

**Bassetlaw District Council**

**Worksop Central  
Development Plan  
Document  
Habitats Regulations  
Assessment Report**

**Final report**

Prepared by LUC

June 2021



**Bassetlaw District Council**

**Worksop Central Development Plan Document**  
**Habitats Regulations Assessment Report**

Version	Status	Prepared	Checked	Approved	Date
1.	Draft for client comment	E. Smith S. Smith	S. Smith	K. Nicholls	10.06.2021
2.	Final for consultation	E. Smith S. Smith	S. Smith	K. Nicholls	11.06.2021

# Contents

<hr/>	
<b>Chapter 1</b>	
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
Background	1
The requirements to undertake HRA of development plans	2
Stages of Habitats Regulations Assessment	2
Relevant case law changes	3
HRA work to date	4
Structure of this report	4
<hr/>	
<b>Chapter 2</b>	
<b>Worksop Central DPD</b>	<b>6</b>
Potential impacts of the Worksop Central DPD on European sites	6
<hr/>	
<b>Chapter 3</b>	
<b>Methodology</b>	<b>9</b>
Identification of European sites that may be affected by the DPD	9
Location of European sites	10
Ecological attributes of the European site	10
Assessment of 'likely significant effects (LSEs)' of the Worksop Central DPD	10
Mitigation at the Screening stage	11
Appropriate Assessment	11
<hr/>	
<b>Chapter 4</b>	
<b>HRA Screening Assessment</b>	<b>14</b>
Physical damage/loss of habitat	14
Non-physical disturbance (noise, vibration and light)	15
Air pollution	15
Impacts of recreation	16
Cat predation	19
Water quantity and quality	19
Identification of other plans and projects which may have 'in-combination' effects	19
Screening Conclusions	20
<hr/>	
<b>Chapter 5</b>	
<b>Appropriate Assessment</b>	<b>22</b>
Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC	23
Identification of other plans and projects which may have 'in-combination' effects	24
Shadow HRA: Appropriate Assessment	24
Recommendations	27
<hr/>	
<b>Chapter 6</b>	
<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>28</b>
HRA Conclusions	28
Shadow HRA Conclusions	28
<hr/>	
<b>Appendix A</b>	
<b>European sites within 15km of Worksop Central</b>	<b>A-1</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Appendix B</b>	
<b>Screening Matrix</b>	<b>B-1</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Appendix C</b>	
<b>Plans with the Potential for In-Combination Effects with the Worksop Central DPD</b>	<b>C-1</b>

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

**1.1** LUC was commissioned by Bassetlaw District Council (BDC) to carry out a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Worksop Central Development Plan Document (DPD). This report presents the methodology and findings of the HRA Screening and Appropriate Assessment for the Worksop Central DPD.

### Background

**1.2** Bassetlaw District Council (BDC) began work on its new Local Plan in 2015. The new Local Plan will provide the long-term approach to development in the District up to the year 2037 and, once adopted, will replace the existing Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD which was adopted in December 2011. The most recent version of the Local Plan, the Draft Bassetlaw Plan November 2020, was published for consultation between November 2020 and January 2021. This was accompanied by a combined HRA and shadow HRA<sup>1</sup>.

**1.3** The emerging Bassetlaw Local Plan proposes significant regeneration of the Central Area of Worksop, as set out in policies ST1: Bassetlaw's Spatial Strategy and ST6: Worksop Central. Policy ST6 identifies land in the Worksop Central area as a Priority Regeneration Area and requires the nature, form, design and mix of uses within this area to be established through the Worksop Central DPD. The Worksop Central DPD therefore supplements emerging Local Plan policies ST1 and ST6 relating to Bassetlaw's Spatial Strategy and the Worksop Central Area respectively, and will set out specific site allocations and more detailed policies in relation to the future development of this area.

**1.4** This document presents the HRA of the Worksop Central DPD (June 2021). The role of the HRA is to establish whether the plan is likely to result in adverse effects on the integrity of internationally important wildlife sites, either alone or in-combination with other plans.

---

<sup>1</sup> Part of the HRA report for the Local Plan is referred to as a 'shadow HRA', as it relates to an assessment of effects on the Sherwood Forest prospective potential Special Protection Area (ppSPA). This area has not been formally designated as a potential SPA (pSPA) or an SPA, but has been recognized as being of sufficient importance

that it could be eligible for these designations. As such, the Habitats Regulations do not currently apply to the ppSPA, but Natural England has advised it should be assessed in the same way as designated sites.

## The requirements to undertake HRA of development plans

**1.5** The requirement to undertake HRA of development plans was confirmed by the amendments to the Habitats Regulations published for England and Wales in July 2007; the currently applicable version is the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)<sup>2</sup>.

**1.6** HRA refers to the assessment of the potential effects of a development plan on one or more European Sites, including Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs):

- SPAs are areas classified<sup>3</sup> for rare and vulnerable birds or regularly occurring migratory species.
- SACs are designated under the Habitats Regulations as amended and target particular habitat types (specified in Annex 1 to the Habitats Directive) and species (specified in Annex II to the Habitats Directive). These annexes to the Habitats Directive list habitat types and species (excluding birds) considered to be most in need of conservation at a European level. Designation of SACs also has regard to the threats of degradation or destruction to which the sites are exposed and to the coherence of the national site network.

**1.7** Currently, the Government also expects potential SPAs (pSPAs)<sup>4</sup>, Candidate SACs (cSACs)<sup>5</sup> and Sites of Community Importance (SCIs)<sup>6</sup>, and Ramsar sites to be included within the assessment<sup>7</sup>.

- Ramsar sites support internationally important wetland habitats and are listed under the Convention on

Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention, 1971).

**1.8** For ease of reference during HRA, these designations are collectively referred to as European sites, despite Ramsar designations being at the wider international level.

**1.9** The overall purpose of the HRA is to conclude whether or not a proposal or policy, or whole development plan would adversely affect the integrity of the site in question. This is judged in terms of the implications of the plan for a site's 'qualifying features' for which the European site has been designated, i.e.:

- SACs – Annex I habitat types and Annex II species<sup>8</sup>.
- SPAs – Annex I birds and regularly occurring migratory species not listed in Annex I<sup>9</sup>.
- Ramsar sites – the reasons for listing the site under the Convention<sup>10</sup>.

**1.10** Significantly, HRA is based on the precautionary principle. Where uncertainty or doubt remains, an adverse effect should be assumed.

## Stages of Habitats Regulations Assessment

**1.11** Table 1.1 summarises the stages and associated tasks and outcomes typically involved in carrying out a full HRA, based on various guidance documents<sup>11,12,13</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017* (Statutory Instrument 2017 No. 1012), as amended by *The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019* (SI 2019/579).

<sup>3</sup> Classified (a) before the day of the UK's exit from the EU (31 January 2020) in accordance with Article 4(1) or 4(2) of the European Union Wild Birds Directive for rare and vulnerable birds (as listed in Annex I of the Directive), and under Article 4(2) for regularly occurring migratory species not listed in Annex I, or (b) after exit day under the retained transposing regulations.

<sup>4</sup> Potential SPAs are sites that have been approved by the Minister for formal consultation but not yet proposed to the European Commission, as listed on the [GOV.UK website](#).

<sup>5</sup> Candidate SACs are sites that have been submitted to the European Commission, but not yet formally adopted, as listed on the JNCC's [SAC list](#).

<sup>6</sup> SCIs are sites that had been adopted by the European Commission before the day of the UK's exit from the EU (31 January 2020) but not yet formally designated as SACs by the UK Government.

<sup>7</sup> Department of Communities and Local Government (July 2018) National Planning Policy Framework (para 176).

<sup>8</sup> As listed in the site's citation on the JNCC website (all features of European importance, both primary and non-primary, need to be considered).

<sup>9</sup> As identified in sections 3.1, 3.2 and 4.2 of the SPAs' standard data form on the JNCC website; species for which the site assessment of population (abbreviated to 'Pop.' in table at section 3.1 and 3.2) is 'D' (non-significant population) are not qualifying features and are only relevant to the HRA if qualifying features are dependent on them. Information from SAC and SPA Standard Data Forms is also published by the JNCC in the [Natura 2000 site details - spreadsheet](#). At sites where there remain differences between species listed in the [2001 SPA Review](#) and the extant site citation in the standard data form, Natural England should be contacted for further guidance.

<sup>10</sup> As set out in section 14 of the relevant 'Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands' available on the JNCC website.

<sup>11</sup> European Commission (2001) 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.

<sup>12</sup> UK Government Planning Practice Guidance, available from <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/appropriate-assessment>

<sup>13</sup> The HRA Handbook. David Tyldesley & Associates, a subscription based online guidance document: <https://www.dtapublications.co.uk/handbook/European>

Table 1.1: Stages of HRA

Stage	Tasks
<b>Stage 1: HRA Screening</b>	<p>Description of the development plan.</p> <p>Identification of potentially affected European sites and factors contributing to their integrity.</p> <p>Review of other plans and projects.</p> <p>Assessment of likely significant effects ('LSEs') of the development plan alone or in-combination with other plans and projects.</p>
<b>Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment (where Stage 1 does not rule out likely significant effects)</b>	<p>Information gathering (development plan and European sites<sup>14</sup>).</p> <p>Evaluation of development plan impacts in view of conservation objectives.</p> <p>Where impacts are considered to affect qualifying features, identify how these effects will be avoided or reduced.</p>
<b>Stage 3: Assessment where no alternatives exist and adverse impacts remain taking into account mitigation</b>	<p>Identify 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest' (IROPI).</p> <p>Demonstrate no alternatives exist.</p> <p>Identify potential compensatory measures.</p>

**1.12** In assessing the effects of a Plan in accordance with Regulation 105 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)<sup>15</sup> there are potentially two tests to be applied by the competent authority: a 'Significance Test', followed if necessary, by an Appropriate Assessment which would inform the 'Integrity Test'. The relevant sequence of questions is as follows:

- Step 1: Under Reg. 105(1)(b), consider whether the plan is directly connected with or necessary to the management of the sites. If not, then the considerations proceed to Step 2.

- Step 2: Under Reg. 105(1)(a) consider whether the plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects (the 'Significance Test'). If yes, proceed to Step 3.
- Step 3: Under Reg. 105(1), make an Appropriate Assessment of the implications for the European site in view of its current conservation objectives (the 'Integrity Test'). In so doing, it is mandatory under Reg. 105(2) to consult Natural England, and optional under Reg. 105(3) to take the opinion of the general public.
- Step 4: In accordance with Reg. 105(4), but subject to Reg. 107, give effect to the land use plan only after having ascertained that the plan would not adversely affect the integrity of a European site.
- Step 5: Under Reg. 107, if Step 4 is unable to rule out adverse effects on the integrity of a European site and no alternative solutions exist then the competent authority may nevertheless agree to the plan or project if it must be carried out for 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest' (IROPI).

**1.13** It is normally anticipated that an emphasis on Stages 1 and 2 of this process will, through a series of iterations, help ensure that potential adverse effects are identified and eliminated through the inclusion of mitigation measures designed to avoid, reduce or abate effects. The need to consider alternatives could imply more onerous changes to a plan document. It is generally understood that so called 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest' (IROPI) are likely to be justified only very occasionally and would involve engagement with both the Government and European Commission.

**1.14** The HRA should be undertaken by the 'competent authority' - in this case BDC, and LUC has been commissioned to do this on its behalf. The HRA requires close working with Natural England as the statutory nature conservation body<sup>16</sup> in order to obtain the necessary information and agree the process, outcomes and any mitigation proposals. The Environment Agency, while not a statutory consultee for the HRA, is also in a strong position to provide advice and information throughout the process.

## Relevant case law changes

**1.15** This HRA has been prepared in accordance with relevant case law findings, including the 'People over Wind'

<sup>14</sup> In addition to European site citations and conservation objectives, key information sources for understanding factors contributing to the integrity of European sites include (where available) conservation objectives supplementary advice and Site Improvement Plans prepared by Natural England.

<sup>15</sup> SI No. 2017/2012

<sup>16</sup> Regulation 5 of *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017* (Statutory Instrument 2017 No. 1012).

and ‘Holohan’ rulings from the Court of Justice for the European Union (CJEU).

**1.16** The *People over Wind, Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta* (April 2018) judgment ruled that Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive should be interpreted as meaning that mitigation measures should be assessed as part of an Appropriate Assessment, and should not be taken into account at the screening stage. The precise wording of the ruling is as follows:

*“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.”*

**1.17** In light of the above, the HRA screening stage will not rely upon avoidance or mitigation measures to draw conclusions as to whether the Workshop Central DPD could result in likely significant effects on European sites, with any such measures being considered at the Appropriate Assessment stage as relevant.

