a number of parameters (although areas with higher population densities will usually have more LSOAs) and so do not always accurately reflect patchily distributed populations; for example, the LSOA associated with Heslington extends beyond the A64 and is over 12km$^2$ although the population is mostly associated with the University campus.

* Approximate number of residents based on 2011 census data; note:

- some Census LSOAs extend significantly beyond the 10km buffer and therefore populations are approximate and likely to be overstated, particularly for 'all areas' (i.e. including other districts.

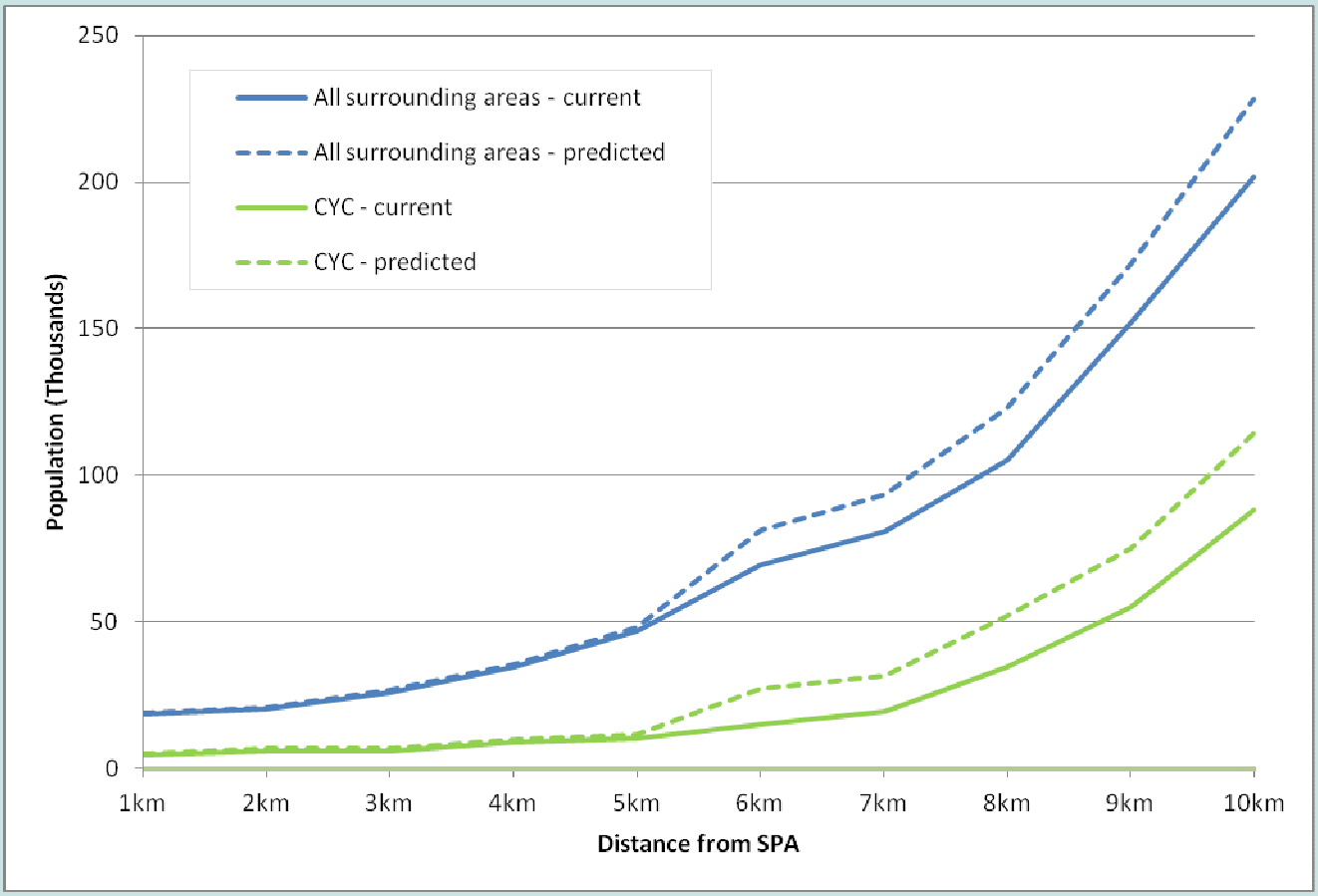
- the Census LSOA for Heslington is within 4km of the SPA at its closest point, which would result in a significant overestimation of the current population within 4km of the SPA as the data for this LMOA is heavily skewed by the population of the University, which is over 7.5km from the site; therefore these data are adjusted to account for this (effectively, the population of the Univeristy is moved from 'within 4km' to 'within 8km'..

† Approximate population equivalent, based on an average occupancy of 2.3 people per home

** Taking into account CYC allocations only for 'all areas'; allocation data for the neighbouring councils has been reviewed but is not available digitally to allow a similar comparison; however, it is clear that most of the population growth within 10km of the SPA will be associated with York. Figures assume no re-locations.

These data are illustrated by Figure 5.1.

**Figure 5.1 – Approximate current and predicted population (life of plan and beyond) within 10km of the Lower Derwent Valley sites**




These data illustrate the population distribution between York city and its hinterland; currently (with regard to the SPA), the CYC population does not substantially increase until the outskirts of York, 7 – 8km from the SPA. The

population in the wider area increases notably around 6km from the SPA, due to a number of villages (e.g. Pocklington and Holme-on-Spalding-Moor (East Riding); Barlby (Selby)). The data also show the predicted effect of the York allocations, most notably Windthorpe, on the population within 6km of the SPA. It should also be noted that the SPA is a large site and that the closest populations (those within 5km) are mostly outside the CYC area and so not liable to be influenced by CYC planning policies. It should also be recognised that the increases in populations within 6km of the plan are long-term: in the case of Windthorpe, the population illustrated will not in present until after 2030.

With regard to the surrounding districts, data are not available digitally to allow easy mapping of distances and allocations. The following numbers are based on the East Riding Local Plan proposals map (2014); up to date information has not been provided with respect to development allocations in Selby.

**Table 5.2 Indicative capacities for East Riding allocations within 6km of SPA**

| Settlement | Allocation ref. | Indicative housing nos. | Population equivalent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bubwith | BUB-A | 8 | 18 |
| Bubwith | BUB-B | 28 | 62 |
| Bubwith | BUB-C | 22 | 49 |
| Bubwith | BUB-D | 8 | 18 |
| Howden | HOW-A | 630 | 1386 |
| Howden | HOW-B | 30 | 66 |
| Howden | HOW-C | 19 | 42 |
| Howden | HOW-D | 16 | 36 |
| Howden | HOW-E | 20 | 44 |
| Melbourne | MBN-A | 18 | 40 |
| Melbourne | MBN-B | 8 | 18 |
| Pocklington | POC-A | 269 | 592 |
| Pocklington | POC-B | 87 | 192 |
| Pocklington | POC-C | 160 | 352 |
| Pocklington | POC-D | 6 | 14 |
| Pocklington | POC-E | 133 | 293 |
| Pocklington | POC-F | 504 | 1109 |
| Pocklington | POC-G | 130 | 286 |
| Stamford Bridge | SMB-A | 176 | 388 |
| Wilberfoss | WIL-A | 29 | 64 |
| Wilberfoss | WIL-B | 19 | 42 |
| Wilberfoss | WIL-C | 21 | 47 |
| Totals | | 2341 | 5158 |

## Site considerations

The Lower Derwent Valley sites are comprised of two main areas: the River Derwent and sections of its floodplain between Kexby (CYC) and Wressle, East Riding (including the Wheldrake Ings); and a separate area to the east alongside the Pocklington Canal near Melbourne (East Riding).

