

# HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT

Ribble Valley Borough Council Housing and Economic  
Development – Development Plan Document  
HRA Screening Report

MARCH 2017

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HRA Screening Report

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## VERSION CONTROL

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This report dated 30 March 2017 has been prepared for Ribble Valley Borough Council (the “Client”) in accordance with the terms and conditions of appointment dated 05 May 2016(the “Appointment”) between the Client and **Arcadis Consulting (UK) Limited** (“Arcadis”) for the purposes specified in the Appointment. For avoidance of doubt, no other person(s) may use or rely upon this report or its contents, and Arcadis accepts no responsibility for any such use or reliance thereon by any other third party.

# ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Appropriate Assessment
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
cSAC	Candidate Special Area of Conservation
DPD	Development Plan Documents
FCS	Favourable Conservation Status
GIS	Geographic Information System
HED	Housing and Economic Development
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IROPI	Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest
IRZ	Impact Risk Zone
LDF	Local Development Framework
LSE	Likely Significant Effect
NE	Natural England
pSPA	Potential Special Protection Area
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Area
RVBC	Ribble Valley Borough Council

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# 1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

## 1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Screening Report has been prepared by Arcadis Consulting UK (Ltd) on behalf of Ribble Valley Borough Council (RVBC) as part of the statutory Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Ribble Valley Housing and Economic Development (HED) Development Plan Document (DPD). The HED DPD forms part of the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) 2008-2028 which sets out site based policies, including specific site allocations for housing and employment.

## 1.2 Purpose of this report

- 1.2.1 This report is the first stage in the HRA process, commonly referred to as Screening. The Screening exercise will identify whether or not the Ribble Valley HED DPD is likely to result in significant effects upon one or more European sites (either in isolation and/or in combination with other plans or projects), and consequently whether or not an Appropriate Assessment (AA) will be required. Further details on the HRA stages are provided in **Section 3**.

## 1.3 Background to Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 1.3.1 Under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, an assessment is required where a plan or project may give rise to significant effects upon any Natura 2000 sites (also known as 'European sites'). There are two European sites within the boundaries of the Ribble Valley Borough, and a further 14 sites within a 20km radius of the borough boundary which form part of the Natura 2000 network. All 16 of these sites could potentially be affected by the HED DPD and therefore will be considered in this Screening Report to determine if such affects are likely to be significant.
- 1.3.2 Natura 2000 is a network of areas designated to conserve natural habitats and species that are rare, endangered, vulnerable or endemic within the European Community. This includes Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), designated under the Habitats Directive for their habitats and/or species of European importance, and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), classified under Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (the codified version of Directive 79/409/EEC as amended) for rare, vulnerable and regularly occurring migratory bird species and internationally important wetlands.
- 1.3.3 In addition, it is a matter of law that candidate SACs (cSACs) and Sites of Community Importance (SCI) are considered in this process; furthermore, it is Government Policy that sites designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention for their internationally important wetlands (Ramsar sites) and potential SPAs (pSPAs) are also considered.
- 1.3.4 The requirements of the Habitats Directive are transposed into English and Welsh law by means of the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2010<sup>1</sup>, as amended.

Regulation 61, Part 6 of the Habitats Regulations states that:

*'A competent authority, before deciding to undertake, or give consent, permission or other authorisation for, a plan or project which (a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and (b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site, must make an appropriate assessment of the implications for that site in view of that site's conservation objectives.'*

Regulation 62, Part 6 of the Habitats Regulations states that:

*'If the competent authority are satisfied that, there being no alternative solutions, the plan or project must be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (which, subject to paragraph (2), may be of a social or economic nature), they may agree to the plan or project notwithstanding a negative assessment of the implications for the European site or the European offshore marine site (as the case may be).'*

Regulation 66, Part 6 of the Habitats Regulations states that:

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<sup>1</sup> SI 2010/490: Explanatory memorandum to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2010.