**1.18** The HRA will also fully consider the *Holohan v An Bord Pleanála* (November 2018) judgement which stated that:

*“Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora must be interpreted as meaning that an ‘appropriate assessment’ must, on the one hand, catalogue the entirety of habitat types and species for which a site is protected, and, on the other, identify and examine both the implications of the proposed project for the species present on that site, and for which that site has not been listed, and the implications for habitat types and species to be found outside the boundaries of that site, provided that those implications are liable to affect the conservation objectives of the site.*

*Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43 must be interpreted as meaning that the competent authority is permitted to grant to a plan or project consent which leaves the developer free to determine subsequently certain parameters relating to the construction phase, such as the location of the construction compound and haul routes, only if that authority is certain that the development consent granted establishes conditions that are strict enough to guarantee that those parameters will not adversely affect the integrity of the site.*

*Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43 must be interpreted as meaning that, where the competent authority rejects the findings in a scientific expert opinion recommending that additional information be obtained, the ‘appropriate assessment’ must include an explicit and detailed statement of reasons capable*

*of dispelling all reasonable scientific doubt concerning the effects of the work envisaged on the site concerned.”*

**1.19** Throughout this HRA, LUC will fully consider the potential for effects on species and habitats, including those not listed as qualifying features, to result in secondary effects upon the qualifying features of European sites, including the potential for complex interactions and dependencies. In addition, the potential for offsite impacts, such as through impacts to functionally linked land, and or species and habitats located beyond the boundaries of European site, but which may be important in supporting the ecological processes of the qualifying features, is being fully considered in this HRA.

## HRA work to date

**1.20** The emerging Bassetlaw Local Plan has been subject to HRA throughout its development. The most recent HRA for the Local Plan is the Bassetlaw Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Assessment and Appropriate Assessment (November 2020). The HRA considered all policies, including Policies ST1: Bassetlaw’s Spatial Strategy and ST6: Workshop Central, which identify Workshop Central as an area for redevelopment.

**1.21** Whilst the Bassetlaw Local Plan has already been subject to HRA, the DPD is being assessed in its own right, given that:

- The DPD contains new, more detailed policies and allocations that are not set out in the emerging Local Plan. In addition, the DPD allocates more homes than the minimum number set out in Policy ST6 (843 in the DPD, compared to a minimum of 660 set out in ST6).
- The Local Plan is not yet finalised and its accompanying HRA is awaiting further data in order to draw firm conclusions.

## Structure of this report

**1.22** This chapter has introduced the requirement to undertake HRA of the Workshop Central DPD. The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2: Workshop Central DPD** summarises the content of the Workshop Central DPD, which is the subject of this report.
- **Chapter 3: Methodology** sets out the approach used and the specific tasks undertaken during the HRA for the Workshop Central DPD.
- **Chapter 4: HRA Screening Assessment** describes the findings of the Screening stage of the HRA.

- **Chapter 5: Appropriate Assessment** describes the findings of the Appropriate Assessment stage of the HRA.
- **Chapter 6: Conclusions** summarises the HRA conclusions and describes the next steps to be undertaken.
- **Appendix A** sets out details of the European sites within 15km of the Worksop Central area, including their qualifying features and conservation objectives.
- **Appendix B** presents the Screening matrix.
- **Appendix C** sets out details of other plans with potential for in-combination effects with the Worksop Central DPD.

## Chapter 2

### Worksop Central DPD

**2.1** This HRA relates to the Worksop Central DPD. The DPD provides a co-ordinated approach to the sustainable regeneration of the Worksop Central area and will implement the policy requirements of the emerging Bassetlaw Local Plan by providing a framework for sustainable economic development, major new housing development, social and green infrastructure and sustainable transport solutions.

**2.2** The Screening matrix set out in **Appendix B** provides a complete list of the policies included in the Worksop Central DPD. These 53 policies cover a range of topics such as locations for residential and employment development, regeneration, green and blue infrastructure, recreational activity, and improvement of the local environment including the public realm, biodiversity and air quality.

#### Potential impacts of the Worksop Central DPD on European sites

**2.3** All potential impacts that development in general and related activities may have on European sites have been considered to inform this HRA. Impacts considered include a broad range of physical, non-physical, direct and indirect impacts, drawing on LUC's experience of HRA, the professional judgement of assessors, impacts noted specifically for those European sites included within the HRA and comments provided by Natural England in relation to the Local Plan HRA regarding the potential impacts and activities that could affect European sites.

**2.4** **Table 2.1** sets out the range of potential impacts that development in general and related activities may have on European sites. This has been used as a starting point to help identify the types of effects that the DPD could have on European sites. The DPD will not result in all of the different types of impacts and activities. Further information regarding the types of impacts that the DPD could have, and which therefore need to be considered in this HRA, is provided in **Chapter 4**.

Table 2.1: Potential impacts and activities adversely affecting European sites

Broad categories and examples of potential impacts on European sites	Examples of activities responsible for impacts
<p><b>Physical loss</b></p> <p>Removal (including offsite effects, e.g. foraging habitat)</p> <p>Mine collapse</p> <p>Smothering</p> <p>Habitat degradation</p>	<p>Development (e.g. housing, employment, infrastructure, tourism)</p> <p>Infilling (e.g. of mines, water bodies)</p> <p>Alterations or works to disused quarries</p> <p>Structural alterations to buildings (bat roosts)</p> <p>Afforestation</p> <p>Tipping</p> <p>Cessation of or inappropriate management for nature conservation</p>
<p><b>Physical damage</b></p> <p>Sedimentation / silting</p> <p>Prevention of natural processes</p> <p>Habitat degradation</p> <p>Erosion</p> <p>Trampling</p> <p>Fragmentation</p> <p>Severance / barrier effect</p> <p>Edge effects</p> <p>Fire</p>	<p>Flood defences</p> <p>Dredging</p> <p>Mineral extraction</p> <p>Recreation (e.g. motor cycling, cycling, walking, horse riding, water sports, caving)</p> <p>Development (e.g. infrastructure, tourism, adjacent housing etc.)</p> <p>Vandalism</p> <p>Arson</p> <p>Cessation of or inappropriate management for nature conservation</p>
<p><b>Non-physical disturbance</b></p> <p>Noise</p> <p>Vibration</p> <p>Visual presence</p> <p>Human presence</p> <p>Light pollution</p>	<p>Development (e.g. housing, industrial)</p> <p>Recreation (e.g. dog walking, water sports)</p> <p>Industrial activity</p> <p>Mineral extraction</p> <p>Navigation</p> <p>Vehicular traffic</p> <p>Artificial lighting (e.g. street lighting)</p>
<p><b>Water table/availability</b></p> <p>Drying</p> <p>Flooding / stormwater</p> <p>Water level and stability</p> <p>Water flow (e.g. reduction in velocity of surface water)</p> <p>Barrier effect (on migratory species)</p>	<p>Water abstraction</p> <p>Drainage interception (e.g. reservoir, dam, infrastructure and other development)</p> <p>Increased discharge (e.g. drainage, runoff)</p>
<p><b>Toxic contamination</b></p> <p>Water pollution</p> <p>Soil contamination</p> <p>Air pollution</p>	<p>Agrochemical application and runoff</p> <p>Navigation</p> <p>Oil / chemical spills</p> <p>Tipping</p> <p>Landfill</p> <p>Vehicular traffic</p> <p>Industrial waste / emissions</p>

Broad categories and examples of potential impacts on European sites	Examples of activities responsible for impacts
<p><b>Non-toxic contamination</b></p> <p>Nutrient enrichment (e.g. of soils and water)</p> <p>Algal blooms</p> <p>Changes in salinity</p> <p>Changes in thermal regime</p> <p>Changes in turbidity</p> <p>Air pollution (dust)</p>	<p>Agricultural runoff</p> <p>Sewage discharge</p> <p>Water abstraction</p> <p>Industrial activity</p> <p>Flood defences</p> <p>Navigation</p> <p>Construction</p>
<p><b>Biological disturbance</b></p> <p>Direct mortality</p> <p>Out-competition by non-native species</p> <p>Selective extraction of species</p> <p>Introduction of disease</p> <p>Rapid population fluctuations</p> <p>Natural succession</p>	<p>Development (e.g. housing areas with domestic and public gardens)</p> <p>Predation by domestic pets</p> <p>Introduction of non-native species (e.g. from gardens)</p> <p>Fishing</p> <p>Hunting</p> <p>Agriculture</p> <p>Changes in management practices (e.g. grazing regimes, access controls, cutting/clearing)</p>

## Chapter 3

### Methodology

**3.1** HRA screening of the Worksop Central DPD has been undertaken in line with current available guidance and seeks to meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations and takes into account the 'People over Wind' judgment and Holohan CJEU rulings. The tasks that have been undertaken during the Screening and Appropriate Assessment stages of the HRA are described in detail below.

#### Identification of European sites that may be affected by the DPD

**3.2** In order to initiate the search of European sites that could potentially be affected by a plan document, it is established practice in HRAs to consider European sites within the plan area, as well as within 15km of the plan area as a starting point, as well as considering other sites that may be affected beyond this distance. As such, a 15km area of search outside the Worksop Central area boundary has been used as an initial screening distance to identify European sites that have potential to be affected by the DPD.

**3.3** Although there are no European Sites within Worksop, or indeed within Bassetlaw District, one site, Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC, lies within 15km of Central Worksop. The SAC is around 10.2km from Worksop Central area at the closest point.

**3.4** European sites outside this 15km zone also need to be considered where there are pathways by which effects could occur on more distant European sites. However, for the Worksop Central area, no linkages or pathways have been identified with any other European sites.

#### Shadow HRA

**3.5** As explained in **Chapter 1**, it is necessary for potential SPAs (pSPAs) to be included in the HRA. Although not formally a pSPA, Natural England has advised that there is the possibility of a Sherwood Forest ppSPA being designated in the future on account of supporting populations of breeding nightjar and woodlark. In an Advice Note to Local Planning Authorities dated March 2014<sup>17</sup>, Natural England advocates a precautionary approach to any plans or projects which could affect such a site, and identifies Core Breeding Areas and Important Bird Areas (IBAs), which together would be likely to

---

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.mansfield.gov.uk/downloads/file/482/natural-england-s-advice-notes-on-the-sherwood-ppspa-2014>

constitute component sites of any Sherwood Forest 'prospective potential' SPA (ppSPA). Natural England has since clarified that the most up to date Sherwood Forest IBA boundaries differ from those in the 2014 advice note, and that these should be used when considering the potential extent of the ppSPA.

**3.6** Natural England's 2014 advice note advises Local Planning Authorities in the vicinity of parts of Sherwood Forest to be mindful of the Secretary of State's decision in 2011, following Public Inquiry, to refuse to grant planning permission for an Energy Recovery Facility at Rainworth where the potential impacts on these birds and their supporting habitats was given significant weight. Natural England's note indicates that, with regards to planning, a risk-based approach should be taken by considering Sherwood Forest in the HRA process as a ppSPA.

**3.7** While no conclusion has been reached, or progress published about the possible future classification of a Sherwood Forest pSPA, Natural England recommend that the ppSPA be considered as part of any relevant HRA, in line with the precautionary principle and to ensure that any planning proposals are adequately future proofed. In responding to the consultation on the HRA of the Draft Bassetlaw Plan, Natural England suggested that assessment of the Sherwood Forest ppSPA should be undertaken separately, as a 'shadow HRA', therefore the same approach has also been taken in this HRA of the Workshop Central DPD. The shadow HRA is presented in this report, but the approach taken (set out in this chapter) and results (in **Chapter 4** and **Chapter 5**) are presented separately from the main HRA through the use of sub-headings.

### Location of European sites

**3.8** The locations of the European sites considered in this HRA are mapped in **Figure 3.1** at the end of this chapter. As the status of Sherwood Forest is still uncertain, there are no defined boundaries for the ppSPA. For the purposes of this assessment, the ppSPA boundaries are based upon the information provided within the Natural England advice note, as described above i.e. that all of the land within the Core Breeding Areas and Important Bird Areas would together comprise the ppSPA. This indicative area is provided in **Figure 3.1**.

### Ecological attributes of the European site

**3.9** Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC is the only European site identified within 15km of the boundary of Central Workshop and is the only European site scoped into this assessment. Detailed information about the location, qualifying features and

vulnerabilities of this SAC is presented in **Appendix A**. The attributes that contribute to and define the integrity of the SAC considered in this HRA have been identified using the Conservation Objectives for the site and Standard Data Form for the SAC. This analysis enabled SAC interest features to be identified, along with the features that determine site integrity and the specific sensitivities and threats facing the site. This information was used to inform an assessment of how the potential impacts of the DPD may affect the integrity of the site.

**3.10** This approach has also been useful for identifying the supporting processes, structure and functions on which the qualifying habitat depends, as highlighted as a requirement by the 'Holohan' ruling.

### Shadow HRA: Ecological attributes of the European site

**3.11** As the Sherwood Forest ppSPA is not currently designated as a European site, there is no Standard Data form or Site Improvement Plan (SIP) for it. However, information about other comparable SPAs within the UK, such as the Thames Basin Heaths SPA which is designated for nesting nightjar and woodlark (and Dartford Warbler), have been used to understand likely pressures and threats, and factors contributing to the coherence and function of the site's qualifying features.

### Assessment of 'likely significant effects (LSEs)' of the Workshop Central DPD

**3.12** As required under Regulation 105 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)<sup>18</sup> (the 'Habitats Regulations'), an assessment has been undertaken of the 'likely significant effects' of the Workshop Central DPD. A risk-based approach involving the application of the precautionary principle has been adopted in the assessment, such that a conclusion of 'no significant effect' has only been reached where it is considered very unlikely, based on current knowledge and the information available, that a proposal in the DPD would have a significant effect on the integrity of a European site.

