



Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Draft Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan

(Rescreening of amended plan)

April 2024

Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Protected sites covered by this report	3
3. Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan.....	3
4. Other Plans and Projects	5
5. Assessment of likely effects of the October 2023 Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan on Habitat Sites	7
6. Summary and conclusions	16
Appendix 1: Sources of background information	17
Appendix 2: Locations of Habitat Sites	18
Ramsar Sites.....	18
Special Areas of Conservation	19
Special Protection Areas	20
Appendix 3: Relevant Habitat Sites.....	21
Appendix 4: Natural England Consultation Responses.....	28
Responses received to latest screening report (2024)	28
Responses received to previous screening report (2022)	30

1. Introduction

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

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

1.3 Regulation 105 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) states:

‘Where a land use plan:

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

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

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

Stage 1: Determining whether a plan is likely to have a significant effect on a Habitat Site. This needs to take account of the likely impacts in combination with other relevant plans and projects.

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

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

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

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

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

the (then) Waveney District. The Local Plan Appropriate Assessment identified significant effects in relation to recreation (including dog walking), air quality and biodiversity net gain. The Council has subsequently produced a Recreational Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) and requires payment towards mitigation from residential developments within 13km of the relevant protected Habitat sites.

2. Protected sites covered by this report

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

Table 1: Relevant Habitat Sites

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

3. Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan

- 3.1 Lowestoft Town Council is producing a Neighbourhood Plan for Lowestoft, in order to set out the vision, objectives and policies for the development of the parish up to 2036, within the context of the East Suffolk Council- Waveney Local Plan.
- 3.2 HRA is an iterative process. This screening report reviews the updated version of the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan (Lowestoft Neighbourhood Development Plan Regulation 14 Consultation Draft October 2023). This second screening was considered necessary due to amendments following the first Regulation 14 consultation. The first screening was undertaken in October 2022 and published in February 2023 to accompany the first Regulation 14 consultation. Natural England were consulted on the first screening report² and their views are included in Appendix 4 for reference. Following the first Regulation 14 consultation the neighbourhood plan has been amended, including the introduction of three new policies (LOW4, LOW11 and LOW14) alongside other amendments. The extent of these changes is considered to warrant rescreening of the whole Neighbourhood Plan as set out in section 5 of this report. Natural England have been consulted on this new screening report and their views taken into account prior to finalising the screening.
- 3.3 The amended Neighbourhood Plan includes a range of policies covering the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan area. A number of policies relate to the full Neighbourhood Plan area whilst others are area/location specific. The Plan does not allocate any sites for new development.
- 3.4 The policies in the October 2023 Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan are listed in Table 2 below.

Table 2: List of Neighbourhood Plan policies

LOW1	East Point Pavilion
LOW2	Kirkley Waterfront Site
LOW3	Lowestoft Town Centre and Historic High Street
LOW4	Kirkley District Shopping Centre
LOW5	Historic Town Hall Regeneration
LOW6	Residential Development

²<https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Neighbourhood-Planning/Designated-Neighbourhood-Areas/Lowestoft/Lowestoft-Habitats-Regulations-Assessment-Screening.pdf>

LOW7	Former Lowestoft Hospital Site
LOW8	Residential Mix and Standards
LOW9	Design and Character
LOW10	Green Infrastructure, Urban Green Spaces and Biodiversity
LOW11	Infrastructure
LOW12	Port Development
LOW13	North Lowestoft Conservation Area
LOW14	South Lowestoft and Kirkley Conservation Area
LOW15	Local Heritage
LOW16	Strategic Green Landscape
LOW17	Local Green Spaces
LOW18	Recreational and Sports Spaces
LOW19	Balanced Transport Provision
LOW20	Local Energy Schemes

4. Other Plans and Projects

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

dwellings in and around the Town Centre, including the conversion of upper floors above retail units.

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

5. Assessment of likely effects of the October 2023 Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan on Habitat Sites

- 5.1 Table 3 below considers each policy of the October 2023 Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan in relation to whether there is potential for a likely significant effect on protected Habitat Sites. This constitutes Stage 1 as set out under paragraph 1.4 above. Consideration is given to the characteristics and location of the Habitat Sites. The policies are considered within the context of the Local Plan policies which they must be in general conformity with, and which have themselves been subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment, as set out in section 4 above.