*Where in accordance with regulation 62 (considerations of overriding public interest )— (a) a plan or project is agreed to, notwithstanding a negative assessment of the implications for a European site or a European offshore marine site, or (b) a decision, or a consent, permission or other authorisation, is affirmed on review, notwithstanding such an assessment,— the appropriate authority must secure that any necessary compensatory measures are taken to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected*

- 1.3.5 The overarching aim of HRA is to determine, in view of a site’s conservation objectives and qualifying interests, whether a plan, either in isolation and/or in combination with other plans, would have a significant adverse effect on the European site. If the Screening (the first stage of the process, see **Section 3** for details) concludes that significant adverse effects are likely, then AA must be undertaken to determine whether there will be adverse effects on a site’s integrity.

## **1.4 Legislation and Guidance**

- 1.4.1 The HRA is being made in accordance with the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, as amended. In doing so, this Screening Report has drawn upon the following guidance:
- European Commission, Managing Natura 2000 sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.
  - European Commission, Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.
  - Department for Communities and Local Government (2006) Planning for the Protection of European Sites: Appropriate Assessment. Guidance for Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents.
  - DTA Publications Limited, The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook.



## 2 INTRODUCTION TO THE HED DPD

### 2.1 Background and Purpose

- 2.1.1 Ribble Valley is a predominantly rural Borough located in the North East of Lancashire. It is situated to the east of the M6 motorway and Preston, and lies to the north of the M65 and the towns of Blackburn and Burnley. It is the largest Borough in the County of Lancashire covering an area of 585 square kilometres. The main commercial centres are Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley. The Borough has a very high quality environment with the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) occupying over 70% of the Borough's land area.
- 2.1.2 The RVBC Core Strategy was adopted in 2014 and is the central document within the LDF. It establishes a vision, underlying objectives and key principles that will guide development of the area over the period 2008-2028. As part of the Core Strategy, the Local Development Scheme sets out that it will produce a HED DPD which will provide more detailed coverage of key issues related to the economy and housing. It includes all relevant allocations, including housing and employment land and policies of the town centres of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley. It will also establish constraints and allocations relating to wider environmental matters, and land uses emerging from the Core Strategy. These potential allocations include detailed boundaries set out on an Ordnance Survey (OS) plan base and show a number of potential specific sites that the Council proposes to allocate for differing forms of development.

### 2.2 Allocation Sites

- 2.2.1 The DPD currently comprises 45 committed housing allocation sites, 14 committed employment allocation sites and five preferred options sites including two housing and three employment sites.

#### Employment allocation sites

Site Name	Size	Planning status
Land North of Barrow Brook Business Village, Barrow	6.7ha	-
Land off Hey Road, Barrow Brook Business Village, Barrow	<5ha	-
Hindle and Schofield Site, Barrow Brook Business Park, Barrow	<5ha	Planning permission has lapsed
Papillion Site, Barrow Brook Business Park, Barrow	<5ha	-
Building 611, Samesbury Aerodrome, Myerscough Road, Balderstone	<5ha	Development complete
Casting Foundry Site, Fort Vale Engineering, Calder Vale Park	<5ha	Outstanding permission (and new current application as at Jan 2016)
Rear of Building S, Fort Vale Engineering, Calder Vale Park, Simonstone	<5ha	Development complete
Land Adjacent to Simonstone Lane, Time Technology Park, Simonstone	<5ha	-
Land at Salthill Industrial Estate, Lincoln Way, Clitheroe	<5ha	Part of site complete

Site Name	Size	Planning status
B Dugdale and Son, Bellman Mill, Salthill, Clitheroe	<5ha	-
Carr Hall Garden Centre, Whalley Road, Wilpshire	<5ha	-
Former Golf Driving Range Upbrooks Lincoln Way, Clitheroe	<5ha	Planning permission granted
Land at Higher Standen Farm and part Littlemoor Farm, Clitheroe	<5ha	Planning permission granted
Land at BAe Systems, Samlesbury Aerodrome, Myerscough Road, Balderstone	<5ha	Development complete

