



Warwickshire County Council

Warwickshire Local Transport Plan

Habitats Regulations Assessment – Stage 1

Screening and Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment



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Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment

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Habitats sites Details, Including Qualifying Features and Conservation Objectives

1 Introduction

- 1.1.1. The Local Transport Act (2000) as amended by the Local Transport Act (2008) requires Warwickshire County Council (WCC) to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP). The fourth WCC Local Transport Plan (LTP4) proposes an approach for addressing current and future transport issues in the County.
- 1.1.2. WSP has been appointed by WCC to undertake the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for LTP4. Stage 1 (Screening), as presented within this report, represents the first step in the HRA process. The focus of the HRA process is on the potential for adverse effects as a result of the LTP policies on the integrity of European nature conservation sites.
- 1.1.3. Under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017¹ (as amended) (the 'Habitats Regulations') 'Competent Authorities' must assess plans and projects for their potential to cause Likely Significant Effects (LSE) on Habitats sites. Where the plan or project may lead to LSE it must be subject to an Appropriate Assessment to determine whether there will be adverse effects to any Habitats sites. Any Plan or project that would lead to adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats site(s) cannot be permitted without meeting strict additional tests.
- 1.1.4. Stage 1 (Screening) comprises a desk-based review of relevant information, including biodiversity information and relevant HRA reporting (relating to other relevant plans and projects).
- 1.1.5. This exercise identifies all relevant Habitats sites where LSE could occur and the information captured here will form the evidence base for this Stage 1 HRA (Screening) and part of any subsequent HRA stages (including, if necessary, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA) (see Methodology Section 2).

1.2 Report Framework

- 1.2.1. This HRA screening report has been produced alongside the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) that incorporates the requirement of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the LTP4 and associated plans.
 - 1.2.2. At a screening level, this report will ensure that all HRA-related considerations are fully integrated into the Local Transport Plan documents as it is developed.
 - 1.2.3. This report details:
-

¹ The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/1012/contents/made> (Accessed 17/08/2022)

- the HRA process and methodology for assessment;
- the relevant Habitats sites within the Zone of Influence (ZOI) for the Local Transport Plan policies;
- the challenges of the Local Transport Plan strategies and how these may impact upon relevant Habitats sites;
- the screening of LSE (Stage 1) of the LTP4 policies, and;
- The findings of the Appropriate Assessment, noting that at a Plan stage this is high-level, and a degree of uncertainty remains which limits the extent to which such projects could rely on this AA without further assessment.

1.2.4. It should be noted that this HRA has been based solely upon the LTP4 and does not include a detailed analysis of any projects that may arise as a result of the LTP4.

1.3 The WCC Local Transport Plan

1.3.1. The LTP4 is being developed to allow WCC to address new and emerging transport needs. The LTP4 will identify transport policies and strategies needed to manage and maintain Warwickshire's transport network in a safe, sustainable and integrated way.

1.3.2. The LTP4 is being developed to support the three Priority Outcomes of WCC's Council Plan²:

- Vibrant Economy and Places - Right jobs, training, future skills, education, infrastructure and places;
- Best Lives - Communities and individuals supported to live safely, healthily, happily and independently; and
- Sustainable Futures - Adapting to and mitigating climate change and meeting Net Zero commitments.

1.3.3. The LTP4 aims to have a flexible, tailored approach to transport changes, and deliver appropriate policies for future impacts upon transport, for example through climate change and decarbonisation of the transport sector, as well as societal changes.

1.3.4. The four key themes for the LTP4 are environment, economy, place and wellbeing, with all policies working together to address the challenges associated with these themes. The vision for outcomes for each theme is as follows:

- Environment - Travel choices which contribute to Carbon Net Zero and leave no negative impacts on our environment;
- Economy - A modern, flexible economy which is supported and strengthened by transport options;

² Warwickshire County Council, Council Plan 2022-2027

- Place - Urban and rural areas, and the connections between them, where transport choices work sustainably with the local environment; and
- Wellbeing - A range of transport options which provide safety, comfort and health for users and those affected by transport.

1.3.5. The LTP proposes a series of strategies (and policies) to guide future decision making. These policies are detailed in Table 1-1 and work together to create the LTP4 and are grouped under seven strategies that form the LTP4 (see below):

- Core Strategy;
- Active Travel Strategy;
- Public Transport Strategy;
- Motor Vehicles Strategy;
- Managing Space Strategy;
- Safer Travel Strategy; and
- Freight Strategy.

Table 1-1 - LTP4 Strategy elements considered in the HRA

Strategy element Number	Title
KP1	Engaging with communities to provide transport options which recognise the unique travel needs of Warwickshire's different places
KP2	Transport interventions which align with our Council Vision, government policy and as many of our four key strategy themes as possible
KP3	Decarbonising transport and transport related infrastructure
KP4	A flexible approach to policy development in response to a changing Warwickshire
KP5	Data and evidence-led monitoring and evaluation of our transport interventions
AT1	Improving accessibility and attractiveness of active travel options
AT2	Better, safer routes for walking and cycling
AT3	Information and Promotion
PT1	Working with partner organisations to improve public transport
PT2	Making our towns and villages and the routes that connect them better Improved accessibility and attractiveness of public transport as a travel Choice
PT3	Information and ticketing
PT4	New developments and connectivity to public transport services
PT5	Community Rail Partnership:
MV1	Using our influence with partners to provide a modern fit-for-purpose route network
MV2	Increased use of technology in network monitoring
MV3	Maximising funding opportunities
MV4	Making our towns and villages and the routes that connect them better places to be

Strategy element Number	Title
MS1	Increasing sustainable development and travel
MS2	Travel options which are accessible to all
MS3	Prioritising use of space to promote sustainable travel options
MS4	Robust data-led decision making in assessing new developments
MS5	Construction to best available standards
MS6	Influencing Planning Authorities and Developers
ST1	Working with Partners to deliver road safety improvements
ST2	Evidence-led road safety engineering interventions
ST3	Wide-ranging community engagement to improve road safety
ST4	Road engineering design to align with appropriate quality standards
ST5	Promoting safety in all travel choices
FT1	Promote shift from road to rail and active travel modes
FT2	Facilitate the transition to alternative fuels for freight vehicles
FT3	Support efforts to deliver a better network of lorry parking in the county
FT4	Support and deliver initiatives that improve journey time reliability for freight movements
FT5	Reduce the impact of 'last mile' deliveries
FT6	Reduce incidents involving freight vehicles
FT7	Encourage freight vehicles to use appropriate routes

2 Relevant policy, legislation, case law and guidance

2.1 Legislative Background

- 2.1.1. Under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the 'Habitats Regulations') 'Competent Authorities' must assess Plans and projects for their potential to cause LSE on Habitats sites. Where the plan or project may lead to LSE it must be subject to an AA to determine whether there will be adverse effects to any Habitats sites. Any plan or project that would lead to adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats site(s) cannot be permitted without meeting strict additional tests.
- 2.1.2. Defra guidance³ states that Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) in the UK no longer form part of the EU's Natura 2000 ecological network. The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 have created a National Site Network (NSN) on land and at sea, including both the inshore and offshore marine areas in the UK. The national site network includes:
- existing SACs and SPAs; and
 - new SACs and SPAs designated under these Regulations.
- 2.1.3. Any references to Natura 2000 in the 2017 Regulations and in guidance now refers to the new NSN.
- 2.1.4. It is a matter of Government policy (NPPF paragraph 118) that sites designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention for their internationally important wetlands (commonly known as Ramsar sites) are also considered in the same way as Habitats sites. Together, these sites are referred to as 'Habitats sites' in the NPPF and in this report.
- 2.1.5. Other site designations of national or local importance are not assessed by the HRA process, but with respect to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) these designations largely overlap with European or Ramsar sites.
- 2.1.6. Maintaining a coherent network of protected sites with overarching conservation objectives is still required in order to:
- fulfil the commitment made by government to maintain environmental protections; and
 - continue to meet our international legal obligations, such as the Bern Convention, the Oslo and Paris Conventions (OSPAR), Bonn and Ramsar Conventions.

³ Defra Policy Paper Changes to the Habitats Regulations 2017 (Published 1 January 2021). Available online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-the-habitats-regulations-2017/changes-to-the-habitats-regulations-2017> Accessed on [16/08/22]

2.1.7. This report presents information to enable the screening assessment required as part of Stage 1 of the HRA process, to establish whether or not the WCC Local Transport Plan will have an LSE upon the NSN and Habitats sites.

2.1.8. The principle of Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) of features within Habitats sites as set out in the original Habitats Directive⁴ is central to this assessment. The use of the term FCS is not amended by The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 and the term still has the meaning given by Article 1 of the Habitats Directive. Defra guidance⁵ does however note that

“an appropriate authority is only responsible for managing and adapting the national site network to secure FCS of a feature proportionately to the importance of the UK within the feature’s natural range”.

2.1.9. The Habitats Directive provides further interpretation of the meaning of ‘favourable conservation status’ within Article 1 parts a, e and i as below.

‘(a) conservation means a series of measures required to maintain or restore the natural habitats and the populations of species of wild fauna and flora at a favourable status as defined in (e) and (i);.....

(e) conservation status of a natural habitat means the sum of the influences acting on a natural habitat and its typical species that may affect its long-term natural distribution, structure and functions as well as the long-term survival of its typical species within the territory referred to in Article 2. The conservative status of a natural habitat will be taken as "favourable" when:

- *its natural range and areas it covers within that range are stable or increasing, and*
- *the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and*
- *the conservation status of its typical species is favourable as defined in (i);*

(i) conservation status of a species means the sum of the influences acting on the species concerned that may affect the long-term distribution and abundance of its populations within the territory referred to in Article 2; The conservation status will be taken as "favourable" when:

⁴ The Habitats Directive, European Commission. Available online: https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/index_en.htm Accessed on [06/07/22]

⁵ Defra Policy Paper Changes to the Habitats Regulations 2017 (Published 1 January 2021). Available online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-the-habitats-regulations-2017/changes-to-the-habitats-regulations-2017> Accessed [06/07/22]

- *population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and*
- *the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and*
- *there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis’.*

2.2 Stages of Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.2.1. Guidance on the Habitats Directive⁶ sets out the step-wise approach which should be followed to enable Competent Authorities to discharge their duties under the Habitats Directive and provides further clarity on the interpretation of Articles 6 (3) and 6 (4). As set out in Regulation 3 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 where Natura 2000 sites are referenced in previously issued guidance, this should be interpreted as relating to the NSN, but does not otherwise affect guidance as it applied before EU exit day.

- **Stage 1: Screening:** the process which initially identifies the likely impacts upon a NSN site of a plan or project, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant.
- **Stage 2: AA:** the detailed consideration of the impact on the integrity of the NSN sites of the plan or project, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, with respect to the site’s conservation objectives and its structure and function. This is to determine whether there will be adverse effects on the integrity of the site. Specific guidance on this stage and stage 1 is provided in Defra guidance⁷.
- **Stage 3: Assessment of Alternative Solutions:** the processes that examine alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the plans or projects that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the NSN site.
- **Stage 4: Assessment where no Alternative Solutions Exist and where Adverse Impacts Remain:** an assessment of whether the development is necessary for Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) and, if so, of the compensatory measures needed to maintain the overall coherence of the NSN.

⁶ European Commission (2000). Managing Natura 2000 Sites, the provisions of Article 6 of the ‘Habitats’ Directive 92/43/EEC. Available online: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/provision_of_art6_en.pdf. Accessed [17/08/2022]

⁷ Defra Guidance: Habitat’s regulations assessments: protecting a Habitats site. How a competent authority must decide if a plan or project proposal that affects a Habitats site can go ahead. Feb 2021. Available online: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/habitats-regulations-assessments-protecting-a-european-site> Accessed [17/08/22]

2.3 Relevant Case Law

- 2.3.1. There are a number of recent Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) rulings which are relevant to this assessment, and these are given for information in Appendix A.
- 2.3.2. As the general provisions for the protection of Habitats sites and the procedural requirements to undertake HRA to assess the implications of Plans or Projects for Habitats sites remain, this previous case law established prior to the UK's exit from the EU is considered to apply unless superseded by the judgement of an appropriate UK court.

2.4 National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.4.1. In relation to biodiversity and the SBC Local Plan, the following paragraphs in the document are relevant:
- Paragraph 170, which states 'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
 - a) *protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
 - b) *recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;*
 - d) *remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate; and*
 - e) *preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans'.*
 - Paragraph 171 which states:

'Plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.'
 - Paragraph 174, which states '*Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: ...e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely*

affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans...;

- Paragraph 185, which states ‘*Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development....’;*

2.5 Relevant Guidance

Natural England’s Internal Guidance

- 2.5.1. In June 2018, Natural England published guidance⁸ on their approach to advising competent authorities on the assessment of road traffic emissions under the Habitats Regulations. The document draws upon Annex F of the DMRB (now withdrawn) but takes into account the Wealden Judgement and need to assess ‘in-combination’ effects on Habitats sites as a result of air pollution.
- 2.5.2. The guidance provides a framework around the assessment of road traffic emissions and subsequent effects on Habitats sites. Notably:
- Step 1 – Does the proposal give rise to emissions which are likely to reach a Habitats site;
 - Step 2 – Are there qualifying features within 200m of a road sensitive to air pollution;
 - Step 3 – Could the sensitive qualifying features of the site be exposed to emissions; and
 - Step 4 – Application of the Screening Thresholds.
 - Step 4a: apply the threshold alone;
 - Step 4b: apply the threshold in-combination with emissions from other road traffic plans and projects; and
 - Step 4c: apply the threshold in-combination with emissions from other non-road plans and projects.