Table 3: Likely significant effects of the October 2023 Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan

Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat Sites	Habitat Sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
LOW1	<p>East Point Pavilion This policy sets out criteria for any future redevelopment of the East Point Pavilion site on the south beach seafront. This includes support for the tourism and the visitor economy through uses such as performance, display, exhibition, recreation, and other tourism and visitor-related uses. The aim of the policy is to achieve exemplary design and create a positive symbol of an area transforming. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified. The seafront Pavilion site is allocated within the Local Plan and is covered by wider strategic policies. Relevant Local Plan Policies are WLP2.3 – Peto Square, WLP8.18 – New Town Centre Use Development, WLP8.19 – Vitality and Viability of Town Centres.</p>	None	None	No
LOW2	<p>Kirkley Waterfront Site This policy sets out design criteria for this site which is allocated for residential and employment uses within the Local Plan under Policy WLP2.4. Policy LOW2 does not allocate additional land for development and any strategic mitigation measures (e.g. contributions to the Suffolk Coast RAMS) are already secured through the adopted Local Plan policy and the references to RAMS in paragraph 9.6 of the NP. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.</p>	None.	None.	No.
LOW3	<p>Lowestoft Town Centre and Historic High Street</p>	None.	None.	No

Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat Sites	Habitat Sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
	<p>This policy seeks the refurbishment or extension of sites and buildings in and around the Town Centre and historic High Street. Ground floor street frontage must retain or create shops or other active frontages. Whilst residential uses will be supported for upper levels or peripheral sites or the reuse of listed buildings, the policy does not allocate sites for such development and the requirement for any contributions to strategic mitigation measures (e.g. the Suffolk Coast RAMS) is considered to be covered by policy WLP8.34 of the adopted Local Plan and the adopted Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) SPD. Reference to the requirements of the RAMS strategy is also included in paragraph 9.6 of the NP. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.</p>			
LOW4	<p>Kirkley District Shopping Centre (new policy introduced in October 2023 draft Plan) This policy relates to the defined Kirkley Shopping area which is an established shopping area to the south of the town. Policy LOW4 supports the refurbishment or extension of sites and buildings in and around the Kirkley District Shopping Area. Ground floor street frontage must retain or create shops or other active frontages. Whilst residential uses will be supported for upper levels or peripheral sites or the reuse of listed buildings, the policy does not allocate sites for such development and the requirement for any contributions to strategic mitigation measures (e.g. the Suffolk Coast RAMS) is</p>	None.	None.	No

Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat Sites	Habitat Sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
	considered to be covered by policy WLP8.34 of the adopted Local Plan and the adopted Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) SPD. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.			
LOW5	<p>Historic Town Hall Regeneration</p> <p>This policy supports the change the use and conversion of the Town Hall to a creative hub including an enterprise hub, meeting and workspace, a café and other uses to support creative and knowledge-based businesses and activities. The policy does not encourage residential use of the site. While this is a change of use policy, the new use is unlikely to significantly change the footfall/ pattern of use of the building and therefore no impact and no impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.</p>	None.	None.	No
LOW6	<p>Residential Development</p> <p>This policy states that in addition to the sites allocated in the Local Plan, new residential development will be supported in sustainable locations such as in the town centre through the conversion and adaptation of upper levels above shops and commercial units; development of infill sites within existing residential areas; and redevelopment of existing residential buildings. The policy does not allocate specific sites for development and the requirement for any contributions to strategic mitigation measures (e.g. the Suffolk Coast RAMS) is considered to be covered by policy WLP8.34 of the adopted Local Plan and the adopted Recreational Disturbance</p>	None.	None.	No

Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat Sites	Habitat Sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
	Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) SPD. Reference to the requirements of the RAMS strategy is also included in paragraph 9.6 of the NP. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.			
LOW7	<p>Former Lowestoft Hospital Site This policy is intended to complement Local Plan policy WLP 2.8, setting out development principles for the refurbishment of the historic building complex and removal of previous inappropriate additions. As it deals with matters of detailed design no impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified</p>	None.	None.	No
LOW8	<p>Residential Mix and Standards This policy seeks to establish a residential mix to reflect the latest evidence of local need and ensure the provision of suitable housing for elderly residents. The policy also requires that new housing development promotes biodiversity. The policy does not in itself promote additional development and will not therefore lead to impact pathways on Habitat sites.</p>	None.	None.	No
LOW9	<p>Design and Character This policy states that development must be locally distinctive and sustainable and must respond to the topography, landscape, heritage, boundaries and other features of the site and local context. The policy also requires that new housing development promotes biodiversity. The policy does not in itself promote additional development and will not therefore lead to impact pathways on Habitat sites.</p>	None.	None.	No

Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat Sites	Habitat Sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
LOW10	<p>Green Infrastructure, Urban Green Spaces and Biodiversity This policy requires that developments avoid adverse biodiversity impacts and deliver biodiversity net gain. The policy also sets criteria for new urban greenspaces which seeks to make them attractive for recreational use, this will help encourage recreational users away from Habitat sites. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.</p>	None.	None.	No
LOW11	<p>Infrastructure (new policy introduced in October 2023 draft Plan) This policy states that development in Lowestoft will be expected to contribute to the infrastructure requirements for the Town in accordance with the Lowestoft Infrastructure Plan. There are no impact pathways to habitat sites and no harms are identified.</p>	None.	None.	No
LOW12	<p>Port Development This policy recognises the importance of the port and requires any development to demonstrate how environmental impacts are mitigated through opportunities to improve the site, it's boundary and environs. The policy does not in itself propose any specific development. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.</p>	None.	None.	No
LOW13	<p>North Lowestoft Conservation Area This policy requires that development within or adjacent to North Lowestoft Conservation Area must preserve or enhance its character or appearance and special architectural interest, this includes maintaining and complementing key</p>	None.	None.	No

Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat Sites	Habitat Sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
	characteristics of the area. The policy sets criteria for development within the Conservation Area but does not allocate sites for development. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.			
LOW14	<p>South Lowestoft and Kirkley Conservation Area (new policy introduced in October 2023 draft Plan)</p> <p>This policy requires that development within or adjacent to South Lowestoft Conservation Area must preserve or enhance its character or appearance and special architectural interest, this includes maintaining and complementing key characteristics of the area. The policy sets criteria for development within the Conservation Area but does not allocate sites for development. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.</p>	None.	None.	No
LOW15	<p>Local Heritage</p> <p>This policy states that development should take opportunities to preserve, enhance and reuse non-designated above-ground heritage assets and avoid harming below-ground non-designated heritage. The policy provides protection for heritage assets and does not in itself promote additional development therefore no impact pathways to Habitat sites are identified.</p>	None.	None.	No
LOW16	<p>Strategic Green Landscape</p> <p>This policy requires that development must not harm the character of this area or harm its amenity, accessibility, recreational or environmental value. The policy seeks to</p>	None.	None.	No

Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat Sites	Habitat Sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
	protect the strategic green landscape area and therefore no impact pathways to Habitat sites are identified.			
LOW17	<p>Local Green Spaces This policy identifies 17 Local Green Spaces and states that developments should take the opportunity to enhance them. The policy also states that small-scale development may be supported in exceptional circumstances where it directly supports the community use of the space. The policy seeks to protect local greenspaces and keep them available for public use which will help encourage recreational users away from Habitat sites. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.</p>	None.	None.	No
LOW18	<p>Recreational and Sports Spaces This policy identifies 6 formal recreational and sports spaces and states that development must take the opportunity to enhance, and have no significant adverse impact on their accessibility, amenity or safety. The policy seeks to protect existing recreational and sports spaces and keep them available for public use which will help encourage recreational users away from Habitat sites. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.</p>	None.	None.	No
LOW19	<p>Balanced Transport Provision This policy seeks to ensure that development that generates additional journeys must incorporate a balanced and sustainable provision of transport options, meeting the following requirements proportionate to the scale and nature</p>	None.	None.	No

Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat Sites	Habitat Sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
	of the scheme and that the needs of pedestrians and cyclists must be prioritised. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.			
LOW20	<p>Local Energy Schemes This policy states that local energy schemes will be supported subject to the siting, scale and appearance of the scheme causing no significant adverse visual impact, there being no significant adverse impacts on the amenities of residential properties, including noise, pollution, vibration or, in the case of wind turbines, shadow flicker and finally there would be no significant adverse impact on the local environment, having regard to other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. The policy does not allocate sites for such developments and includes the requirement that there is no significant adverse impact on the local and natural environment. No impact pathways to Habitat sites are therefore identified.</p>	None.	None.	No

6. Summary and conclusions

- 6.1 The Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan will provide policies which will be used for determining planning applications alongside the East Suffolk Council- Waveney Local Plan, 2019.
- 6.2 This screening report reviews the updated version of the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan (Lowestoft Neighbourhood Development Plan Regulation 14 Consultation Draft, October 2023). This second screening was considered necessary due to amendments following the first Regulation 14 consultation, including the addition of three new policies.
- 6.3 The amended Neighbourhood Plan includes a range of policies covering the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan area. A number of policies relate to the full Neighbourhood Plan area whilst others are area/location specific. The Plan does not allocate any sites for new development.
- 6.4 Natural England were consulted on a draft of this Screening Statement as statutory nature conservation body. Their response is contained in Appendix 4.
- 6.5 The Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to be in general conformity with the relevant policies of the Local Plan and includes adequate reference to the requirements of the Suffolk Coast RAMS and additional green infrastructure requirements. It is concluded that the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan will not lead to likely significant effects on protected Habitat sites alone or in combination.