The NE citation for the SPA (1999) indicated that "*recreational disturbance is increasing due to increased house building adjacent to the site*", presumably referring to developments in the villages within 1 – 2km of the site boundary. There are a number of villages within 0.5 to 2 km of the SPA, including (from north to south) Kexby, Sutton-upon-Derwent, Wheldrake, Storwood, East Cottingworth, Thorganby, Ellerton, Aughton, North Duffield, Bubwith, Gunby, South Duffield, Breighton and Wressle. These villages are accessed via minor roads from the B1228, A19 and A163.

Much of the SPA is a National Nature Reserve, some of which is managed by the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and the Carstairs Countryside Trust including the larger flood meadows known as Wheldrake Ings. There are three main access points to the reserve: North Duffield Carrs car park (1.5 km east of North Duffield, off the A163), Bank Island car park, and the nearby Wheldrake car park, both 1 to 1.5 km south-east of Wheldrake, off a minor road from Wheldrake to Thorganby. Much of the remainder of the SPA is private land and access is limited to the canal and river banks, either by PrOWs or permitted paths[24]. However, the paths along the river can be accessed from many of the villages including Elvington and Sutton-upon-Derwent.

With regard to disturbance, it should be noted that no dogs are permitted within the Wheldrake Ings section of the reserve although this is obviously more difficult to manage across the site as a whole given the PrOW access: a number of studies have shown that birds are affected more by dogs and people with dogs than by people alone (Gill et al. 1998).

## Current and predicted effects

No detailed studies of recreational disturbance and its effects have been found for the SPA and therefore it is not clear if the perceived or actual increases in disturbance noted by NE have been measured and positively connected to reduced productivity or increased mortality of the SPA interest features (although for many species it would be very difficult (in reality) to isolate local disturbance effects in the Lower Derwent Valley from wider pressures on populations). To some extent the nature of the site (particularly in winter, when large areas are flooded) may mean that disturbance is less of an issue than at some other SPAs that have been studied, notably coastal SPAs where large expanses of beach are easy accessible at low tide, and heathland SPAs where access is not typically constrained by large amounts of standing water for part of the year.

[24] Although access is still made to many bank sections of where there is no right of way – for example, at the old course of the River Derwent (east of Wheldrake) an unofficial path links a PRoW from Sutton-upon-Derwent to a bridge across the river).

The populations of some breeding species have been increasing at the site[25] and wintering bird numbers are largely stable and/or consistent with trends in the wider populations; the WeBS data for the wintering SPA interest features over the last five 5 years are summarised in Table 5.3. A BTO review in 2002 (Armitage *et al*. 2002) noted a decline in the population of Bewick's swan from a peak of 164 birds in the winter of 1979/80, although numbers fluctuated significantly from year to year which was attributed to the degree of winter flooding; the current low numbers may be related to this, hence investigations into flood control led by NE, the EA and Yorkshire Water. Consequently, the current level of disturbance may be affecting some species at the site, but it does not appear to be adversely affecting the overall integrity of the site based on population trends; however, that is not to say that it not a potentially significant factor that needs to be appropriately managed and addressed, or that potential increases in visitor pressure are not an issue.

**Table 5.3 WeBS species counts for wintering SPA interest features in Lower Derwent Ings 2008 – 2013** (*after Underhill et al. 2014*)

| Species | Annual Peaks | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2008/9 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 5-year mean |
| Bewick's swan | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| Wigeon | 9,614 | 14,803 | 17,803 | 11,688 | 10,748 | 12,931 |
| Teal | 3,393 | 6,411 | 6,361 | 7,226 | 6,592 | 5,997 |
| Bittern* | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Golden plover | 2,500 | 4,124 | 976 | 3,658 | 1,840 | 2,620 |
| Ruff | 93 | 78 | 69 | 87 | 61 | 78 |
| Assemblage** | 27,529 | 41,233 | 42,980 | 41,191 | 33,022 | 37,191 |

*Bittern added in SPA review but not included in citation / conservation objectives as separate feature

** Totals are the sum of species maxima during the WeBS-year at the site, using data from all months. Species specifically noted in the assemblage qualification are not identified separately.

With regard to the prediction of effects, it is not possible to accurately model the likely increase in the number of visits to the site without substantial investigations into the current behaviour of residents in CYC (including those that do not regularly visit the sites), and it is likely that some allocations will have a disproportionate effect due to their proximity. As a guide (based on the CYC allocations only), the population within 2km of the site is likely to increase by ~4% (13% if considering the CYC area only), and by ~17% within 6km (78% if considering the CYC area only; this is primarily due to the Windthorpe allocation). Assuming that the number of visits is proportional to this increase, this might suggest a notable increase in the number of visits to the site per year. Overall, data from the CYC plan and the East Riding plan suggest that housing within 6km of the SPA may increase by around 7520 over the course of the plan and beyond, assuming all indicative capacities are filled.

[25] For example, corncrake pairs have been steadily increasing for 20 years (although note that this species is not strictly an interest feature, only being identified for possible addition in the SPA review).

The section of the SPA closest to York roughly coincides with the Wheldrake Ings reserve and the river north to Elvington; this is approximately 5.8km from the proposed Windthorpe allocation, although it is worth noting that the driving distance is substantially greater (approximately 12km to Elvington and 14.5km to Wheldrake, although this may change depending on the future layout of the development). Due to the orientation of the Derwent the distances from Windthorpe to other main access points is greater still and hence it is likely that any additional recreational pressure as a result of Windthorpe will be focused roughly on the Elvington - Wheldrake Ings section, which is closest to York and where parking is most available.

Despite the size of the Windthorpe allocation, and the potential increase in visits that it provides, it should be noted that there are other accessible recreational areas close by (for example, Wheldrake Wood) and the size of the site will provide a number of opportunities to manage landscapes and access to encourage residents to use the local area rather than driving elsewhere. It should also be noted that the allocation will only be gradually realised over the life of the plan and beyond, allowing for monitoring of recreational pressure to influence site design and development. The allocations that are closer to the SPA (within 2km) may be of more concern, partly as there will be limited space to provide alternative local recreational opportunities, and partly as they are so close to the SPA that the site will almost always be the first choice location for casual recreation:

**Table 5.4 CYC allocations within 2km of Lower Derwent Valley SPA**

| Allocation | | Size (ha) | Homes | Popn. equiv | Timing | Distance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H26 | Land at Dauby Lane Elvington | 4.05 | 114 | 263 | 1 – 10 years | 945m |
| H28 | Land to the North of North Lane Wheldrake | 3.15 | 88 | 203 | 1 – 10 years | 1240m |
| H39 | North of Church Lane Elvington | 0.92 | 29 | 67 | 1 – 5 years | 265m |
| H49 | Station Yard Wheldrake | 3.89 | 108 | 249 | 1 – 10 years | 1330m |

This is not to say that additional visits cannot be controlled and managed: for example, Guillemain *et al*. (2007) investigated the effects of ecotourism in the Camargue and found that waterbodies with more tourists did not support fewer birds in the medium-term; and that in the long term, wildfowl numbers were not related to the number of visitors. Obviously there will always be site-specific variations, but it is known that management can minimise disturbance, provided sufficient funds are available. It is therefore important that the Local Plan provides control mechanisms for monitoring, managing and mitigating any potential effects. Other plans have adopted a range of measures in similar situations, but most commonly these involve developer contributions to site management; and the provision of well-designed green infrastructure that integrates with the developments and allows easy walking access to local greenspace and the wider countryside (i.e. attractive local areas that are more convenient than protected areas). Studies have repeatedly shown that the most important factors influencing dog owners' choice of recreational area are the ability to take their dog off its lead; the proximity to home; and it being traffic-free. Measures that reduce the attractiveness of the Lower Derwent Valley in this regard and increase the accessibility and value of local greenspace are likely to be successful in mitigating potential increases in recreational pressure.