⁸ Natural England (June 2018) Natural England’s approach to advising competent authorities on the assessment of road traffic emissions under the Habitats Regulations. Available online: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4720542048845824>: Accessed [18/08/2022]

- Step 5: Advise on the need for Appropriate Assessment where thresholds are exceeded, either alone or in-combination.

2.5.3. The relevant thresholds in relation to Step 4 are as follows:

- Changes in AADT of 1000 vehicles a day (or more); and/or
- Changes of 1% of the relevant Critical Load and/or Level as a result of the Plan/Project.

IAQM's Guide to the Assessment of Air Quality Impacts on Designated Nature Conservation Sites

2.5.4. The Guide to the Assessment of Air Quality Impacts on Designated Nature Conservation Sites⁹ provides advice for ecologists relating to air quality assessments (AQAs), to evaluate the effects of air pollution on habitats and species, by increasing their understanding of the information provided by air quality specialists. The Guide focusses on the AQA process and no specific detail on the subsequent stage of the overall process, i.e. the assessment of the effects that air quality impacts may have on habitats and species, is provided in this guidance.

Updated DMRB (LA 115 – Habitats Regulations Assessment)

2.5.5. DMRB document LA 115 - Habitats Regulations Assessment¹⁰ states that HRA shall include systematic collection, assessment, and reporting of the implications of highways projects on Habitats sites and shall be implemented forthwith on all projects involving HRA on the motorway and all-purpose trunk roads. In addition to identifying the Habitats site designations to be considered within HRA and the format of reporting, the document sets out (principles and purpose) that:

- The precautionary principle shall be applied in reporting through all HRA stages.
- Recourse to the precautionary principle may be relevant when there:
 1. are "potentially negative effects"; or
 2. is "insufficiency of the data, which makes it impossible to determine with sufficient certainty the risk in question".
- Site conservation objectives should prevail where there is uncertainty.

⁹ Holman et al (2020). *A guide to the assessment of air quality impacts on designated nature conservation sites – v1.1* Available online: <https://iaqm.co.uk/text/guidance/air-quality-impacts-on-nature-sites-2020.pdf> Accessed [18/08/2022]

¹⁰ Highways England (November 2019) Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, LA115 – Habitats Regulations Assessment. Available at: <https://standardsforhighways.co.uk/dmrB/search/e2fdab58-d293-4af7-b737-b55e08e045ae> [Accessed 18/08/2022].

- Adverse effects should be reported in the HRA in the absence of evidence to the contrary.

CIEEM Advisory Note: Ecological Assessment of Air Quality Impacts

2.5.6. This guidance from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management ¹¹ is intended to take ecologists (and air quality specialists) through the issues that they should consider in order to make an informed judgement as to the ecological effects of changes in pollution concentrations and deposition rates. The approaches set out build on the advice and guidance from Natural England and IAQM, but focus on the ecologist role to interpret the numerical output of air quality assessments to reach evidence-based conclusions on ecological significance.

Other relevant guidance and policy:

- Chapman, C. and Kite, B. (2021). Guidance on Decision-Making Thresholds for Air Pollution. JNCC Report No.696 (Main Report), JNCC, Peterborough, ISSN 0963-8091 (Note: Plan-level limitation of use is set out in this document; advice on Zol has been applied)
- Department for Communities and Local Government (August 2006). Planning for the protection of Habitats sites: Appropriate Assessment. Guidance for Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents. Draft.
- English Nature (2006). Draft Guidance – The Assessment of Regional Spatial Strategies and Sub-regional strategies under the provisions of the Habitats Regulations
- European Commission (2000). Managing Natura 2000 Sites, the provisions of Article 6 of the ‘Habitats’ Directive 92/43/EEC. Available online: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/provision_of_art6_en.pdf. Accessed [16/08/2022]
- Highways England (2019) Design Manual for Roads and Bridges Sustainability and Environment Appraisal LA 105 Air quality (formerly HA 207/07, IAN 170/12, IAN 174/13, IAN 175/13, part of IAN 185/15) Revision 0
- Scottish Natural Heritage (January 2015). Habitats Regulations Appraisal of Plans Guidance for Plan-Making Bodies In Scotland Version 3.0 originally prepared by David Tyldesley And Associates;
- Tyldesley, D. and Chapman, C. (2013). The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook (July 2020 Edition) UK DTA Publications Ltd.

¹¹ CIEEM (January 2021) *Advisory Note: Ecological Assessment of Air Quality Impacts*. Available online: <https://cieem.net/resource/advisory-note-ecological-assessment-of-air-quality-impacts/#:~:text=Advisory%20Note%3A%20Ecological%20Assessment%20of%20Air%20Quality%20Impacts,.of%20changes%20in%20pollution%20concentrations%20and%20deposition%20rates> Accessed [18/08/22].

- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat. Ramsar (Iran), 2 February 1971. UN Treaty Series No. 14583. As amended by the Paris Protocol, 3 December 1982, and Regina Amendments, 28 May 1987.
- Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) (2016). SAC and SPA Standard Data Forms and Ramsar Information Sheets. Available online: <https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/uk-protected-area-datasets-for-download/> Accessed [16/08/2022].

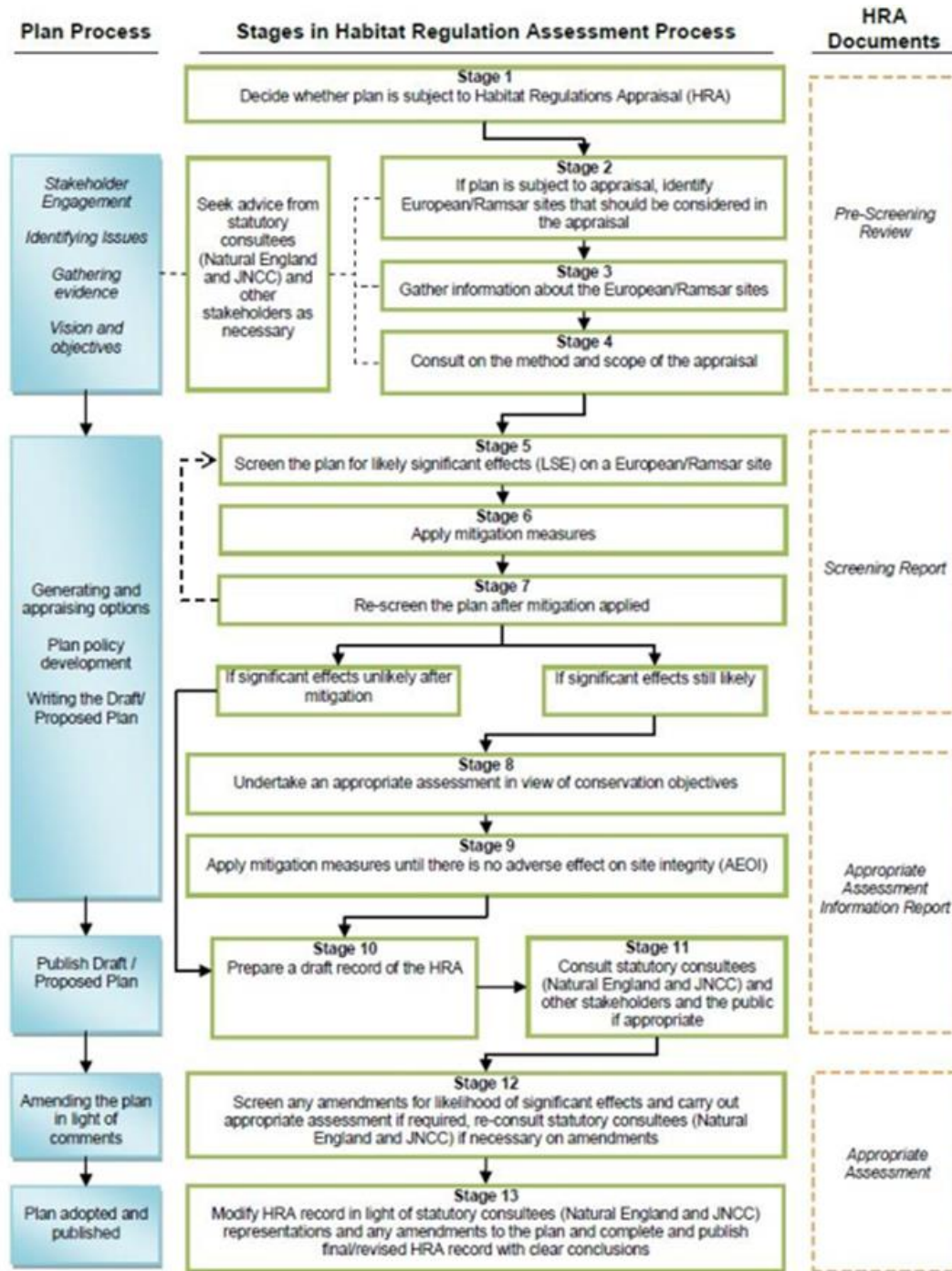
HRA Policy Guidance

- Council of the European Union (1992). Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Available online: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=CELEX:31992L0043>. Accessed: [12/04/2022]
- Council of the European Union (2009). Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds. Available online: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV:ev0024>. Accessed: [16/08/2022]
- Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) (2019). National Planning Policy Framework.
- European Communities (2007). Guidance document on Article 6 (4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC; Available online: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/guidance_art6_4_en.pdf Accessed: [16/08/2022]
- Her Majesty's Stationery Office (2017). The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017/490.

3 Methodology

- 3.1.1. This first part of this document presents the findings of the Screening undertaken as part of Stage 1 of the HRA process to establish whether or not the likely impacts of the LTP4 could have LSE on Habitats sites.
- 3.1.2. This document provides this information by undertaking the following steps:
 - determining whether the plan is directly connected with or necessary for the management of applicable Habitats sites;
 - describing the project/plan impacts that may have the potential for significant effects upon applicable Habitats sites; and
 - describing the potential pathways of impacts, both alone and in-combination with other plans and projects.
- 3.1.3. The precautionary principle is applied at all stages of the HRA process. In relation to screening this means that projects and plans where effects are considered likely and those where uncertainty exists as to whether effects are likely to be significant must be subject to the second stage of the HRA process, AA.
- 3.1.4. The first part of the review is to establish whether the LTP4 should be subject to HRA.
- 3.1.5. The second part comprises the information gathering stage and in particular the identification of Habitats sites which will likely require consideration and on which background information is collated. This information includes the qualifying features of these sites, the conservation objectives and the sensitivities of those sites.
- 3.1.6. As part of the information gathering stage, consideration is given to the air quality sensitivities of these Habitats sites, specifically their qualifying features, to changes in both NO_x and NH₃ concentrations and N Dep and then consideration of these changes in relation to the relevant Critical Levels and Critical Loads.
- 3.1.7. Critical Loads and Levels are metrics used for assessing the risk of air pollution impacts to sensitive vegetation and ecosystems.

Figure 1 - Screening and Appropriate Assessment Stages in the HRA process (after SNH, 2015)



3.1.8. Critical Levels are used to estimate the exposure of sensitive vegetation and ecosystems to some important airborne pollutants, below which significant harmful effects are not expected to occur. They are not habitat specific, as with Critical Loads, but have been set to cover broad vegetation types. These levels have been adopted by the European Union and the United Nations Economic Commissions for Europe (UNECE) and are used as regulatory standards and are expressed in units of $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (micrograms per cubic metre).

- 3.1.9. In addition to the direct effect of pollutant concentrations in the air, vegetation can also be affected by the deposition of pollutants and particles onto both the ground and vegetation. Close to roads, nitrogen deposition can be of concern for sensitive ecological sites as it can result in a variety of adverse effects depending on the habitats present (e.g. interfering with photosynthesis, increasing acidification, altering species composition etc).
- 3.1.10. The final element of the information gathering stage is to review the availability of relevant data sets and sources which will form the evidence base of the assessment of the Local Plan policies alone and in-combination with other relevant plans and projects. Information on sources of HRA guidance are given below and the legislative and policy background including the relevant CJEU rulings, are given in Appendix A.

3.2 In-Combination Assessment

- 3.2.1. It is a requirement of the Habitats Regulations to consider the effects of projects or plans “in combination” at the screening stage. Articles 24, 63 and 105 of the Habitats Regulations require Natural England and other competent authorities to consider the effects of plans or projects alone and in combination with other plans or projects. The ‘in-combination’ requirement is undertaken in order to make sure that prior to their authorisation the effects of numerous proposals, which alone would not result in a significant effect, are further assessed to determine whether their combined effect would be significant enough to require more detailed assessment.
- 3.2.2. The landmark Waddenzee judgment provides a clear interpretation of the legislation. Paragraphs 53 and 54 of the Judgment state:
- 3.2.3. “according to the wording of that provision [Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive] an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site concerned of the plan or project must precede its approval and take into account the cumulative effects which result from the combination of the plan or project with other plans or projects in view of the sites conservation objectives. Such an assessment therefore implies that all the aspects of the plan or project which can, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, affect those objectives must be identified in the light of the best scientific knowledge in the field.”
- 3.2.4. Table 3-1 outlines the types of plans and projects that should be considered in an in-combination assessment:

Table 3-1 - Types of plans and projects considered at “In-combination” assessment

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The incomplete or non-implemented parts of plans or projects that have already commenced;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plans or projects given consent or given effect but not yet started;

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plans or projects currently subject to an application for consent or proposed to be given effect;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Projects that are the subject of an outstanding appeal;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing plans or projects that are the subject of regular review;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any draft plans being prepared by any public body;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any proposed plans or projects published for consultation prior to application;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Projects being proposed or being undertaken by a competent authority itself which require no external authorisation.