Signed:

Dated: 19 April 2024



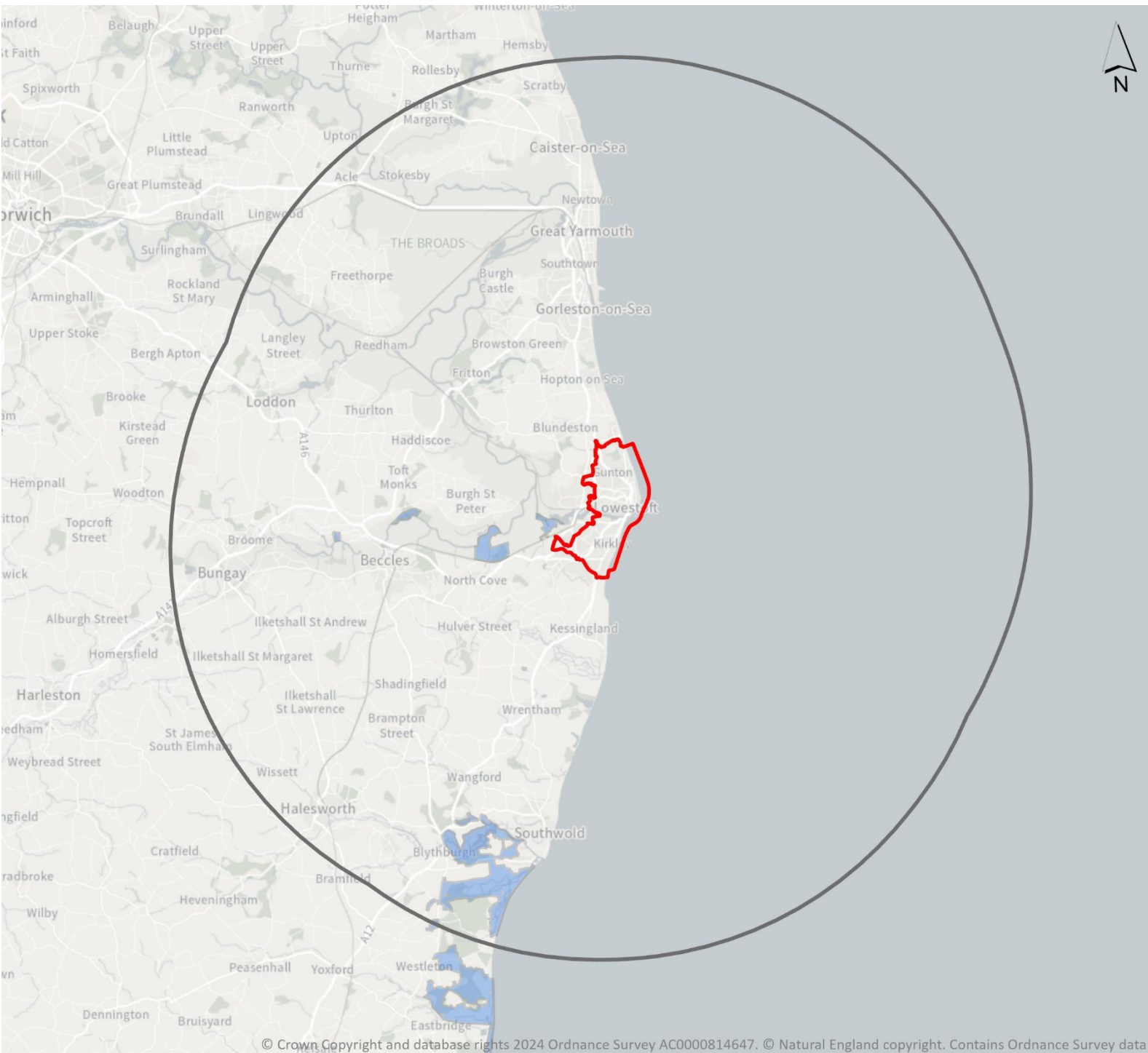
Andrea McMillan
Interim Joint Head of Planning
East Suffolk Council