There are several policies within the CYC Local Plan that will help minimise additional recreational pressure on the SPA, most notably the following:

**Table 5.5 Policies with protective or mitigating measures that will minimise potential recreational effects**

| Policy | | Protective / mitigating measures |
|---|---|---|
| SS5 | Winthorpe | Requires provision of strategic greenspace<br>Will ensure impacts are avoided by:<br>- provision of a new 'Habitat Enhancement Area' (HEA) adjacent to the SSSI<br>- provision of site wide recreation and access strategy to minimise indirect disturbance from development and compliment the HEA. |
| GI1 | Green Infrastructure | Requirement for green infrastructure |
| GI4 | Green Infrastructure Network | Development should create and/or enhance 'stepping stones' and new Green Corridors that improves links between existing corridors, nature conservation sites and other open space. |
| GI6 | New Open Space and Recreation Provision | Requires all development to contribute to the provision of open space for recreation and amenity on site; also requires that development on the strategic sites plan cohesive greenspace provision which will "mitigate and compensate for ecological impacts, and provide for ecological enhancement". |

## Conclusions / Recommendations

Recreational visits to the Lower Derwent Valley sites are likely to increase as the population of CYC increases. The effects of this are likely to be significant, but appropriate controls within the Local Plan can ensure that effects will not be adverse. Ensuring that provided open space is connected to the existing green networks and wedges (so allowing easy access to large, nearby open space or the wider countryside) is likely to greatly reduce the potential for adverse effects to occur. The policy review in Section 4 has identified areas where the drafted policies could usefully be strengthened to ensure that effects on European sites are avoided, and it is suggested that these amendments will provide the developmental safeguards required to ensure that the Lower Derwent valley sites are not adversely affected.

- Policy GI6: New Open Space and Recreation Provision; it is suggested that this be strengthened to indicate a potential requirement for greenspace provision to minimise potential recreational impacts on sites, e.g.
  - New paragraph: "*The precise type of on-site provision required will depend on the size and location of the proposal; the existing open space provision in the area (excluding sites designated for their nature conservation value); and the existing pressures on natural greenspace within 10km of the proposal*".
  - Addition: "The precise delineation and extent of strategic greenspace will be set through detailed masterplanning and the planning process, and the areas indicated on the proposals map are a guide to general extent based on current understanding of site and other conditions. New g*reenspace*

*provision must be linked to existing greenspace, green wedges and / or the wider countryside and PrOW network to maximise its value.*"

In addition, for Windthorpe, and all sites within 2km of the SPA, developer contributions to the management of the Lower Derwent Valley sites should be required as part of a package of measures (including greenspace provision) to ensure that adverse effects on European sites are avoided. It is recommended that additional text is added to the supporting text:

- "*Developments within 6km of a European site are considered likely to increase recreational pressure and will be subject to Appropriate Assessment; they will be required to determine and deliver an appropriate level of mitigation to prevent any adverse effects, which will include securing management measures for the designated features of the sites and the provision of greenspace and green infrastructure*."

It is also suggested that the following text is added in respect of strategic allocations:

- "*Strategic allocations within 6km of a European site will be required to agree an appropriate monitoring strategy to identify any significant recreational effects on the interest features of the site as the allocation is developed, and suitable mitigation measures*".

### 5.3.5 Effects on other habitats

Many European interest features may use or be reliant on non-designated habitats outside of a European site during their life-cycle. Developments some way from a European site can therefore have an effect if its interest features are reliant on the habitats being affected by the development.

Heslington Tillmire SSSI is a 46ha site south of the A64 which is designated for its tall herb fen plant community and marshy grassland, associated assemblage of breeding birds. The breeding bird assemblage includes a range of wetland species, including lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*, snipe *Gallinago gallinago*, curlew *Numenius arquata*, redshank *Tringa totanus*, teal *Anas crecca*, shoveler *Anas clypeata* and pintail *Anas acuta*, which also form part of the Lower Derwent Valley SPA over-wintering bird assemblage.

The potential for this SSSI to support bird species from the Lower Derwent Valley SPA was identified during consultations on the preferred options, and it was suggested that the SSSI may provide an important resource for SPA birds. Natural England and the RSPB noted that the proximity of the large strategic allocation at Windthorpe (ST15) would probably increase disturbance of the Heslington Tillmire SSSI, which could therefore have indirect significant effects on the SPA.

The potential linkages between the SSSI and the SPA have been investigated through breeding and wintering bird surveys, and regional data analysis, undertaken by Peak Ecology (Peak Ecology 2014a, 2014b, 2014c). Analysis of the regional survey data and records provided by the York Ornithological Club (YOC) indicates that the SSSI does not appear to provide a particularly notable or exceptional resource for breeding or wintering wader species, and all species (but particularly lapwing) have disproportionately low abundance during breeding compared to other sites in the area surveyed by the YOC. Breeding and wintering bird surveys support this interpretation. Breeding season surveys showed that at least one pair of lapwing were breeding, with a pair of curlew also observed. Other target

wader species (redshank, snipe) were not recorded. Wintering surveys did not record significant numbers of waders, with lapwing, curlew and snipe only recorded on the final vantage point survey (February 2014).

These studies have concluded that:

- there is currently no evidence to suggest that there is any significant link between the Heslington Tillmire SSSI and the Lower Derwent Valley SPA; no ringed birds have been recorded to confirm a connection.
- it is possible that the site may operate as a sink for some bird species populations (i.e. mortality greater than recruitment / productivity), particularly lapwing, due to the size of the site.

Notwithstanding this, there are several policies within the CYC Local Plan that will help minimise additional recreational pressure on the SSSI, most notably the following:

**Table 5.6 Policies with protective or mitigating measures that will minimise potential recreational effects**

| Policy | | Protective / mitigating measures |
|---|---|---|
| SS5 | Winthorpe | Requires provision of strategic greenspace<br>Will ensure impacts on the SSSI are avoided by:<br>- provision of a new 'Habitat Enhancement Area' (HEA) adjacent to the SSSI<br>- provision of site wide recreation and access strategy to minimise indirect disturbance from development and compliment the HEA. |
| GI1 | Green Infrastructure | Requirement for green infrastructure |
| GI4 | Green Infrastructure Network | Development should create and/or enhance 'stepping stones' and new Green Corridors that improves links between existing corridors, nature conservation sites and other open space. |
| GI6 | New Open Space and Recreation Provision | Requires all development to contribute to the provision of open space for recreation and amenity on site; also requires that development on the strategic sites plan cohesive greenspace provision which will "mitigate and compensate for ecological impacts, and provide for ecological enhancement". |

## Conclusions / Recommendations

There do not appear to be any significant linkages between the interest features of the Heslington Tillmire SSSI and the Lower Derwent Valley SPA that would present a risk of the SPA being indirectly affected by negative impacts on the SSSI. Ensuring that provided open space is connected to the existing green networks and wedges (so allowing easy access to large, nearby open space or the wider countryside) is likely to greatly reduce the potential for adverse effects to occur.

## 5.4 River Derwent SAC

### 5.4.1 Water resources

As per Section 5.2.1; the predicted growth of York is accounted for within YW's WRMP, which will not have significant effects on any European sites. Note that water levels in general are an issue in the Valley and this is being addressed by a collaborative project between Natural England, the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water which includes improvements to the operation of Barmby Barrage on the River Derwent. This will improve drainage from the SACs during medium to high flows and improving passage for lamprey species.

### 5.4.2 Water quality

As per Section 5.2.2; the predicted growth of York is accounted for within YW's assessment of wastewater treatment capacity, and significant effects on the River Derwent SAC due to water quality deterioration can be avoided, assuming that the plan allows for the timely delivery of additional treatment capacity. The policy protections included within the plan, and the amendments recommended in Section 5.2.2, will be effective in preventing significant adverse effects on these sites.

### 5.4.3 Flooding / water level management

As per Section 5.3.3; the CYC plan includes sufficient safeguards to ensure that significant effects as a result of changes to flooding or water level management regimes will not occur (e.g. the requirement for sustainable drainage (Policy ENV5) or requirement that developments do not increase flood risk (Policy ENV4).

