



Draft Winchester Local Plan Part 2 - Development Management and Site Allocations

Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report

September 2014

prepared by

enfusion



HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT

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Prepared for: Winchester City Council

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CONTENTS		PAGE
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY		
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	Background to the Draft Local Plan Part 2 and HRA	1
	Purpose and Structure of Report	4
2	HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT (HRA) & THE PLAN	5
	Requirement for Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	5
	Guidance and Good Practice	5
3	HRA SCREENING	7
	Scope of HRA	7
	Potential Impacts of the Draft LPP2	8
	Draft LPP2 Screening Assessment	9
	Effects of the Plan Alone	9
	Effects of the Plan In Combination	11
4	HRA CONCLUSIONS	15
	HRA Summary	15
TABLES & FIGURES		
	Table 1: Habitats Regulations Assessment: Key Stages	6
	Table 2: European Site within HRA Scope	7
	Figure 1: Winchester District Development Framework	2
	Figure 2: Source, Pathway, Receptor Model	7
APPENDICES		
1	European Site Characterisations	
2	Plans and Programmes Review	
3	Policy and Site Allocations Screening	
4	Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership Charge Zone	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 0.1 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of spatial development plans is a requirement of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) as set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). This report details the Habitats Regulations Assessment for Winchester City Council's Local Plan Part 2 - Development Management and Site Allocations Local Development Document (LDD). It sets out the method, findings and conclusions of the HRA screening.
- 0.2 The following European sites are considered to be within the influence the plan and have therefore been scoped into the HRA:
- Butser Hill SAC
 - Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA/ Ramsar
 - East Hampshire Hangers SAC
 - Emer Bog SAC
 - Mottisfont Bats SAC
 - New Forest SAC/ SPA/ Ramsar
 - Portsmouth Harbour SPA/ Ramsar
 - River Itchen SAC
 - Solent Maritime SAC
 - Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC
 - Solent and Southampton Water SPA/ Ramsar
- 0.3 The screening considered whether the policies and allocations proposed in the plan, have the potential to have significant effects on the European sites listed above. Each of the Draft LPP2 policies and their potential impacts were assessed in turn with consideration given to environmental pathways and sensitivities of the European sites to determine if there is the potential for a significant effect. The findings of the HRA work for the LPP1 was a key consideration and helped to inform the screening assessment for the Draft LPP2.
- 0.4 The screening found that the majority of policies/ allocations were unlikely to have a significant effect on European sites alone given the location and small scale of proposed development. Some allocations were identified as being in close proximity to the River Itchen SAC; however, the screening assessment concluded that there is suitable mitigation provided through strategic policies in the adopted LPP1 and development management policies in LPP2 and available at the project level to ensure that there will be no significant effects on the River Itchen SAC.
- 0.5 The screening found that nine of the site allocations identified to deliver new housing fall within the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership Charge Zone. It was concluded that as long as the standard contribution of £172 is provided for each new housing unit delivered within the charge zone, in line with guidance produced by Winchester City Council and the emerging Interim Solent Bird

Disturbance Mitigation Strategy, then the development proposed will not have likely significant in combination effects on the Solent SPAs.

- 0.6 The HRA for the LPP1¹ concluded that there would not be adverse in combination effects on the integrity of European sites as a result of the proposed distribution and overall level of growth proposed in the Plan area (as well as surrounding areas). The Draft LPP2 does not propose any additional growth on top of what is already proposed through the adopted LPP1. It is considered that suitable mitigation is provided through strategic policies in LPP1 and development management policies in LPP2 and available at the project level to ensure that there will be no significant in combination effects on European sites.
- 0.7 These findings will be subject to consultation comments and advice from NE and wider stakeholders.

¹ HRA (AA) of Submission Core Strategy June 2012.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