### Housing allocation sites

Site Name	Size	No. of homes	Greenbelt (G)/ Brownfield (B)	Planning status (F=Full, O=Outline, RM=Reserve Matters)
Land north of Whalley Road, Hurst Green	2.44ha	30	G	F
1-5 Anchor Hill Close, Ribchester	0.75ha	15	G	F
Strawberry Fields, Gisburn	1.42ha	34	G	RM
Land off Mill Lane, Gisburn	0.54ha	3	G	F
Whins Lane, Read and Simonstone	1.07ha	15	G	F
Land off Longsight Road, Langho	5.4ha	18	G	O
Land off Chatburn Old Road, Chatburn	0.68ha	10	G	F
Land rear Pendle Street East, Ribchester	0.63ha	17	G	O
Land at Elker Lane, Billington	0.53ha	19	G	F

Site Name	Size	No. of homes	Greenbelt (G)/ Brownfield (B)	Planning status (F=Full, O=Outline, RM=Reserve Matters)
Land at Sunnyside Avenue, Billington	1.68ha	39	G	O
Land off Dale View, Billington	2.14ha	49	G	F
Nab Rise, Painter Crescent Billington	2.35ha	57	G	F
Wheatsheaf Close, Whalley	0.71ha	28	G	F
Land off Clitheroe Road, Barrow	0.77ha	9	G	O
Land at Whiteacre Lane, Barrow	0.7ha	7	G	RM
South-west of Barrow/West of Whalley, Barrow	18.26ha	504	G	RM
Middle Lodge Road, Barrow	4.35ha	105	G	F
23-25 Old Row, Barrow	1.13ha	23	G	O
Hanson Garden Centre, Barrow	1.92ha	43	B	O
100-112 Clitheroe Road, Barrow	0.46ha	7	B	F
Land at Bennetts Close, Whalley	1.44ha	4	G	F
Oak Hill College, Whalley	1.00ha	6	G	O
Land East of Clitheroe Road, Whalley	8.30ha	214	G	RM

Site Name	Size	No. of homes	Greenbelt (G)/ Brownfield (B)	Planning status (F=Full, O=Outline, RM=Reserve Matters)
Land at Accrington Road, Whalley	2.97ha	77	G	O
North of Riddings Lane, Whalley	2.12ha	71	G	RM
Land at Mitton Road, Whalley	6.20ha	137	G	F
Land north of Dilworth Lane, Longridge	6.26ha	195	G	RM
East of Chipping Lane, Longridge	24.8ha	363	G	O
Land at Chapel Hill, Longridge	3.4ha	53	G	F
Spout Farm, Longridge	1.78ha	32	G	O
Water Meadows, Longridge	2.25	-	G	Unknown
Barnacre, Longridge	0.44ha	32	G	F
Adjacent to Greenfield Ave, Clitheroe	1.37ha	30	G	O
Adjacent to St Paul's Church, Clitheroe	0.55ha	8	G	RM
Land off Henthorn Road I, Clitheroe	8.27ha	270	G	F
Land off Henthorn Road II, Clitheroe	4.97ha	130	G	RM
Southwest of Primrose Village, Clitheroe	2.48ha	81	G	F

Site Name	Size	No. of homes	Greenbelt (G)/ Brownfield (B)	Planning status (F=Full, O=Outline, RM=Reserve Matters)
Primrose Mill, Clitheroe	1.75ha	49	G	O
Higher Standen, Clitheroe	45.25ha	1,040	G	O
15 Parker Avenue, Clitheroe	0.73ha	14	G	F
Northwest of Littlemoor, Clitheroe	2.68ha	126	G	RM
Land at Chatburn Road, Clitheroe	1.82ha	23	G	O
Land off Pimlico Link Road, Clitheroe	0.76ha	19	G	O
Waddington, Clitheroe	9.2ha	275	G	O
Milton Ave, Clitheroe	1.23ha	50	G	O

### Preferred options sites

Site Name	Size	No. of homes	Greenbelt (G)/ Brownfield (B)	Planning status (F=Full, O=Outline, RM=Reserve Matters)
WILPSHIRE 3	5.67ha	226.8	G	None
MELLOR1	0.29ha	10	G	None
Land at Sykes Holt, Mellor	1.7ha	N/A	B	Application submitted
TIME Technology Park, Simonstone	1.0ha	N/A	B	Application submitted but withdrawn in 2016
Land at Higher College Farm, Longridge	2.2ha	N/A	G	None

## 3 THE HABITAT REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT PROCESS

### 3.1 Stages in HRA

3.1.1 This section provides an outline of the stages involved in HRA and the specific methods that have been used in preparing this report.