## 5.5 Skipworth Common SAC

### 5.5.1 Recreational pressure

Recreational pressure is not currently identified as affecting the interest features of this site, although development within the CYC area could increase recreational pressure on the site, in combination with development proposed in Selby and East Riding; HRAs of the Selby District Core Strategy and the East Riding of Yorkshire Local Plan indicate that significant effects as a result of increased recreation will not occur.

The interest features of Skipworth Common will be mainly sensitive to direct damage (trampling, erosion etc.) and localised eutrophication (e.g. associated with dog faeces). The site is access land and so is theoretically more vulnerable than other sites where access is restricted to PRoWs.

The nearest large CYC allocation to Skipworth Common SAC is Winthorpe (ST15), which is over 10km away; this is beyond the distance typically travelled for 'casual' recreation (such as dog walking) based on studies at other sites (see Section 3) and the characteristics of Skipworth are likely to attract small numbers of enthusiasts rather than mass recreation. Natural England have previously indicated that visitor numbers are not at "saturation point"

(Selby District Core Strategy HRA, 2010), and the site is actively managed (through the provision of waymarked trails) to minimise the effects of disturbance.

There are several policies within the CYC Local Plan that will help minimise additional recreational pressure on designated sites and it is therefore considered that there will be no significant effects on Skipworth Common SAC due to recreational pressure linked to the CYC Local Plan, alone or in combination with other development plans.

## 5.6 Strensall Common SAC

### 5.6.1 Recreational Pressure

Recreational pressure is not currently identified as affecting the interest features of this site, although development within the CYC area is likely to increase this. There are 18 proposed allocations with their centre point within 6km of the SAC boundary, potentially providing 8023 homes over the lifetime of the plan and beyond (see Table 5.7):

**Table 5.7 Allocations with centre points within 6km of Strensall Common SAC**

| Allocation | | Size (ha) | Homes | Popn. equiv | Phasing | Distance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H12 | Land R/O Stockton Lane/Greenfield Park Drive (33) | 0.77 | 33 | 76 | Short Term | 5.3km |
| H16 | Sessions of York Huntington Road | 1.76 | 57* | 132 | Short Term | 4.3 km |
| H18 | Land off Woodland Chase Clifton Moor | 0.39 | 13 | 30 | Short Term | 5.4 km |
| H30 | Land to the South of Strensall Village | 2.53 | 71 | 164 | Short Term | 0.5 km |
| H32 | The Tannery Sheriff Hutton Road Strensall | 2.22 | 47* | 109 | Short Term | 1.0 km |
| H33 | Water Tower Land Dunnington | 1.66 | 46 | 106 | Short Term | 3.2 km |
| H37 | Land at Greystone Court Haxby | 3.47 | 34 | 79 | Short Term | 3.4 km |
| H46 | Land to North of Willow Bank and East of Haxby Road, New Earswick | 4.16 | 118 | 272 | Short Term | 3.5 km |
| H48 | Haxby Hall EPH | 0.42 | 15 | 35 | Short Term | 2.4 km |
| H50 | Land at Malton Road | 2. 92 | 70 | 161 | Short Term | 4.7 km |
| H51 | Morrell House EPH | 0.23 | 10 | 23 | Short Term | 5.5 km |
| ST3 | The Grain Stores Water Lane | 7.80 | 197 | 454 | Short Term | 5.8 km |
| ST7 | Land East of Metcalfe Lane | 113.28 | 1800** | 4140 | Lifetime of the Plan | 5.6 km |
| ST8 | Land North of Monks Cross | 52.28 | 1400** | 3220 | Lifetime of the Plan | 2.6 km |
| ST9 | Land North of Haxby | 33.48 | 747 | 1719 | Lifetime of the Plan | 2.5 km |
| ST11 | Land at New Lane Huntington | 13.76 | 400 | 920 | Short to Medium Term | 4.2km |
| ST14 | Land to North of Clifton Moor | 157.09 | 2800** | 6440 | Lifetime of the Plan | 5.3 km |

| Allocation | | Size (ha) | Homes | Popn. equiv | Phasing | Distance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ST30 | Land to the North of Stockton Lane | 5.92 | 165 | 380 | Short to Medium Term | 5.0km |

* This is the total of remaining dwellings to be built following completions in previous years

** Includes dwellings to be built beyond the plan period

Based on previous studies, most of these homes will be within the distance typically travelled by car for 'casual' recreation (such as dog walking). It is therefore likely that the number of visitors to Strensall Common will increase, and this could significantly affect the interest features of the site. Having said that, parking at the site is relatively limited, with the main access point for people travelling by car being approximately 3km further away from York than the closest point of the SAC so for many allocations the driving distance will be substantially more than 5km (which is likely to limit the attractiveness and accessibility of the site for many new developments).

The interest features of the SAC will be mainly sensitive to direct damage (trampling, erosion etc.) and localised eutrophication (e.g. associated with dog faeces); however, as the Common is not access land these issues are relatively easily to manage since the effects will generally be local to the existing PRoWs and Permissive Paths. Public access is permitted when military training is not taking place, and is subject to an integrated management plan agreed between the MOD, NE and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust; the absence of open access therefore limits the exposure of the interest features to effects associated with visitor pressure, and allows management of visitor pressure by the Wildlife Trust. Furthermore, the Wildlife Trust also require that dogs be kept on leads. Consequently, there are a number of factors that are likely to limit the exposure of the interest features to additional recreational pressure.

There are several policies within the CYC Local Plan that will help minimise additional recreational pressure on this site, most notably the following:

**Table 5.8 Policies with protective or mitigating measures that will minimise potential recreational effects**

| Policy | | Protective / mitigating measures |
|---|---|---|
| SS6 | East of Metcalfe Lane | Requires strategic greenspace focused around:<br>- the corridor of Tang Hall Beck, providing a 'green wedge' that maintains separation between Heworth and Tang Hall.<br>- the southern end of the site, incorporating the dismantled railway (therefore providing easy access to the wider countryside). |
| SS7 | Clifton Gate | Requirement for greenspace |
| SS8 | Land North of Monks Cross | Requirement for greenspace |
| GI1 | Green Infrastructure | Requirement for green infrastructure |
| GI4 | Green Infrastructure Network | Development should create and/or enhance 'stepping stones' and new Green Corridors that improves links between existing corridors, nature conservation sites and other open space. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| GI6 | New Open Space and Recreation Provision | Requires all development to contribute to the provision of open space for recreation and amenity on site; also requires that development on the strategic sites plan cohesive greenspace provision which will "mitigate and compensate for ecological impacts, and provide for ecological enhancement". |

## Conclusions / Recommendations

There are a number of factors that are likely to ensure that future increases in the population of York, and the allocation of housing sites within 6km of Strensall Common SAC, can be managed without adverse effects on the interest features of the site. The policy review in Section 4 has identified areas where the drafted policies could usefully be strengthened to ensure that effects on European sites are avoided, and it is suggested that these amendments will provide the developmental safeguards required to ensure that Strensall Common is not adversely affected.

- Policy GI6: New Open Space and Recreation Provision; it is suggested that this be strengthened to indicate a potential requirement for greenspace provision to minimise potential recreational impacts on sites, e.g.
  - New paragraph: "*The precise type of on-site provision required will depend on the size and location of the proposal; the existing open space provision in the area (excluding sites designated for their nature conservation value); and the existing pressures on natural greenspace within 10km of the proposal*".
  - Addition: "The precise delineation and extent of strategic greenspace will be set through detailed masterplanning and the planning process, and the areas indicated on the proposals map are a guide to general extent based on current understanding of site and other conditions. New g*reenspace provision must be linked to existing greenspace, green wedges and / or the wider countryside and PrOW network to maximise its value.*"

Ensuring that provided open space is connected to the existing green networks and wedges (so allowing easy access to large, nearby open space or the wider countryside) is likely to greatly reduce the potential for adverse effects to occur.