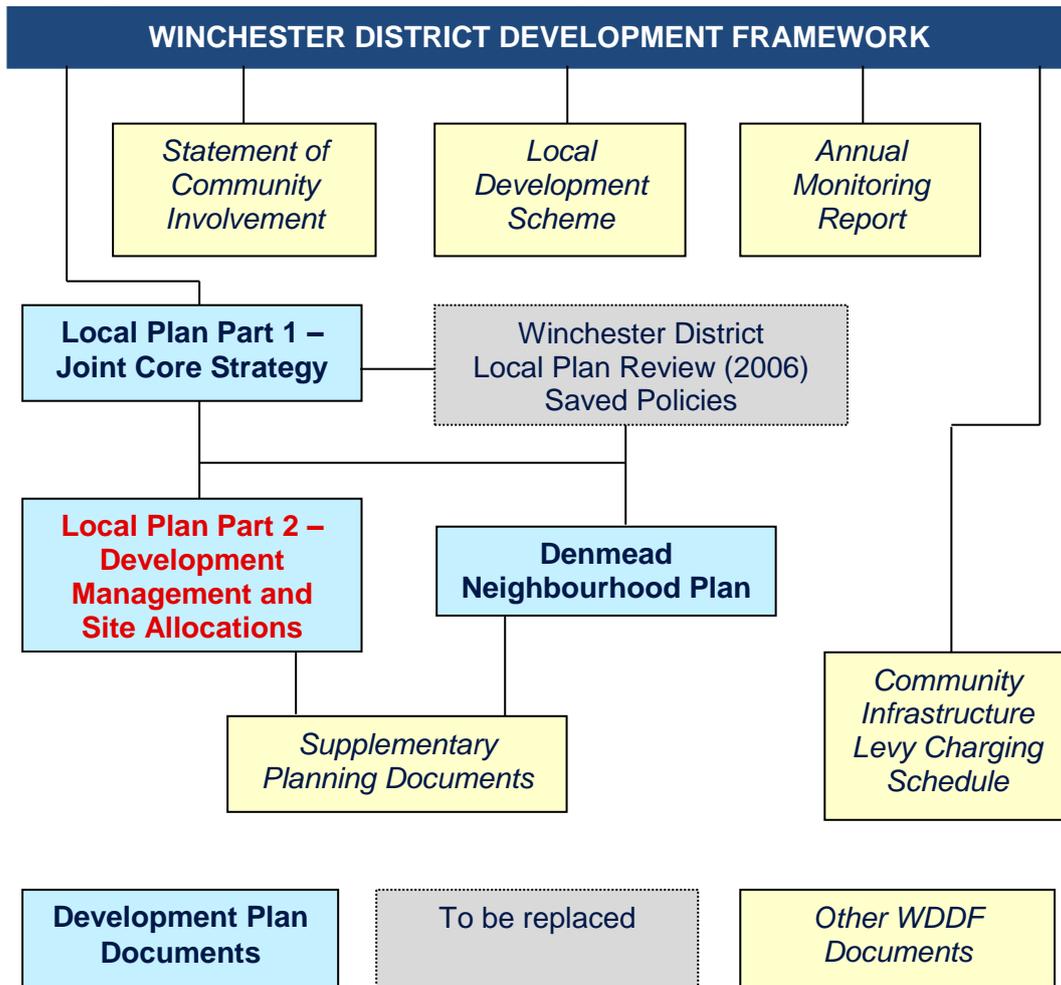
- 1.1 Winchester City Council is currently preparing its Local Plan Part 2 - Development Management and Allocations Local Development Document (LDD) for the District. The LDD is one of two key documents to be prepared as part of the Winchester District Development Framework (WDDF). The other key document is the Local Plan Part 1 - Core Strategy LDD, which is the overarching document of the Winchester District Development Plan and provides the planning framework (vision, objectives, spatial development strategy and core policies for spatial planning) that guides development in District over the plan period to 2031. The Local Plan Part 1 was adopted on 20 March 2013.
- 1.2 The Local Plan Part 2 will set out detailed development management policies and allocate (non-strategic) sites to meet the objectively assessed needs of the District, which includes retail, housing, employment, community, leisure and transport. Enfusion Ltd was commissioned to carry out Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of Winchester City Council's Local Plan Part 2 on behalf of the Council in their role as the competent authority. At the same time Enfusion was also commissioned to undertake Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment [SEA]) of the LDD and this work has been undertaken in parallel, with the two processes informing each other as appropriate.

Background to the Draft Local Plan Part 2 and HRA

Winchester District Development Framework

- 1.3 The Winchester District Development Framework (WDDF) comprises a number of documents which taken as a whole set out Winchester City Council's policies relating to the development and use of land in their area. The WDDF includes:
- Local Plan Part 1 - Joint Core Strategy
 - Local Plan Part 2 - Development Management and Allocations
 - Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which supplement the Local Plan by providing direction on specific issues: Village and Neighbourhood Design Statements
 - Neighbourhood Plans
 - Statement of Community Involvement
 - Annual Monitoring Report
- 1.4 The diagram below illustrates the relationship between the different WDDF documents.