3.2.5. With reference to Section 2.2, case law and methodology relating to HRA has changed rapidly over recent years. One of the most notable changes as a result of CJEU rulings has been the clarification that mitigation measures cannot be included in HRA Stage 1 (Screening). As this was previously a common practice, many HRAs will have concluded no LSE on Habitats sites, based on the likely effectiveness of mitigation measures. The outcome of this is that preceding plan-level HRAs can be unreliable in terms of adopted conclusions of ‘no LSE’.

3.2.6. Based on this complexity and need for consistency in the assumptions relating to mitigation, a precautionary approach has been adopted when considering the HRA conclusions of overlapping plans and projects in-combination.

4 Review Results

4.1 Is HRA required?

4.1.1. The review looked to specifically answer each of the questions set out in the HRA review methodology. It should be noted that the level of detail of the Local Plan only allows for an anticipated assessment of the need for HRA based on experience of similar plans and projects (see Table 4-1 below).

Table 4-1 – Is HRA required?

	Question	Response
1	Is the whole of the plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Habitats site for nature conservation purposes?	No
2	Is the plan a 'strategic development plan' or 'local development plan' or 'supplementary guidance' or a core path plan or a revision thereof?	Yes
3	Does the plan provide a framework for deciding applications for project consents and / or does it influence decision makers on the outcome of applications for project consents?	No
4	Does the plan contain a programme, or policies, or proposals which could affect one or more particular Habitats site?	Yes
5	Is the plan a general statement of policy showing only the general political will or intention of the plan-making body, and no effect on any particular Habitats site can reasonably be predicted?	No

4.1.2. When the answer to either questions (1) or (5) is 'no', but the answer to any of questions (2), (3) or (4) is 'yes', then the requirement for further HRA is identified.

4.1.3. In this case, the answers to questions (1), (3) and (5) are 'no', while the answers to questions (2) and (4) are all 'yes'. It is therefore confirmed based on the availability of current information that the LTP4 does therefore require HRA.

5 Review of Habitats sites

- 5.1.1. The following section provides a summary of the results of the review of Habitats sites data which will form the baseline for subsequent stages of HRA.
- 5.1.2. It is necessary to consider all the Habitats sites that form part of the national site network (SACs, SPAs and proposed or candidate SPAs or SACs, expanded by the NPPF to include Ramsar sites) within a broad area or zone of influence of the LTP4 and the specific policies therein.

5.2 Habitats sites

- 5.2.1. Relevant Habitats sites include all those that fall within a potential Zone of Influence (Zol) for the relevant policies and visions of the LTP4. The Zol is defined by the potential effects arising from the project or plan and the available pathways for those effects to reach and impact the interest features of Habitats sites.
- 5.2.2. In order to identify all strategic corridors where potential direct, indirect and in-combination effects could reasonably be considered possible, an initial buffer of 10km around the WCC boundary was applied. The premise is that 10km represents the average trip length from the National Transport Survey, as included in JNCC guidance for air quality (Chapman, C. and Kite, B. 2021) and traffic data for this buffer will be consulted and used in any detailed analysis of implementation schemes at future dates. This buffer was extended to 30km where bats are the qualifying features of a SAC, cSAC or pSAC.
- 5.2.3. Following consultation with Natural England, it was requested that the Zol be extended to include Habitats sites with potential hydrological pathway connection and/or functionally linked land which in the opinion of Natural England could be impacted by implementation of the LTP4.
- 5.2.4. These additional Habitats sites comprised The Severn Estuary SAC and Ramsar Site, and the Humber Estuary SAC.
- 5.2.5. Natural England also requested the inclusion of the Cannock Extension Canal SAC within the assessment for air quality effects due to its location within 200m of a major road (the A5) that could be impacted by LTP measures.
- 5.2.6. There are three further SACs within 30km radius however, none of these are designated for having bats as qualifying features and hence these have not been included for screening assessment.
- 5.2.7. A total of six Habitats sites therefore lie within the potential Zol for the LTP4 which consists of five SAC Sites and one Ramsar site.
- 5.2.8. The Habitats sites included within the assessment are listed in Table 5-1, their locations shown in Figure 1 and details provided in Appendix B.
- 5.2.9.

Table 5-1 - Habitats sites within the Zol

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	Ramsar
River Mease	Severn Estuary
Humber Estuary	
Cannock Extension Canal	
Ensor's Pool	
Severn Estuary	

- 5.2.10. The reasons for designation of these sites and their known vulnerabilities are also summarised in Appendix B, which has been collated from the Natura 2000 standard data forms (JNCC, 2016) and Site Improvement Plans (Natural England, publication years vary).
- 5.2.11. With regard for the qualifying features and information on vulnerability of the sites detailed in Appendix B, the broad conservation objectives for SACs and SPAs are to:
- 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.*
- 5.2.12. Specific conservation objectives for Ramsar sites are not currently available.

5.3 Critical Loads and Levels

- 5.3.1. The relevant Critical Levels for NO_x and NH₃ relating to the protection of vegetation and ecosystems are summarised in Table 5-2.

Table 5-2 - Relevant NO_x and NH₃ Critical Levels for the Protection of Vegetation and Ecosystems

Pollutant	Concentration (µg/m ³)	Averaging Period
Nitrogen oxides (NO _x)	30	Annual Mean
	75	24-hours

Ammonia (NH ₃)	3 (uncertainty of 2 - 4µg/m ³ for higher plants)	Annual Mean
	1 (where lichens and bryophytes are present)	Annual Mean

Baseline Conditions

- 5.3.2. Baseline conditions for those Habitats sites that are located within 200m of roads that may experience a change in traffic flow/composition/alignment as a result of the LTP are presented below.
- 5.3.3. Existing background annual mean NO_x values for 2022 within the study area have been taken from the national maps provided on the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)¹², where background concentrations of NO_x have been mapped at a grid resolution of 1x1km for the whole of the UK. These indicate that in 2022 the Critical Level for NO_x will be easily met in all grid squares containing the identified Habitats sites. Notably:
- The estimated background concentration for grid square 434500_290500, the grid square containing Ensor’s Pool SAC, was 13.5µg/m³.
 - The estimated background concentrations for the grid squares containing the River Mease SAC ranged from 8.8 – 12.7µg/m³ (again considerably below the objective level).
 - The estimated background concentrations for the grid squares containing the Cannock Extension Canal SAC ranged from 16.1 – 17.7µg/m³.
- 5.3.4. A review of annual mean ammonia (NH₃) concentrations from APIS indicates that the maximum concentrations predicted within Ensor’s Pool SAC, Cannock Extension Canal SAC and the River Mease SAC are below the relevant Critical Level based on the habitats present (3µg/m³), where a Critical Level has been identified.
- 5.3.5. Data obtained from APIS indicates that average rates of N deposition within the grid squares containing Cannock Extension Canal SAC range between 11.7 kgN/ha/yr and 12.3kgN/ha/yr. These rates are considerably above the relevant Critical Level based on the habitats present (3-10KgN/ha/yr).
- 5.3.6. As no Critical Loads have been established in relation to N deposition for both Ensor’s Pool SAC and the River Mease SAC, it has not been possible to compare the maximum N Dep values to the relevant Critical Loads for the habitats present within these sites. Notwithstanding the above, advice will be sought at an appropriate time regarding the relevant Critical Loads to be applied to Ensor’s Pool SAC and the River Mease SAC.

¹² <https://laqm.defra.gov.uk/review-and-assessment/tools/background-maps.html>



However, as presented within Table 5-3, air pollution is not considered as a pressure or threat to either of these SAC sites. Furthermore, based on previous discussions with Natural England for other aquatic habitats, potential effects on the Habitats sites due to changes in air quality are considered low risk (as N does not accumulate within a water environment in the same way it would up on leaved vegetation). N.B. This same rationale is not applicable to Cannock Extension Canal SAC due to the presence of *Luronium natans* (floating water plantain), which could potentially experience an accumulation of N .

Table 5-3 - Pressures and threats listed on Habitats sites SIPs¹³

Impacts highlighted as red should be given primary consideration in screening and appropriate assessment of the LTP4 Strategies, and those highlighted green are less likely to be considerations in screening and appropriate assessment of the LTP4 Strategies (note that abbreviations are those pressures and threats listed in the JNCC data sheet for the respective Habitats site).

Site Name	Air pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition	Water pollution	Hydrological changes	Public access/ disturbance	Habitat fragmentation	Habitat Connectivity	Physical Modification	Coastal squeeze	Change in land management	Inappropriate Management	Offsite habitat availability/ management	Invasive species	Direct impact from third party	Military	Fisheries: marine and estuarine	Forestry and woodland management	Under grazing	Wildfire/ arson	Other
River Mease SAC	-	P	P – Drainage P – Water abstraction	-	-	-	-	-	-	P- Inappropriate weirs, dams and other structures ¹⁴	-	P	-	-	-	-	-	-	P - Siltation
Ensor's Pool SAC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	P – Changes in species distributions ¹⁵
Severn Estuary SAC	P	P/T	-	P/T	-	-	T	P/T	P/T	-	-	-	-	-	P	-	-	-	P/T – Impact of Developments ¹⁶ T – Changes in species distributions P/T – Marine consents and permits: Minerals and Waste P/T – Marine Litter T – Marine pollution incidents
Severn Estuary Ramsar	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	The RIS indicates dredging, erosion and recreational/ tourism disturbance as pressures.
Humber Estuary SAC	P	P/T	-	P	-	-	-	T	-	-	-	T	T	-	P/T	-	T	-	T – Changes in Species Distributions ¹⁷ P/T – Natural Changes to site Conditions P – Fisheries: Fish Stocking T – Direct land take from Development P – Shooting/Scaring P – Inappropriate Scrub Control
Cannock Extension Canal SAC	P	P	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	P/T	-	-	-	-	-	-	P - Overgrazing ¹⁸

¹³ P = Pressure, T = Threat

¹⁴ River Mease SAC Site Improvement Plan. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/6448011194400768> (Accessed on: 24/08/2022)

¹⁵ Ensor's Pool SAC Site Improvement Plan. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/4864434220564480> (Accessed on: 24/08/2022)

¹⁶ Severn Estuary SAC Site Improvement Plan. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/4856107648417792> (Accessed on: 27/02/2023)

¹⁷ Humber Estuary SAC Site Improvement Plan. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/5730884670980096> (Accessed on: 27/02/2023)

¹⁸ Cannock Extension Canal SAC Site Improvement Plan. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/6749431462363136> (Accessed on: 27/02/2023)

5.3.7. With regard for the qualifying features and information on vulnerability of the sites detailed in Appendix B, the broad conservation objectives for SACs are to:

- 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.

6 Screening Assessment

6.1 The Local Transport Plan and Management of Habitats sites

- 6.1.1. This stage considers whether the LTP4 is directly connected with or necessary to the management of Habitats sites. Within this context 'directly' means that the plan is solely conceived for the conservation management of a site or group of sites and 'management' refers to the management measures required in order to maintain, in favourable condition, the features for which e.g. a European site, has been designated.
- 6.1.2. The LTP4 is neither directly connected with, nor necessary for, the management of any of the Habitats sites listed. As such, it is clear that further consideration of the plan by way of an HRA screening assessment is required.

6.2 Description of the Warwickshire LTP4

- 6.2.1. The overall vision of the LTP4 is for WCC to address new and emerging transport needs. The LTP4 will identify transport strategies needed to manage and maintain Warwickshire's transport network in a safe, sustainable and integrated way.
- 6.2.2. The LTP4 is being developed to support the three Priority Outcomes of WCC's Council Plan¹⁹:
- Vibrant Economy and Places - Right jobs, training, future skills, education, infrastructure and places;
 - Best Lives - Communities and individuals supported to live safely, healthily, happily and independently; and
 - Sustainable Futures - Adapting to and mitigating climate change and meeting Net Zero commitments.
- 6.2.3. The LTP4 aims to have a flexible, tailored approach to transport changes, and deliver appropriate policies for future impacts upon transport, for example through climate change and decarbonisation of the transport sector, as well as societal changes. The LTP4 is therefore being developed to alter the way transport planning is carried out in the county. The focus of the LTP4 is to create safer communities and streets, integrate modes and focus on connectivity, mobility and movement in the county, as well as encouraging a modal shift away from private car use.
- 6.2.4. There are seven strategic themes that underpin the vision:
-

¹⁹ Warwickshire County Council, Council Plan 2022-2027

- Core Strategy;
- Active Travel Strategy;
- Public Transport Strategy;
- Motor Vehicles Strategy;
- Managing Space Strategy;
- Safer Travel Strategy; and
- Freight Strategy.

6.2.5. Within these strategic themes (hereafter referred to as ‘Strategies’), LTP4 proposes a series of ‘Key Policies’ or ‘Policy Positions’ (hereafter referred to as ‘policies’) to guide future decision making as set out in Figure 1 and Table 6-1.