Appendix 1: Sources of background information

- Habitats Regulations Assessment for the East Suffolk -Waveney -Local Plan 2019.
- Habitats Regulations Assessment Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy for Ipswich Borough, Babergh District, Mid Suffolk District and East Suffolk Councils (May 2019)
- East Suffolk Council- Waveney Local Plan, March 2019

Appendix 2: Locations of Habitat Sites

Ramsar Sites

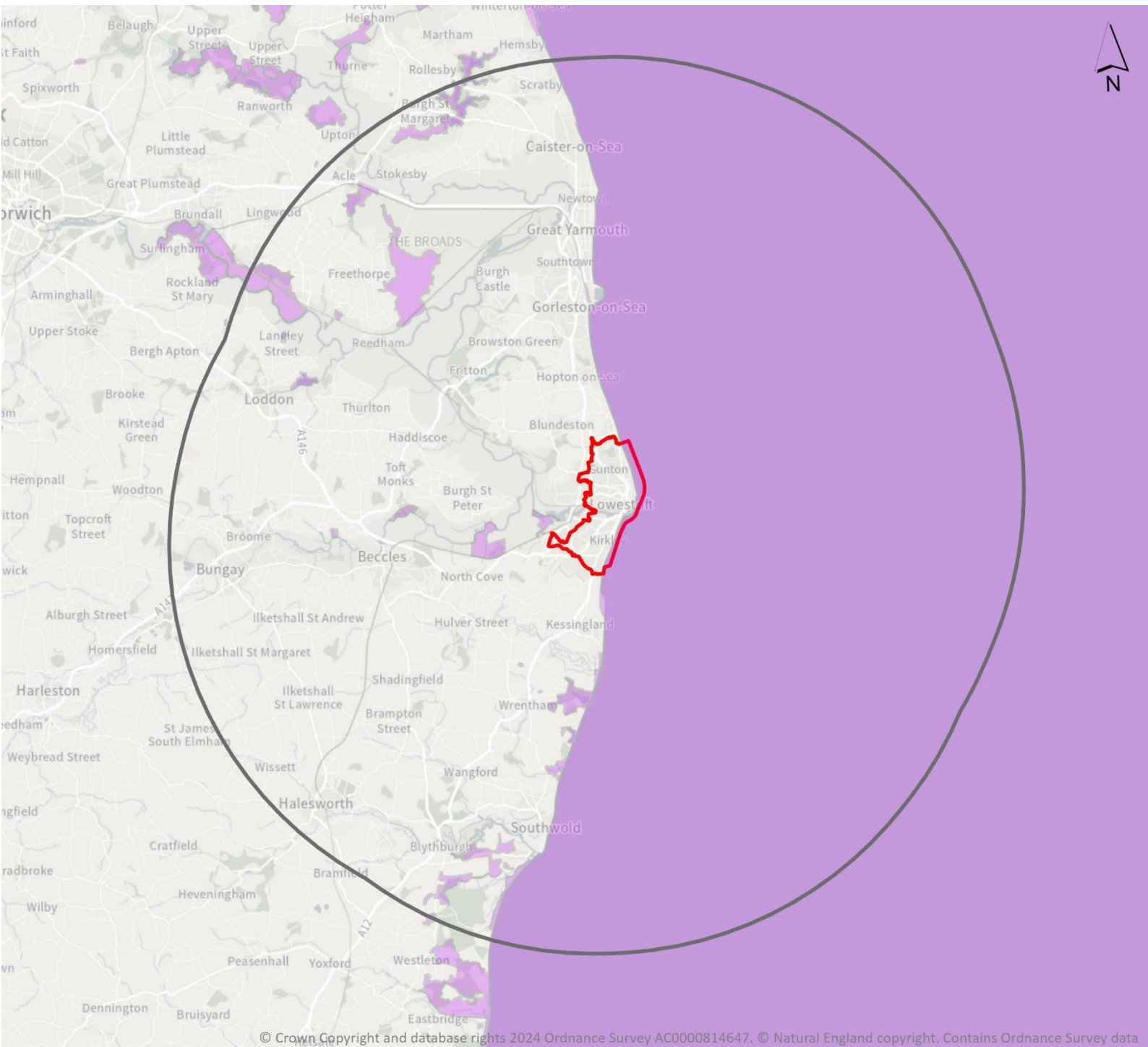





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-  Lowestoft Neighbourhood Area
-  20Km Buffer
-  Ramsar Sites