Figure 1: Winchester District Development Framework



Source draft LPP2

Local Plan Part 1 - Joint Core Strategy Development

1.5 The LPP1 - Joint Core Strategy is the overarching strategic document of the Winchester City Council's WDDF and sets out the key elements of the planning strategy for the District; it is the spatial expression of the Community Strategy. In particular, the LPP1 established various development requirements for the District's larger settlements. These included the following levels of housing provision from 2011 to 2031:

- Winchester - 4000 dwellings (including 2000 at Barton Farm)
- Whiteley - 3500 dwellings (all at North Whiteley)
- Bishops Waltham - 500 dwellings
- New Alresford - 500 dwellings
- Colden Common - 250 dwellings
- Denmead - 250 dwellings
- Kings Worthy - 250 dwellings

- Swanmore - 250 dwellings
 - Waltham Chase - 250 dwellings
 - Wickham - 250 dwellings
- 1.6 LPP1 also supports the retention and improvement of employment, public transport, facilities and services in these settlements, as well as containing standards for the provision of open space and built recreation facilities.
- 1.7 The HRA process for the LPP1 began in 2008, when a HRA Screening Interim Report (Feb 2008) was produced to outline the processes and information gathered up to that point. The Interim Report informed the development of the HRA Screening for the Core Strategy Preferred Options. The findings of this screening process were reported in Consultation Draft HRA Screening of Preferred Options (May 2009). The Screening Report was subject to consultation advice from the statutory nature conservation body, i.e. Natural England (NE).
- 1.8 Further screening work and an Appropriate Assessment of the Pre-Submission Core Strategy was carried out from November to December 2011. The findings were presented in the HRA (AA) Report (Dec 2011) which accompanied the Pre-submission Core Strategy on consultation from 25th January 2012 to 12th March 2012. The HRA (AA) Report was subject to consultation advice from NE and wider stakeholders. Comments received helped to inform the final HRA (AA) Report (June 2012) which accompanied the Core Strategy on Submission in June 2012.

Draft Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management and Allocations

- 1.9 In addition to the LPP1 - Joint Core Strategy, which is the overarching document of the WDDF, Winchester City Council are in the process of preparing a further planning policy document under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 ('Local Planning Regulations'). This is the Draft Local Plan Part 2 - Development Management and Allocations and it aims to refine the development requirements for the District's larger settlements as set out in the LPP1 (please see above paragraphs 1.5 & 1.6) and produce development management policies.
- 1.10 The Draft LPP2 only covers the part of Winchester District that lies outside the South Downs National Park. The Draft LPP2 is required to be in conformity with Local Plan Part 1 and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1.11 A key element of LPP2 is to add detail to the development strategy set out in LPP1 by allocating sites as necessary to meet development needs.
- 1.12 Furthermore, the Draft LPP2 also provides the opportunity to develop detailed development management policies required to assess and

determine planning proposals and applications, particularly where these are not already covered by the general policies set out in LPP1.

- 1.13 The preparation of the Draft LPP2 has been informed by a number of technical studies and public consultation events in addition to the findings of the SA/SEA processes recorded in this Report. The production of the Draft LPP2 represents the beginning of the Plan preparation process as set out under Regulation 18 of the Local Planning Regulations. Further iterations of the Plan are to be developed following public consultation and the timetable is set out in the WDDF - Local Development Scheme².

Purpose and Structure of Report

- 1.14 This report sets out the findings of the HRA screening for the Draft Local Plan Part 2. Following this introductory section the report is organised into three further sections:
- **Section 2** summarises the requirement for HRA and relevant guidance.
 - **Section 3** outlines the Screening process and the findings of the screening assessment.
 - **Section 4** summarises the findings of the HRA and sets out the next steps, including consultation arrangements.