In addition, for strategic allocations ST8 and ST9, and all sites within 2km of the SPA, developer contributions to the management of the SAC should be required as part of a package of measures (including greenspace provision) to ensure that adverse effects on European sites are avoided. It is recommended that additional text is added to the supporting text:

- "*Developments within 6km of a European site are considered likely to increase recreational pressure and will be subject to Appropriate Assessment; they will be required to determine and deliver an appropriate level of mitigation to prevent any adverse effects, which will include securing management measures for the designated features of the sites and the provision of greenspace and green infrastructure*."

It is also suggested that the following text is added in respect of strategic allocations:

- "*Strategic allocations within 6km of a European site will be required to agree an appropriate monitoring strategy to identify any significant recreational effects on the interest features of the site as the allocation is developed, and suitable mitigation measures*".

# 6. Conclusions

Regulation 102 of the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010* (as amended) (the 'Habitats Regulations') states that if a land-use plan is "*(a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects); and (b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site*" then the plan-making authority must "*…make an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of that site's conservation objectives*" before the plan is given effect. The process by which Regulation 102 is met is known as Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

As with Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) it is accepted best-practice for the HRA of strategic planning documents to be run as an iterative process alongside the plan development, with the emerging policies or options continually assessed for their possible effects on European sites and modified or abandoned (as necessary) to ensure that the subsequently adopted plan is not likely to result in significant effects on any European sites, either alone or 'in combination' with other plans.

CYC's Local Plan has drawn on the abandoned Core Strategy evidence base, which included a draft HRA. The draft Local Plan and Preferred Options were supported by a preliminary HRA produced by CYC[26] in 2013 (the 'Preferred Options HRA'), which concluded that emerging Local Plan would not have any significant adverse effects on any European sites as a result of its adoption and implementation, assuming that the strategy, policies and allocations of the Preferred Options stage were adopted and that mitigation and avoidance measures recommended by the HRA process were employed in the final plan. Consultation with NE indicated that further information on some aspects of the assessment may be necessary to support a conclusion of 'no adverse effects', particularly in relation to indirect effects on the Lower Derwent Valley SPA associated with development and increased disturbance of the Heslington Tillmire SSSI.

The HRA of the Local Plan submission has reviewed the available data and the draft plan. The assessment concluded that the Local Plan will have no significant effects (alone or in combination) on Kirk Deighton SAC, Skipworth Common SAC, the Humber Estuary SAC, the Humber Estuary SPA or the Humber Estuary Ramsar due to either an absence of impact pathways; policy controls within the plan that can be relied on to ensure significant effects are avoided; or external controls (such as the water resources planning process) that account for the growth aspects of the plan and with which the plan is consistent.

Potential significant effects as a result of increased recreational pressure were identified for Strensall Common SAC and the Lower Derwent Valley SAC, Lower Derwent Valley SPA and Lower Derwent Valley Ramsar.

Strensall Common SAC has three strategic allocations and several smaller allocations fully or partly within 6km of the site boundary, potentially providing 7458 homes over the lifetime of the plan and beyond; most of these homes will be within the distance typically travelled by car for 'casual' recreation (such as dog walking) based on studies at other sites. However, only three small allocations will be within 2km. Several factors are likely to limit the

[26] CYC (2013) *Habitats Regulations Assessment: Local Plan Preferred Options*. Report by the City of York Council, York.

exposure of the interest features to additional recreational pressure, notably the access arrangements and controls (managed by the MOD and the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust). Policies within the Local Plan will ensure the provision of adequate greenspace to prevent development significantly increasing visitor pressure, although policy enhancements are recommended to improve the performance of these. It is therefore concluded that the Local Plan will have no adverse effects on this SAC.

With regard to the Lower Derwent Valley sites, the level of development proposed within 6km is less than for Strensall Common (accounting also for development in neighbouring districts) and is predominantly associated with one strategic site, Windthorpe. The potential for this allocation to have indirect effects on the SPA features via impacts on the Heslington Tillmire SSSI has been explored through breeding and wintering bird surveys, and regional bird data analysis; this has concluded that there is no evidence of a significant link between the Heslington Tillmire SSSI and the Lower Derwent Valley SPA. As with Strensall Common, several factors will limit the exposure of the SAC, SPA and Ramsar interest features to additional recreational pressure, notably the existing access and management arrangements; these can be enhanced through planning policy. Furthermore, policies within the Local Plan will ensure the provision of adequate greenspace to prevent the Windthorpe allocation significantly increasing visitor pressure, although policy enhancements are recommended to improve the performance of these. It is therefore concluded that the Local Plan will have no adverse effects on Lower Derwent Valley sites assuming that the recommended amendments (or similar) are included in final plan.

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# Appendix A
# European site designations

| Box A1 | European sites | |
|---|---|---|
| Special Area of Conservation | SAC | Designated under the EU *Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora*, and implemented in the UK through the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010* (as amended), and the *Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995* (as amended). |
| Sites of Community Importance | SCI | Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) are sites that have been adopted by the European Commission but not yet formally designated by the government of each country. Although not formally designated they are nevertheless fully protected by *Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora*, the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010* (as amended), and the *Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995* (as amended). |
| Candidate SAC | cSAC | Candidate SACs (cSACs) are sites that have been submitted to the European Commission, but not yet formally adopted as SCIs. Although these sites are still undergoing designation and adoption they are still fully protected by *Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora*, the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010* (as amended) and the *Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995* (as amended). |
| Possible SACs | pSAC | Sites that have been formally advised to UK Government, but not yet submitted to the European Commission. As a matter of policy the Governments in England, Scotland and Wales extend the same protection to these sites in respect of new development as that afforded to SACs. |
| Draft SACs | dSAC | Areas that have been formally advised to UK government as suitable for selection as SACs, but have not been formally approved by government as sites for public consultation. These are not protected (unless covered by some other designation) and it is likely that their existence will not be established through desk study except through direct contact with the relevant statutory authority; however, the statutory authority is likely to take into account the proposed reasons for designation when considering potential impacts on them. |
| Special Protection Area | SPA | Designated under *EU Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds* (the 'old Wild Birds Directive') and *Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds* (the 'new Wild Birds Directive, which repeals the 'old Wild Birds Directive'), and protected by Article 6 of *Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.* These directives are implemented in the UK through the *Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981* (as amended), the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010* (as amended), the *Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985*, the *Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) Order 1985* and *The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &C.) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 1995* (as amended) and the *Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 2007*. |
| Potential SPA | pSPA | These are sites that are still undergoing designation and have not been designated by the Secretary of State; however, ECJ case law indicates that these sites are protected under Article 4(4) of *Directive 2009/147/EC* (which in theory provides a higher level of protection than the Habitats Directive, which does not apply until the sites are designated as SPAs), and as a matter of policy the Governments in England, Scotland and Wales extend the same protection to these sites in respect of new development as that afforded to SPAs, and they may be protected by some other designation (e.g. SSSI). |
| Ramsar | | The *Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat* (Ramsar Convention or Wetlands Convention) was adopted in Ramsar, Iran in February 1971. The UK ratified the Convention in 1976. In the UK Ramsar sites are generally underpinned by notification of these areas as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) (or Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) in Northern Ireland). Ramsar sites therefore receive statutory protection under the *Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981* (as amended), and the *Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) Order 1985*. However, as a matter of policy the Governments in England, Scotland and Wales extend the same protection to listed Ramsar sites in respect of new development as that afforded to SPAs and SACs. |