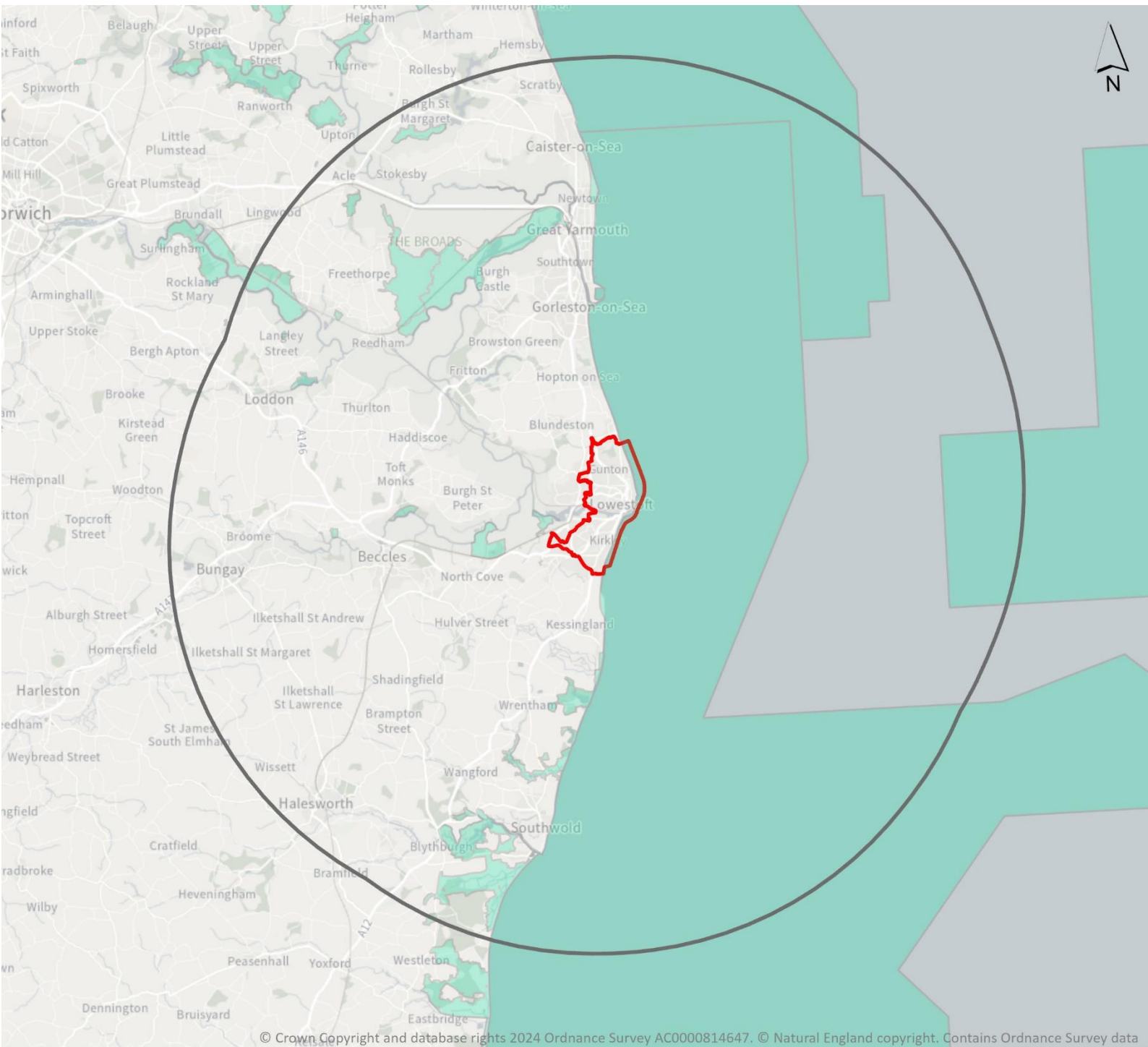
Special Areas of Conservation






-  Lowestoft Neighbourhood Area
-  20Km Buffer
-  Special Areas of Conservation

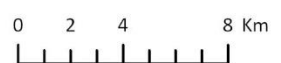


Special Protection Areas



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-  Lowestoft Neighbourhood Area
-  20Km Buffer
-  Special Protection Areas