**3.13** A Screening matrix has been prepared (**Appendix B**), which considers the potential for likely significant effects resulting from each policy and site allocation in the Workshop Central DPD. A 'traffic light' approach has been used in the screening matrix to record the likely effects of the policies and site allocations on European sites and their qualifying habitats and species, using the colour categories shown in **Table 3.1**. The findings of the Screening assessment are described in **Chapter 4**.

<sup>18</sup> SI No. 2017/2012

Table 3.1: Interpretation of 'likely significant effect'

Red	There are likely to be significant effects (Appropriate Assessment required).
Amber	There may be significant effects, but this is currently uncertain (Appropriate Assessment required).
Green	There are unlikely to be significant effects (Appropriate Assessment <b>not</b> required).

**3.14** Relevant case law helps to interpret when effects should be considered as a likely significant effect, when carrying out HRA of a land use plan.

**3.15** In the Waddenzee case<sup>19</sup>, the European Court of Justice ruled on the interpretation of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive (translated into Reg. 105 in the Habitats Regulations), including that:

- An effect should be considered 'likely', "if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that it will have a significant effect on the site" (para 44);
- An effect should be considered 'significant', "if it undermines the conservation objectives" (para 48); and
- Where a plan or project has an effect on a site "but is not likely to undermine its conservation objectives, it cannot be considered likely to have a significant effect on the site concerned" (para 47).

**3.16** A relevant opinion delivered to the Court of Justice of the European Union<sup>20</sup> commented that:

*"The requirement that an effect in question be 'significant' exists in order to lay down a de minimis threshold. Plans or projects that have no appreciable effect on the site are thereby excluded. If all plans or projects capable of having any effect whatsoever on the site were to be caught by Article 6(3), activities on or near the site would risk being impossible by reason of legislative overkill."*

**3.17** This opinion (the 'Sweetman' case) therefore allows for the authorisation of plans and projects whose possible effects, alone or in-combination, can be considered 'trivial' or de minimis; referring to such cases as those "that have no appreciable effect on the site". In practice such effects could be screened out as having no likely significant effect; they would be 'insignificant'.

**3.18** With reference to the broad impact types shown in **Table 2.1** in the previous chapter, consideration has been given to

the potential for the development proposed in the DPD to result in significant effects associated with:

- Physical damage/loss of habitat.
- Non-physical disturbance (noise, vibration and light).
- Air pollution.
- Impacts of recreation.
- Cat predation.
- Water quality and quantity.

**3.19** Toxic and non-toxic contamination of air and water is addressed within air pollution and changes to hydrological regimes. For the European sites considered within this HRA, biological disturbance may occur as either cat predation or as a result of recreation-related activities. As such, cat predation is considered on in its own right and other issues are considered under impacts of recreation.

### Mitigation at the Screening stage

**3.20** As mentioned in **Chapter 1**, the Court of Justice of the European Union judgement in relation to the *People over Wind, Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta* case ruled that Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive should be interpreted as meaning that mitigation measures should be assessed as part of an Appropriate Assessment, and should not be taken into account at the Screening stage.

**3.21** Potential effects identified through the Screening exercise as set out in **Chapter 4** and **Appendix B** could be mitigated through the implementation of policies within the DPD itself or the emerging Local Plan. These may include policies such as those relating to the provision of improved sustainable transport links which could help to mitigate potential increases in air pollution associated with increased vehicle traffic, and the provision of green infrastructure within new developments which may help to relieve increases in visitor pressure at European sites.

**3.22** Potential avoidance and mitigation included in the DPD itself and the emerging Local Plan has not therefore been considered at the Screening stage, but has, as relevant, been considered during the Appropriate Assessment, thereby ensuring full compliance with the 'People over Wind' judgment.

### Appropriate Assessment

**3.23** The Appropriate Assessment stage of HRA focuses on those impacts judged likely at the Screening stage to have a

<sup>19</sup> ECJ Case C-127/02 "Waddenzee" Jan 2004.

<sup>20</sup> Advocate General's Opinion to CJEU in Case C-258/11 *Sweetman and others v An Bord Pleanála* 22nd Nov 2012.

significant effect, and seeks to conclude whether, in light of mitigation and avoidance measures, they would result in an adverse effect on the on the integrity of the qualifying features of a European site(s), or where insufficient certainty regarding this remains. The integrity of a site depends on the site being able to sustain its 'qualifying features' across the whole of the site and ensure their continued viability. The findings of the Appropriate Assessment (and Shadow Appropriate Assessment for Sherwood Forest ppSPA) are described in **Chapter 5**.

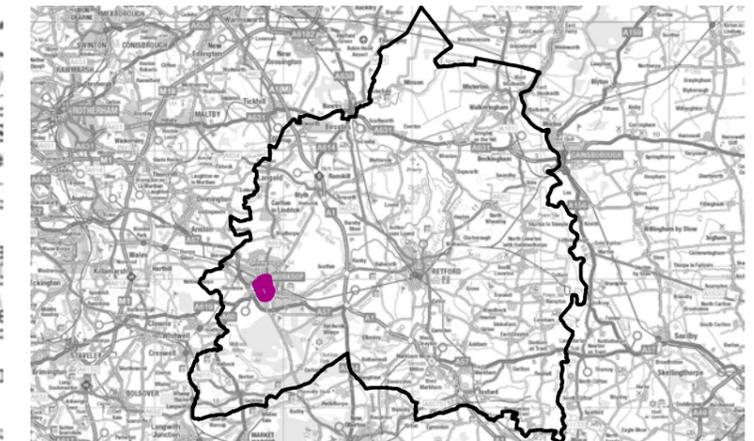
Figure 3.1: European sites within proximity to Worksoop Central Area and the Sherwood Forest ppSPA



- Worksoop Central boundary
- Bassetlaw District Council
- Worksoop 15km buffer
- Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC

**Indicative prospective potential Special Protection Area (ppSPA)**

- Indicative core area of breeding Nightjar and Woodlark
- Important Bird Area



Map scale 1:130,000 @ A3

## Chapter 4

# HRA Screening Assessment

**4.1** This chapter sets out the approach taken to and the findings of the Screening stage of the HRA for the Worksop Central DPD.

**4.2** For some types of impacts, screening for likely significant effects has been determined on a proximity basis, using GIS data to determine the proximity of potential development locations to the European sites that are the subject of the assessment. Where an impact pathway from the Worksop Central DPD to a European site cannot be identified, such impacts can be screened out of further assessment. The detailed Screening matrix is presented in **Appendix B**, and the findings are described below in relation to each broad type of potential impact that the DPD could give rise to.

### Physical damage/loss of habitat

**4.3** Any development resulting from the Worksop Central DPD will be located within the Worksop Central area. As there are no European sites within Worksop, loss of habitat from within the boundaries of a European site can be ruled out.

**4.4** Loss of habitat from outside the boundaries of a European site could still result in likely significant effects if that habitat supports qualifying species from within the European sites, for example habitat that is used for foraging by birds (usually referred to as 'functionally linked' habitat). Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC is designated for habitat (old acidophilous oak woods) rather than for any mobile species; therefore the qualifying features do not rely on any functionally linked land.

**Likely significant effects on European sites can therefore be screened out in relation to physical damage or loss of habitat, both on and off-site.**

### Shadow HRA: Physical damage/loss of habitat

**4.5** The ppSPA lies outside of the Worksop Central area; therefore effects relating to physical damage to or loss of onsite habitat can be screened out.

**4.6** Sherwood Forest ppSPA has been identified as being important for woodlark and nightjar. The preferred habitat type for these species during the breeding season is heathland and rotational coniferous plantation habitats. Nightjar do not overwinter in the UK, and will utilise a much broader range of habitat types for nocturnal foraging including open grasslands,

woodlands and wetland habitats. Woodlark typically have large territories which incorporate early successional stage habitat that provides the low vegetation sward preferred for nesting, but usually within woodland clearings. Woodlark also overwinter in the UK when they often forage in arable habitats.

**4.7** Given the urban nature of the Worksop Central area, it is highly unlikely that this area would be important in contributing to the availability of functionally linked habitat for ppSPA bird species.

Likely significant effects on the ppSPA can therefore be screened out in relation to physical damage or loss of habitat, both on and off-site.

### Non-physical disturbance (noise, vibration and light)

**4.8** Noise and vibration effects, e.g. during the construction of new housing or employment development, are most likely to disturb bird species and are thus a key consideration with respect to European sites where birds are the qualifying features, although such effects may also impact upon some mammals and fish species. Artificial lighting at night (e.g. from street lamps, flood lighting and security lights) is most likely to affect bat populations and other nocturnal animals, and therefore have an adverse effect on the integrity of European sites where bats or nocturnal animals are a qualifying feature.

**4.9** Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC is designated for habitat (old acidophilous oak woods), rather than any mobile species, therefore the qualifying features of the site are not sensitive to non-physical disturbance.

Likely significant effects can therefore be screened out in relation to non-physical disturbance.

### Shadow HRA: Non-physical disturbance (noise, vibration and light)

**4.10** It has been assumed that the effects of noise, vibration and light are most likely to be significant within a distance of 500m from the ppSPA. There is also evidence of 300m being used as a distance up to which certain bird species can be disturbed by the effects of noise<sup>21</sup>; however, it has been assumed (on a precautionary basis) that the effects of noise, vibration and light pollution are most likely to cause an adverse effect if development takes place within 500m of a European site with qualifying features sensitive to these

disturbances, or within 500m of known off-site breeding, foraging or roosting areas.

**4.11** The ppSPA lies further than 500m from the Worksop Central area. Given the urban nature of the Worksop Central area and its surrounds, land within 500m of this area is unlikely to be suitable for ppSPA species. There are a few small fields adjoining the eastern boundary of Worksop Central, which constitute primarily rough grassland, although there is a small area of scrub and arable. Nevertheless, considering the surrounding urban context, and factors such as flight lines from the ppSPA being interrupted by significant urban development, it is considered unlikely that this area would be important in contributing to the availability of functionally linked habitat for ppSPA bird species.

Likely significant effects on the ppSPA can therefore be screened out in relation to non-physical disturbance.

### Air pollution

**4.12** Air pollution is most likely to affect European sites where plant, soil and water habitats are the qualifying features, but some qualifying animal species may also be affected, either directly or indirectly, by any deterioration in habitat as a result of air pollution. Deposition of pollutants to the ground and vegetation can alter the characteristics of the soil, affecting the pH and nitrogen availability that can then affect plant health, productivity and species composition.

**4.13** In terms of vehicle traffic, nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>, i.e. NO and NO<sub>2</sub>) are considered to be the key pollutants. Subsequent deposition of nitrogen compounds may lead to both soil and freshwater acidification, and eutrophication of soils and water.

**4.14** Based on the Highways Agency Design Manual for Road and Bridges (DMRB) Manual Document LA105: Air Quality<sup>22</sup> which was produced to provide advice regarding the design, assessment and operation of trunk roads (including motorways), it is assumed that air pollution from roads is unlikely to be significant beyond 200m from the road itself. Where increases in traffic volumes are forecast, this 200m buffer needs to be applied to the relevant roads in order to make a judgement about the likely geographical extent of air pollution impacts.

**4.15** The DMRB Guidance for the assessment of local air quality in relation to highways developments provides criteria that should be applied at the screening stage of an assessment of a plan or project, to ascertain whether there are likely to be significant impacts associated with routes or

<sup>21</sup> *British Wildlife Magazine*. October 2007.

<sup>22</sup> *Design Manual for Road and Bridges: LA105, Air Quality*. Highways Agency (2019).

<https://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/dmrp/search/10191621-07df-44a3-892e-c1d5c7a28d90>

corridors. Based on the DMRB guidance, affected roads which should be assessed are those where:

- Daily traffic flows will change by 1,000 AADT (Annual Average Daily Traffic) or more; or
- Heavy duty vehicle (HDV) flows will change by 200 AADT or more; or
- There will be a change in speed band; or
- Road alignment will change by 5m or more.

**4.16** It has been assumed that only those roads forming part of the primary road network (motorways and 'A' roads) are likely to experience any significant increases in vehicle traffic as a result of development (i.e. greater than 1,000 AADT), as these are the roads new residents are most likely to use e.g. for commuting. As such, where a potential development site is within 200m of only minor roads, no significant effect from traffic-related air pollution is considered to be the likely outcome.

**4.17** There are no motorways within the Worksop Central area and the A60 is the only 'A' road that passes through Worksop Central. Moreover, the Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC is located more than 200m from the major roads which also pass through Bassetlaw District.

**There is no impact pathway in relation to air pollution effects and therefore likely significant effects can be screened out in relation to air pollution.**

#### Shadow HRA: air pollution

**4.18** The DPD will lead to increased housing and employment in Worksop, which will likely increase the number of cars on the road within the town and surrounding area. In addition, the DPD seeks to improve and regenerate Worksop Central, which could increase the attractiveness of Worksop to visitors, resulting in more people travelling to the area. The A60 runs adjacent to the Sherwood Forest ppSPA, just north of the village of Warsop, and the A57, which runs along the western and southern boundaries of Worksop (although not the DPD area itself), runs adjacent to the ppSPA. Therefore, an increase in traffic on the road network associated with residential and employment development, as well as an increase in tourism, has the potential to lead to increased air pollution from traffic on roads within 200m of the Sherwood Forest ppSPA.