3.1.2 The requirements of the Habitats Directive comprise four distinct stages:

1. **Screening** is the process which initially identifies the likely impacts upon a European site of a project or plan, either alone or in-combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts may have a significant effect on the integrity of the site's qualifying habitats and/or species. It is important to note that the burden of evidence is to show, on the basis of objective information, that there will be no significant effect; if the effect may be significant, or is not known, that would trigger the need for an Appropriate Assessment. There is European Court of Justice case law to the effect that unless the likelihood of a significant effect can be ruled out on the basis of objective information, and adopting the precautionary principle, then an Appropriate Assessment must be made.
2. **Appropriate Assessment** is the detailed consideration of the impact on the integrity of the European site of the project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's conservation objectives and its structure and function. This is to determine whether or not there will be adverse effects on the integrity of the site. This stage also includes the development of mitigation measures to avoid or reduce any possible impacts.
3. **Assessment of alternative solutions** is the process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that would avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the European site, should avoidance or mitigation measures be unable to cancel out adverse effects.
4. **Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain.** At Stage 4, an assessment is made with regard to whether or not the development is necessary for Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI). If it is, this stage also involves detailed assessment of the compensatory measures needed to protect and maintain the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network.

### 3.2 Approach to Screening

3.2.1 This Screening Report takes into account the requirements of the Habitats Directive and relevant guidance produced by David Tyldesley Associates<sup>2</sup>.

3.2.2 The following stages have been completed:

- Identification of all European sites potentially affected (including those outside of the Ribble Valley DPD area);
- A review of each site, including the features for which the site is designated, the Conservation Objectives, and an understanding of the current conservation status and the vulnerability of the individual features to threats;
- A review of the site allocations which have the potential to affect the European sites, and whether the sites are vulnerable to these effects (this has included a categorisation of the potential effects of development, in line with current guidance);
- A consideration of any impacts in-combination with other plans or projects;
- Where potential effects are identified, avoidance or mitigation measures have been considered in order to avoid significant effects.

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<sup>2</sup> DTA Publications Limited. The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook.