² <http://www.winchester.gov.uk/n/planning-policy/core-strategy-timetable-lds/>

2.0 HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT (HRA) & THE PLAN

Requirement for Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 2.1 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) [the Habitats Regulations] require that HRA is applied to all statutory land use plans in England and Wales. The aim of the HRA process is to assess the potential effects arising from a plan against the conservation objectives of any site designated for its nature conservation importance.
- 2.2 The Habitats Regulations transpose the requirements of the European Directive (92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna [the Habitats Directive] which aims to protect habitats and species of European nature conservation importance. The Directive establishes a network of internationally important sites designated for their ecological status. These are referred to as Natura 2000 sites or European Sites, and comprise Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) which are designated under European Directive (2009/147/EC) on the conservation of wild birds [the Birds Directive]. In addition, Government guidance also requires that Ramsar sites (which support internationally important wetland habitats and are listed under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance [Ramsar Convention]) are included within the HRA process as required by the Regulations.
- 2.3 The process of HRA is based on the precautionary principle and evidence should be presented to allow a determination of whether the impacts of a land-use plan, when considered in combination with the effects of other plans and projects against the conservation objectives of a European Site; would adversely affect the integrity of that site. Where effects are considered uncertain, the potential for adverse impacts should be assumed.

Guidance and Good Practice

- 2.4 The HRA Screening of the Draft LPP2 has been carried out in accordance with current guidance and best practice, which includes guidance produced by the European Commission³ in 2001. Draft guidance for HRA 'Planning for the Protection of European Sites: Appropriate Assessment', was published by the Government (DCLG, 2006) and is based on the European Commission's (2001) guidance for the Appropriate Assessment of Plans. The DCLG guidance recommends three main stages to the HRA process:

- **Stage 1:** Screening for Likely Significant Effect

³ Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting European Sites. Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission Environment DG, November 2001.

- **Stage 2:** Appropriate Assessment, Ascertaining Effects on Integrity
 - **Stage 3:** Mitigations Measures and Alternatives Assessment.
- 2.5 NE has produced additional, detailed guidance on the HRA of Local Development Documents (Tyldesley, 2009 (Revised April 2010 and September 2012)), that complements the DCLG guidance, and builds on assessment experience and relevant court rulings.
- 2.6 The approach taken for the HRA of Draft LPP2 follows the method set out in formal guidance documents and has additionally been informed by recent good practice examples. The key stages of the HRA process overall, and the specific tasks undertaken for each stage are set out in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Habitats Regulations Assessment: Key Stages	
Stages	Habitats Regulations Assessment
Stage 1: Screening for Likely significant Effects	1. Identify European sites in and around the plan area.
	2. Examine the conservation objectives of each interest feature of the European site(s) potentially affected.
	3. Analyse the policy/ plan and the changes to environmental conditions that may occur as a result of the plan. Consider the extent of the effects on European sites (magnitude, duration, location) based on best available information.
	4. Examine other plans and programmes that could contribute (cumulatively) to identified impacts/ effects.
	5. Produce screening assessment based on evidence gathered and consult statutory nature conservation body on findings.
	6. If effects are judged likely or uncertainty exists – the precautionary principle applies proceed to Stage 2 .
Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment	1. Agree scope and method of Appropriate Assessment with statutory nature conservation body.
	2. Collate all relevant information and evaluate potential impacts on site(s) in light of conservation objectives.
Stage 3: Mitigation Measures and Alternatives Assessment	1. Consider how effect on integrity of site(s) could be avoided by changes to plan and the consideration of alternatives (e.g. an alternative policy/ spatial location). Develop mitigation measures (including timescale and mechanisms for delivery).
	2. Prepare HRA/ AA report and consult statutory body.
	3. Finalise HRA/AA report in line with statutory advice to accompany plan for wider consultation.

3.0 HRA SCREENING

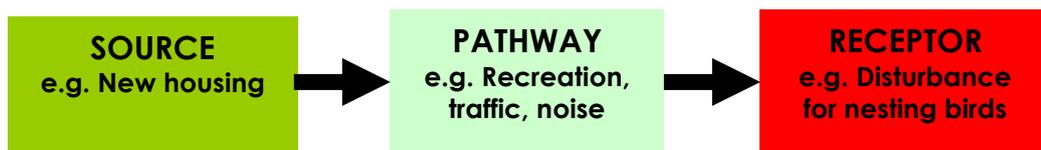
3.1 As detailed in Section 2, Table 1, HRA typically involves a number of stages. This section of the report sets out our approach and findings for Stage 1, HRA Screening for the Draft LPP2. The aim of the screening stage is to assess in broad terms whether the policies and allocations set out in the plan are likely to have a significant effect on a European site(s), and whether in the light of available avoidance and mitigation measures, an Appropriate Assessment (AA) is necessary.