**4.19** Worksop Central is well-connected by train, as Worksop railway station lies within the DPD area. In addition, many journeys are likely to be local, given that Worksop is the main town for the district and therefore contains many services and facilities. Nevertheless, there is likely to be some increase in traffic in the surrounding area.

**4.20** Case law, known as the Wealden judgement<sup>23</sup>, has revised the method by which Natural England expects to see in-combination air pollution effects assessed. The implication of the judgment is that, where the road traffic effects of other plans or projects are known or can be reasonably estimated (including those of adopted plans or consented projects), then these should be included in road traffic modelling by the local authority whose plan document or project is being assessed. The screening criteria of 1,000 AADT should then be applied to the traffic flows of the plans in-combination.

**4.21** Whilst increases in air pollution as a result of the Worksop Central DPD are considered unlikely to be significant alone, there could be an air pollution effect in-combination with the Local Plan and growth proposed in neighbouring plans. Therefore, this should be considered further at the Appropriate Assessment stage.

The potential for the DPD to result in likely significant effects on the Sherwood Forest ppSPA as a result of air pollution cannot be ruled out in-combination with other plans, and therefore this will require further consideration at the Appropriate Assessment stage.

#### Impacts of recreation

**4.22** Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC is designated for old acidophilous oak woods. Recreational activities can affect this habitat through soil compaction, nutrient enrichment, direct loss of trees, introduction of non-native species and altered ecological succession, all of which can affect habitat structure and function. Where DPD policies are likely to result in an increase in the local population, or where an increase in visitor numbers to the European site is considered likely, there may be potential for associated recreational impacts.

**4.23** In its response to the HRA of the Draft Bassetlaw Plan, Natural England highlighted that the Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre and nearby forest, which constitutes part of Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC, is a regional recreational resource, drawing visitors from a wide area. The visitor centre lies in the north of Edwinstowe, around 150m from the Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC and around 12km from Worksop Central. The

<sup>23</sup> Wealden District Council v. (1) Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government; (2) Lewes District Council; (3) South Downs National Park Authority and Natural England

visitor centre is a gateway to the forest and there are footpaths running from the visitor centre into Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC. As such, an increase in visitors to the visitor centre is likely to correlate strongly with an increase in visitors to Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC.

**4.24** Visitor survey information provided by the RSPB, which manages the Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre, shows that in 2018/19 around 30% of visitors lived within 10 miles (16.1km) of the visitor centre. However, as the data sent to LUC only refers to 'within 10 miles' or 'not within 10 miles', it is difficult to establish a zone of influence using this data. The 2019/2020 visitor survey also established that 60% of visitors live within a 60 minute drive of the visitor centre (all response choices were based on drive times). The 2018/19 survey found that over 90% of visitors drove to the visitor centre (equivalent information was not available for 2019/2020). This suggests a much larger catchment of around 65km, based on an average driving speed of 40mph. This would cover the whole of Bassetlaw District and a substantial area beyond this as well, as shown in **Figure 4.1**. Using the information set out above, this estimated visitor catchment area for the Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre has been used as a proxy for the visitor catchment area of the Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC. As such, it is considered that development within Worksop Central could contribute, either alone or in-combination, to likely significant effects associated with increases in recreational pressure.

**Due to the potential of this visitor centre to draw people from further afield, and in order to be precautionary, potential impacts of recreational disturbance at Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC requires further consideration through Appropriate Assessment.**

#### Shadow HRA: impacts of recreation

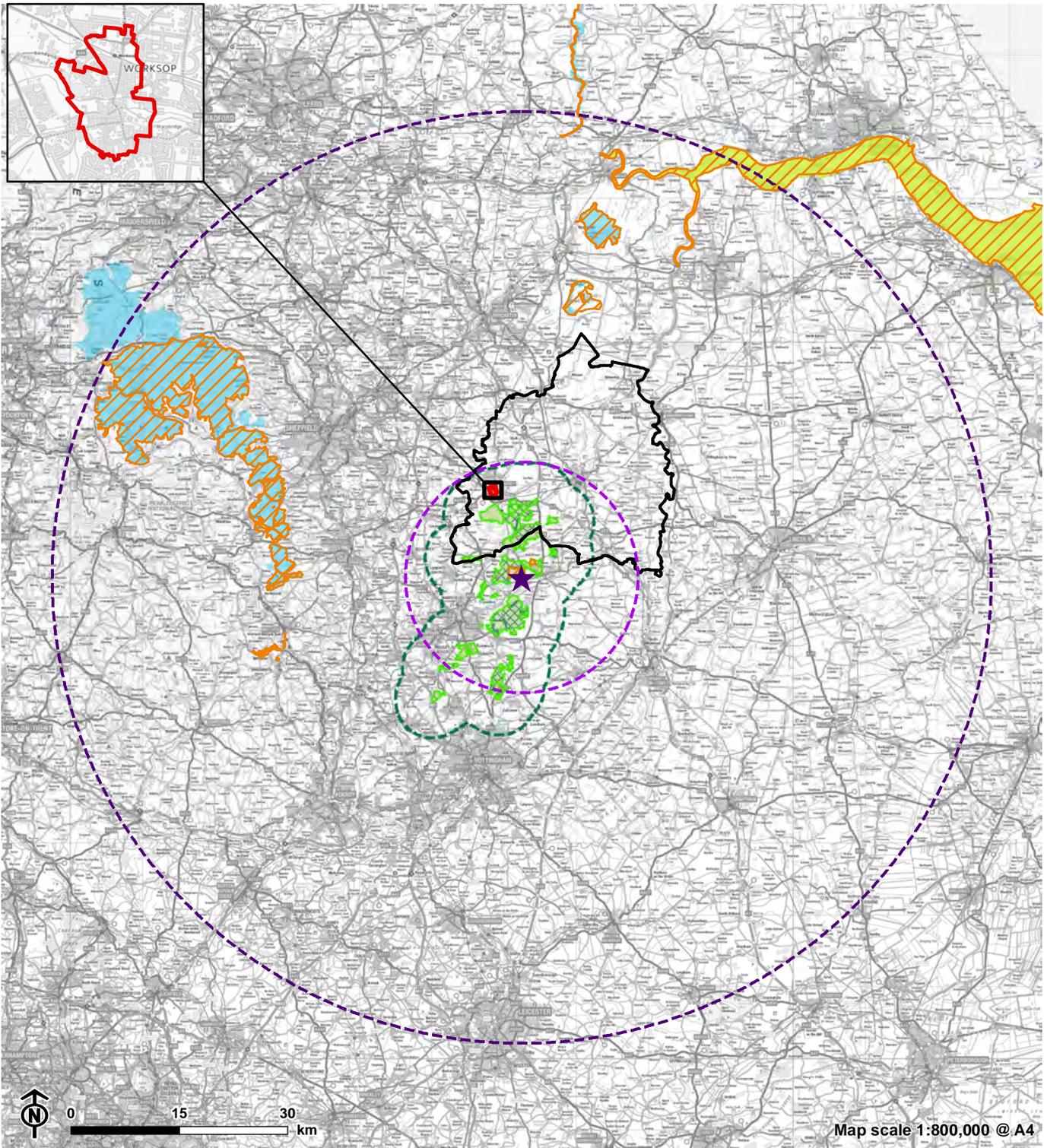
**4.25** The Sherwood Forest ppSPA comprises a mosaic of plantation coniferous and broadleaved woodlands, open heathland and grassland habitats. It is particularly susceptible to recreational pressures because the qualifying bird species nest on the ground and are therefore vulnerable to disturbance, displacement and predation, for example associated with dog walking or the effects of cat predation from nearby residential development. The habitats are also susceptible to nutrient enrichment (e.g. through dog excretion) and direct disturbance resulting in degradation through erosion and trampling.

**4.26** In addition, the Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre and nearby forest is a regional recreational resource, drawing visitors from a wide area. The visitor centre lies in the north of Edwinstowe, around 150m from the ppSPA and around 12km from the district boundary. As noted above, visitor survey

information provided by the RSPB, which manages the Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre, suggests that people will drive between 16.1km (30% of visitors in 2018/19) and 65km (60% of visitors in 2019/20) to the visitor centre. A potential visitor catchment of 65km from the visitor centre would cover the whole of Bassetlaw District (including the Worksop Central area) and a substantial area beyond this as well.

**4.27** As such, it is considered that development proposed in the Worksop Central DPD could contribute, either alone or in-combination, to likely significant effects associated with increases in recreational pressures. Avoidance and mitigation safeguards are likely to be required, but cannot be relied upon at this Screening stage.

The DPD has the potential to result in likely significant effects on the Sherwood Forest ppSPA as a result of increases in recreational pressure, both alone and in-combination with other plans and projects and will therefore require further consideration at the Appropriate Assessment stage.



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2021  
© Natural England copyright 2021.

CB:CB EB:Bean\_C LUC FIGX\_10327\_r0\_VisitorCentre\_A4P\_08/06/2021  
Source: NE, NWT, OS

**Figure 4.1: Location of Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre and Travel Buffers**

- |                                              |                                                           |                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bassetlaw District Council                   | Ramsar                                                    | Indicative prospective potential Special Protection Area (ppSPA) |
| Worksop Central boundary                     | Special Protection Area                                   |                                                                  |
| Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre               | Sherwood Forest Important Bird Area*                      |                                                                  |
| Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre 16.1km buffer | Sherwood Forest Important Bird Area 5km buffer            |                                                                  |
| Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre 65km buffer   | Indicative core area of breeding of Nightjar and Woodlark |                                                                  |
| Special Area of Conservation                 |                                                           |                                                                  |

\* IBA boundary from 2018 is shown. IBAs outside of Sherwood Forest are not shown on this map as they have not been considered in the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening.

## Cat predation

**4.28** Cat predation due to an increase in residential populations and cat ownership can result in likely significant effects on European sites where ground nesting bird species are the qualifying features and the new residential development is in close proximity. The Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC is outside the District boundary and is designated for old acidophilous oak woods, not bird species, and can therefore be screened out, given the lack of impact pathways.

**Likely significant effects can be screened out in relation to cat predation.**

### Shadow HRA: cat predation

**4.29** Nightjar and woodlark (for which the Sherwood Forest ppSPA is likely to be designated) are ground nesting species, and therefore these birds and their nests are vulnerable to predation by domestic cats.

**4.30** The increased risk of cat predation associated with residential schemes in relation to the Thames Basin Heaths SPA (designated for nightjar and woodlark, as well as Dartford warbler) resulted in the adoption of a 400m development exclusion zone within the Delivery Framework. Natural England specifies that at distances of less than 400m avoidance measures are likely to be ineffective at reducing the risks associated with predation. It is considered reasonable to apply a similar approach to the Sherwood Forest ppSPA given the similarities in habitat types and qualifying species. Workshop Central lies substantially further than 400m from the ppSPA, therefore there is no impact pathway with regards to cat predation.

Likely significant effects are not expected to occur due to cat predation.

## Water quantity and quality

**4.31** An increase in demand for water abstraction and treatment resulting from the growth proposed in the DPD could result in changes in hydrology at European sites, specifically a decrease in water quality or changes to water levels. The habitat for which the Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC is designated is not vulnerable to changes in hydrology.

**Likely significant effects can therefore be screened out in relation to water quality and quantity.**

### Shadow HRA: water quantity and quality

**4.32** Although Sherwood Forest ppSPA lies in proximity to waterways, the habitats within the ppSPA which the birds rely upon are not vulnerable to changes in hydrology. Therefore, the qualifying bird species would nest and continue to breed, hence this would not be expected to affect the European site or its qualifying features.

The potential for the DPD to result in likely significant effects on any European site as a result of changes in water quality and quantity can therefore be ruled out.

## Identification of other plans and projects which may have 'in-combination' effects

**4.33** Regulation 105 of the Amended Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended) requires an Appropriate Assessment where “a land use plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site (either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects) and is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site”. Therefore, it is necessary to consider whether there may be significant effects from the DPD in-combination with other plans or projects.

**4.34** Where the DPD is likely to have an effect on its own (due to impact pathways being present), whether significant or not, there may also be the same types of effects from other plans or projects that could combine with the DPD to produce adverse effects on integrity, and therefore these need to be considered through the Appropriate Assessment stage. Where the screening assessment has concluded that there is no impact pathway between development proposed in the DPD and the conditions necessary to maintain qualifying features of a European site, then there will be no in-combination effects to assess.

**4.35** The only impact pathway identified in the screening assessment relates to potential effects arising in relation to recreational disturbance at Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC. Significant effects could potentially occur as a result of the plan alone. However, it is also possible that the plan could give rise to small, but not significant effects alone, but that significant effects could come forward in-combination with other plans, particularly the emerging Bassetlaw Local Plan and the neighbouring Newark and Sherwood Local Plan.