Appendix 3: Relevant Habitat Sites

Name	Qualifying features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the East Suffolk – Waveney – Local Plan 2019)
Special Areas of Conservation			
Benacre to Easton Bavents Lagoons	H1150# Coastal lagoons, A195(B) <i>Sterna albifrons</i> : Little tern A021(B) <i>Botaurus stellaris</i> : Great bittern A081(B) <i>Circus aeruginosus</i> : Eurasian marsh harrier	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats, The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and, The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.	Public access/disturbance, water pollution, physical modification, changes in species distributions, fisheries (marine and estuarine).
The Broads	H7210# Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> S1016 <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> : Desmoulin`s whorl snail H7230 Alkaline fens H6410 <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) H91E0# Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species, The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats,	Water pollution, climate change, invasive species, siltation, inappropriate water levels, hydrological changes, water abstraction, change in land management, inappropriate ditch management, inappropriate scrub control, changes in species distributions, public access/disturbance, undergrazing, drainage, direct impact from 3rd party

	<p>(Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) H7140 Transition mires and quaking bogs H3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp H3150 Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition-type vegetation S1355 Lutra lutra: Otter S1903 Liparis loeselii: Fen orchid S4056 Anisus vorticulus: Little ramshorn whirlpool snail</p>	<p>The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species, The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely, The populations of qualifying species, and, The distribution of qualifying species within the site.</p>	
<p>Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SAC (also SPA and Ramsar site)</p>	<p>H4030 European dry heaths H1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines H1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks A052(B) Anas crecca: Eurasian teal A021(B) Botaurus stellaris: Great bittern A081(B) Circus aeruginosus: Eurasian marsh harrier A082(NB) Circus cyaneus: Hen harrier A224(B) Caprimulgus europaeus: European nightjar A056(B) Anas clypeata: Northern shoveler</p>	<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats, The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and, The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.</p>	<p>Coastal squeeze, public access/disturbance, changes in species distributions, invasive species, inappropriate pest control, air pollution, water pollution, deer, fisheries (commercial marine and estuarine)</p>

	<p>A056(NB) <i>Anas clypeata</i>: Northern shoveler A051(B) <i>Anas strepera</i>: Gadwall A051(NB) <i>Anas strepera</i>: Gadwall A132(B) <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>: Pied avocet A195(B) <i>Sterna albifrons</i>: Little tern A394(NB) <i>Anser albifrons</i>: Greater white-fronted goose</p>		
Southern North Sea	1351: <i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features by maintaining or restoring: The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats; The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats; and The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.</p>	Not identified in Suffolk Coastal Final Draft Local Plan HRA.
Winterton-Horsey Dunes	<p>H2110 Embryonic shifting dunes H2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ("white dunes") H2150# Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (<i>Calluno-Ulicetea</i>) H2190</p>	<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;</p>	<p>H2110 Embryonic shifting dunes H2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ("white dunes") H2150# Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (<i>Calluno-Ulicetea</i>) H2190 Humid dune slacks, A195(B) <i>Sterna albifrons</i>: Little Tern</p>

	Humid dune slacks, A195(B) Sterna albifrons: Little Tern		
Special Protection Areas			
Benacre to Easton Bavents	H1150# Coastal lagoons, A195(B) Sterna albifrons: Little tern A021(B) Botaurus stellaris: Great bittern A081(B) Circus aeruginosus: Eurasian marsh harrier	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features, The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features, The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely, The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	Public access/disturbance, water pollution, physical modification, changes in species distributions, fisheries (marine and estuarine).
Breydon Water (also Ramsar site)	A132(NB) Recurvirostra avosetta: Pied avocet A140(NB) Pluvialis apricaria : European golden plover A142(NB) Vanellus vanellus: Northern lapwing Waterbird assemblage A193(B) Sterna hirundo: Common tern A151(NB) Philomachus pugnax: Ruff	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	Shooting/scaring, change in land management, public access/disturbance, hydrological changes, fisheries (marine and estuarine).

	A037(NB) <i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i> : Bewick swan	qualifying features, and, the distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	
Broadland (also Ramsar site)	H7210# Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> S1016 <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> : Desmoulin`s whorl snail H7230 Alkaline fens H6410 <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) H91E0# Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) H7140 Transition mires and quaking bogs H3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp H3150 Natural eutrophic lakes with <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrocharition</i> -type vegetation S1355 <i>Lutra lutra</i> : Otter S1903 <i>Liparis loeselii</i> : Fen orchid S4056 <i>Anisus vorticulus</i> : Little ramshorn whirlpool snail	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species, The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species, The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely, The populations of qualifying species, and, The distribution of qualifying species within the site.	Water pollution, climate change, invasive species, siltation, inappropriate water levels, hydrological changes, water abstraction, change in land management, inappropriate ditch management, inappropriate scrub control, changes in species distributions, public access/disturbance, undergrazing, drainage, direct impact from 3rd party
Minsmere to Walberswick (also Ramsar site)	H4030 European dry heaths H1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to	Coastal squeeze, public access/disturbance, changes in species distributions, invasive