Scope of HRA

3.2 Plans such as the adopted LPP1 and Draft LPP2 can have spatial implications that extend beyond the intended plan boundaries. In particular, it is recognised that when considering the potential for effects on European sites, distance in itself is not a definitive guide to the likelihood or severity of an impact. Other factors such as inaccessibility/ remoteness, the prevailing wind direction, river flow direction, and ground water flow direction will all have a bearing on the relative distance at which an impact can occur. This means that a plan directing development some distance away from a European Site could still have effects on the site and therefore, needs to be considered as part of the HRA screening.

3.3 Therefore, rather than rely on distance alone, a more effective mechanism for considering the scope of the HRA is to use a 'source-pathway-receptor' model (see **Figure 2**) which focuses on whether there is a pathway by which impacts from the plan can affect the identified sensitivities/ vulnerabilities of European site(s)' environmental conditions.

Figure 2: Source, Pathway, Receptor Model



3.4 Using this approach the following sites that lie both within and outside the plan, were scoped into the HRA Screening for the Draft LPP2. These are the same sites that were scoped into the HRA for the LPP1.

Table 2: European Sites within HRA Scope	
European Site	Designation
European Sites within Plan Area	
River Itchen	SAC
Solent Maritime	SAC
Solent and Southampton Water	SPA/ Ramsar
European Sites outside Plan Area	
Butser Hill	SAC
Chichester and Langstone Harbours	SPA/ Ramsar

East Hampshire Hangers	SAC
Emer Bog	SAC
Mottisfont Bats	SAC
New Forest	SAC/ SPA/ Ramsar
Portsmouth Harbour	SPA/ Ramsar
Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons	SAC

- 3.5 Detailed descriptions including conservation objectives and the specific vulnerabilities for each site are provided in **Appendix 1**.

Potential Impacts of the Draft LPP2

- 3.6 The Draft LPP2 aims to refine the requirements and locations for non-strategic development to meet the level of growth set out in the adopted LPP1. The Draft Local Plan Part 2 does not propose any additional growth on top of what is proposed through the adopted LPP1. Housing, employment and infrastructure development has the potential to generate a range of environmental impacts which can, (depending on their nature, magnitude, location and duration), have effects on European sites. A summary of the types of impacts and effects that can arise from these types of development is provided in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Housing, Employment and Infrastructure Development: Summary of Impacts and Effects on European Sites	
Effects on European Sites	Impact Types
Habitat (& species) fragmentation and loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Direct land take, removal of green/ connecting corridors/ supporting habitat, changes to sediment patterns (rivers and coastal locations) ■ Introduction of invasive species (predation)
Disturbance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increased recreational activity (population increase) ■ Noise and light pollution (from development and increased traffic)
Changes to hydrological regime/ water levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increased abstraction levels (new housing) ■ Increased hard standing non-permeable surfaces/ accelerated run-off ■ Laying pipes/ cables (surface & ground) ■ Topography alteration ■ Changing volume of discharge
Changes to water quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increase in run-off/ pollutants from non-permeable surfaces (roads, built areas) ■ Increased air pollution (eutrophication) (traffic, housing) ■ Increased volume of discharges (consented)
Changes in air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increased traffic movements ■ Increased emissions from buildings

Draft LPP2 Screening Assessment

- 3.7 The first stage in the screening process is to consider whether the policies and allocations proposed in the plan, have the potential to lead to likely significant effects (LSE), such as those identified in **Table 3**, on the European sites scoped into the assessment. Each of the Draft LPP2 policies and their potential impacts were assessed in turn with consideration given to environmental pathways and sensitivities of the European sites to determine if there is the potential for LSE. Potential mitigation provided through adopted LPP1 and Draft LPP2 policies was also considered. The findings of the HRA work for the LPP1 was a key consideration and helped to inform the screening for the Draft LPP2. **Appendix 3** details the results of the HRA screening process for the Draft LPP2. The key findings are summarised below.