**4.36** In order to identify what other ‘in-combination’ effects could arise from other plans and projects in addition to the Workshop Central DPD, a review has been undertaken focusing on planned spatial growth within the emerging Bassetlaw Local Plan and the authorities adjacent to Bassetlaw District. **Appendix C** lists the plans that were considered, outlining the components of each that could have

an impact on nearby European sites (including Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC) and considering the findings of the accompanying HRA work (where available). There is some uncertainty with regards to new plans that are in the early stages of development. Any updates to these emerging plans will be considered in future iterations of the HRA.

**The potential for in-combination effects from recreational disturbance are considered in relation to Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC.**

#### Shadow HRA: in-combination effects

**4.37** Sherwood Forest ppSPA has been assessed as having likely significant effects from the DPD on its own for recreational pressure. In addition, potential for in-combination effects have been identified with regards to air pollution as a result of increased traffic on the A60 and A57.

**4.38** Therefore in-combination effects for these impacts have been assessed in the Shadow Appropriate Assessment in relation to the ppSPA.

Taking a precautionary approach, in-combination effects for air quality and recreational pressure are considered in the Shadow Appropriate Assessment for Sherwood Forest ppSPA.

## Screening Conclusions

#### Summary of screening outcomes

**4.39** This chapter summarises the HRA screening conclusions regarding whether likely significant effects (LSEs) in relation to each broad impact type would occur as a result of the Worksop Central DPD. The screening assessment concluded that the Worksop Central DPD may result in likely significant effects with regards to recreation on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC both alone and in-combination.

**4.40 Appendix B** considers each policy in turn and whether each one has the potential to result in likely significant effects on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC.

**4.41** The following policies have potential to result in likely significant effects on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC as a result of increased recreational pressure:

- W2: Leisure and Culture.
- W4: Delivering Residential Development.
- W15: Chesterfield Canal.
- W23: Creative Village Phase 2.

- W24: Former Gas Works Site, Canal Road.
- W25: Warehouse, Priorswell Road.
- W27: Former Bus Depot, Hardy Street.
- W28: Central Avenue.
- W29: Priory Wharf.
- W30: The Canch.
- W31: Gateford Car Park.
- W32: Worksop Fire Station Site.
- W33: Sandy Lane.
- W35: Bridge Street Opportunity Area.
- W36: Crown House.
- W37: Newcastle Avenue.
- W38: Land at Newcastle Avenue/Norfolk Street.
- W39: Lead Hill Car Park.
- W40: Middletons.
- W43: Former Magistrates Court.
- W44: Mayfair Centre.
- W46: Worksop Public Sector Hub.
- W47: Land to the South of Newgate Street.
- W48: Old Ship Inn Public House.
- W49: Market Square.
- W50: Turner Road Opportunity Area.
- W52: Turner Road.
- W53: Land to the East of Carlton Road.

#### Shadow HRA: screening conclusion

**4.42** This chapter summarises the HRA screening conclusions regarding whether likely significant effects (LSEs) in relation to each broad impact type would occur as a result of the Worksop Central DPD.

**4.43** The screening assessment concluded the Worksop Central DPD may result in likely significant effects with regards to recreation on Sherwood Forest ppSPA both alone and in-combination. Whilst likely significant effects on Sherwood Forest ppSPA in relation to air quality are not expected to arise as a result of the DPD alone, there is potential for likely significant effects to occur in combination with other plans.

**4.44 Appendix B** considers each policy in turn and whether it has potential to result in likely significant effects on the Sherwood Forest ppSPA.

**4.45** The following policies have potential to result in likely significant effects on the Sherwood Forest ppSPA as a result of both increased recreational pressure and increased air pollution:

- W2: Leisure and Culture.
- W4: Delivering Residential Development.
- W15: Chesterfield Canal.
- W23: Creative Village Phase 2.
- W24: Former Gas Works Site, Canal Road.
- W25: Warehouse, Priorswell Road.
- W27: Former Bus Depot, Hardy Street.
- W28: Central Avenue.
- W29: Priory Wharf.
- W30: The Canch.
- W31: Gateford Car Park.
- W32: Worksop Fire Station Site.
- W33: Sandy Lane.
- W35: Bridge Street Opportunity Area.
- W36: Crown House.
- W37: Newcastle Avenue.
- W38: Land at Newcastle Avenue/Norfolk Street.
- W39: Lead Hill Car Park.
- W40: Middletons.
- W43: Former Magistrates Court.
- W44: Mayfair Centre.
- W46: Worksop Public Sector Hub.
- W47: Land to the South of Newgate Street.
- W48: Old Ship Inn Public House.
- W49: Market Square.
- W50: Turner Road Opportunity Area.
- W52: Turner Road.
- W53: Land to the East of Carlton Road.

**4.46** In addition, the following policies have potential to result in likely significant effects on the Sherwood Forest ppSPA as

a result of increased air pollution (but not as a result of recreational pressure):

- W26: The WASH.
- W51: Worksop Station.

## Chapter 5

### Appropriate Assessment

**5.1** Following the screening stage, the plan-making authority is required under Regulation 105 of the Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended) to make an 'Appropriate Assessment' of the implications of the plan for European sites, in view of their conservation objectives.

**5.2** European Commission Guidance<sup>24</sup> 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.

**5.3** A European site's integrity depends on it being able to sustain its 'qualifying features' (i.e. those Annex I habitats, Annex II species, and Annex I bird populations for which it has been designated) and to ensure their continued viability. A high degree of integrity is considered to exist where the potential to meet a European site's conservation objectives is realised and where the European site is capable of self-repair and renewal with a minimum of external management support.

**5.4** The Appropriate Assessment stage seeks to determine whether implementation of the DPD will result in an adverse effect on the integrity of the whole European site in question (many European sites are made up of a number of fragments of habitat). This stage therefore needs to focus on those impacts judged likely to have a significant effect on the qualifying features of European sites, or where insufficient certainty regarding this remained at the screening stage. It also considers the potential for in-combination effects from development proposed in neighbouring authorities' Local Plans. Consideration is given to mitigation measures that already are or may be included in the DPD itself or the Local Plan to reduce the likelihood and significance of effects on European sites.

**5.5** The Screening assessment identified the potential for significant effects on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC in terms of increased recreational pressure. This is therefore considered further below. No other likely significant effects were identified on any other European sites.

---

<sup>24</sup> 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.

## Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC

**5.6** The Screening assessment identified that all residential site allocations have potential to result in recreational disturbance effects upon Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC (specifically in the vicinity of the Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre), either alone or in-combination.

**5.7** In addition to housing allocations, policies W2: Leisure and Culture and W15: Chesterfield Canal may result in increased visitors to the area. In addition, the DPD as a whole may increase visitors to the area as the regeneration of Worksop Central is likely to enhance the attractiveness and visitor offer of the area.

**5.8** Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC is designated for Old acidophilous oak woods. The Site Improvement Plan<sup>25</sup> (SIP) recognises public access/disturbance as an issue and specifically relates this to the presence of the Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre. Potential effects on the qualifying habitat of the SAC arising from visitor pressure include:

- Soil compaction.
- Nutrient enrichment.
- Direct loss of trees (vandalism/ health and safety).
- Non-native species.
- Altered ecological succession.

**5.9** Such impacts can affect the health of soils, tree roots and the associations with mycorrhizal fungi, which in turn can have impacts on the health of the veteran and ancient trees as well as emerging cohorts. Since preparation of the SIP, the visitor centre has been moved out of the SAC itself to Edwinstowe, in order to provide an opportunity for habitat restoration. Nevertheless, the visitor centre still represents a gateway to the forest and is only around 150m from the SAC itself. Therefore, the DPD could result in adverse effects on the integrity (AEoI) of the SAC habitats as a result of recreation.

**5.10** The Council has commissioned a Recreational Impact Assessment for the SAC. This includes establishing a zone of influence for the site. The Draft Bassetlaw Local Plan, which the DPD will sit alongside, states that this study will identify potential management and mitigation measures, which will feed into future iterations of the Local Plan and this HRA.

**5.11** Policy ST42: Biodiversity and Geodiversity in the Draft Bassetlaw Local Plan requires housing development within the zones of influence to make provision for appropriate management, mitigation and monitoring on site, to address

recreational impacts. It is envisaged that such avoidance and mitigation requirements could include:

- Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) for the SAC – with contributions to be made by the relevant development applicants in accordance with suitable requirements.
- Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) - provision of a proportionate area of high quality SANGs within the relevant policies in line with the requirements specified by Natural England. A SANG should be ready for use prior to occupation and will need to be managed, monitored and funded to meet the requirements specified in perpetuity.

**5.12** The DPD itself includes policies that seek to improve and expand green space provision and protect biodiversity. In particular, Policy W13: Green and Blue Infrastructure seeks to extend and enhance the green and blue infrastructure network in Worksop, including 'ensuring the community can more easily access space for recreation and play, and food growing, close to home'. Policies W30: The Canch and W34: Sandhill Lake seek to improve these two strategic green infrastructure assets for recreation. Policy W14: Enhancing Biodiversity and Tree Cover seeks to protect, extend and manage biodiversity, although this focuses on opportunities within the plan area itself, whereas Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC is outside of Central Worksop. It is expected that new residents associated with housing development in the DPD will generally visit nearby locations for recreation, particularly given the presence of strategic green space (such as The Canch) in the area and improvements to this as set out in the DPD. However, given the wide estimated catchment area for the Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre, and the fact that visiting the SAC provides a different experience to visiting the green spaces within Worksop, there may still be some increase in the number of visitors at Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC as a result of the DPD.

**5.13** The measures to be incorporated in the Bassetlaw Local Plan as a result of the Recreational Impact Assessment are expected to be sufficient to ensure that no adverse effects on integrity of Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC will arise, particularly given that the development proposed in the DPD will also have to comply with the policies set out in the emerging Local Plan. **Nevertheless, it is recommended that the DPD refers to the potential for impacts to arise and makes it clear that any development within Worksop Central will also need to comply with relevant mitigation measures set out in the Recreational Impact Assessment and the Bassetlaw Local Plan.**

<sup>25</sup> Natural England (2015) Site Improvement Plan: Birklands and Bilhaugh, Available at:

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6727956374224896>, Accessed 22/10/2020

**Assuming any recommendations from the Recreation Impact Assessment will be integrated into the Local Plan and referenced in the DPD, it can be concluded that the DPD would not lead to AEoI on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC in relation to increases in recreational pressure.**

### Identification of other plans and projects which may have 'in-combination' effects

**5.14** The Screening assessment identified potential recreational disturbance effects on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC as a result of the DPD in-combination with other plans. However, the Appropriate Assessment identified no Adverse Effects on Integrity (AEoI) from the DPD alone as a result of recreational disturbance, providing the recommendations from the Recreation Impact Assessment will be integrated into the Local Plan and referenced in the DPD. Although in-combination effects cannot be ruled out entirely if taking a precautionary approach, the HRAs of relevant Local Plans (see **Appendix C**) do not predict likely significant effects upon European sites including Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC from recreation, although the Newark and Sherwood Local Plan HRA recommends working closely with neighbouring authorities surrounding Sherwood Forest to improve the understanding of potential visitor pressures at Sherwood Forest ppSPA and Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC. This collaboration has commenced with the commissioning of the Recreational Impact Assessment, which is aiming to establish a zone of influence within which recreational pressure is likely to be significant. The Draft Bassetlaw Local Plan also states that this study will identify potential management and mitigation measures, which will feed into future iterations of the Local Plan and this HRA. Therefore, it is concluded that in-combination impacts should be able to be avoided, and this will be reviewed at the next stage of HRA, at which point there is expected to be more certainty regarding the outcomes of the Recreational Impact Assessment and mitigation incorporated in the Bassetlaw Local Plan.

**No AEoI have been identified in-combination with other plans and policies, providing the recommendations of the Recreation Impact Assessment are taken forward, as described above.**

### Shadow HRA: Appropriate Assessment

**5.15** The Screening assessment identified potential for the DPD to result in likely significant effects on the Sherwood Forest ppSPA in relation to the following impacts:

- Recreational pressure.

- Air quality.

**5.16** Although the Sherwood Forest ppSPA is not currently a designated European site, in line with the Natural England Advice Note (March 2014) referred to in **Chapter 3** and the precautionary principle underpinning HRA, Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken for the Sherwood Forest ppSPA to determine whether the Local Plan will result in Adverse Effects on its Integrity (AEoI). The Appropriate Assessment findings are detailed below. A conclusion has been reached as to whether or not policies and site allocations in the DPD would adversely affect the integrity of the ppSPA by considering whether the predicted impacts of the proposals (either alone or in-combination) have the potential to :

- Disrupt factors that help to maintain the favourable conditions of the site.
- Interfere with the balance, distribution and density of key habitats and species that are the indicators of the favourable condition of the site.

**5.17** The conservation objectives for the Sherwood Forest ppSPA are not yet defined, but are likely to be similar to other designated SPAs in England, i.e. to ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and to ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring:

- The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features.
- The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features.
- The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely.
- The population of each of the qualifying features.
- The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.

### Air Quality

**5.18** The screening assessment identified the potential for an increase in air pollutants at the ppSPA alongside the A60 and A57, due to an increase in residents, workers and visitors travelling along those roads as a result of the DPD.