### 3.3 Consultation

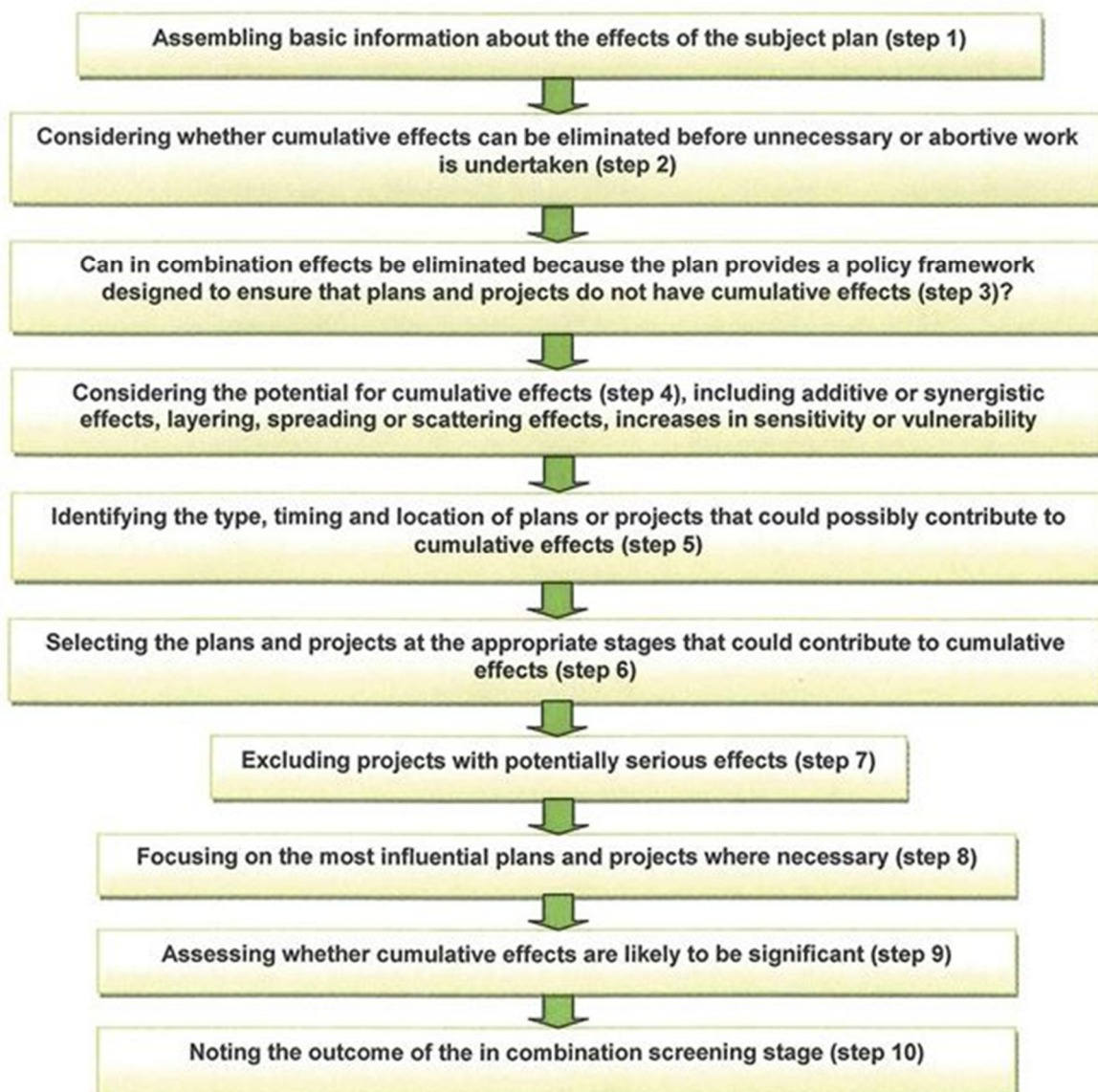
3.3.1 Consultation with Natural England (NE) on the conclusions of this Screening Report will be carried out following confirmation of the final list of allocation sites to be included within the DPD.

### 3.4 In-Combination Effects

3.4.1 As outlined in **Section 3.1**, it is necessary for HRA to consider in-combination effects with other plans and projects.

3.4.2 Where an aspect of a plan could have some effect on the qualifying feature(s) of a European site, but the effects of that aspect of the plan alone would not be significant, the effects of that aspect of the plan will need to be checked in-combination firstly, with other effects of the same plan, and then with the effects of other plans and projects.

3.4.3 The flow chart below is taken from DTA Publications Limited, The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook, and illustrates the outline methodology for the in-combination assessment.



- 3.4.4 If the prospect of cumulative effects cannot be eliminated in steps 2 and 3 in the figure above, it is necessary to consider how the addition of effects from other plans or projects may produce a combined adverse effect on a European site that would be significant. Taking the effects which would not be likely to be significant alone, it is necessary to make a judgement as to whether these effects would be made more likely or more significant if the effects of other plans or projects are added to them. Most cumulative effects can be identified by way of the following characteristics. Could additional effects be cumulative because they would:
- Increase the effects on the qualifying features affected by the subject plan in an additive, or synergistic way
  - Increase the sensitivity or vulnerability of the qualifying features of the site affected by the subject plan?
  - Be felt more intensely by the same qualifying features over the same area (a layering effect), or by the same qualifying feature over a greater (larger) area (a spreading effect), or by affecting new areas of the same qualifying feature (a scattering effect)?
- 3.4.5 In accordance with DTA Publications Limited guidance, it will be necessary to look for plans or projects at the following stages:
- Applications lodged but not yet determined.
  - Projects subject to periodic review e.g. annual licences, during the time that their renewal is under consideration.
  - Refusals subject to appeal procedures and not yet determined.
  - Projects authorised but not yet started.
  - Projects started but not yet completed.
  - Known projects that do not require external authorisation.
  - Proposals in adopted plans.
  - Proposals in finalised draft plans formally published or submitted for final consultation, examination or adoption
- 3.4.6 Consideration of in-combination effects is included in Section 5.3.
- 3.4.7 Plans under consideration may range from neighbouring authorities' planning documents down to sector-specific strategic plans on such topics as flood risk. A review has been undertaken of plans and projects with the potential for an in-combination effect with the Ribble Valley DPD, and these are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Plans and Projects Considered in respect of In-Combination Effects