Figure 1 - LTP4 Strategies

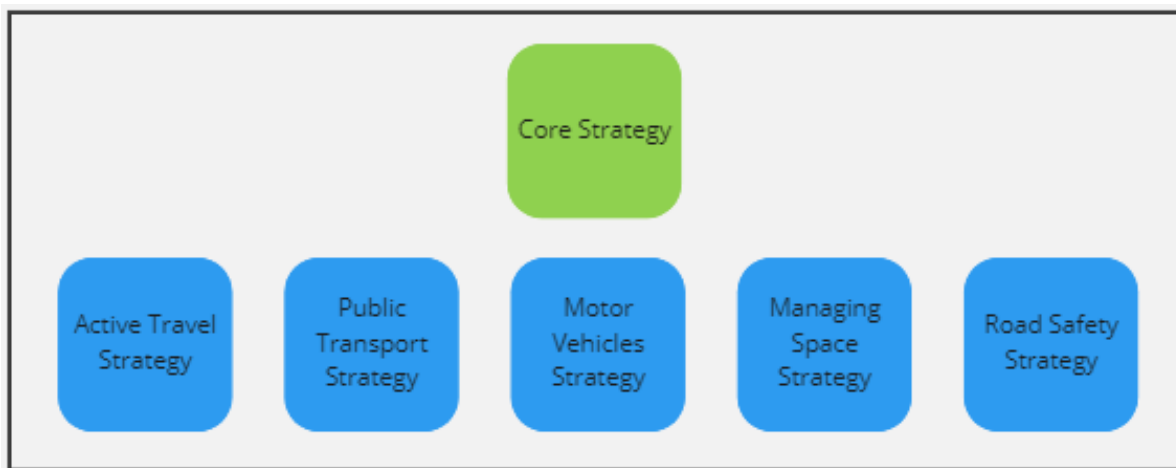


Table 6-1 - Transport Strategy Key Policy Elements

<p>1. Core Strategy</p>
<p>Key Policy KP1 - Engaging with communities to provide transport options which recognise the unique travel needs of Warwickshire's different places:</p> <p><i>Within the overall aim to provide and develop a sustainable transport network, WCC will tailor interventions to suit local requirements. Urban, semi-urban and rural areas, and the transport corridors between them, will have different needs and solutions. We will listen to the needs of communities and work with partners to maximise opportunities to provide modern, fit-for-purpose, sustainable travel choices.</i></p> <p>Key Policy KP2 - Transport interventions which align with our Council Vision, government policy and as many of our four key strategy themes as possible:</p> <p><i>All policies and interventions will deliver benefits for the environment, wellbeing, place and/or economy. They will be designed to facilitate the right jobs, training, future skills, education, infrastructure and places. We will ensure that communities and individuals are</i></p>

supported to live safely, healthily, happily and independently. We want Warwickshire to be a prime example of a sustainable, net zero county.

Key Policy KP3 - Decarbonising transport and transport related infrastructure:

Transport contributes a greater proportion of carbon emissions than any other sector. WCC will pursue actions and objectives that seek to reduce pollution in general, and carbon emissions in particular, through a range of interventions. Car dependency will be discouraged, where suitable, in favour of more sustainable travel choices. We will consider the carbon cost of our activities on a cradle to grave basis, including new and improved transport infrastructure, such as roads, rail and bridges.

Key Policy KP4 – A flexible approach to policy development in response to a changing Warwickshire:

Our new Local Transport Plan cannot afford to be rigid in its approach. It will need to adapt to a changing Warwickshire and the wider world beyond our borders. The LTP will therefore be outward-looking and pro-active, seeking to identify challenges and opportunities that may have an impact on our transport network. To do this, we will regularly review our existing approach by questioning its on-going relevance and, where necessary, seeking to implement new policies that address these changes and aim to make Warwickshire a better place

Key Policy KP5 - Data and evidence led monitoring and evaluation of our transport interventions:

Throughout the lifetime of the Local Transport Plan, our Action and Monitoring Plans will be dynamic. They will evolve as we deliver and conclude transport schemes in some parts of the County and initiate new schemes in others. We will collect data both to determine the effectiveness of our transport interventions and to inform future works and direction.

2. Active Travel Strategy

Policy Position AT1 – Improving accessibility and attractiveness of active travel options:

Warwickshire County Council will seek to promote the attractiveness of active travel options by improving the facilities that enable and increase access to them. We will do this through our own interventions and also by influencing the planning and development process. Measures may include:

- improvements at bus and rail interchanges, car parks, town centres and key public buildings
- cycle parking facilities; easier access to rental bikes; e-bike hubs; more lockers and showers in new workplace developments
- low carbon last mile goods deliveries - using or switching to cycles or e-bikes for the short, final stages of deliveries

Policy Position AT2 – Better, safer routes for walking and cycling:

WCC has developed a hierarchy of travel choice which seeks to establish active travel options at the forefront of transport choices for Warwickshire's residents and visitors. Safety is critical in promoting cycling and walking. We will design, create and place

emphasis on the maintenance of local walking and cycling routes which offer coherent, safe, comfortable, attractive, direct connections that are accessible to all. WCC will do this through:

- local cycling and walking improvement plans
- Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) - [link to follow when these are published]
- liaison with local cycling and walking groups
- active involvement in the road safety audit process to prioritise cyclist and pedestrian welfare

Policy Position AT3 – Information and Promotion:

The benefits of active travel choices in terms of physical and mental well-being and the economic and environmental advantages are well-known. But it is not enough to build better cycling and walking routes and expect people to use them. WCC will exploit all media platforms to provide information to promote active travel routes. We will develop better county-wide mapping and signing and carry out regular surveys and audits on active travel uptake.

3. Public Transport Strategy

Policy Position PT1 – Working with partner organisations to improve public transport

Delivery of a successful, integrated public transport network can only be the result of partnership work between the private companies which operate rail and bus services, the County Council and key industry organisations.

WCC will develop and strengthen relationships with Network Rail, DfT, West Midlands Rail Executive and Midlands Connect. We will work with private rail companies and listen to the public transport needs of communities. Our BSIP will be produced jointly with bus operators and with them we will create an Enhanced Partnership that sets out how we will work together to deliver BSIP outcomes. We will maximise funding opportunities, wherever possible, to promote and improve existing public transport services. Any funding provided by the Council to private organisations is bound by legal agreements through which we monitor effectiveness and value for money.

Policy Position PT2 – Making our towns and villages and the routes that connect them better Improved accessibility and attractiveness of public transport as a travel Choice

WCC will work with the bus and rail sector to develop proposals for new services, stations and interchanges which allow connections from a range of other travel types to provide a truly integrated public transport network. We will work with partner organisations to ensure that vehicle fleets and facilities at rail and bus stations are improved to be the best they can be. Buses on demand, better bus connections, safe cycle parking and more electric vehicle charging points at stations are just some of the improvements we will want to see. Additionally, the County Council will also seek to retain the existing levels of passenger services and stations.

Policy Position PT3 – Information and ticketing

Convenience and cost are hugely influential factors in determining which travel options the public chooses. We recognise that smart-ticketing, contactless payments and fares that are easier to understand will make public transport more attractive for people to use. WCC will work with its partners to review and develop new, simpler, more flexible ways of obtaining and paying for journeys, and ticketing that allows journeys to be made on different forms of transport. We will rely on our transport partners to provide accurate and up-to-date information accessible to all users.

Policy Position PT4 – New developments and connectivity to public transport services

Population growth is likely to place strain on all areas of transport. WCC will work with colleagues in the local district and borough planning departments to ensure that new developments maximise their opportunities to provide excellent access to the public transport network, taking into account potential demand from new development.

We want to improve Warwickshire's places and the connections between them. Public transport infrastructure, waiting areas and interchange facilities should add to the quality of local centres and provide a focus for growth and investment.

Where possible and appropriate we will secure developer funding towards the cost of public transport improvements.

Policy Position PT5 – Community Rail Partnership

A number of Community Rail Partnerships (CRP) have been established across the country, including the Heart of England CRP which was established in 2019 and covers part of Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull. CRPs engage communities and develop projects to help ensure the railway supports the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the areas they serve. The County Council will continue to support Community Rail initiatives, such as the Heart of England Community Rail Partnership.

4. Motor Vehicles Strategy

Policy Position MV1 – Using our influence with partners to provide a modern fit-for-purpose route network:

WCC will work with organisations such as DfT, National Highways, Midlands Connect, West Midlands Combined Authority, Planning Authorities and neighbouring local councils to provide a road network which is safe, convenient and fit for purpose for all its users. Our route network will need to be resilient and flexible enough to adapt to pressures from development. We will work closely with planning departments to identify pressures and provide evidence-led solutions, which will include options for alternative, more sustainable transport choices.

Policy Position MV2 – Increased use of technology in network monitoring:

We recognize the value of technology in helping to maintain network performance and will seek to increase its use to provide data to support targeted interventions. WCC will monitor the effectiveness of our network as it responds to changes from developments,

environmental concerns and the needs of local communities, reviewing our route hierarchy as necessary.

Policy Position MV3 – Maximizing funding opportunities:

Development will continue across Warwickshire and will provide funding opportunities for transport improvements. WCC will seek to maximise developer contributions, where appropriate, to fund sustainable improvements both to the network itself and to provide alternative transport options to car use in order to deal with the impact of developments. Our aim will be for growth to complement and improve our existing environment, rather than being a reason for more roads, vehicles, congestion and pollution.

Policy Position MV4 – Making our towns and villages and the routes that connect them better places to be:

Warwickshire's residents tell us that the places they live and visit are better when they are not dominated by cars. We will seek to reduce the volume of through-traffic in our urban and semi-rural areas. This will improve the amenity of Warwickshire's places, their air quality and provide better environments for active travel choices.

New infrastructure will consider the needs of all road users, ensuring continued connectivity between places, but providing attractive alternatives to car use, with benefits to the environment and people's well-being as a result.

Examples of interventions may include:

- more easily accessible electric and hydrogen vehicle re-fuelling
- freight routes
- low carbon last mile goods deliveries: using or switching to cycles or e-bikes for the short, final stages of deliveries
- Reduced traffic town centres (retaining disabled access) and suburban neighbourhoods
- connected and autonomous vehicles (CAVs)
- Park and Ride facilities

5. Managing Space

Policy Position MS1 – Increasing sustainable development and travel:

WCC will encourage sustainable development through the promotion of public and community transport, the provision of cycling and pedestrian facilities and traffic management measures. Where feasible and appropriate, space will be reallocated to more sustainable travel options.

Working with communities, the district and borough councils, external organisations and developers, we will use our influence to put pressure on new developments and the transport options which serve them to be as environmentally beneficial as possible. We will take evidence-based decisions which may include requirements for transport assessments, travel plans, modelling assessments and other appropriate data.

Policy Position MS2 – Travel options which are accessible to all:

We want Warwickshire's residents and visitors to be able to travel around the county in safety and for transport options to be accessible to all. In its role as Highway Authority,

WCC will strive to ensure that all developments are accessible, that designs and layouts contribute to the local area and that improved connectivity to footways, cycleways and public transport are incorporated.

Policy Position MS3 – Prioritising use of space to promote sustainable travel options:

Warwickshire is a diverse semi-rural county, with small villages and medium-sized towns surrounded by large areas of countryside. Transport interventions will therefore recognise the need to tailor solutions according to individual community needs within an overall framework of sustainability and economic success.

In more urban areas, space will be prioritised to promote public transport, cycling and walking and to facilitate non-polluting private vehicle transport. Reduced car dependency is a key aspiration in places where this is appropriate without adversely affecting people’s lives.

Interventions may include:

- parking changes including Park and Ride and Park and Stride provision
- charging points for EVs – on-street and in hubs, in line with the UK Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy
- low emission zones
- low traffic neighbourhoods
- managing traffic around schools
- safer cycling and walking routes
- increased transport connectivity between types of public transport e.g. bus interchanges
- future technology – autonomous vehicles; drone landing spaces; hubs for short, local goods deliveries using low carbon options

Policy Position MS4 – Robust data-led decision making in assessing new developments:

We will take evidence-based decisions which may include requirements from developers for transport assessments, travel plans, modelling assessments and other appropriate data. These decisions require specific technical data, such as the use of micro-simulation modelling techniques to support Transport Assessments, where appropriate, in accordance with WCC Modelling Protocol. The County Council will publish and regularly review this protocol and will work with applicants to assess the individual requirements for the sites/areas being developed.

Policy Position MS5 – Construction to best available standards:

We will ensure that new highways, including those built by developers, are constructed to the best available standards. Developers will be expected to follow the Warwickshire Design Guide, which provides details of build quality. We will use appropriate legal agreements to ensure that developer-built roads are of sufficient standard to be adopted by the County as a public highway. WCC-commissioned highways will abide by the Construction Design Framework, which embeds carbon reduction and climate change into our contract work.

Policy Position MS6 – Influencing Planning Authorities and Developers:

WCC does not have responsibility for planning decisions concerning development. However, we are consulted on most development proposals and will use these opportunities to influence development in ways which provide better, safer, more sustainable transport options. We will use this influence to maintain efficient travel on major roads in the county, for example by minimising new accesses to the Major Road Network, avoiding journeys being rerouted through neighbourhoods, which would impact negatively on congestion, air quality and the local environment.

Using planning law, we will create binding legal agreements that require developers to make contributions with the aim of improving travel infrastructure in the county.

We will continue to require contributions from developers which include: road safety audits; school travel plans and promoting safer routes to schools; encouraging better walking and cycling connections and accessibility for disabled people; transport assessments or transport statements for new developments.