# Appendix B
# Summary of in combination assessment

**Table B1 Assessment of possible 'in combination' effects with other strategic plans**

| Plan | Summary (from SEA) | Likely Net Effect of Plan on European Sites | Potential for LSE i/c With WRMP | Notes and summary of assessment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Regional Plans** | | | | |
| North Yorkshire Local Investment Plan 2011-2021 (North Yorkshire Strategic Housing Partnership, June 2011) | This Local Investment Plan is the result of ongoing discussions between the local authorities of North Yorkshire (excluding City of York), North Yorkshire County Council, the North York Moors and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authorities and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The purpose of this Plan is to showcase the huge potential that can be unlocked through investment in housing in North Yorkshire. It forms the business case and development prospectus for future investment through a place-based approach. This is vital in a time of increasing austerity and cuts to public sector funding when monies need to be targeted effectively and deliver key outcomes and value for money. | No effect; general strategic policy / aspiration | None | Does not allocate any sites or provide for a quantum of development. |
| North Yorkshire Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2010-2015 (NYCC, 2010) | The document set out the overarching strategic issues and challenges for the sub-region and established five key priorities for action; it forms the business case and development prospectus for future investment through a place–based approach. The measures required to deliver on these priorities are set out in the North Yorkshire Local Investment Plan (LIP). | No effect; general strategic policy / aspiration | None | Does not allocate any sites or provide for a quantum of development. |
| North Yorkshire Waste Local Plan Saved Policies (May 2009) | To encourage a reduction in the amount of waste that requires treatment and disposal<br>To encourage a move away from traditional waste disposal methods and alternative methods of re-use and recovery<br>The policies must be adhered to as they still form part of the Development Plan due to the policies being saved. | No significant effect; previously subject to HRA | None | Policies will form part of the development plan and Local Plan has been developed with these in mind; previously subject to HRA; no allocations. |

| Plan | Summary (from SEA) | Likely Net Effect of Plan on European Sites | Potential for LSE i/c With WRMP | Notes and summary of assessment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| North Yorkshire Minerals Local Plan Saved Policies (2007) | To ensure an adequate and steady supply of minerals<br>To encourage greater use of alternatives to primary resources<br>To minimise conflict with non-mineral development<br>To sustain the contribution of mineral related employment to the economy<br>The policies must be adhered to as they still form part of the Development Plan due to the policies being saved. LDF must reflect the wider Minerals strategy and apply it locally | No significant effect | Yes | Policies will form part of the development plan and Local Plan has been developed with these in mind; review of saved policies shows no potentially significant conflicts with LP allocations. |
| Rights of Way Improvement Plan for North Yorkshire (NYCC, 2007) | Meet the present and likely future needs of the public.<br>Provide for exercise and other forms of open air recreation and enjoyment of North Yorkshire.<br>Meet the accessibility of local rights of way to blind or partially sighted persons and others with mobility problems.<br>Contribute to the Government's four shared transport priorities which are central to the Local Transport Plan for North Yorkshire. These are reducing congestion, improving air quality, enhancing accessibility and improving safety. | No effect; general strategic policy / aspiration | No | Does not specify schemes; enhancement of footpaths may increase recreational disturbance but this can only be managed at the local level and not through the Local Plan. |
| Climate Change Plan for Yorkshire and Humber 2009-2014 :Your Climate, Our Future (Yorkshire and Humber Climate Change Partnership, 2009) | Climate Change mitigation and adaptation underpins future regional strategies and has strong local and regional leadership<br>The plans does not set targets but relies on national, regional local initiatives for delivery. The plan identifies gaps and where value can be sort from the partnership as a way forward. | No effect; general strategic policy / aspiration | No | - |
| Historic environment Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber Region (Yorkshire and the Humber Historic Environment Forum 2009-2013) | Acts as an advocacy document - to broaden awareness and understanding and change the way organizations perceive and value the historic environment. | No effect; general strategic policy / aspiration | No | - |
| Regional Biodiversity Strategy for Yorkshire and Humber (Y&H Biodiversity Forum, 2009) | It sets a framework for the integration of biodiversity into our regional and local policies, programmes and processes, and promotes a more joined up approach to biodiversity. | No effect; general strategic policy / aspiration | No | - |

| Plan | Summary (from SEA) | Likely Net Effect of Plan on European Sites | Potential for LSE i/c With WRMP | Notes and summary of assessment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Delivering Sustainable Energy in North Yorkshire (Produced for a partnership of North Yorkshire LA, Oct 2005) | Aim of the document is to set out and advise on the opportunities and structure in delivering renewable energy within the region.<br>The document sets out how different technologies could be incorporated within the region. | No effect; general strategic policy / aspiration | No | - |
| Water Resources Management Plan (Yorkshire Water, 2010-2035) | The plan provides a response to development and growth within Yorkshire that is balanced and sustainable, whilst maintaining a minimum level of service of no more than one hosepipe ban per 25 years, in line with the Yorkshire Water Drought Plan. It takes into account future greenhouse gas emissions, the potential impact of abstraction on the environment and the volume of water lost through leaks.<br>The Plan forecasts a deficit in the supply demand balance from 2018/2019. This deficit is cause primarily by the loss of yield due to climate change. To meet the supply demand deficit the preferred solution is a balance of demand reduction options and the development of existing or new assets. | No significant effect | No | WRMP has been subject to HRA and no significant effect has been concluded; the WRMP specifically accounts for LPA growth targets (inter alia) in its calculations of Deployable Output. This means that 'in combination' water-resource effects with growth promoted by other plans or projects are considered and accounted for during the WRMP development process and its deficit calculations. Therefore, potential 'in combination' effects in respect of water-resource demands due to other plans or projects are unlikely since these demands are explicitly modelled when determining deficit zones and hence developing feasible options. |
| Local Transport Plan 3 2011-2021 (CYC, 2011) | This third transport plan sets out five themes with objectives:<br>Providing quality alternatives<br>Improving strategic Links<br>Encouraging behavioural Change<br>Tackling transport emissions<br>Enhancing public Streets and spaces.<br>The LTP is a long-term vision / strategy for transport in York | No effect; general strategic policy / aspiration | No | - |

| Plan | Summary (from SEA) | Likely Net Effect of Plan on European Sites | Potential for LSE i/c With WRMP | Notes and summary of assessment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| City of York Council Housing Strategy 2011-15 | "Creating homes, building communities" strategy includes six strategic aims to tackle the local housing issues identified. | No effect; general strategic policy / aspiration | No | - |
| Let's Talk Rubbish: A Municipal Waste Management Strategy for City of York and North Yorkshire 2006-2026 (2006) | This Strategy aims to reduce the amount of waste produced in York and North Yorkshire so as to make it one of the best performing areas in the country by 2013 (currently York and North Yorkshire residents produce more waste per person than in most other areas). By 2008, we aim to produce less per person than the average for England and Wales<br>To promote the value of waste as a natural and viable resource, by:<br>The Partnership aims to achieve the following targets, as a minimum:<br>• Recycle or compost 40% of household waste by 2010<br>• Recycle or compost 45% of household waste by 2013<br>• Recycle or compost 50% of household waste by 2020<br>Divert 75% of municipal waste from landfill by 2013 | No effect; general strategic policy / aspiration | No | - |
| Contaminated Land Strategy, Environmental Protection Unit, City of York Council, (Adopted July 2001, revised January 2010) | It is envisaged that this strategy will help the council to improve and protect the condition of the environment and the health of residents in York. Specific targets and indicators are detailed in the document | No effect; general strategic policy / aspiration | No | - |
| Reaching Further: York's Economic Strategy (CYC, 2012) | Strategic vision for economic future of York to become an international and enterprising city, and in time, the most competitive city of its size, not only in the UK but globally. | No effect; general strategic policy / aspiration | No | - |