Authority	Relevant Plan/Project
United Utilities	Water Resources Management Plan (2015).
Environment Agency	Lune and Wyre Abstraction Licensing Strategy (2013)
Lancashire County Council	Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2021: A Strategy for Lancashire May (2011).
Lancashire County Council	Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Development Framework Core Strategy (2009) (Site Allocations document in preparation).
AONB Unit	The Forest of Bowland Action Plan (adopted 2000)
Blackburn with Darwen Council	Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (adopted 2011) Local Plan Part 2 (adopted 2015)
Burnley Borough Council	Local Plan (adopted 2006) (New Local Plan in preparation)



Authority	Relevant Plan/Project
Craven District Council	Saved policies from the 1999 Local Plan (New Local Plan in preparation)
Hyndburn Borough Council	Core Strategy (adopted 2012) Accrington Area Action Plan (adopted 2012) Development Management DPD (New Local Plan in preparation)
Lancaster City Council	Lancaster City Council Core Strategy (adopted 2008) (New Local Plan in preparation) Morecambe Area Action Plan (2014) Arnsdale and Silverdale AONB DPD (with South Lakeland District Council)
Ribble Valley Borough Council	Core Strategy (adopted 2014)
Pendle Borough Council	Core Strategy (adopted 2015) Bradley Area Action Plan (2011) Saved policies from the Replacement Pendle Local Plan (adopted 2006)
Preston City Council	Core Strategy (adopted 2012) Local Plan (adopted 2015)
South Lakeland District Council	Local Plan Part 1 - Core Strategy (adopted 2010) Local Plan Part 2 – Land Allocations (adopted 2013) Local Plan Part 3 - Currently in preparation
South Ribble Borough Council	Local Plan (adopted 2015)
Wyre Borough Council	Wyre Borough Local Plan (Adopted 1999) (New Local Plan in preparation).

## 3.5 Consideration of Effects

### Definition of Significant Effects

3.5.1 A critical part of the HRA screening process is determining whether or not the proposals are likely to have a significant effect on European sites and, therefore, if they will require an Appropriate Assessment. Judgements regarding significance should be made in relation to the qualifying interests for which the site is of European importance and also its conservation objectives. A useful definition of 'likely' significant effects is as follows:

*'...likely means readily foreseeable not merely a fanciful possibility; significant means not trivial or inconsequential but an effect that is potentially relevant to the site's conservation objectives<sup>3</sup>'.*

3.5.2 In considering whether the plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, a precautionary approach must be adopted:

- The plan should be considered 'likely' to have such an effect if the plan making authority is unable (on the basis of objective information) to exclude the possibility that the plan could have

<sup>3</sup> Welsh Assembly Government Annex to Technical Advice Note 5: Nature conservation and planning. The Assessment of Development Plans in Wales Under the Provision of The Habitats Regulations' (October 2006).

significant effects on any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

- An effect will be ‘significant’ in this context if it could undermine the site’s conservation objectives. The assessment of that risk must be made in the light of factors such as the characteristics and specific environmental conditions of the European site in question.

### Categorising Effects

3.5.3 The housing and employment allocations of the Ribble Valley HED DPD, have been screened for likely significant effects on European sites and categorised in accordance with DTA Publications Limited *The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook*.

3.5.4 The effects associated with the DPD can be allocated into one of 12 categories according to the ways in which the option, policy or proposal could affect the European site. These are described in Table 2 below. The assessment category relating to the allocation sites are detailed in Table 7 (Section 5).