6. Safer Travel Strategy

Policy Position ST1 – Working with Partners to deliver road safety improvements:

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) Road Safety teams will own and deliver the activities identified as their responsibility within the Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership strategy. We will engage fully with the process to create, manage and fulfil a successful WRSP.

We recognise that there are three broad areas which combine to create safer roads for all road users. These are education, engineering and enforcement. To bring about road safety improvements via all three of these approaches will require both interventions by Warwickshire County Council and close working relationships with other organisations, such as the police and other emergency services.

Policy Position ST2 – Evidence-led road safety engineering interventions:

WCC will use all available data and evidence to inform its engineering interventions and responses. The WRSP strategy describes the numerous ways that each partner organisation will contribute to the overall road safety approach. These include, but are not limited to, casualty reduction schemes, road safety audits, traffic calming initiatives and speed management measures. A full list of WCC road safety engineering activities is available in the WRSP strategy document.

Policy Position ST3 - Wide-ranging community engagement to improve road safety:

Warwickshire already carries out a wide range of community engagement activities, helping to promote road safety through various approaches under the general banner of ‘education’, from primary schoolchildren, through secondary education, driver offender courses, mature drivers and vehicle specific campaigns, including motorbike and cycling initiatives. Again, a full description of WCC road safety education schemes is available in the WRSP strategy document.

Policy Position ST4 - Road engineering design to align with appropriate quality standards:

Our Engineering Design Services (EDS) teams will continue to ensure that all new road construction in Warwickshire and improvements to existing road layouts will be carried out in accordance with the latest, most appropriate British construction and road design standards.

EDS will engage with the road safety auditing process as part of the initial design and in the pre- and post-construction stages of projects. This will ensure that safety remains at the forefront of all design decisions.

Policy Position ST5 – Promoting safety in all travel choices:

Travel safety is not just about road safety. We want people to feel personally secure whenever and however they choose to move around the county. To this end we will work with partners including the police, private sector bus and rail companies, district and borough councils and developers to seek improvements to other forms of transport so that modern, convenient, cost effective and secure alternatives to car usage are available.

We will seek safety improvements to facilities such as bus stops, bus and rail stations, pedestrian and cycle routes so that they are safer and, just as importantly, feel safer to potential users.

7. Freight Strategy

Policy Position F1 – Promote shift from road to rail and active travel modes:

WCC will work with developers, freight operators and customers to encourage a transport shift to more sustainable modes, helping reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality and road safety. This may require the introduction of new and improved infrastructure and the promotion of efforts to encourage co-operation in the freight sector.

Policy Position F2 – Facilitate the transition to alternative fuels for freight vehicles:

WCC will work with partners to help provide a network of recharging and refuelling stations that allows goods to flow freely across the county, without impacting on the environment, to provide continuity and growth of the local and sub-regional economy.

Policy Position F3 – Support efforts to deliver a better network of lorry parking in the county:

The strategic location of the county, as well as its distance of several hours’ drive from major ports in the south of England, means that there is demand for good quality, safe and secure lorry parking in the area for drivers to rest. We will work with planning authorities and developers to ensure that supply meets demand. Professional drivers should be safe, well-rested and best prepared to operate safely on Warwickshire’s roads.

Policy Position F4 – Support and deliver initiatives that improve journey time reliability for freight movements:

Congestion results in reduced productivity and losses to the local economy. We will seek to support efforts to improve the Strategic Road Network (SRN) and Major Road Network (MRN) to increase journey time reliability and the efficiency of the supply chain.

Policy Position F5 – Reduce the impact of ‘last mile’ deliveries:

Last mile deliveries often take place in our town centres and increasingly to our homes. The proliferation of vans in affected locations can impact on the amenity of an area and create local air quality issues. WCC will look to progress initiatives that help consolidate, re-time and reduce the number of deliveries as well as promoting active travel solutions for goods deliveries.

Policy Position F6 – Reduce incidents involving freight vehicles:

We will work with the logistics sector and partners such as the police to promote options that will reduce the likelihood of collisions occurring on our network. Our Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership will consider the role of goods vehicles in road safety on Warwickshire’s Road network as we strive to reduce casualties to a minimum.

Policy Position F7 – Encourage freight vehicles to use appropriate routes:

HGVs using unsuitable routes can affect the amenity of the affected area and also may present a safety issue. Promotion of appropriate routes can help reduce instances of HGVs using roads with environmental weight limits and enhance the well-being of those living and working in affected areas.

6.3 Initial Screening for Impacts and Effects on Habitats sites

- 6.3.1. The development of or improvements to infrastructure within the Zol of Habitats sites as a result of the implementation of the LTP4 has the potential to result in a number of short and long-term effects, as detailed in Table 6-2 below.

Table 6-2- Potential Effects on Habitats sites resulting from the implementation of the LTP4

Potential effects	Development actions/activities
Water Resources and Quality	Pollution from accidental spills and run off (construction and operation).
Air Quality	Increase in atmospheric pollutants during construction and operation (N deposition and NO _x and NH ₃ levels, dust).
Habitat / Species Disturbance	Construction and operation of new developments (noise, air, visual disturbance). Recreational pressures during operation including improved access
Habitat (and species) loss and fragmentation (including supporting habitats and functionally linked land)	Direct land take during construction Barriers to migration during operation (for example bridge construction)

- 6.3.6. Each of the proposed policies set out to implement the Strategies of the LTP4 have been subject to an initial screening exercise to assess whether they could give rise to LSE on Habitats sites.
- 6.3.7. Where proposals will clearly not lead to specific infrastructure projects or any tangible effects on Habitats sites, for example as a result of being communication-based, they have been screened out. Where there is still the likelihood of significant effects of policies on the integrity of Habitats sites or any uncertainty in this respect, in line with the precautionary principle, policies have been screened in.

Strategy 1 of the LTP4 – Core Strategy

- 6.3.8. Table 6-3 below sets out each of the proposed policies for implementation of Strategy 1, which have been subject to an initial screening assessment.

Table 6-3- Initial screening of Strategy 1

Policy (source: LTP4)	Screening outcome	Justification
KP1 Engaging with communities to provide transport options which recognise the unique travel needs of Warwickshire's different places	Screened out	This is a general Policy action which will not lead to LSE.
KP2 Transport interventions which align with our Council Vision, government policy and as many of our four key strategy themes as possible	Screened in	Depending on the nature of the proposed transport interventions, there is the potential that they may result in a redistribution of traffic on the local road network. This may result in changes in traffic flows/speed/composition on roads which fall within 200m of the identified Habitats Sites. This Policy has therefore been screened in for further assessment.
KP3 Decarbonising transport and transport related infrastructure	Screened out	This Policy action is compatible with the aims of conserving the integrity of Habitats sites by decarbonising transport networks (i.e. rail/road fleet), it is also a general action which will lead to no LSE.

KP4 A flexible approach to policy development in response to a changing Warwickshire	Screened out	This is a general Policy action which will not lead to LSE.
KP5 Data and evidence led monitoring and evaluation of our transport interventions	Screened out	This is a general Policy action which will not lead to LSE.

Strategy 2 of the LTP4 – Active Travel Strategy

6.3.9. Table 6-4 below sets out each of the proposed policy for implementation of Strategy 2, which have been subject to an initial screening assessment.

Table 6-4 - Initial screening of Strategy 2

Policy (source: LTP4)	Screening outcome	Justification
AT1 Improving accessibility and attractiveness of active travel options	Screened out	This Policy action is compatible with the aims of conserving the integrity of Habitats sites by decarbonising transport networks (i.e. rail/road fleet), it is also a general action which will lead to no LSE.
AT2 Better, safer routes for walking and cycling	Screened in	The proposed safer routes could lead to future infrastructure projects being delivered in unconfirmed locations and subsequent increased usage and access to those locations. This Policy action has therefore been screened in for further assessment. It is not considered that LSE will arise from the Policy for Habitats sites more distant from the County boundary.
AT3 Information and Promotion	Screened out	This is a general Policy action which will not lead to LSE.

Strategy 3 of the LTP4: Public Transport Strategy

6.3.10.

6.3.11. Table 6-5 below sets out each of the proposed policy for implementation of Strategy 3, which have been subject to an initial screening assessment.

Table 6-5 - Initial screening of Strategy 3

Policy (source: LTP4)	Screening outcome	Justification
PT1 Working with partner organisations to improve public transport.	Screened out	This is a general Policy action which will not lead to LSE.
PT2 Making our towns and villages and the routes that connect them better. Improved accessibility and attractiveness of public transport as a travel Choice	Screened out	Principles of green technology and shifts towards more sustainable lifestyles and behaviours are compatible with the aims of conserving the integrity of Habitats sites. In addition, the infrastructure referred to in this strategy is likely to be urban-focussed and small-scale in nature and as such will not lead to LSE.
PT3 Information and ticketing	Screened out	This is a general Policy action which will not lead to LSE.
PT4 New developments and connectivity to public transport services	Screened in	The new developments and associated infrastructure to be taken forward by this action have the potential to lead to LSE on Ensor's Pool SAC. This action has therefore been screened in for further assessment. Potential air quality effects on Cannock Extension Canal SAC are considered unlikely due to the distance of this SAC from Warwickshire's administrative boundary (and therefore new development/public transport interventions).

Policy (source: LTP4)	Screening outcome	Justification
		It is not considered that LSE will arise from the Policy for Habitats sites more distant from the County boundary.
PT5 Community Rail Partnership	Screened out	This is a general Policy action which will not lead to LSE.

Strategy 4 of the LTP4: Motor Vehicles Strategy

6.3.12. Table 6-6 below sets out each of the proposed policy for implementation of Strategy 4, which have been subject to an initial screening assessment.

Table 6-6 - Initial screening of Strategy 4

Policy (source: LTP4)	Screening outcome	Justification
MV1 Using our influence with partners to provide a modern fit-for-purpose route network	Screened in	<p>Providing a fit-for-purpose route network has the potential to create new road networks, which could alter the existing traffic flows. This has the potential to lead to LSE on Ensor's Pool SAC, due to its proximity to local roads which may form part of the MV1 Policy.</p> <p>The details of Policy implementation are unknown at this stage, however significant infrastructure projects have the potential to affect water quality, hydrology and to add or remove barriers on watercourses.</p> <p>This policy also has the potential to lead to LSE on Cannock Extension Canal SAC due to location of this SAC immediately south of the A5, a strategic road which may be impacted by the MV1 Policy.</p> <p>This Policy action has therefore been screened in for further assessment.</p>

Policy (source: LTP4)	Screening outcome	Justification
MV2 Increased use of technology in network monitoring	Screened out	This is a general Policy action which will not lead to LSE.
MV3 Maximizing funding opportunities	Screened out	This is a general Policy action which will not lead to LSE.
MV4 Making our towns and villages and the routes that connect them better places to be	Screened out	This Policy action is compatible with the aims of conserving the integrity of Habitats sites by helping to ensure the successful delivery of sustainable travel and shifts towards more sustainable lifestyles and behaviours. It will not lead to LSE.

Strategy 5 of the LTP4: Managing Space

6.3.13. Table 6-7 below sets out each of the proposed policy for implementation of Strategy 5, which have been subject to an initial screening assessment.

Table 6-7 - Initial screening of Strategy 5

Policy (source: LTP4)	Screening outcome	Justification
MS1 Increasing sustainable development and travel	Screened in	<p>Increasing sustainable travel options such as new cycle routes and mass rapid transit infrastructure have the potential to lead to LSE on Ensor's Pool SAC. This action has therefore been screened in for further assessment.</p> <p>Potential air quality effects on Cannock Extension Canal SAC due to Policy MS1 are considered unlikely due to the distance of this SAC from Warwickshire's administrative boundary (and therefore from</p>

Policy (source: LTP4)	Screening outcome	Justification
		<p>interventions proposed to increase sustainable development and travel).</p> <p>It is not considered that LSE will arise from the Policy for Habitats sites more distant from the County boundary.</p>
<p>MS2 Travel options which are accessible to all</p>	<p>Screened out</p>	<p>This Policy action is compatible with the aims of conserving the integrity of Habitats sites by helping to ensure the successful delivery of green technology and shifts towards more sustainable lifestyles and behaviours. It will not lead to LSE.</p>
<p>MS3 Prioritising use of space to promote sustainable travel options</p>	<p>Screened out</p>	<p>This is a general Policy action which will not lead to LSE.</p>
<p>MS4 Robust data-led decision making in assessing new developments</p>	<p>Screened out</p>	<p>This Policy action is compatible with the aims of conserving the integrity of Habitats sites by helping to ensure the successful delivery of green technology and shifts towards more sustainable lifestyles and behaviours. It will not lead to LSE.</p>
<p>MS5 Construction to best available standards</p>	<p>Screened out</p>	<p>This is a general Policy action which will not lead to LSE.</p>
<p>MS6 Influencing Planning Authorities and Developers</p>	<p>Screened out</p>	<p>This is a general Policy action which will not lead to LSE.</p>

Strategy 6 of the LTP4: Safer Travel Strategy

6.3.14. Table 6-8 below sets out each of the proposed policy for implementation of Strategy 6, which have been subject to an initial screening assessment.