Effects Summary - the plan alone

- 3.8 The Draft LPP2 contains a number of policies that seek to refine the requirements and locations for non-strategic development in Winchester District, to meet the level of growth set out in the adopted LPP1. The screening found that the majority of the policies and proposed site allocations are unlikely to have significant effects alone on European sites given the small scale of proposed development, distance from European sites and lack of environmental pathways.
- 3.9 All the site allocation policies require that any proposal for development has to accord with the strategic policies in LPP1 and development management policies in LPP2, which include the following:
- **LPP1 Policy DS1** (Development Strategy and Principles) requires development proposals to consider the importance of retaining environmental assets and the efficient use of scarce resources. It also requires that development proposals test whether infrastructure has adequate capacity to serve new development, or arrangements are made in a timely manner for appropriate increases in capacity. Development proposals are also required to consider impacts on the water environment are properly addressed.
 - **LPP1 Policy SH1** (Development Strategy for South Hampshire Urban Areas) seeks to protect important natural assets, particularly habitats of national and international importance.
 - **LPP1 Policy CP7** (Open Space, Sport and Recreation) seeks improvements in the open space network and in built recreation facilities within the District. Requires new housing development to make provision of public open space and built facilities.
 - **LPP1 Policy CP15** (Green Infrastructure) supports development proposals that maintain, protect and enhance the function of the integrity of the existing green infrastructure (GI) network in the District and at a sub-regional level, which includes strategic blue

and green corridors. It also supports the proposals identified through the PUSH GI Implementation Strategy.

- **LPP1 Policy CP16** (Biodiversity) supports development which maintains, protects and enhances biodiversity across the District, delivering a net gain in biodiversity and has regard to the following:
 - protecting sites of European importance from inappropriate development.
 - new development will be required to show how biodiversity can be retained, protected and enhanced through its design and implementation.
 - new development will be required to avoid adverse impacts, or if unavoidable, ensure impacts are appropriately mitigated, with compensation measures used as only a last resort. Development proposals will only be supported if the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the harm of the habitat and/or species.
 - maintaining a District wide network of local wildlife sites and corridors to support the integrity of the biodiversity network, prevent fragmentation, and enable biodiversity to respond and adapt to the impacts of climate change.
 - supporting and contributing to the targets set out in the District's Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) for priority habitats and species.
- **LPP1 Policy CP17** (Flooding, Flood Risk and the Water Environment) supports development that does not cause unacceptable deterioration to water quality or have unacceptable impact on water quantity through suitable pollution prevention measures, optimising water efficiency and taking opportunities to improve water quality where possible.
- **LPP2 Policy DM6** (Open Space Provision for New Developments) requires residential development of 15 dwellings and above to provide usable open space on site, in accordance with LPP1 Policy CP7. All sites should provide adequate amenity space which should contribute to maintaining or enhancing the environmental character of the area and include arrangements for the future management and maintenance of the area.
- **LPP2 Policy DM19** (Developments and Pollution) seeks to minimise pollution arising from new development.

3.10 The screening identified that there are some site allocations proposed in Winchester Town that are in close proximity to the River Itchen SAC, in particular the Silver Hill allocation (Policy WIN4) and Abbotts Barton (Policy WIN 9) which are both 50 m away from the SAC. The screening concluded that there is suitable mitigation provided through the LPP1 and LPP2 policies outlined above and available at the project level to ensure that there will be no significant effects alone on the River Itchen SAC.

3.11 Whilst not essential to the conclusion of no LSE for Policy WIN 9 (Abbotts Barton), the screening recommended that development should be avoided in the green open space in the north east of the proposed

area, which is the area of the site that is the closest to the River Itchen SAC. The small area of green open space should be retained with improvements sought to green infrastructure links with the surrounding countryside.

- 3.12 The screening found that the majority of the development management policies set out criteria for the consideration of planning applications and will therefore not result in development themselves. Development will occur through lower level planning applications, which will need to accord with the strategic policies in LPP1 and development management policies in LPP2 (set out above in Para 3.10). The mitigation provided through LPP1 and LPP2 policies and available at the project level will help to ensure that any lower level proposals for development do not have likely significant effects on any European sites either alone or in combination.

The screening concluded that none of the policies/allocations in the Draft Local Plan Part 2 are likely to have a significant effect alone on the identified European sites.