Table 2: Screening Assessment Categories

Category	Description
Category A:	General statements of policy/general aspirations. Policies which are no more than general statements of policy or general political aspirations should be screened out because they cannot have a significant effect on a site.
Category B:	Policies listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals. These general policies cannot have any effect on a European site and should be screened out.
Category C:	Proposal referred to but not proposed by the plan. Screen out any references to specific proposals for projects, such as those which are identified, for example, in higher policy frameworks such as the Wales Spatial Plan or National Policy Statements, relating perhaps to nationally significant infrastructure projects. These will be assessed by the Secretary of State or Welsh Ministers. A useful ‘test’ as to whether a project should be screened out in this step is to ask the question:  ‘Is the project provided for/proposed as part of another plan or programme and would it be likely to proceed under the other plan or programme irrespective of whether this subject plan is adopted with or without reference to it?’  If the answer is ‘yes’ it will normally be appropriate to screen the project out in this step.
Category D:	Environmental protection/site safeguarding policies. These are policies, the obvious purpose of which is to protect the natural environment, including biodiversity, or to conserve or enhance the natural, built or historic environment, where enhancement measures will not be likely to have any adverse effect on a European Site. They can be screened out because the implementation of the policies is likely to protect rather than adversely affect European sites and not undermine their conservation objectives.
Category E:	Policies or proposals that steer change in such a way as to protect European sites from adverse effects. These types of policies or proposals will have the effect of steering change away from European sites whose qualifying features may be affected by the change and they can therefore be screened out.
Category F:	Policies or proposals that cannot lead to development or other change. Policies that do not themselves lead to development or other change, for example, because they relate to design or other qualitative criteria for development, such as materials for new

Category	Description
	development. They do not trigger any development or other changes that could affect a European site and can be screened out.
Category G:	Policies or proposals that could not have any conceivable adverse effect on a site. Policies which make provision for change but which could have no conceivable effect on a European site, because there is no causal connection or link between them and the qualifying features of any European site, and can therefore be screened out.
Category H:	Policies or proposals the (actual or theoretical) effects of which cannot undermine the conservation objectives (either alone or in combination with other aspects of this or other plans or projects). Policies or proposals which make provision for change but which could have no significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other aspects of the same plan, or in combination with other plans or projects, can be screened out. These may include cases where there are some potential effects which (and theoretically even in combination) would plainly be insignificant and could not undermine the conservation objectives.
Category I:	Policies or proposals with a likely significant effect on a site alone. Policies or proposals which are likely to have a significant effect on a European site alone, should be screened in.
Category J:	Policies or proposals not likely to have a significant effect alone. These aspects of the plan would have some effect on a site, but the effect would not be likely to be a significant effect; so they must be checked for in-combination (cumulative) effects. They will then be re-categorised as either Category K (no significant effect in combination) or Category L (likely to have a significant effect in-combination), as explained below.
Categories K and L:	Policies or proposals not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in-combination (K) or likely to have a significant effect in-combination (L) after the in-combination test. Where an aspect of a plan could have some effect on the qualifying feature(s) or a European site, but the effects of that aspect of the plan alone would not be significant, the effects of that aspect of the plan will need to be checked in-combination firstly, with other effects of the same plan, and then with the effects of other plans and projects.

### 3.6 Scoping potential Impact Pathways

3.6.1 During the HRA screening stage, the likely nature, magnitude, frequency, timing, duration, location and spatial extent of changes resulting from implementation of the DPD will be assessed. As a part of this, mechanisms through which the Ribble Valley Local Plan could impact upon European sites will be considered. The potential impact pathways could comprise the following.

#### **Direct habitat loss associated with European sites**

3.6.2 Construction works could result in the direct destruction of habitats, leading to a net loss in the extent of habitat area. There are two European sites within the Ribble Valley boundary. The North Pennine Dales and Meadows SAC is formed of three discrete sub-sites within the northern half of the Borough (in the area around Slaidburn). The Bowland Fells SPA is located along the north-western boundary of the Borough.

#### **3.6.3 Direct loss of habitat within Ribble Valley that is functionally linked to a European site**

3.6.4 Functionally linked land is considered to be any land outside of the European designated site which is used by species that are qualifying interest features of that designated site. In relation to this Screening

Report, this includes land used by qualifying bird species during the wintering and on passage periods for foraging or roosting (i.e. birds associated with Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar site and the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA/Ramsar site); and also land used by birds during the breeding season for foraging (i.e. birds associated with Bowland Fells SPA).