	<p>H1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks A052(B) <i>Anas crecca</i>: Eurasian teal A021(B) <i>Botaurus stellaris</i>: Great bittern A081(B) <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>: Eurasian marsh harrier A082(NB) <i>Circus cyaneus</i>: Hen harrier A224(B) <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>: European nightjar A056(B) <i>Anas clypeata</i>: Northern shoveler A056(NB) <i>Anas clypeata</i>: Northern shoveler A051(B) <i>Anas strepera</i>: Gadwall A051(NB) <i>Anas strepera</i>: Gadwall A132(B) <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>: Pied avocet A195(B) <i>Sterna albifrons</i>: Little tern A394(NB) <i>Anser albifrons albifrons</i>: Greater white-fronted goose</p>	<p>achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features, The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features, The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely, The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.</p>	<p>species, inappropriate pest control, air pollution, water pollution, deer, fisheries (commercial marine and estuarine)</p>
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Great Yarmouth and North Denes	H2110 Embryonic shifting dunes H2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ("white dunes") H2150# Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (<i>Calluno-Ulicetea</i>) H2190 Humid dune slacks, A195(B) <i>Sterna albifrons</i> : Little Tern	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features, The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features, The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely, The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	Inappropriate coastal management, coastal squeeze, public access/disturbance, hydrological changes, inappropriate scrub control, inappropriate pest control, invasive species, undergrazing, air pollution
Outer Thames Estuary	A001 (W) <i>Gavia stellata</i> Red-throated Diver A195 (B) <i>Sterna hirundo</i> Common Tern A193 (B) <i>Sternula albifrons</i> Little Tern	Subject to natural change ² , maintain ³ or enhance the red-throated diver population (<i>Gavia stellata</i>) and its supporting habitats in favourable condition.	Physical loss of supporting habitat, physical damage to their habitats, non-physical disturbance, toxic contamination, non-toxic contamination, biological disturbance,

Appendix 4: Natural England Consultation Responses

Responses received to latest screening report (2024)

Date: 19 March 2024
Our ref: 466929
Your ref: Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan



Ms Laura Mundy
East Suffolk Council

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

BY EMAIL ONLY

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Ms Mundy

Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan - HRA & SEA Screening Consultation

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 14 February 2024.

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

Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

It is Natural England's advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that:

- significant effects on statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscapes are unlikely; and,
- significant effects on Habitats sites¹, either alone or in combination, are unlikely.

The proposed neighbourhood plan is unlikely to significantly affect any Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Ramsar wetland or sites in the process of becoming SACs or SPAs ('candidate SACs', 'possible SACs', 'potential SPAs') or a Ramsar wetland. The plan area is unlikely to have a significant effect on a National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Heritage Coast, and is unlikely to impact upon the purposes for which these areas are designated or defined.

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in line with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 is contained within the [Planning Practice Guidance](#). This identifies three triggers that may require the production of an SEA:

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

¹ Habitats sites are those referred to in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (Annex 2 - glossary) as "any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites".

Natural England does not hold information on the location of significant populations of protected species, so is unable to advise whether this plan is likely to affect protected species to such an extent as to require an SEA. Further information is included in Natural England's [standing advice](#) on protected species.

Furthermore, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all environmental assets. The plan may have environmental impacts on priority species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites, soils and best and most versatile agricultural land, or on local landscape character that may be sufficient to warrant an SEA. Information on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees is set out in Natural England/Forestry Commission [standing advice](#).

We therefore recommend that advice is sought from your ecological, landscape and soils advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local soils, best and most versatile agricultural land, landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by the plan before determining whether a SEA is necessary.

Natural England reserves the right to provide further advice on the environmental assessment of the plan. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make. If a SEA is required, Natural England must be consulted at the scoping and environmental report stages.

Please send any new consultations, or further information on this consultation to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk

Yours sincerely

Sally Wintle
Consultations Team

Responses received to previous screening report (2022)

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



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

T 0300 060 3900

Ms. Seabrook
[REDACTED]

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Ms Seabrook

Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan – SEA and HRA screening report consultation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Yours sincerely

Joe Thompsett
Norfolk & Suffolk Team