Effects Summary - the plan in combination

- 3.13 Other plans, programmes and projects that are being prepared and/or implemented in the area have the potential to have significant effects on European sites. Effects from different plans may interact leading to a cumulative, significant effect overall for the area's biodiversity interests. It is a key requirement of the Habitats Regulations that effects identified through the plan screening are considered for their potential in combination effects. Guidance recommends that the in combination assessment is undertaken in a targeted way, to ensure that the assessment is most effective, by focusing on those plans most likely to interact with the plan under consideration.
- 3.14 The plans and programmes listed below have formed the basis of the in combination test for this policy screening. This list is not exhaustive and represents the most relevant current plans (further details are provided in **Appendix 2**).
- South East River Basin Management Plan, December 2009
 - The Test and Itchen Catchment Abstraction Management Final Strategy, March 2006
 - The East Hampshire Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy, May 2003
 - The Arun and Western Streams Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy, April 2003
 - Portsmouth Water Draft Water Resources Management Plan, 2014
 - Southern Water – Water Resource Management Plan, 2013
 - Thames Water Revised Draft Water Resource Management Plan 2015-2040
 - Hampshire County Council Local Transport Plan 2011-2031

- Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton, New Forest National Park and South Downs National Park Minerals and Waste Plan 2013
- Basingstoke and Dean Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan 2014
- East Hampshire District Council and South Downs National Park Joint Core Strategy 2014 (Local Plan Part 1)
- Eastleigh Borough Council Revised Pre-Submission Local Plan 2011-2029
- Fareham Borough Council Core Strategy (adopted) August 2011
- Gosport Borough Council Local Plan 2011-2029 Publication Version
- Havant Borough Council Core Strategy (adopted) March 2011
- New Forest District Council Core Strategy (adopted) October 2009
- New Forest National Park Authority National Park Management Plan 2010-2015
- New Forest National Park Authority Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD (adopted) December 2010
- Portsmouth Plan (adopted) 2012
- Southampton City Council Core Strategy (adopted) January 2010
- Test Valley Borough Council Revised Local Plan DPD 2011-2029 Regulation 19 Pre-Submission
- Isle of Wight Council Core Strategy (including Waste and Minerals) and Development Management DPD (adopted) 2012
- Winchester District and South Downs National Park Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy (adopted) 2013

3.15 Visitor and disturbance studies have been carried out by the Solent Forum in response to concerns over the impact of recreational pressure on features of the Solent SPA, SAC and Ramsar Sites. The project has sought to assess the impacts of visitor numbers and activities on the survival rates of internationally designated wintering waterbirds throughout the Solent coast, and to establish the likely additional impact from the residents of development proposed in the area. The project has been divided into three phases, with Phases I and II now complete and Phase III ongoing.

3.16 The Phase I and II work concluded that there is likely to be a significant effect on the Solent SPAs from the additional recreational activity that will arise as a result from new housing development in the area. NE advised that the research, “represents the best available evidence, and therefore avoidance measures are required in order to ensure a significant effect, in combination, arising from new housing around the Solent, is avoided”⁴.

3.17 Following the publication of the Solent Disturbance and Mitigation Project Phase III Report (Towards an Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy) in May 2013 the relevant Council's, NE and partner conservation organisations have come together under the Solent

⁴http://www.solentforum.org/forum/sub_groups/Natural_Environment_Group/Disturbance_and_Mitigation_Project/Advice_to_PUSH_and_Solent_Forum%20310513.pdf

Recreation Mitigation Partnership (SRMP) to develop an Interim Solent Bird Disturbance Mitigation Strategy (ISBDMS). The mitigation strategy seeks to address the potential adverse in combination effects of proposed development in the area on the Solent SPAs. Winchester City Council has concurrently been developing guidance for applicants to set out the details of the emerging mitigation strategy and highlight the areas affected within the District.

- 3.18 The SRMP has determined that any new housing development within 5.6km of the Solent SPAs should be considered likely to have a significant in combination effect and will require mitigation. It has been determined that a standard contribution of £172 will be sought per new dwelling unit within the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership Charge Zone, which will rise in line with inflation and be updated on 01 April every year. The contributions will be used to implement the mitigation strategy and will enable housing proposals to meet the requirements of the Habitats Directive and Regulations.
- 3.19 The screening found that a number of the policies propose site allocations that either partially or entirely fall within the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership Charge Zone. These include the following:

Partially within Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership Charge Zone

- Policy BW2 – Martin Street Housing Allocation
- Policy BW3 – The Vineyard / Tangier Lane Housing Allocation

Entirely within Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership Charge Zone

- Policy WC1 – Morgan's Yard Mixed Use Allocation
- Policy WC2 – Clewers Lane Housing Allocation
- Policy WC3 – Sandy Lane Housing Allocation
- Policy WC4 – Forest Road (North and South) Housing Allocations
- Policy WK2 – Winchester Road Housing Allocation
- Policy WK3 – The Glebe Housing Allocation
- Policy SHUA1 – Whiteley Green Housing Allocation