Table 6-8 - Initial screening of Strategy 6

policy (source: LTP4)	Screening outcome	Justification
<p>ST1 Working with Partners to deliver road safety improvements</p>	<p>Screened in</p>	<p>The proposed road safety improvements have the potential to create new infrastructure, which could alter the existing traffic flows. The Policy therefore has the potential to lead to LSE on Habitats sites, due to its proximity to local roads which may form part of the ST1 Policy. This action has therefore been screened in for further assessment.</p> <p>Potential air quality effects on Cannock Extension Canal SAC due to Policy MS1 are considered unlikely due to the distance of this SAC from Warwickshire’s administrative boundary (and therefore from interventions proposed to deliver road safety improvements).</p> <p>It is not considered that LSE will arise from the Policy for Habitats sites more distant from the County boundary.</p>
<p>ST2 Evidence-led road safety engineering interventions</p>	<p>Screened in</p>	<p>The proposed road safety engineering interventions have the potential to create new road infrastructure, which could alter the existing traffic flows. This has the potential to lead to LSE on Habitats sites of Ensor’s Pool and River Mease, due to proximity to local roads which may form part of the ST2 Policy. This action has therefore been screened in for further assessment.</p> <p>Potential effects on Cannock Extension Canal SAC due to Policy MS1 are considered unlikely due to the distance of this SAC from Warwickshire’s administrative boundary (and therefore from the proposed road safety interventions).</p> <p>It is not considered that LSE will arise from the Policy for Habitats sites more distant from the County boundary.</p>

policy (source: LTP4)	Screening outcome	Justification
ST3 Wide-ranging community engagement to improve road safety	Screened out	This Policy action is compatible with the aims of improving the road safety and creating awareness in general community. It will not lead to LSE.
ST4 Road engineering design to align with appropriate quality standards	Screened out	This Policy action is compatible with the aims of conserving the integrity of Habitats sites by helping to ensure the delivery of sustainable travel. It will not lead to LSE.
ST5 Promoting safety in all travel choices	Screened out	This Policy action is compatible with the aims of conserving the integrity of Habitats sites by helping to ensure the delivery of sustainable travel. It will not lead to LSE.

Strategy 7 of the LTP4: Freight Strategy

6.3.15. Table 6-9 below sets out each of the proposed policy for implementation of Strategy 7, which have been subject to an initial screening assessment.

Table 6-9 - Initial screening of Strategy 7

Policy (source: LTP4)	Screening outcome	Justification
F1 Promote shift from road to rail and active travel modes	Screened out	This Policy action is compatible with the aims of conserving the integrity of Habitats sites by ensuring improvements in air quality. It will not lead to LSE.
F2 Facilitate the transition to alternative fuels for freight vehicles	Screened out	This Policy action is compatible with the aims of conserving the integrity of Habitats sites by ensuring general improvements in air quality. It will not lead to LSE.

Policy (source: LTP4)	Screening outcome	Justification
<p>F3 Support efforts to deliver a better network of lorry parking in the county</p>	<p>Screened in</p>	<p>Depending on where the lorry parking is located, there is the potential for effects on Habitats sites, either directly or indirectly through the redistribution of freight traffic on the local road network. This Policy action has therefore been screened in for further assessment.</p> <p>Potential effects on Cannock Extension Canal SAC due to Policy MS1 are considered unlikely due to the distance of this SAC from Warwickshire’s administrative boundary (and therefore from the interventions proposed to deliver a better network of lorry parking). However, as the SAC lies adjacent to the A5, which forms part of the strategic road network, potential effects due to the redistribution of freight traffic (as a result of Policy F3) cannot be discounted without further assessment.</p> <p>It is not considered that LSE will arise from the Policy for Habitats sites more distant from the County boundary.</p>
<p>F4 Support and deliver initiatives that improve journey time reliability for freight movements</p>	<p>Screened out</p>	<p>This is a general Policy action which will not lead to LSE.</p>
<p>F5 Reduce the impact of ‘last mile’ deliveries</p>	<p>Screened out</p>	<p>This is a general Policy action which will not lead to LSE.</p>
<p>F6 Reduce incidents involving freight vehicles</p>	<p>Screened out</p>	<p>This is a general Policy action which will not lead to LSE.</p>

Policy (source: LTP4)	Screening outcome	Justification
<p>F7 Encourage freight vehicles to use appropriate routes</p>	<p>Screened in</p>	<p>Encouraging freight vehicles to use alternative routes may result in a redistribution of freight traffic on the local road network which could impact the identified Habitats sites including Cannock Extension Canal SAC due to the proximity of this SAC to the strategic road network. This Policy action has therefore been screened in for further assessment.</p> <p>It is not considered that LSE relating to functionally linked land or hydrology will arise from the Policy for Habitats sites more distant from the County boundary.</p>

6.4 Summary of Screening Exercise

- 6.4.1. Following the screening exercise, a number of the Strategies and associated policies set out in the LTP4 have been screened-out on the basis that they are likely to have either a nugatory or general positive impact on Habitats sites in the ZOI, for example as a result of being communication-based or where the policies relate to the review or development of plans and strategies which require consideration of their own requirements for HRA (see Table 6-3 to 6-9 for details). The policies screened out relate to Strategies 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the LTP4.
- 6.4.2. At screening, nine policies within the seven Strategies have been screened-in where they are likely to or will clearly lead to specific infrastructure projects which could give rise to LSE on the identified Habitats sites, notably on Ensor’s Pool SAC, which is within the WCC LTP4 boundary.
- 6.4.3. Whilst still a consideration and ‘screened in’, effects on Ensor’s Pool SAC as a result of potential changes in air quality are considered unlikely due to the riverine nature of the habitats present (which are likely to be less sensitive to changes in air quality and do not allow for the accumulation of nitrogen (N)) and the distance of the SAC to the nearest strategic road. At its nearest point, the SAC is 200m from the B4112 Heath End Road, with 200m being the screening distance applied when determining the need for further consideration of air quality effects.

- 6.4.4. The River Mease is within the LTP4 Zol and therefore LSE is more likely to arise with those policies which promote large scale changes – but at plan level, a precautionary approach has been taken to not screening out LSE on this SAC.
- 6.4.5. Similarly, Cannock Extension Canal SAC is located within the wider LTP4 Zol and therefore LSE is more likely to arise with those policies which promote large scale schemes or changes in traffic volume/composition on roads which form part of the strategic road network. Whilst also riverine in nature, the presence of *Luronium natans* (Floating water-plantain) increases the sensitivity of the SAC to changes in air quality, when compared with other riverine sites. At a plan level, a precautionary approach has been taken to not screening out LSE on this SAC.
- 6.4.6. The Habitats sites of the Humber Estuary SAC and the Severn Estuary SAC and Ramsar are at a significant distance from the Warwickshire County boundary (115KM and 55KM, respectively). There is significant uncertainty regarding impacts arising from the LTP4 on the extensive river catchment network of potentially functionally linked land. An assessment of LSE is therefore lacking in full baseline data at this scale and a precautionary approach has been taken based on the recommendations of Natural England.
- 6.4.7. The policies screened-in are associated with the following; Strategy 1 (KP2), Strategy 2 (AT2), Strategy 3 (PT4), Strategy 4 (MV1), Strategy 5 (MS1), Strategy 6 (ST1 and ST2) and Strategy 7 (F3 and F7) and are summarised below:
- KP2 Transport interventions which align with our Council Vision, government policy and as many of our four key strategy themes as possible
 - AT2 Better, safer routes for walking and cycling
 - PT4 New developments and connectivity to public transport services
 - MV1 Using our influence with partners to provide a modern fit-for-purpose route network
 - MS1 Increasing sustainable development and travel
 - ST1 Working with Partners to deliver road safety improvements
 - ST2 Evidence-led road safety engineering interventions
 - F3 Support efforts to deliver a better network of lorry parking in the county
 - F7 Encourage freight vehicles to use appropriate routes
- 6.4.8. Due to the high-level nature of the Strategies and associated policies, a precautionary approach has been taken to screening the potential for LSE arising from the policies ‘alone’.

In-Combination Effects from Stage 1 Screening

- 6.4.9. There is the potential for additional effects, or severity of effects, arising ‘in-combination’ with other plans and this may have a greater impact on the River Mease, where the SAC lies within neighbouring authority areas of Leicestershire, Staffordshire and Derbyshire and is crossed by strategic highway routes, than Ensor’s Pool.

- 6.4.10. The consideration of distant Habitats sites for hydrological pathways and functionally linked land in relation to the Humber Estuary and Severn Estuary is a complex assessment for potential in-combination effects as the river basins associated with both estuaries are extremely extensive. Assigning any threshold where an effect may become detectable and significant in the context of a Plan-level assessment has therefore solely relied upon the advice provided by Natural England. This is informed by the precautionary approach and high-level assessment of effects from the LTP4.
- 6.4.11. Following the screening stage, if LSE on Habitats sites are unable to be ruled out, the plan-making authority is required under Regulation 61 of the Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended) to make an 'Appropriate Assessment' of the implications of the plan for Habitats sites, in view of their conservation objectives. EC Guidance²⁰ states that the Appropriate Assessment should consider the impacts of the plan (either alone or in combination with other projects or plans) on the integrity of European sites with respect to their conservation objectives and to their structure and function.
- 6.4.12. The Policies screened-in have therefore been taken forward to Appropriate Assessment which forms Section 7 of this document.

²⁰ 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. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/natura_2000_assess_en.pdf [Accessed on 4 March 2022].

7 Appropriate Assessment

7.1.1. This HRA recognises that addressing current and future transport issues in the County does pose potential risks to Habitats sites, notably where new infrastructure or improvement schemes will be brought forward under the LTP4. All policies forming the Strategies screened into this AA therefore relate to new infrastructure or improvement schemes which are associated with the following LTP4 policies (see table 6-3 to 6-9 for details):

- Action KP2
- Action AT2
- Action PT4
- Action MV1
- Action MS1
- Action ST1 and ST2
- Action F3 and F7

7.1.2. It has not been possible to rule out LSE in the absence of mitigation for these policies and any potential associated new road schemes or improvements due to insufficient detail to enable a more in-depth analysis to the degree required for AA. It will only be possible to undertake this level of assessment once sufficient detail is available to enable a thorough and robust analysis to be carried out.

7.1.3. The information presented within this AA is therefore high-level and does not contain the detail typically presented for project level HRA AA. A degree of uncertainty remains which limits the extent to which such projects could rely on this AA without further assessment.

7.1.4. In the Opinion of Advocate General Kokott in Case C-6/04 Commission v UK [2005] ECR I-9017 at paragraph²¹ she noted that an assessment of plans cannot by definition take into account all effects because:

“Many details are regularly not settled until the time of the final permission” and “[i]t would also hardly be proper to require a greater level of detail in preceding plans or the abolition of multi-stage planning and approval procedures so that the assessment of implications can be concentrated on one point in the procedure. Rather, adverse effects on areas of conservation must be assessed at every relevant stage of the procedure to the extent

²¹ Case C-6/04 Commission v UK [2005] ECR I-9017. Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:62009CJ0538_SUM: (Accessed 19/08/2022).

possible on the basis of the precision of the plan. This assessment is to be updated with increasing specificity in subsequent stages of the procedure”.

- 7.1.5. The Kokott finding was also bolstered and added to in UK High Court Feeney case²²:
- ”A core strategy is a high level strategic document and the detail falls to be worked out at a later stage. Subsequent appropriate assessment of specific proposals is plainly envisaged by, and indeed necessitated under, the regime. Each appropriate assessment must be commensurate to the relative precision of the plans at any particular stage and no more. There does have to be an appropriate assessment at the Core Strategy stage, but such an assessment cannot do more than the level of detail of the strategy at that stage permits.”*
- 7.1.6. In accordance, any projects brought forward under the LTP4 are likely to require consideration of their own requirements for HRA and this document does not preclude the need for further assessment at the project or lower tier level. However, the findings of this strategic level HRA can be incorporated into and explored at the appropriate level of detail at the next tier.
- 7.1.7. The LTP4 HRA has identified the potential for effects on Habitats sites, but these effects are by no means certain or a confirmed outcome of the policies assessed. It is considered likely that such effects, at a more detailed stage of consideration, can be wholly avoided or mitigated. As a result, the HRA for these policies and any associated schemes should be undertaken at project level under these particular circumstances:
- the HRA of the LTP4 cannot reasonably assess the effects on Habitats sites in a meaningful way;
 - the HRA of any projects will be required as a matter of law or government policy;
 - the results of the project level HRA will be able to inform changes in a proposal (including rejecting it outright) if necessary; and
 - enabling a retrospective update of the plan-level HRA of the LTP4 if required.
- 7.1.8. It is important to re-emphasise that the adoption of the LTP4 does not facilitate the granting of permissions for developments (or projects) that would be contrary to the Habitats Regulations.
- 7.1.9. With any Schemes brought forward under the LTP4, there are a number of environmental control measures that it will be necessary to employ to ensure adverse impacts upon the environment are avoided (in the first instance) or minimised.

²² Feeney v Oxford City Council and SSCLG [2011] EWHC 2699 Admin (Para.92). Available at: <http://www.programmeofficers.co.uk/posl/documents/Gloucester/CD13/CD13.40.pdf> (Accessed 19/08/2022).