**5.19** Commuting data demonstrates that those living in Worksop generally work in the town, although some people

also commute to Worksop for work, particularly from Retford<sup>26</sup>. Such commutes tend to be by car<sup>27</sup> and are likely to utilise the A57, which could lead to increases in air pollution at the ppSPA. There are a small number of people who commute into Worksop from villages south along the A60 but given that the commuting link is currently weak, it is considered that the DPD will have negligible effects on traffic along the A60.

**5.20** Air pollution is listed as a threat for Sherwood Forest ppSPA, however it is not listed within the IBA factsheet as one of the highest priority threats for the site.

**5.21** Sherwood Forest ppSPA is recognised for its population of nightjar and woodlark. These species nest in heathland, moorland and forest clearings. They both feed on insects and woodlark also feed on seeds. Nightjar will travel several kilometres to forage and tend to follow linear features, including forest edges. Woodlark use trees and woodland edges as song or lookout posts.

**5.22** Whilst Sherwood Forest ppSPA includes plant communities that thrive in nutrient poor conditions, the area within 200m of the A57 comprises deciduous and conifer plantation woodland. It is thought that this is managed on a rotational basis, therefore felled areas will be suitable for nightjar and woodlark, becoming less suitable once the trees mature. Aerial photography<sup>28</sup> shows primarily dense plantation woodland within 200m of the road, which is not suitable nesting habitat for nightjar and woodlark, but could be used for foraging, particularly by nightjar. Aerial photography only shows one small area of felled/young woodland within 200m of the road, which could be suitable for nesting nightjar, although it is noted that forest management is dynamic and this is subject to change.

**5.23** Due to the rotational harvesting cycle of this habitat crop, it is far more resilient to the effects of nutrient enrichment from traffic related air pollution than equivalent habitats which support these birds, such as lowland heathland. However, nitrogen enrichment could affect re-growth of felled woodland. The main effect is expected to be an increased rate of regrowth. Forest clearings as a result of forestry, which could form suitable nesting habitat, are transient in their nature anyway, although faster regrowth could mean that suitable nesting habitat is available for a shorter amount of time. However, this is likely to be balanced out by an increased rate of growth and therefore increased rate of felling.

**5.24** Given the expected cyclical nature of forest management described above, nutrient enrichment is likely to have negligible effects on the nightjar and woodlark population. In addition, dispersal of nitrates is more limited through woodland, and therefore it is likely that increased nitrates from traffic will affect a smaller area than 200m either side of the road.

**5.25** Nevertheless, it is recommended that the DPD (and the Local Plan) commits to monitoring nightjar and woodlark breeding numbers and success within cleared areas within 200m of the A57. This could include comparison with breeding numbers and success further than 200m from the road.

Providing the management regime of the forest is confirmed, it can be concluded that the DPD will not result in adverse effects on integrity of the Sherwood Forest ppSPA in relation to increased air pollution.

### Recreational Pressure

**5.26** The Screening assessment identified that all residential site allocations in the DPD have potential to result in recreational disturbance effects upon Sherwood Forest ppSPA, either alone or in-combination.

**5.27** In addition to housing allocations, policies W2: Leisure and Culture and W15: Chesterfield Canal may result in increased visitors to the area. In addition, the DPD as a whole may increase visitors to the area as the regeneration of Worksop Central is likely to enhance the attractiveness and visitor offer of the area.

**5.28** Recreational disturbance is listed as the highest level of threat in the IBA factsheet<sup>29</sup> and is therefore also assumed to be the main threat for the ppSPA. Given the increase in population and visitors likely as a result of the DPD, the DPD has the potential to increase recreational pressure on the ppSPA, which can lead to bird disturbance, predation, and displacement, and this can reduce breeding success or the ability of birds to breed and survive. Therefore, the DPD could result in adverse effects on the integrity of the ppSPA nightjar and woodlark populations as a result of recreation.

**5.29** The Council has commissioned a Recreational Impact Assessment for the Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC and the Clumber Park SSSI, many areas of which coincide with the

<sup>26</sup> Oliver O'Brien & James Cheshire (2016) Interactive mapping for large, open demographic data sets using familiar geographical features, *Journal of Maps*, 12:4, 676-683, DOI: 10.1080/17445647.2015.1060183. Available at: <https://commute.datashine.org.uk/>, accessed 17/05/2021

<sup>27</sup> Oliver O'Brien & James Cheshire (2016) Interactive mapping for large, open demographic data sets using familiar geographical

features, *Journal of Maps*, 12:4, 676-683, DOI: 10.1080/17445647.2015.1060183. Available at: <https://commute.datashine.org.uk/>, accessed 17/05/2021

<sup>28</sup> Getmapping plc, Infoterra Ltd & Bluesky, Maxar Technologies via Google Maps. Imagery dated 2021.

<sup>29</sup> <http://datazone.birdlife.org/site/factsheet/sherwood-forest-iba-united-kingdom/details>

ppSPA. This includes establishing a zone of influence for the site. The Draft Bassetlaw Local Plan, which the DPD will sit alongside, states that this study will identify potential management and mitigation measures, which will feed into future iterations of the Local Plan and this HRA.

**5.30** Policy ST42: Biodiversity and Geodiversity of the Draft Bassetlaw Local Plan requires housing development within the zones of influence to make provision for appropriate management, mitigation and monitoring on site, to address recreational impacts. It is envisaged that such avoidance and mitigation requirements could include:

- Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) for the ppSPA itself – with contributions to be made by the relevant development applicants in accordance with suitable requirements.
- Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) - provision of a proportionate area of high quality SANGs within the relevant policies in line with the requirements specified by Natural England. A SANG should be ready for use prior to occupation and will need to be managed, monitored and funded to meet the requirements specified in perpetuity.
- Parking restrictions in and around the ppSPA during the critical months of April and May, which are the most sensitive part of the breeding season for woodlark and nightjar.

**5.31** As stated in the Appropriate Assessment for Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC above, the DPD includes policies that seek to improve and expand green space provision and protect biodiversity, particularly Policies W13: Green and Blue Infrastructure, W14: Enhancing Biodiversity and Tree Cover, W30: The Canch and W34: Sandhill Lake. It is expected that new residents associated with housing development in the DPD will generally visit nearby locations for recreation, particularly given the presence of strategic green space (such as The Canch) in the area and improvements to this as set out in the DPD. However, given the wide estimated catchment area for the Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre and the popularity of Clumber Park, and the fact that visiting the SAC provides a different experience to visiting the green spaces within Worksop, there may still be some increase in the number of visitors at the ppSPA as a result of the DPD.

**5.32** The measures to be incorporated in the Bassetlaw Local Plan as a result of the Recreational Impact Assessment are expected to be sufficient to ensure no adverse effects on integrity of the ppSPA will arise, particularly given that the development proposed in the DPD will also have to comply with the policies set out in the emerging Local Plan.

**Nevertheless, it is recommended that the DPD refers to the potential for impacts to arise and makes it clear that**

**any development within Worksop Central will also need to comply with relevant mitigation measures set out in the Recreational Impact Assessment and the Bassetlaw Local Plan.**

Assuming any recommendations from the Recreation Impact Assessment will be integrated into the Local Plan and referenced in the DPD, it can be concluded that the DPD would not lead to AEoI on Sherwood Forest ppSPA in relation to increases in recreational pressure.

#### Identification of other plans and projects which may have 'in-combination' effects

**5.33** The Screening assessment identified potential in-combination effects on Sherwood Forest ppSPA as a result of:

- Air quality.
- Recreational pressure.

#### Air Quality

**5.34** The Appropriate Assessment has concluded that AEoI for Sherwood Forest ppSPA are not expected with regards to air quality as a result of the DPD alone. This conclusion is based on the resilience and lower suitability of habitats within 200m of the road, rather than on numbers of vehicle movements expected to be generated. As such, in-combination effects with growth proposed in other plans are not expected to occur.

#### Recreational Pressure

**5.35** The Screening assessment identified that there could be potential recreational disturbance effects on Sherwood Forest ppSPA as a result of the DPD in-combination with other plans and policies. However, the Appropriate Assessment identified no AEoI as a result of recreational disturbance arising from the Worksop Central DPD upon Sherwood Forest ppSPA alone. The HRAs of other Local Plans (see **Appendix C**) do not predict likely significant effects upon the Sherwood Forest ppSPA from recreation, although the Newark and Sherwood Local Plan HRA recommends working closely with neighbouring authorities surrounding Sherwood Forest to improve the understanding of potential visitor pressures at Sherwood Forest ppSPA and Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC. This has commenced with the commissioning of a Recreational Impact Assessment, which is aiming to establish a zone of influence within which recreational pressure is likely to be significant. Policy ST42: Biodiversity and Geodiversity in the Draft Bassetlaw Local Plan requires housing development within the zones of influence to make provision for appropriate management, mitigation and monitoring on site, to address recreational impacts – this will apply to development allocated

in the Worksop Central DPD. Therefore, it is concluded that in-combination impacts in relation to this and other Local Plans can be avoided.

No AEoI have been identified in-combination with other plans and policies upon the Sherwood Forest ppSPA in relation to air quality or recreational disturbance.

## Recommendations

**5.36** The emerging Bassetlaw Local Plan is expected to make sufficient provisions for managing increased recreational pressure at Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC, by incorporating the recommendations of the Recreation Impact Assessment. However, this will need to be confirmed once the study is complete and the next iteration of the Local Plan has been drafted.

**5.37** Additional recommendations for the DPD are set out below:

- It is recommended that the DPD refers to the potential for recreational impacts to arise and makes it clear that any development within Worksop Central will also need to comply with relevant mitigation measures set out in the Recreational Impact Assessment and the Bassetlaw Local Plan. This will help to ensure no adverse effects on integrity arise as a result of the DPD, particularly in-combination with the Local Plan and planned development in surrounding areas.
- It is recommended that the DPD (and the Local Plan) commits to monitoring nightjar and woodlark breeding numbers and success within cleared areas within 200m of the A57. This could include comparison with breeding numbers and success further than 200m from the road.

## Chapter 6

# Conclusions

### HRA Conclusions

**6.1** The Screening stage of the HRA for the Worksop Central DPD identified one European site with potential to be affected by the DPD: Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC. The only pathway by which likely significant effects could arise on the SAC is through an increase in recreational pressure. This pressure may arise as a result of increased population in Worksop Central, due to housing provision, as well as an increase in visitors to the area as the DPD as a whole is likely to make Worksop a more attractive destination. Visitors to Worksop are likely to explore the surrounding area, and in particular the Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre draws people from a wide area.

**6.2** The Appropriate Assessment concluded that this issue is likely to be adequately addressed through the Recreation Impact Assessment and that recommendations from that study are expected to be integrated into the Local Plan. Whilst this is expected to provide sufficient mitigation (and will be reviewed in the next round of HRA), it is recommended that the DPD includes wording to recognise this work and the need for developments in Worksop Central to comply with any relevant measures. Providing this recommendation is implemented, no adverse effects on the integrity of the SAC will occur as a result of the DPD.

### Shadow HRA Conclusions

**6.3** The Screening assessment identified potential likely significant effects resulting from the Worksop Central DPD alone upon the Sherwood Forest ppSPA as a result of recreational pressure. Likely significant effects may also arise with regards to air quality in-combination with the Local Plan and other plans.

**6.4** As set out above, Recreation Impact Assessment is being undertaken, which includes the Clumber Park SSSI and Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC, which overlap with the ppSPA. Providing recommendations from the study are taken forward, no adverse effects on integrity are expected to arise in relation to recreational pressure.

**6.5** The Appropriate Assessment concluded that adverse effects on the integrity of the Sherwood Forest ppSPA as a result of the DPD would not occur either alone or in-combination with other plans. Nevertheless, it is

recommended that breeding numbers and success of nightjar and woodlark is monitored in proximity to the road.