| Plan | Summary (from SEA) | Likely Net Effect of Plan on European Sites | Potential for LSE i/c With WRMP | Notes and summary of assessment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Visit York Strategic Plan 2009-2012 | Strategy to increase tourism to York. | No effect; general strategic policy / aspiration | No | Increasing tourism may increase recreational pressure on some European sites but the strategy contains no specific schemes or proposals that could be meaningfully assessed for in combination effects. |
| City of York Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2006-2011 (draft) | This report is a requirement of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and looks to evaluate to what extent local rights of way meet the present and future needs of the public; the extent to which rights of way offer opportunities for exercise and other outdoor recreation and the accessibility of the rights of way to the blind/partially sighted and people with mobility problems. | No effect; general strategic policy / aspiration | No | Does not specify schemes; enhancement of footpaths may increase recreational disturbance but this can only be managed at the local level and not through the Local Plan. |
| Ouse Flood Risk Management Strategy (Environment Agency, 2010) | The Ouse Flood Risk Management Strategy focuses on the River Ouse and the rivers and streams which join it. The strategy identifies, properties and land at risk from flooding along the River Ouse between Linton Lock to the North West of York and Boothferry Bridge to the SE of Selby and the River Wharfe between the A64 bridge at Tadcaster and where it joins with the Ouse at Wharfe's mouth. It looks at various methods of managing flood risk and suggests the most appropriate ways of doing this in the future.<br>The primary objective of the study is to identify the preferred ways of managing flood risks in the long term, over the next 100 years. The strategy adopts targets based on both national and local objectives. These targets reflect not only flood risk management objectives but also relevant wider issues and concerns including the environment, sustainability and climate change. | Neutral | No | 'In combination' effects unlikely as the CFMPs are subject to SEA / HRA and primarily provide a strategic framework for future flood management; specific schemes are not identified in any detail, such that meaningful 'in combination' assessment could be made. |

| Plan | Summary (from SEA) | Likely Net Effect of Plan on European Sites | Potential for LSE i/c With WRMP | Notes and summary of assessment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The Swale, Ure, Nidd and Upper Ouse Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (CAMS) (Environment Agency, March 2004 and updated 2008) | The vision for the Swale, Ure, Nidd and Upper Ouse CAMS is to ensure that a sustainable level of abstraction is achieved that meets the needs of the environment, economy and water users both now and in the future. CAMS are strategies for management of water resources at a local level. The SUNO CAMS covers an area of approximately 3,500km2 and includes the towns of Harrogate, Knaresborough, Northallerton, Thirsk, Ripon, Richmond and the City of York. The strategy will apply to the significant rivers, tributaries and groundwater resources. | Neutral | No | 'In combination' effects unlikely as the CFMPs are subject to SEA / HRA and primarily provide a strategic framework for future flood management; specific schemes are not identified in any detail, such that meaningful 'in combination' assessment could be made. |
| Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (CYC, 2011) | The City of York Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment assesses the different levels of flood risk in the York area and provides maps of this information. The study also recognises the increasing threat of global warming and explains how climate change could increase flood risk in York due to more intense rainfall, which would increase peak rivers flows.<br>The study provides concise information on flood risk issues to aid planners in the preparation of the Development Plan and in the assessment of future planning applications. The main target is to minimise flood risk for people and property in York through ensuring development is built in low risk areas and subject to sequential and exception tests where necessary. | Neutral | No | 'In combination' effects unlikely as primarily provide a strategic framework for future flood management; specific schemes are not identified in any detail, such that meaningful 'in combination' assessment could be made. |

| Plan | Summary (from SEA) | Likely Net Effect of Plan on European Sites | Potential for LSE i/c With WRMP | Notes and summary of assessment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Selby District Council Core Strategy Local Plan (2013) | The Selby Core Strategy Local Plan aims to provide a spatial strategy for future development within Selby for the plan period up to 2027.<br>The strategy has a focus on housing growth with a target of 390 dwellings per annum.<br>The Core Strategy sets the following aims to try and ensure the Council's vision of creating a distinctive rural District will be delivered in a sustainable manner.<br>Establish a spatial context for meeting the housing, economic, recreational. Infrastructure and social needs of Selby District<br>Ensure that new development is sustainable and that it contributes to mitigating and adapting to the future impacts of climate change<br>Ensure that new development and other actions protects and enhances the built and natural environment, reinforces the distinct identity of towns and villages, and supports community health and wellbeing. Including new communities | Neutral | No | The plan has been / is subject to HRA and will only be adopted if there are no significant effects. The inclusion of policies associated with water resources should help ensure that water resources are not significantly pressured and the plan will not operate 'in combination' with the WRMP to have any effects on European sites in terms of water resources. None of the allocations within the plan are likely to have 'in combination' effects with the base plan options. In addition, the area is largely outside the PW area of influence. |
| Harrogate District Core Strategy (2009) (currently being reviewed) | The Harrogate Core Strategy sets out the direction and strategy for development and conservation in the District up to the year 2021.<br>The Core Strategy has identified objectives under six key themes which include settlement growth, homes for local people, jobs and business, travel, environment and communities. The strategy has a focus on economic and housing growth with a target of delivering 450 dwellings per annum | | | |
| Ryedale District Council Local Plan Strategy (2013) | Ryedale Local Plan Strategy aims to create opportunities to retain and create jobs, skills and prosperity, to work towards rebalancing the age structure of the District, protect and enhance the safety and well-being of local communities and to protect and enhance the environment. The strategy has a focus on economic and housing growth and aims to deliver at least 3000 new homes over the plan period to 2027. | | | |

| Plan | Summary (from SEA) | Likely Net Effect of Plan on European Sites | Potential for LSE i/c With WRMP | Notes and summary of assessment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| East Riding Emerging Local Plan (Proposed Submission Version January 2014) | East Riding Local Plan Strategy sets the overall strategic direction for the Local Plan, providing strategic policies to guide decisions on planning applications for the plan period up to 2029.<br>The Strategy sets out 21 objectives which are categorised by the following themes, spatial strategy, a healthy and balanced housing market, a prosperous economy, a high quality environment and a strong and healthy community.<br>The Site Allocations Documents allocates sites for specific uses including housing, employment, retail, open space and transport. The strategy has a focus on economic growth with the allocation of 235 ha of employment land and on housing growth making provision for at least 23,800 dwellings between 2012 and 2029 | Uncertain (although no LSE concluded by draft HRA) | Yes | Plan includes allocations within |
| Hambleton District Council Core Strategy (2007) (currently being reviewed) | Hambleton Council's Core Strategy) sets out the long term spatial vision for Hambleton to become sustainable, prosperous, safe, healthy and vibrant.<br>The Core Strategy identifies 12 objectives, which include to ensure development is sustainable, to reduce the need to travel, to support thriving and sustainable communities and to accommodate future population and employment growth.<br>Hambleton Development Policies DPD was adopted in 2008 and the emerging Site Allocations Document in 2010.<br>Hambleton Council are currently working on an Local Plan Foucssed Review | | | |

| Plan | Summary (from SEA) | Likely Net Effect of Plan on European Sites | Potential for LSE i/c With WRMP | Notes and summary of assessment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yorkshire Water Company Drought Plans | Drought Plans set out the steps that each water company will take through the stages of developing drought, drought, severe drought and recovery from drought to ensure their supply of water resources. Drought Plans must be produced by all water companies to fulfil their requirements under the Water Act 2003. | Neutral | No | The Drought Plans have been subject to HRA and should not result in any adverse effects on any European sites, although it should be noted that these plans are only deployed in extremis when sites are already likely to be affected by adverse conditions. However, it is unlikely that the CYC plan will operate 'in combination' with any of the drought plan proposals to significantly or adversely affect any European sites since population growth is modelled in the Drought Plan scenarios that underpin the plan. |