- 7.1.10. Air quality emissions will be a consideration at project-level HRA, however air quality effects on Ensor's Pool SAC are not considered likely to give rise to LSE on the basis that air pollution is not identified as a pressure or threat (see Table 5-3) and Ensor's Pool SAC is located 200m from the nearest B Road and even further from the nearest A Road.
- 7.1.11. Effects (alone and in-combination) on the River Mease SAC have been screened out due to its distance from Warwickshire's County boundary, combined with a lack of identified pressures and threats associated with this impact.
- 7.1.12. Whilst a significant distance from Warwickshire's administrative boundary, air quality effects on Cannock Extension Canal SAC should be considered at project-level HRA given the proximity of this SAC to the strategic road network (A5) and the presence of floating water-plantain which is sensitive to air pollution, and which could experience an accumulation of N deposition. However, only those policies with the potential to change traffic flows/composition on the wider strategic road network are at risk of impacting this SAC.
- 7.1.13. It is not possible to identify the location of any Schemes or necessary infrastructure that may arise as a result of the individual Policies. It is therefore not possible to completely rule out adverse effects at this strategic level. Notwithstanding the need for project-level HRAs, there are a number of measures that can be exploited at the detailed design stage to ensure that adverse effects are avoided. Specifically, that there will be a presumption against land-take within designated sites or additional barriers to potentially functionally linked land associated with watercourses and in addition, construction best-practice measures will be integrated into Scheme designs to avoid indirect effects.
- 7.1.14. It is also considered likely that adverse effects as a result of disturbance can be avoided through reference to this HRA document and with the use of carefully designed measures which will be based on evidence acquired through survey.
- 7.1.15. At this plan level of the LTP4, it is reasonable to expect that these safeguards will avoid, or as a minimum, fully mitigate direct and indirect effects on Habitats sites at subsequent project stages.

In-Combination Effects from Appropriate Assessment

- 7.1.16. With appropriate measures in place, adverse effects can be avoided / minimised and the integrity of the Habitats sites can be maintained and protected where Schemes are brought forward under the LTP4, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects.

8 Conclusions

- 8.1.1. This document provides guidance on the likely data sources, information requirements and the process of HRA Screening and other stages of assessment if necessary. It also provides an indication of where the ecological implications of the LTP4 will lie, and which Habitats sites are vulnerable to known pressures, threats and existing air quality impacts.
- 8.1.2. There are only two Habitats sites within WCC's administrative area and within the 10km Zol. At HRA Stage 1 (Screening) of the LTP4, it has not been possible to screen out LSE on these Habitats sites as the SACs are located close to local and/or strategic road routes and areas of land which may be affected by the non-location-specific high-level Policies.
- 8.1.3. Similarly, potential effects on Cannock Extension Canal SAC, located within the extended Zol following comments received from Natural England, cannot be discounted on the basis of the presence of floating water-plantain (which is sensitive to changes in air quality) and the potential for certain policies to result in changes in traffic flow/composition on strategic roads within the wider Zol.
- 8.1.4. Impacts on more distant Habitats sites linked through the river network, as potentially functionally linked land for mobile species, and water pollution, have been recommended for inclusion at HRA screening by Natural England. Whilst remote from the County boundary and policies to be implemented under the LTP4, a precautionary approach means that impacts on functionally linked land cannot be discounted.
- 8.1.5. The LTP4 proposes an approach for addressing current and future transport issues in the County and in this document, it has been subject to HRA screening for potential LSE on Habitats sites at a strategic level. Several policies associated with the seven Strategies have been screened-out due to their nugatory or beneficial effects on Habitats sites.
- 8.1.6. A total of 9 policies within the seven Strategies have been screened-in for their further consideration at Stage 2 AA.
- KP2 - Transport interventions which align with our Council Vision, government policy and as many of our four key strategy themes as possible
 - AT2 - Better, safer routes for walking and cycling
 - PT4 - New developments and connectivity to public transport services
 - MV1 - Using our influence with partners to provide a modern fit-for-purpose route network
 - MS1 - Increasing sustainable development and travel
 - ST1 - Working with Partners to deliver road safety improvements
 - ST2 - Evidence-led road safety engineering interventions
 - F3 - Support efforts to deliver a better network of lorry parking in the county and

- F7 - Encourage freight vehicles to use appropriate routes

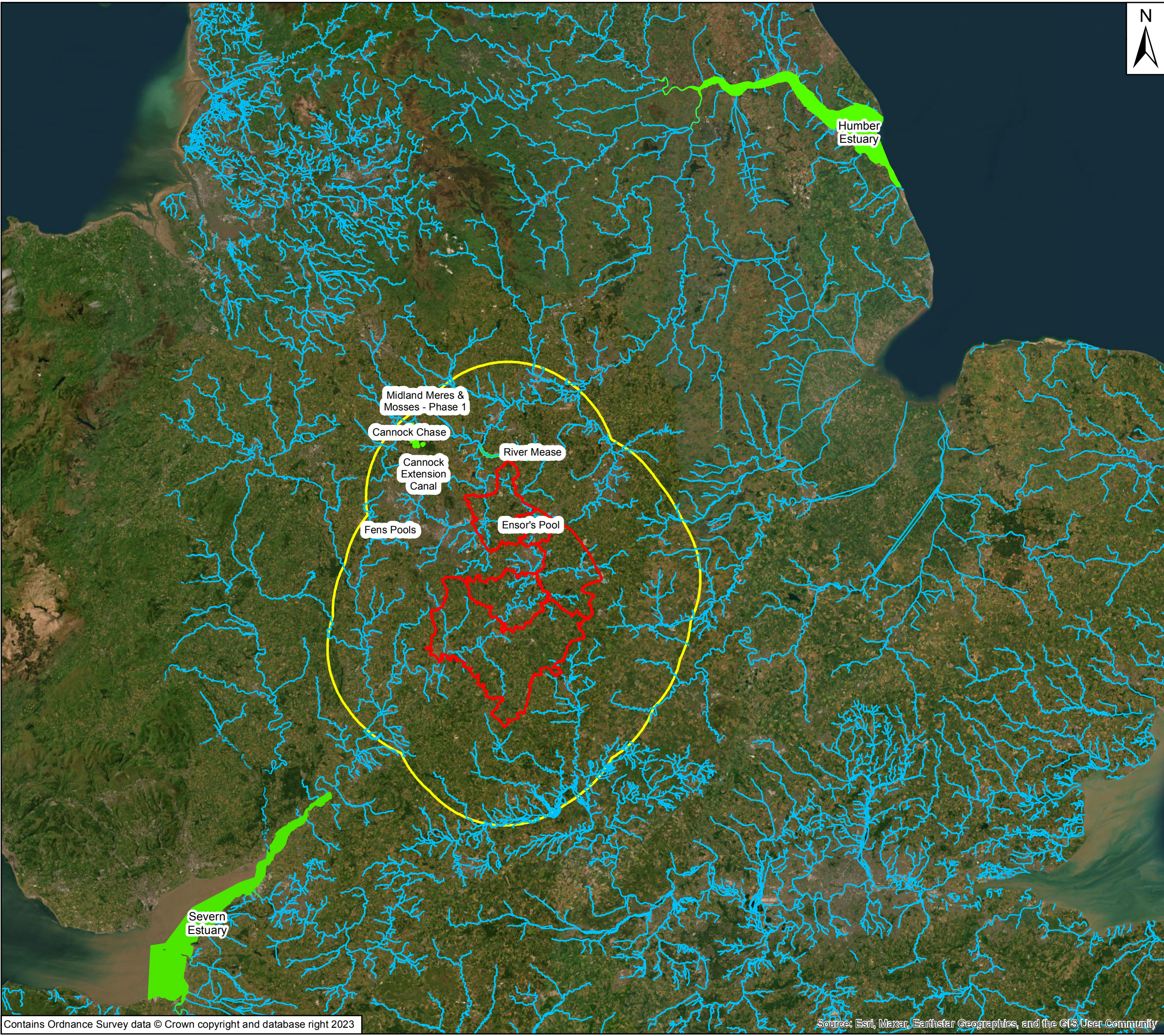
- 8.1.7. These policies are related primarily to potential new infrastructure, heavy vehicle routing, or infrastructure improvement schemes, for which no location or design information is currently available.
- 8.1.8. Given the possibility of LSE associated with the screened-in policies, further, detailed assessment is considered potentially necessary at a project-level basis to satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations.
- 8.1.9. The following over-arching statement is recommended for incorporation within the accompanying supplementary guidance or directly within the LTP4:
- Any development that would be likely to have a significant effect on a Habitats site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects would not be in accordance with the LTP4. Any development that would be likely to have a significant effect on a Habitats site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, will be subject to assessment under part 6 of the Habitats Regulations at project application stage. If it cannot be ascertained that there would be no adverse effects on site integrity the project will have to be refused or pass the tests of Regulation 61 and 62, in which case any necessary compensatory measures will need to be secured in accordance with Regulation 66.*
- 8.1.10. No further HRA work is considered necessary for the LTP4 to be adopted as a strategic document by Warwickshire County Council subject to the conditions noted above relating to the requirement that project-level HRA be undertaken for relevant infrastructure improvements in the County.
- 8.1.11. The HRA concludes that the LTP4 is compliant with the Habitats Regulations and will not result in likely significant effects on any Habitats sites, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. For infrastructure schemes or associated development coming forward through implementation of Strategies and associated policies, it is considered that these are at a sufficiently early stage of development that adverse effects on Habitats sites can be avoided based on the information and recommendations provided within this assessment, or otherwise only progressed where effects can be successfully addressed through mitigation measures set out in specific project-level HRA requirements and secured through regulatory requirements and development management processes.
- 8.1.12. With these measures in place, adverse effects can be concluded to be likely avoided / minimised, and the integrity of the Habitats sites can be maintained and protected under the LTP4, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects.

Figures

Figure 1 - Screening and Appropriate Assessment Stages in the HRA process (after SNH, 2015), found in text

Figure 2 - LTP4 Policies, found in text

Figure 3 – Habitats sites with potential Zones of Influence



Key

- County Boundary
- Ramsar Site - Wetland of International Importance (if not underlying SAC)
- Special Area of Conservation
- Statutory Main Rivers (Eng) (<250k)
- 30km Buffer

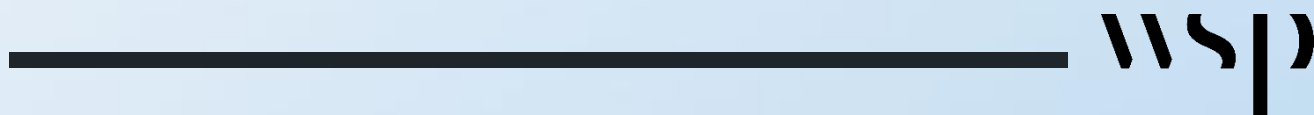


Client:	Warwickshire County Council
Project:	Warwickshire County Council Local Transport Plan
Title:	Designated Sites - Warwickshire County Council

Drawing No:	FIGURE 3	Drawn:	SD
Date:	03/03/2023	Checked:	OP
Scale:	1,120,000 @ A3	Approved:	

Appendix A

CJEU Rulings



The Council for Justice of the European Union (CJEU) rulings

A number of CJEU rulings are relevant to the HRA screening exercise and are noted below. At the present time the position, under section 6(3) EU (Withdrawal) Act 2018 (as amended), is that the courts in the UK, with the sole exception of the Supreme Court, will continue to be bound by HRA judgments handed down by the CJEU and by domestic courts prior to 31 December 2020 when interpreting the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This is the case as long as the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) remain unmodified by Parliament. The Supreme Court will, however, be at liberty to depart from these judgments after 31 December 2020 if they consider it appropriate to do so.²³

The Wealden Judgement

The Wealden Judgement²⁴, handed down in March 2017, has introduced additional complexities into the assessment process in relation to in-combination and cumulative effects.

Prior to this Judgement, air quality impacts on Habitats sites were only considered alongside roads where the traffic growth associated with the individual Plan or Project being assessed exceeded specified screening criteria. These criteria were typically based on changes in vehicle movements and taken from the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB, HA207/07²⁵), which has been subsequently withdrawn namely:

- increases of 1000 vehicles per day or 200 Heavy Goods Vehicles per day (as Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)).

The Wealden Judgement found that the application of the criteria to the traffic growth associated with a single Local Plan was unsound on the basis that two Local Plans collectively contributing more than 1000 AADT could lead to a potentially significant effect. The Judge determined that further assessment of air quality impacts on Habitats sites should have been carried out and quashed part of the Local Plan that would have led to an in-combination exceedance of 1,000 AADT.

The Wealden Judgement means that every single plan or project which, alone, is predicted to give rise to any increase in traffic or other air emission (however small) must be subjected to an in-

²³ Freeths Habitats Regulations update 2020. Available at: <https://communications.freeths.co.uk/44/1637/october-2020/the-habitats-regulations-assessment-regime-after-31-december-2020---how-will-it-look-.asp?sid=8bf6fad5-597a-43c6-8f70-61503ec0adb9>

²⁴ Judgment in Wealden District Council v. Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Lewes District Council and South Downs National Park Authority [2017] EWHC 351 (Admin) DATE: 21 Mar 2017.

²⁵ *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), Volume 11, Section 3, Part 1 (HA207/07)*. Withdrawn, but available online: <https://standardsforhighways.co.uk/dmrb/archive/search/df0c77ed-887b-4c84-be0e-000fe18545ae> Accessed [31/03/2022]

combination assessment with other plans or projects (which would include those plans or projects with a similar tiny impact). However, the judgement did not rule out the application of thresholds in principal and this approach is normally taken as the basis of the assessment.

The judgement has led to a more detailed analysis of three key questions to discern which plans and project are those where a detailed “in combination” assessment is required in relation to changes in air quality:

1. Is your plan or project putting emissions into the air?;
2. If so, are those emissions at a level where they could actually be measured / perceived?; and
3. If so, is there a realistic (rather than hypothetical) risk that those emissions, alone, will have an adverse effect on the ecology of a SAC / SPA?