LUC  
June 2021

# Appendix A

## European sites within 15km of Worksop Central

Table A.1: Birklands and Bilhaugh Special Area of Conservation

1. Birklands and Bilhaugh Special Area of Conservation	
<b>Site description</b>	
<p>Covering an approximate area of 271.84 hectares, Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC is a landscape-remnant of the historic Sherwood Forest, which is of world renowned cultural significance due to the high concentration of ancient oak trees and associated folklore. The trees and open woodland- pasture habitat have been utilised over the centuries as a medieval Royal hunting forest, as a source of timber for the construction of cathedrals and English naval fleets, and more recently for public amenity, recreation and tourism. There is high public usage across the SAC supported by a network of Public Rights of Way and permissive paths. Part of the SAC forms part of the Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve.</p> <p>The site lies on freely-draining, acidic, sandy soils and is notable for its rich invertebrate fauna, particularly spiders, and for a diverse fungal assemblage, including <i>Grifoa sulphurea</i> and <i>Fistulina hepatica</i>. The oak population consists of approximately equal numbers of the pedunculate oak <i>Quercus robur</i> and the sessile oak <i>Q. petraea</i> covering a wide range of size and age, including an exceptional population of ancient standing oaks. Although birch (mainly <i>Betula verrucosa</i>) forms groves between the oaks the canopy is, over large areas, still rather open allowing a dense bracken field layer to develop. A wide variety of fungi are present. Within the woodland occur glades of acid grassland dominated by the tussock-forming wavy-hair grass <i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i> and which contain such characteristic herbs as heath bedstraw <i>Galium saxatile</i> and tormentil <i>Potentilla erecta</i>.</p>	
<b>Qualifying Features</b>	
H9190	Old acidophilous oak woods with <i>Quercus robur</i> on sandy plains
Site status*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 96.87% in unfavourable (recovering) condition</li> <li>■ 3.13% in unfavourable (no change) condition</li> </ul>
<b>Non-Qualifying Features</b>	
<p>This habitat type relies on a range of supporting processes, structure and functions which influence the distribution of this feature.</p> <p>This habitat relies on old or over-mature elements of the woodland which are particularly characteristic and important features for the woodland, and their continuity should be a priority. This can be accomplished through active management, by managing selected trees to ensure that they reach veteran status (though tree ageing techniques where feasible), but also ensuring that sufficient regeneration occurs at a rate necessary to keep in line with veteran tree deaths. This is particularly important for hole-nesting birds.</p> <p>The habitat relies on continuity to maintain wood pasture conditions found. This can be achieved by ensuring the wide distribution of size and ages classes of the major site-native tree and shrub species are maintained, and that a variety of woodland habitats and niches are provided where required (through appropriate management techniques).</p> <p>The provision of some open, sunlit, tree-less areas to facilitate natural tree and shrub regeneration will provide habitat for woodland invertebrates, birds, vascular and lower plants. This can be achieved through natural or managed grazing, and will assist in restoring the habitat to a favourable condition.</p> <p>This habitat type needs to maintain its resilience to environmental changes, so it can retain the same structure and functioning and cope with environmental stress and changes on the ecosystem. This can be achieved by maintaining the diversity of site-native trees.</p>	

1. Birklands and Bilhaugh Special Area of Conservation
<p>The habitat must maintain the canopy and understorey of site native trees which are known to generally support a greater species assemblage. This will ensure that the abundance of H9190 Annex 1 habitat species, such as the oak polymore, are maintained.</p> <p>Additionally, any invasive/non-native should be managed so that they are either rare or absent, and if present, causing minimal damage to H9190 features within the woodland.</p> <p>The habitat relies on soil structure with space for water and air to move through to allow root growth, therefore soil management within root zones needs to ensure the prevention of soil compaction around mature and ancient trees. This could occur as a result of construction/management works or trampling from grazing or recreational activities.</p> <p>There is a requirement to maintain or restore as necessary the concentration of air pollutants to a, or below, the critical load or level given for H9190 features of the Site. This is because this habitat type is sensitive to changes in air quality, as this could affect the chemical status of the soil and result in an impact on plant growth, species present and vegetation structure.</p> <p>This habitat type provides natural patterns of light and darkness which woodland species have adapted to and rely on. Therefore it is essential that any artificial lighting is maintained at a level which will not result in an impact on the natural phenological cycles and processes of the woodland, or the features or species which utilise this habitat.</p>
<b>Special Area of Conservation objectives</b>
<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;</p> <p>The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats</p> <p>The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and,</p> <p>The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.</p>
<b>Site Improvement Plan<sup>30</sup>: pressures, threats and related development</b>
<p>The main pressures and threats to this site include public access and disturbance in that the current visitor's centre complex that is located within the SAC, is preventing the necessary restoration of the full extent of the oak woodland. The visitor centre complex needs to be physically removed and the area restored, but planning permission is proving problematic [note that the visitor centre has now been relocated since the preparation of the SIP]. Other issues include change in land management which has created a large age gap between the ancient trees, physical modification, impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition, disease and invasive species.</p>
<p>*Site status is an assessment by Natural England of the status of the SSSIs within the SAC</p>

<sup>30</sup> Natural England - Site Improvement Plan: Birklands & Bilhaugh (SIP016)  
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6727956374224896?category=4526209115357184>

## Appendix B

### Screening Matrix

**B.1** The screening matrix below sets out which types of impacts on European sites could potentially result from policies and proposals in the Worksoop Central DPD, and whether a policy or proposal is expected to have a likely significant effect. Where a policy is not expected to have potential to lead to likely significant effects, the relevant cell is shaded green. Where a policy could potentially have a likely significant effect, this is shown in orange. The final column sets out the screening conclusions.

Appendix B  
Screening Matrix

Worksop Central Development Plan Document  
June 2021

Policy No	Policy	Likely activities (operation) to result as a consequence of the policy	Likely effects if proposal implemented	Type of potential effect on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC	Shadow HRA: Type of potential effect on Sherwood Forest ppSPA
W1	Sustainable business growth	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A
W2	Leisure and Culture	Leisure and culture development Increase in visitors Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W3	A Retail Strategy for Worksop Central	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A
W4	Delivering Residential Development	Residential development Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W5	Housing estate maintenance, renewal and regeneration	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A
W6	Houses in Multiple Occupation	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A

Appendix B  
Screening Matrix

Worksop Central Development Plan Document  
June 2021

Policy No	Policy	Likely activities (operation) to result as a consequence of the policy	Likely effects if proposal implemented	Type of potential effect on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC	Shadow HRA: Type of potential effect on Sherwood Forest ppSPA
W7	High Design Quality	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A
W8	Local Views and Local Landmarks	Policy for environmental protection	None	N/A	N/A
W9	Improving Public Realm	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A
W10	Historic Worksop Central	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A
W11	Creating Healthy Neighbourhoods	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A
W12	Flood Management in Worksop Central	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A
W13	Green and Blue Infrastructure	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A

Appendix B  
Screening Matrix

Worksop Central Development Plan Document  
June 2021

Policy No	Policy	Likely activities (operation) to result as a consequence of the policy	Likely effects if proposal implemented	Type of potential effect on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC	Shadow HRA: Type of potential effect on Sherwood Forest ppSPA
W14	Enhancing Biodiversity and Tree Cover	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A
W15	Chesterfield Canal	Increase in visitors Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W16	Supporting Efficient Buildings	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A
W17	Promoting Active Travel	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A
W18	Promoting Public Transport	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A
W19	Managing Vehicular Traffic	Transport infrastructure improvements (aimed at relieving congestion)	None	N/A	N/A
W20	Delivering the Regeneration Strategy	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A
W21	Comprehensive development	Policy listing general criteria for testing the	None	N/A	N/A

Appendix B  
Screening Matrix

Workshop Central Development Plan Document  
June 2021

Policy No	Policy	Likely activities (operation) to result as a consequence of the policy	Likely effects if proposal implemented	Type of potential effect on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC	Shadow HRA: Type of potential effect on Sherwood Forest ppSPA
		acceptability/sustainability of proposals			
W22	Safeguarded Land	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A
W23	Creative Village Phase 2	Residential and employment development Increase in visitors Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W24	Former Gas Works Site, Canal Road	Residential development Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W25	Warehouse, Priorswell Road	Residential development Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W26	The WASH	Education development Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution	N/A	Air pollution
W27	Former Bus Depot, Hardy Street	Residential and employment development	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure

Appendix B  
Screening Matrix

Worksop Central Development Plan Document  
June 2021

Policy No	Policy	Likely activities (operation) to result as a consequence of the policy	Likely effects if proposal implemented	Type of potential effect on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC	Shadow HRA: Type of potential effect on Sherwood Forest ppSPA
		Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic			
W28	Central Avenue	Residential development Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W29	Priory Wharf	Residential and employment development Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W30	The Canch	Increase in visitors Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution
W31	Gateford Road Car Park	Residential and employment development Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W32	Worksop Fire Station Site	Residential development	Air Pollution	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure

Appendix B  
Screening Matrix

Worksop Central Development Plan Document  
June 2021

Policy No	Policy	Likely activities (operation) to result as a consequence of the policy	Likely effects if proposal implemented	Type of potential effect on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC	Shadow HRA: Type of potential effect on Sherwood Forest ppSPA
		Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Recreational Pressure		
W33	Sandy Lane	Residential development Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W34	Sandhill Lake	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A
W35	Bridge Street opportunity Area	Residential and employment development Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W36	Crown House	Residential and employment development Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure

Appendix B  
Screening Matrix

Worksop Central Development Plan Document  
June 2021

Policy No	Policy	Likely activities (operation) to result as a consequence of the policy	Likely effects if proposal implemented	Type of potential effect on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC	Shadow HRA: Type of potential effect on Sherwood Forest ppSPA
W37	Newcastle Avenue	Residential development Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W38	Land at Newcastle Avenue/Norfolk Street	Residential development Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W39	Lead Hill Car Park	Residential development Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W40	Middletons	Employment and residential development Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W41	Castle Hill	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	None	N/A	N/A

Appendix B  
Screening Matrix

Worksop Central Development Plan Document  
June 2021

Policy No	Policy	Likely activities (operation) to result as a consequence of the policy	Likely effects if proposal implemented	Type of potential effect on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC	Shadow HRA: Type of potential effect on Sherwood Forest ppSPA
W42	Acorn Theatre	Safeguarding a cultural asset	None	N/A	N/A
W43	Former Magistrates Court	Residential development Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W44	Mayfair Centre	Residential and employment development Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W45	Newgate Street Health Centre	Safeguarding health infrastructure	None	N/A	N/A
W46	Worksop Public Sector Hub	Employment and cultural development Increase in vehicle traffic Increase in visitors	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution
W47	Land to the south of Newgate St	Residential development Increase in vehicle traffic Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure

Appendix B  
Screening Matrix

Worksop Central Development Plan Document  
June 2021

Policy No	Policy	Likely activities (operation) to result as a consequence of the policy	Likely effects if proposal implemented	Type of potential effect on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC	Shadow HRA: Type of potential effect on Sherwood Forest ppSPA
W48	Old Ship Inn Public House	Residential, employment and commercial development Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W49	Market Square	Employment and commercial development Increase in vehicle traffic Increase in visitors	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution
W50	Turner Road Opportunity Area	Residential, employment and commercial development Increase in vehicle traffic Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure
W51	Worksop Station	Commercial development Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution	N/A	Air pollution
W52	Turner Road	Residential development Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure

Appendix B  
Screening Matrix

Worksop Central Development Plan Document  
June 2021

Policy No	Policy	Likely activities (operation) to result as a consequence of the policy	Likely effects if proposal implemented	Type of potential effect on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC	Shadow HRA: Type of potential effect on Sherwood Forest ppSPA
W53	Land to the east of Carlton Road	Residential and commercial/employment development  Increase in the use of local facilities and recreational areas  Increase in vehicle traffic	Air Pollution  Recreational Pressure	Recreational pressure	Air pollution and recreational pressure

## Appendix C

### Plans with the Potential for In-Combination Effects with the Worksop Central DPD

#### Local Plans and Strategies

##### Draft Bassetlaw Local Plan (November 2020)

Bassetlaw District is currently preparing a new Local Plan. Once adopted, the emerging Local Plan will replace the Core Strategy which was adopted in 2011, and set out the vision and spatial planning framework for the future development of Bassetlaw over the next 17 years to 2037.

##### **Housing Provision:**

Policy ST6: Housing distribution states that in addition to the delivery of existing commitments and completions since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018, land for a minimum of 3,080 new homes will be provided during the plan period to 2037. Policy ST16 will allocate land for housing in accordance with the Spatial Strategy, which concentrates housing development in the three Main Towns (including Worksop) and Large Rural Settlements.

##### **Employment land Provision:**

Sustainable economic growth will be directed to General Employment Sites and a Strategic Employment Site, as identified on the Policies Map, over the plan period, for E(g), B2 (Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution) and other specified employment uses.

General Employment Sites will support the delivery of local employment growth at sites totalling an area of 298.55 Ha and 168.6 Ha Available Employment Land.

To develop the role of the A57/A1 growth corridor the development of a strategic employment site, SEM01: Apleyhead Junction (118.7ha) will be allocated to accommodate sub-regional and/or regional employment growth in accordance with Policy ST10: Site SEM01: Apleyhead Junction, Worksop.

The majority of the sites identified by Policy ST8 have planning permission and/or are well progressed and are being actively promoted. In this plan period 17.5ha of land at the site allocations have been developed, including land at Symmetry Park, Harworth.

##### **HRA Findings:**

The HRA Report that accompanies the Bassetlaw Local Plan is the 2020 Bassetlaw Local Plan Habitats Regulations Appropriate Assessment (Stage 2) report. It concludes that, taking account of the effects of the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, the Local Plan alone, is unlikely to lead to adverse effects on the integrity of the Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC, Hatfield Moor SAC, Thorne Moor SAC, Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA and the Humber Estuary SAC, SPA and Ramsar.

The Appropriate Assessment concluded that adverse effects on the integrity of Sherwood ppSPA as a result of the Local Plan alone or in-combination cannot be ruled out in relation to air pollution.

##### North Lincolnshire Saved Policies Direction and List of Saved Policies (September 2007)

##### North Lincolnshire Core Strategy (Adopted June 2011)

##### North Lincolnshire Housing and Employment Land Allocations DPD (Adopted March 2016)

##### North Lincolnshire New Local Plan Stage 3: Preferred Options (2020)

North Lincolnshire lies to the north of Bassetlaw District.

North Lincolnshire Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan. The adopted local plan is focused on below, followed by the emerging local plan.