- 3.20 A map is provided in Appendix 4 that shows the area of Winchester District that falls within the charge zone as well as the site allocations proposed through the Draft LPP2.
- 3.21 In line with the emerging Interim Solent Bird Disturbance Mitigation Strategy, (July 2014), the screening found that a contribution of £172 will be required for each new housing unit that falls within the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership Charge Zone. It should be noted that as set out in the Winchester Guidance to Applicants, this will not be necessary if the developer can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Council and Natural England that it will provide alternative measures which will fully mitigate the impact of the development. The screening found that as long as the standard contribution is provided for each new housing unit within the charge zone or the developer

demonstrates that it will provide alternative measures to fully mitigate the impact of development (to the satisfaction of the Council and NE), it can be concluded that the policies set out above will not have likely significant in combination effects on the Solent SPAs.

- 3.22 The screening also found that Little Park Farm (Policy SHUA2) falls within the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership Charge Zone. The site is part of a larger allocation for employment uses that extends beyond the administrative boundary of Winchester District westwards into Fareham Borough. Fareham Borough Council is taking this allocation forward into its new Local Plan. Based on the emerging Interim Solent Bird Disturbance Mitigation Strategy, as only employment development is being proposed it is considered that it will not contribute to increased levels recreational activity and is therefore not likely to have a significant in combination effect on the Solent SPAs. Policy SHUA2 requires any proposal for development to accord with the strategic policies in LPP1 and development management policies in LPP2. The mitigation provided through LPP1 and LPP2 policies and available at the project will help to ensure that proposed development will not have likely significant in combination effects on any European sites.
- 3.23 The HRA for the LPP1⁵ concluded that there would not be adverse in combination effects on the integrity of European sites as a result of the proposed distribution and overall level of growth proposed in the Plan area (as well as surrounding areas). The Draft LPP2 does not propose any additional growth on top of what is already proposed through the adopted LPP1. It is considered that suitable mitigation is provided through strategic policies in LPP1 and development management policies in LPP2 (set out above in Para 3.10) and available at the project level to ensure that there will be no significant in combination effects on European sites.

The screening concluded that none of the policies/allocations in the Draft Local Plan Part 2 are likely to have a significant in combination effect on the identified European sites; therefore, an Appropriate Assessment is not required.

⁵ HRA (AA) of Submission Core Strategy June 2012.

4.0 HRA CONCLUSIONS

HRA Summary

- 4.1 This report outlines the methods used and the findings arising from the Habitats Regulations Assessment screening for the Winchester City Council's Draft Local Plan Part 2. The HRA of the Draft LPP2 has been undertaken in accordance with current guidance and good practice and has been informed by the findings of the HRA for the adopted LPP1 as well as the findings of the Solent Disturbance and Mitigation Project.
- 4.2 The screening considered the likely significant effects on sixteen European sites within the influence the plan. It was assessed that the majority of policies/ allocations were unlikely to have a significant effect on European sites alone given the location and scale of proposed development. Some allocations are proposed in close proximity to the River Itchen SAC; however, the screening concluded that there is suitable mitigation provided through strategic policies in LPP1 and development management policies in LPP2 and available at the project level to ensure that there will be no significant effects on European sites.
- 4.3 The screening found that nine of the site allocations identified to deliver new housing fall within the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership Charge Zone. It was concluded that as long as the standard contribution of £172 is provided for each new housing unit within the charge zone, in line with the emerging Interim Solent Bird Disturbance Mitigation Strategy, then the development proposed will not have likely significant in combination effects on the Solent SPAs.
- 4.4 The HRA for the LPP1⁶ concluded that there would not be adverse in combination effects on the integrity of European sites as a result of the proposed distribution and overall level of growth proposed in the Plan area (as well as surrounding areas). The Draft LPP2 does not propose any additional growth on top of what is already proposed through the adopted LPP1. It is considered that suitable mitigation is provided through strategic policies in LPP1 and development management policies in LPP2 and available at the project level to ensure that there will be no significant in combination effects on European sites.
- 4.5 The screening concluded that none of the policies/allocations in the Draft Local Plan Part 2 are likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination on the identified European sites; therefore, an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
- 4.6 These findings will be subject to consultation comments and advice from NE and wider stakeholders.

⁶ HRA (AA) of Submission Core Strategy June 2012.