A fuller justification will be required when applying the threshold approach.

People over Wind (The Sweetman Case)

The Court of Justice of the European Union’s (CJEU’s) decision in the matter of People Over Wind and Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta (C-323/17)²⁶ (hereafter referred to as the ‘Sweetman Case’), states that:

‘Article 6(3) must be interpreted as meaning that, in order to determine whether it is necessary to carry out, subsequently, an Appropriate Assessment of the implications, for a site concerned, of a plan or project, it is not appropriate, at the screening stage, to take account of measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of the plan or project on that site.’

In the new judgement the CJEU concluded that mitigation measures could not be considered as part of the project, and thus that the screening stage of HRA should not take account of them. This will undoubtedly be tested further in the courts in coming months and years, but the key issue is whether the mitigation measures proposed can genuinely be considered as part of the project, in that they would happen in any case, irrespective of the Habitats site. If not, then they should be considered mitigation measures, and considered at the Appropriate Assessment stage of HRA.

This is an emerging issue for local authorities and means that, because of the potential for ‘in-combination effects and the fact that HRA Screening should not take into account measures targeted at mitigating effects on Habitats sites. Therefore, it is becoming increasingly commonplace for local authorities to conduct an Appropriate Assessment of all project, plans and planning applications (i.e. these are often no longer screened out, by way of an HRA Screening as has been the practise to date).

²⁶ Judgement of the Court 12 April 2018, People Over Wind, Peter Sweetman, Coillte Teoranta Available online: <https://curia.europa.eu/juris/document/document.jsf?jsessionid=B02FE6F4F1C61308615DBBDF079EE5F4?txt=anddocid=200970andpageIndex=0anddoclang=enandmode=Istanddir=andocc=firstandpart=1andcid=11190634> Accessed [27/04/2022]

CJEU Ruling in the Netherlands nitrogen and agriculture cases c-293/17 and c-294/17

The final Court Judgement in relation to these two cases was handed down on the 7th November 2018. The judgement relates to the assessment of agricultural activities under the Habitats Regulations, but has potential implications for the assessment of changes in nitrogen (N) deposition in relation to air quality. Notably, the Court of Justice of the European Union ruled that:

- An ‘appropriate assessment’ may only take into account the existence of Article 6(1) ‘conservation measures’, or Article 6(2) ‘preventive measures’, or specific measures adopted for a conservation programme, or ‘autonomous’ measures not in the programme, if the expected benefits of those measures are certain at the time of the assessment.
- National measures such as procedures for the surveillance and monitoring of farms whose activities cause nitrogen deposition and the possibility of imposing penalties, up to and including the closure of those farms, are sufficient for the purposes of complying with Article 6(2).

Of particular relevance to the assessment of air quality effects on Habitats sites, the Court of Justice of the European Union ruled that:

“An ‘appropriate assessment’ may only take into account the existence of Article 6(1) ‘conservation measures’, or Article 6(2) ‘preventive measures’, or specific measures adopted for a conservation programme, or ‘autonomous’ measures not in the programme, if the expected benefits of those measures are certain at the time of the assessment.

The Ruling makes clear that certainty and a thorough and in-depth examination of the scientific soundness is required that there is no reasonable scientific doubt as to the absence of adverse effects of each plan or project on the integrity of the site concerned.

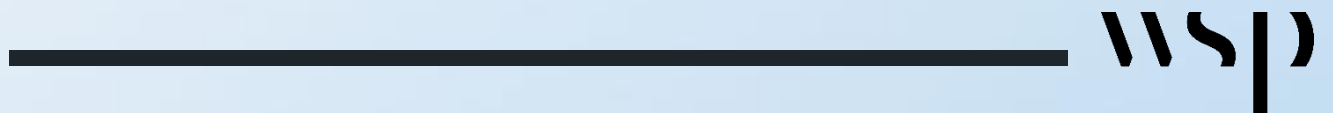
Kokott Ruling

In the Opinion of Advocate General Kokott in Case C-6/04 Commission v UK [2005] ECR I-9017 at paragraph 49 she noted that an assessment of plans cannot by definition take into account all effects because

“Many details are regularly not settled until the time of the final permission” and “[i]t would also hardly be proper to require a greater level of detail in preceding plans or the abolition of multi-stage planning and approval procedures so that the assessment of implications can be concentrated on one point in the procedure. Rather, adverse effects on areas of conservation must be assessed at every relevant stage of the procedure to the extent possible on the basis of the precision of the plan. This assessment is to be updated with increasing specificity in subsequent stages of the procedure”.

Appendix B

**Habitats sites Details, Including
Qualifying Features and
Conservation Objectives**



Site Name	Distance	Site Size (Ha)	Summary of reasons for designation summarised on Natura 2000 Standard Data Form or Ramsar Information Sheet	Activities with greatest effect upon the site, as listed on Natura 2000 standard data forms and Information Sheets for Ramsar Wetlands	Pressures and threats listed within the Site Improvement Plan (NE, undated) (T=Threat, P=Pressure) ²⁷	Conservation Objectives
Ensor's Pool SAC	Within Warwickshire County Council	3.86	<p>Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1092 White-clawed (or Atlantic stream) crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> <p>Ensor's Pool represents white-clawed crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> in standing water. This 1ha marl pit holds a very large population, estimated at 50,000. Although crayfish plague outbreaks have occurred in the Midlands, this waterbody is isolated from river systems and is a good example of a 'refuge' site in an important part of the species' former range. This site is considered to be one of the best areas for <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> in United Kingdom.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M02 – Changes in biotic conditions 	P – Changes in species distribution ²⁸	<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent and distribution of 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 site²⁹
River Mease SAC	On the north-western boundary of Warwickshire border	23.08	<p>Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculon fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation <p>Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1149 Spined loach <i>Cobitis taenia</i> 1163 Bullhead <i>Cottus gobio</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> H02- Pollution to groundwater (point sources and diffuse sources) J02- Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions I01- Invasive non-native species 	<p>P – Water Pollution³⁰</p> <p>P – Drainage</p> <p>P – Inappropriate weirs dams and other structures</p> <p>P – Invasive species</p> <p>P – Siltation</p> <p>P – Water abstraction</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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely

²⁷ Threats/pressures highlighted in green should be given primary consideration in screening and appropriate assessment of the LTP policies, those highlighted amber should be considered as indirect effects as a result of the LTP policies and those highlighted red are unlikely to be considerations in screening and appropriate assessment of the LTP policies.

²⁸ Ensor's Pool SAC Site Improvement Plan. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/4864434220564480> (Accessed on: 24/08/2022)

²⁹ Ensor's Pool SAC Site Conservation Objectives. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/5267179054563328> (Accessed on: 24/08/2022)

³⁰ River Mease SAC Site Improvement Plan. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/6448011194400768> (Accessed on: 24/08/2022)

			<p>Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1166 Great crested newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i> 1092 White-clawed (or Atlantic stream) crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> 1355 Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site³¹
<p>Severn Estuary SAC</p>	<p>Around 55kms to the south-west of the Warwickshire border.</p>	<p>73,715.40</p>	<p>Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1130 Estuaries 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide 1330 Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) <p>Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1110 Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time 1170 Reefs <p>Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1095 Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>) 1099 River Lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>) 1103 Twaite Shad (<i>Alosa fallax</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> J01- Fire and fire suppression M01- Changes in abiotic conditions A02- Modification of cultivation practices E06- Other urbanisation, industrial and similar activities G01- Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities 	<p>P/T – Public Access/Disturbance³²</p> <p>T – Physical Modification</p> <p>P/T – Impact of Developments</p> <p>P/T – Coastal Squeeze</p> <p>P/T – Change in land management</p> <p>T – Changes in species distributions</p> <p>P/T – Water Pollution</p> <p>P – Air Pollution: Impact of Atmospheric Nitrogen deposition</p> <p>P/T – Marine consents and permits: Minerals and Waste</p> <p>P – Fisheries: Recreational marine and estuarine</p> <p>T – Fisheries: Commercial marine and estuarine</p> <p>P/T – Marine Litter</p> <p>T – Marine pollution incidents</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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site³³

³¹ River Mease SAC Site Conservation Objectives. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/6012812623347712>(Accessed on: 24/08/2022)

³² Severn Estuary Site Improvement Plan. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/4856107648417792> (Accessed on: 27/02/2023)

³³ Severn Estuary SAC Site Conservation Objectives. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/6012812623347712>(Accessed on: 24/02/2023)

<p>Severn Estuary Ramsar</p>	<p>Around 55kms to the south-west of the Warwickshire border.</p>	<p>24,701</p>	<p>Ramsar Criterion 1 Habitats Directive Annex I features present on the pSAC include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ H1110 Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time ▪ H1130 Estuaries ▪ H1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide ▪ H1330 Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) <p>Ramsar Criterion 3 Due to unusual estuarine communities, reduced diversity and high productivity.</p> <p>Ramsar Criterion 4 This site is important for the run of migratory fish between sea and river via estuary. Species include Salmon <i>Salmo salar</i>, sea trout <i>S. trutta</i>, sea lamprey <i>Petromyzon marinus</i>, river lamprey <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>, allis shad <i>Alosa alosa</i>, twaite shad <i>A. fallax</i>, and eel <i>Anguilla anguilla</i>. It is also of particular importance for migratory birds during spring and autumn.</p> <p>Ramsar Criterion 8 The fish of the whole estuarine and river system is one of the most diverse in Britain, with over 110 species recorded. Salmon <i>Salmo salar</i>, sea trout <i>S. trutta</i>, sea lamprey <i>Petromyzon marinus</i>, river lamprey <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>, allis shad <i>Alosa alosa</i>, twaite shad <i>A. fallax</i>, and eel <i>Anguilla anguilla</i> use the Severn Estuary as a key migration route to their spawning grounds in the many tributaries that flow into the estuary. The site is important as a feeding and nursery ground for many fish species particularly allis shad <i>Alosa alosa</i> and twaite shad <i>A. fallax</i> which feed on mysid shrimps in the salt wedge.</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 5 Assemblages of international importance: Species with peak counts in winter: 70919 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dredging³⁴ ▪ Erosion ▪ Recreational/tourism disturbance (unspecified) 	<p>No Information Available</p>	
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³⁴ Severn Estuary Ramsar European Marine Site: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/3977366> (Accessed on 27/02/2023)

			<p>Ramsar criterion 6 – species/populations occurring at levels of international importance.</p> <p>Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tundra swan , <i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>, NW Europe ▪ Greater white-fronted goose , <i>Anser albifrons albifrons</i>, NW Europe ▪ Greater white-fronted goose , <i>Anser albifrons albifrons</i>, NW Europe ▪ Greater white-fronted goose , <i>Anser albifrons albifrons</i>, NW Europe ▪ Greater white-fronted goose , <i>Anser albifrons albifrons</i>, NW Europe ▪ Common redshank , <i>Tringa totanus totanus</i> 			
<p>Humber Estuary SAC</p>	<p>Around 140kms to the north-east of the Warwickshire border.</p>	<p>36657.15</p>	<p>Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1130 Estuaries ▪ 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide <p>Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1110 Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time ▪ 1150 Coastal lagoons ▪ 1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonizing mud and sand ▪ 1330 Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) ▪ 2110 Embryonic shifting dunes ▪ 2120 "Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ("white dunes")" ▪ 2130 "Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation ("grey dunes")" ▪ 2160 Dunes with <i>Hippopha rhamnoides</i> <p>Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ M01- Changes in abiotic conditions ▪ E02- Industrial or commercial areas ▪ J02- Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions ▪ H02- Pollution to groundwater (point sources and diffuse sources) ▪ K01- Interspecific floral relations 	<p>P/T – Water Pollution³⁵</p> <p>T – Coastal Squeeze</p> <p>T – Changes in Species Distributions</p> <p>T – Undergrazing</p> <p>T – Invasive Species</p> <p>P/T – Natural Changes to site Conditions</p> <p>P – Public Access/Disturbance</p> <p>P – Fisheries: Fish Stocking</p> <p>P/T – Fisheries: Commercial marine and estuarine</p> <p>T – Direct land take from Development</p> <p>P – Air Pollution: Impact of Atmospheric Nitrogen deposition.</p> <p>P – Shooting/Scaring</p> <p>T – Direct impact from third party</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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features ▪ The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features ▪ The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely ▪ The population of each of the qualifying features, and, <p>The distribution of the qualifying features within the site³⁶</p>

³⁵ Humber Estuary SAC Site Improvement Plan. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/5730884670980096> (Accessed on: 24/02/2023)

³⁶ Humber Estuary SAC Site Conservation Objectives. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/6294287600058368> (Accessed on: 24/02/2023)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1095 Sea lamprey <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> 1099 River lamprey <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> 1364 Grey seal <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> 		P – Inappropriate Scrub Control	
Cannock Extension Canal SAC	Around 13kms to the north-west of the Warwickshire border.	5	Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1831 Floating water-plantain <i>Luronium natans</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I01- Invasive non-native species H04- Air pollution, air-borne pollutants H02- Pollution to groundwater (point sources and diffuse sources) A04- Grazing 	P- Water Pollution ³⁷ P- Overgrazing P/T- Invasive Species P- Air Pollution: Risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition	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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site ³⁸

³⁷ Cannock Extension Canal SAC Site Improvement Plan. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/6749431462363136> (Accessed on: 27/02/2023)

³⁸ Cannock Extension Canal SAC Site Conservation Objectives. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/5726861862895616> (Accessed on 22-02-2023)



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