#### **Housing Provision:**

Core Strategy policy CS7: Overall Housing Provision states that between 2010 and 2026, North Lincolnshire's housing requirement is for 12,063 new dwellings to be provided (754 new dwellings per year). Of these new dwellings around 3,482 will be provided from sites that already have planning permission or are under construction. Dependent upon the location of a development site at least the following net density ranges should be achieved within a residential development site, or the residential element of a mixed use site:

- Scunthorpe town centre: 45-70 dwellings per hectare
- Within Scunthorpe and Market Towns development limits: 40-45 dwellings per hectare
- Within rural settlements and the countryside: 30-35 dwellings per hectare.

According to Core Strategy policy CS8: Spatial Distribution of Housing Sites:

- 82% of all new dwellings will be located in and adjacent to the urban area, equating 9,892 new dwellings. A total of 6,000 new dwellings will be provided within the Lincolnshire Lakes area during the plan period, with 1,250 being provided elsewhere within the urban area. Of these new dwellings 2,642 will be provided from sites that already have planning permission or are under construction.
- 18% of all new dwellings will be located within the Market Towns of Barton upon Humber, Brigg, Crowle, Kirton in Lindsey and Winterton, equating to 2,171 new dwellings.

#### **Employment Land Provision:**

Core Strategy policy CS11: Provision and Distribution of Employment Land states that an additional 40 hectares of employment land will be identified and allocated in the Housing and Employment Land Allocations DPD between 2006 and 2021. Strategic employment sites will be identified in the following broad locations:

- Scunthorpe – 71 hectares
- Market Towns – 10 hectares
- Humberside Airport – 20 hectares
- Sandtoft Business Park – 58.5 hectares

#### **New Local Plan Stage 3: Preferred Options (2020):**

The new Local Plan plans for 7,961 new homes and 11,500 new jobs, including delivering 91.5ha employment land by 2036, as well as improving quality of life, enhancing the visitor economy and protecting and enhancing the built and natural environments. Large-scale residential development will be focused at Scunthorpe and Bottesford, with substantial growth through smaller sites at the principal towns of Barton upon Humber and Brigg. A smaller level of growth will be delivered at the large service centres, large rural settlements and smaller rural settlements.

#### **HRA Findings:**

The HRA Report that accompanies the Core Strategy is the 2010 Habitats Regulations Appropriate Assessment (Stage 2) report. It concludes that, taking account of the effects of the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, the Core Strategy either alone or in combination with other plans, is unlikely to lead to adverse effects on the integrity of the Humber Estuary SAC, SPA or Ramsar site or the Thorne Moor SAC, the Hatfield Moor SAC or the Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA.

The HRA Report that accompanies the Housing and Employment Land Allocations DPD is the December 2014 Habitats Regulations Assessment. This document identified potential for likely significant effects, therefore Appropriate Assessment was undertaken (presented in the same document). The HRA concluded that, when taking mitigation measures into account, the DPD would not have an adverse effect on any European site either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects.

The HRA Report that accompanies the Preferred Options stage of the emerging Local Plan is the 2020 Shadow Habitats Regulations Assessment. The Screening Assessment determined that the Preferred Options and site allocations currently detailed in the North Lincolnshire Local Plan could potentially have significant effects, both alone and in-combination with other plans and projects, on a number of European sites, therefore appropriate assessment was required. However, the appropriate assessment concluded that the existing policies and provisions in the of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan Preferred Options and Site Allocations, in relation to recreational pressures, urbanisation, atmospheric pollution, water pollution/siltation and flood and water management will ensure that the Local Plan will have no adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites.

#### Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (Adopted April 2017)

##### Central Lincolnshire Local Plan: Issues and Options (2019)

The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan covers the combined areas of the City of Lincoln, North Kesteven and West Lindsey. West Lindsey is located to the north east of Bassetlaw District.

The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan will replace the West Lindsey Local Plan (First Review). A draft of the revised plan is intended to be published for public consultation in 2020.

##### **Housing and Employment Land Provision:**

Policy LP3: Level and Distribution of Growth states that the Local Plan's strategic aim is to facilitate the delivery of 36,960 new dwellings and the creation of 11,894 FTE net new jobs over the plan period 2012-2036, distributed as follows:

- Lincoln Strategy Area – around 64% (23,654) of the total homes and employment land needed.
- Gainsborough – around 12% (4,435) of the total homes and employment land needed.
- Sleaford – around 12% (4,435) of the total homes and employment land needed.
- Elsewhere – around 12% (4,435) of the total homes and employment land needed.

##### **Central Lincolnshire Local Plan: Issues & Options (2019):**

The new Local Plan is at a very early stage in its development, therefore the contents of the plan are currently unknown. As such, it has not been considered here in terms of in-combination effects. However, the progress of the new Local Plan will be monitored and consideration of in-combination effects updated as necessary in future iterations of the HRA.

##### **HRA Findings:**

The HRA Report accompanying the Proposed Submission Local Plan is the 2016 Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment Methodology and Screening Report. It concludes that the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan policies, in combination with other Local Plan policies and other relevant plans, policies and projects, would not have likely significant effects on European sites either alone or in combination with other plans.

#### Newark & Sherwood Allocations & Development Management DPD (Adopted July 2013)

##### Newark & Sherwood Plan Review – Amended Core Strategy (Adopted March 2019)

Newark & Sherwood is located to the south of Bassetlaw District.

In adopting the Allocations & Development Management DPD the Council has committed to an early review of the already adopted DPDs. An Issues Paper was published for the amended Allocations and Development Management DPD in July 2019. However, as a result of the measures introduced to tackle Covid-19 the work on the review of the Allocations and Development Management DPD has been unable to progress and the local development scheme is currently being updated.

##### **Housing Provision:**

Amended Core Strategy Spatial Policy 2: Spatial Distribution of Growth states that the housing requirements for Newark & Sherwood District between 2013 and 2033 are 9,080 dwellings. When discounting dwelling completions and commitments in settlements which are not central to the delivery of the Spatial Strategy, the total number of dwellings to be allocated by

the District Council between 2013 and 2033 in the Sub-Regional Centre, Service Centres and Principal Villages is in the region of 8,806 dwellings. In allocating sites for housing development, the following percentages will be met:

- Sub-Regional Centre – 60% of overall growth
- Service Centres – 30% of overall growth
- Principal Villages – 10% of overall growth

#### **Employment Land Provision:**

According to Spatial Policy 2, the employment land requirement for Newark & Sherwood District between 2013 and 2033 is a minimum of 83.1 hectares. This figure is distributed amongst the five Areas of the District (Newark Area, Southwell Area, Nottingham Fringe Area, Sherwood Area and Mansfield Fringe Area).

#### **HRA Findings:**

The HRA Report of the Plan Amended Core Strategy (PACS) concludes that the likelihood of in-combination effects with the PACS is negligible, therefore no in-combination effects have been identified. The HRA Report recommends working closely with neighbouring authorities surrounding Sherwood Forest to improve the understanding of potential visitor pressures at Sherwood Forest ppSPA and Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC.

### **Mansfield District Local Plan – Publication Draft (September 2018)**

#### **Schedule of Main Modifications (October 2019)**

Mansfield is located to the south of Bassetlaw District.

The Council recently published the Mansfield District Local Plan – Publication Draft for six weeks public consultation ahead of its submission to the Secretary of State for an Examination in Public.

#### **Housing Provision:**

Policy S2: The spatial strategy states that at least 6,500 new homes will be provided between 2013 and 2033. This will be distributed as follows:

- Mansfield urban area – 90% or at least 5,850 new homes; and
- Warsop Parish – 10% or at least 650 new homes.

#### **Employment Land Provision:**

Policy S2: The spatial strategy states that existing employment areas will be safeguarded, and 41ha of employment land for development will be identified between 2013 and 2033.

#### **HRA Findings:**

The HRA Report accompanying the Local Plan Publication Draft concludes that no likely significant effects on the SAC will arise from the Mansfield Local Plan either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. Furthermore, no adverse effects will arise from the Mansfield Local Plan in relation to Sherwood ppSPA, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Additionally, the HRA of the submitted Local Plan Main Modifications determined that no likely significant effects will arise alone nor in combination with other projects.

### **Local Plan for Bolsover District (adopted on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020)**

#### **Proposed Main Modifications to the Local Plan for Bolsover District (Publication Local Plan June 2019)**

Bolsover is located south west of Bassetlaw District.

#### **Housing Provision:**

Policy SS2: Scale of Development states that the Local Plan will accommodate new growth and investment in Bolsover District by making provision for:

- Sufficient land to accommodate the delivery (proposed modification: 'a minimum') of 5,168 dwellings (272 new homes per year) to meet the Council's Housing Objectively Assessed Need across the period 2014 to 2033.

- An additional housing land supply buffer of 10% for site flexibility applied across the period 2014 to 2033 (up to a planned scale of housing provision of 5,700 dwellings).

#### **Employment Land Provision:**

Core Strategy Policy SS2: Scale of Development states that the Local Plan will accommodate growth and investment in Bolsover District by making provision for:

- Sufficient land to accommodate 92 hectares of employment land across the period 2015 to 2033.

#### **HRA Findings:**

The Publication Draft HRA concludes that most aspects of the plan will have no adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Where residual effect pathways remain, appropriate policy-based mitigation measures have been incorporated into the plan policies to ensure that proposals coming forward under the Local Plan either avoid affecting European sites entirely (no significant effect) or will have no adverse effects on site integrity.

### **Rotherham Core Strategy (Adopted September 2014)**

#### **Rotherham Sites and Policies (Adopted June 2018)**

Rotherham is located north east of Bassetlaw District.

The Sites and Policies document identifies development sites to meet targets set out in the adopted Core Strategy 2013-2028.

#### **Housing Provision:**

Land is allocated in the Sites and Policies document to meet Rotherham's housing requirement of 850 net additional dwellings per annum or 12,750 for the period 2013 to 2028, plus any shortfall in the delivery against that annual target from April 2008 to March 2013 (estimated to be 1,621 dwellings). According to Policy CS 1: Delivering Rotherham's Spatial Strategy, most new development will take place within Rotherham's urban area and at Principal Settlements for Growth. At Principal Settlements and Local Service Centres development will be appropriate to the size of the settlement, meet the identified needs of the settlement and its immediate area and help create a balanced sustainable community.

#### **Employment Land Provision:**

Some 230 hectares of land is allocated in the Sites and Policies document for business and industrial development, whilst 5 hectares of land is allocated in the Sites and Policies document for office floorspace over the plan period.

#### **HRA Findings:**

The HRA Screening, included in a letter to Natural England dated September 2015, concluded that the Pre-Submission Draft Rotherham Local Plan Sites and Policies Document is not likely to have any significant effects on Natura 2000 sites. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment was not required.

### **Doncaster Core Strategy (Adopted May 2012)**

#### **Doncaster Local Plan 2015 – 2035 Publication Version (Published June 2019)**

Doncaster is located to the north of the District of Bassetlaw.

Doncaster Council is preparing a new Local Plan that will have a big influence on the amount and location of new development across the Borough in the period from 2015 to 2035. The document includes planning policies ensuring the necessary new homes, jobs, shops, leisure and other developments. Policies also address new infrastructure, minerals, energy, health and other community infrastructure, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment. Doncaster Council has submitted the new Local Plan to the Government for independent examination on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Once adopted, it will replace the 2012 Core Strategy.

#### **Housing Provision:**

Policy 3 (Level and Distribution of Growth) of the emerging Local Plan states that the Council aims to facilitate the delivery of at least 882 (net) new homes each year over the plan period 2018-2033 (18,400 homes in total) with sufficient land

allocated to deliver at least 15 years' supply (13,230). New allocations will be distributed according to Policy 6 (Housing Allocations [Strategic Policy]).

Policy 6 (Housing allocations (Strategic Policy)) of the adopted statutory Local Plan states that sufficient land will be provided to deliver 15,668 new dwellings in the first 15 year period of the plan (2018-2035). Within each town, allocation priority will be afforded to well-located brownfield urban sites followed by other well located urban sites followed by sustainable urban extension sites.

**Employment Land Provision:**

Policy 3 (Level and Distribution of Growth) of the emerging local plan states that the Council aims to facilitate the delivery of at least 481 hectares of employment land over the plan period (2015-2035) to help grow and diversify the Sheffield City Region economy. This includes accommodation of businesses, light industry and manufacturing and distribution and warehouse uses to meet future employment needs.

Policy 4 (Employment Allocations (Strategic Policy)) states that the Council will continue allocating employment sites to help stimulating employment opportunities, to develop a diverse economy, and assist tackling deprivation through job creating and training. It allocates six employment sites, with the majority of employment provision in the plan period to be provided at Junction 6 M18, Thorne North (51.54 ha) and RHADS Site 1, Phase 4 Business Park (68.54 ha).

**HRA Findings:**

The HRA of the Local Plan Publication Draft identified the potential for significant effects to arise as a result of 11 policies at the screening stage. These policies were considered in detail in the Appropriate Assessment and for the majority the potential impacts were ruled out. A small number of amendments to policies were suggested in order to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of European sites. These have now been implemented in the Local Plan and therefore the HRA concludes that the policies in the local plan are not likely to result in adverse effects on integrity of any European site.