# Appendix C
# Allocations

**Table C.1 Proximity of allocations to nearest European sites**

| Allocation | | Size (ha) | Homes | Phasing | Closest European site | Distance (km) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H1 | Former Gas Works, 24 Heworth Green | 3.54 | 283 | Short to Medium Term | Strensall Common SAC | 6.4 |
| H2a | Land at Racecourse Tadcaster Road | 2.44 | 98 | Medium Term | Strensall Common SAC | 10.2 |
| H2b | Land at Cherry Lane | 0.44 | 18 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 10.2 |
| H3 | Burnholme School | 2.70 | 25 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 6.1 |
| H4 | St Josephs Monastery | 2.56 | 157 | Short to Medium Term | Strensall Common SAC | 7.5 |
| H5 | Lowfield School | 2.24 | 72 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 9.6 |
| H6 | Land R/O The Square Tadcaster Road | 1.53 | 49 | Short to Medium Term | Strensall Common SAC | 11.0 |
| H7 | Bootham Crescent | 1.72 | 73 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 6.6 |
| H8 | Askham Bar Park & Ride | 1.57 | 50 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 10.9 |
| H9 | Land off Askham Lane | 1.30 | 42 | Short to Medium Term | Strensall Common SAC | 10.9 |
| H10 | The Barbican | 0.78 | 187 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 7.7 |
| H11 | Land at Frederick House Fulford Road | 0.78 | 33 | Short to Medium Term | Strensall Common SAC | 8.4 |
| H12 | Land R/O Stockton Lane/Greenfield Park Drive (33) | 0.77 | 33 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 5.3 |
| H13 | Our Ladys Primary School | 1.30 | 55 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 9.8 |
| H14 | Former Citroen Garage 32 Lawrence Street | 0.55 | 220 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 7.6 |
| H15 | Former Civic Amenity Site Beckfield Lane | 0.48 | 27 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 9.2 |
| H16 | Sessions of York Huntington Road | 1.76 | 57* | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 4.3 |
| H17 | Burnholme Social Club | 0.80 | 37 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 6.0 |
| H18 | Land off Woodland Chase Clifton Moor | 0.39 | 13 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 5.4 |

| Allocation | | Size (ha) | Homes | Phasing | Closest European site | Distance (km) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H19 | Land at Mill Mount | 0.36 | 16 | Short to Medium Term | Strensall Common SAC | 8.4 |
| H20 | Oakhaven EPH | 0.33 | 15 | Short to Medium Term | Strensall Common SAC | 8.9 |
| H21 | Woolnough House EPH | 0.29 | 11 | Short to Medium Term | Strensall Common SAC | 7.1 |
| H22 | Heworth Lighthouse | 0.29 | 13 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 6.4 |
| H23 | Grove House EPH | 0.25 | 11 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 6.6 |
| H25 | Heworth Green North | 0.22 | 20 | Short to Medium Term | Strensall Common SAC | 6.6 |
| H26 | Land at Dauby Lane Elvington | 4.05 | 114 | Short to Medium Term | River Derwent SAC | 1.0 |
| H27 | Land at The Brecks Strensall (N.B. site called in) | 4.00 | 102 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 0.5 |
| H28 | Land to the North of North Lane Wheldrake | 3.15 | 88 | Short to Medium Term | Lower Derwent Valley SAC / SPA / Ramsar | 1.4 |
| H29 | Land at Moor Lane Copmanthorpe | 2.65 | 74 | Short Term | Skipwith Common SAC | 11.5 |
| H30 | Land to the South of Strensall Village | 2.53 | 71 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 0.5 |
| H31 | Eastfield Lane Dunnington | 2.51 | 70 | Short Term | River Derwent SAC | 2.7 |
| H32 | The Tannery Sheriff Hutton Road Strensall | 2.22 | 47* | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 1.0 |
| H33 | Water Tower Land Dunnington | 1.66 | 46 | Short Term | River Derwent SAC | 3.2 |
| H34 | Land North of Church Lane Skelton | 1.74 | 49 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 7.0 |
| H35 | Land at Intake Lane Dunnington | 1.59 | 44 | Short Term | River Derwent SAC | 2.5 |
| H37 | Land at Greystone Court Haxby | 3.47 | 34 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 3.4 |
| H38 | Land RO Rufforth Primary School Rufforth | 0.99 | 28 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 12.6 |
| H39 | North of Church Lane Elvington | 0.92 | 29 | Short Term | River Derwent SAC | 0.3 |
| H40 | West Fields Copmanthorpe | 0.82 | 26 | Long Term | Skipwith Common SAC | 12.0 |
| H43 | Manor Farm Yard, Copmanthorpe | 0.25 | 8 | Medium Term | Skipwith Common SAC | 11.9 |

| Allocation | | Size (ha) | Homes | Phasing | Closest European site | Distance (km) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H46 | Land to North of Willow Bank and East of Haxby Road, New Earswick | 4.16 | 118 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 3.5 |
| H47 | Sites at Connaught Court | 1.11 | 37 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 9.4 |
| H48 | Haxby Hall EPH | 0.42 | 15 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 2.4 |
| H49 | Station Yard Wheldrake | 3.89 | 108 | Short to Medium Term | Lower Derwent Valley SAC / SPA / Ramsar | 1.5 |
| H50 | Land at Malton Road | 2. 92 | 70 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 4.7 |
| H51 | Morrell House EPH | 0.23 | 10 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 5.5 |
| ST1 | British Sugar/Manor School | 40.70 | 1140 | Lifetime of the Plan | Strensall Common SAC | 8.1 |
| ST2 | Former Civil Service Sports Ground Millfield Lane | 10.43 | 289 | Short to Medium Term | Strensall Common SAC | 8.5 |
| ST3 | The Grain Stores Water Lane | 7.80 | 197 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 5.8 |
| ST4 | Land adj. Hull Road & Grimston Bar | 7.54 | 230 | Short to Medium Term | River Derwent SAC | 6.3 |
| ST5 | York Central | 10.55 | 410 | Medium to Long Term | Strensall Common SAC | 8.0 |
| ST7 | Land East of Metcalfe Lane | 113.28 | 1800** | Lifetime of the Plan | Strensall Common SAC | 5.6 |
| ST8 | Land North of Monks Cross | 52.28 | 1400** | Lifetime of the Plan | Strensall Common SAC | 2.6 |
| ST9 | Land North of Haxby | 33.48 | 747 | Lifetime of the Plan | Strensall Common SAC | 2.5 |
| ST11 | Land at New Lane Huntington | 13.76 | 400 | Short to Medium Term | Strensall Common SAC | 4.2 |
| ST12 | Land at Manor Heath Road Copmanthorpe | 20.078 | 421 | Lifetime of the Plan | Skipwith Common SAC | 12.4 |
| ST13 | Land at Moor Lane Copmanthorpe | 5.61 | 125 | Short Term | Skipwith Common SAC | 11.8 |
| ST14 | Land to North of Clifton Moor | 157.09 | 2800** | Lifetime of the Plan | Strensall Common SAC | 5.3 |
| ST15 | Whinthorpe New Settlement | 392.58 | 4680** | Lifetime of the Plan | Lower Derwent Valley SAC / SPA / Ramsar | 5.8 |
| ST16 | Terrys | 10.23 | 395 | Lifetime of the Plan | Strensall Common SAC | 9.3 |
| ST16 | Terry's overage (assumed) | 10.23 | 175 | Short to Medium Term | Strensall Common SAC | 9.8 |

| Allocation | | Size (ha) | Homes | Phasing | Closest European site | Distance (km) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ST17 | Nestle South | 7.16 | 315 | Short to Medium Term | Strensall Common SAC | 4.2 |
| ST17 | Nestle South | | 130 | Short to Medium Term | Strensall Common SAC | 4.2 |
| ST22 | Germany Beck Site East of Fordlands Road | 34.59 | 655 | Short to Medium Term | Lower Derwent Valley SAC / SPA / Ramsar | 8.4 |
| ST23 | (Phase 2) Land to West of Metcalfe Lane Osbaldwick | 21.91 | 117* | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 6.4 |
| ST23 | (Phase 3 & 4) Land to West of Metcalfe Lane Osbaldwick | | 342* | Short to Medium Term | Strensall Common SAC | 6.4 |
| ST24 | York College of Further & Higher Education Tadcaster Rd | 10.32 | 10* | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 10.8 |
| ST28 | Land Adj to & R/O Windy Ridge & Brecks Lane Huntington | 5.09 | 87 | Short Term | Strensall Common SAC | 8.7 |
| ST29 | Land at Boroughbridge Road | 5.75 | 135 | Short to Medium Term | Lower Derwent Valley SAC / SPA / Ramsar | 8.4 |
| ST30 | Land to the North of Stockton Lane | 5.92 | 165 | Short to Medium Term | Strensall Common SAC | 5.0 |