### **Disturbance/displacement of species as a result of construction activities/operational stage**

- 3.6.5 There is the potential to disturb species associated with European sites, in particular birds, during the construction and operational phases of new developments. Disturbance could occur as a result of increased visual, noise, vibration and lighting, with a resultant potential loss of fitness and the consequential health or mortality effects on birds and their prey species. Fragmentation effects could also cause a barrier to the movement and dispersal of species, thereby limiting access to foraging opportunities.

### **Disturbance of species and habitats through increased recreational pressure as a result of population growth within Ribble Valley**

- 3.6.6 An increase in population (as a result of new development and improved road infrastructure) could result in increased recreational pressure as a result of additional people in an area and the consequent increases in people visiting the European sites or utilising areas that constitute functionally linked land adjacent to new developments. In relation to this Screening Report, this would focus on recreational pressure on European sites within the borough, i.e. Bowland Fells SPA and the North Pennine Dales Meadows SAC

### **Habitat degradation as a result of increased air pollution**

- 3.6.7 Changes in air quality from increased traffic and development (including new road links) could have impacts on European sites. For example, changes in air quality as a result of increased population and road traffic may affect habitats that are sensitive to increased nitrogen deposition.

### **Changes in water quality where sites are hydrologically linked to European sites**

- 3.6.8 Changes in water quality as a result of new development could have impacts on European sites. For example, increased risk of potential pollution incidents, and potential increases in suspended sediments resulting in ecological effects, such as the direct loss of habitats caused by re-deposition of suspended sediment, and the consequential health or mortality effects on prey species, particularly invertebrates associated with the intertidal mudflats.

## **3.7 Embedded Avoidance and Mitigation**

- 3.7.1 The avoidance/mitigation measures included within the Core Strategy comprise Key Statement EN4. This provides for ensuring that negative impacts upon biodiversity through development are avoided.
- 3.7.2 All development proposals that adversely affect a site of recognised environmental or ecological importance will need to demonstrate that negative effects can be mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated in order for planning permission to be granted. Any proposals that could affect European designated sites will be bound by the provision of the relevant Habitats Directives and Regulations.
- 3.7.3 Such measures will ensure that there would be no likely significant effects on European sites.

## 4 IDENTIFYING THE EUROPEAN SITES

### 4.1 Approach to Identifying Sites

- 4.1.1 There are two European sites located within the Borough boundary which need to be taken into consideration in this assessment. In addition, European sites outside of the Borough may be affected by activities undertaken in Ribble Valley if they are connected through an impact pathway, for example, hydrological links, or, if mobile species (i.e. birds) use land which is functionally linked to a European site, for example for foraging.
- 4.1.2 Given the Ribble Valley Local Plan can only have a physical effect on the land in certain ways, it was not considered appropriate to identify all European sites within a set distance of the Borough boundary. Therefore, in addition to all sites within the Borough, European sites which may be affected by the DPD activities through an identifiable impact pathway have been considered, within a 20km distance from the Borough.

### 4.2 European Sites within Ribble Valley

- 4.2.1 Two European sites have been identified within the Ribble Valley Borough boundary. These European sites are listed in Table 3 and shown on Figure 1 in Appendix D. Both of these sites will be taken into consideration within the Screening Assessment (refer to **Section 5**).

Table 3: Summary of European Sites within or partially within Ribble Valley

Name of Site	Identification Number	Designation
Bowland Fells	UK9005151	SPA
North Pennine Dales and Meadows	UK0014775	SAC

### 4.3 European Sites Outside of Ribble Valley

#### Potential Impacts and Effects of the HED DPD

- 4.3.1 The HED DPD was reviewed and, in conjunction with the parallel Sustainability Appraisal (SA), the following potential impact pathways, shown in Table 4, were identified that may have some effect on European sites located outside the Borough Boundary. Detailed screening of each of these potential impact pathways is presented in **Section 5**.

Table 4: Potential Impacts and Effects of the Local Plan on European Sites outside Ribble Valley boundaries

Potential impacts and effects of the Local Plan	European sites and features potentially affected
Direct loss of habitat within Ribble Valley that is functionally linked to a European site.	<p>Direct loss of agricultural land used by foraging wintering wildfowl and waders associated with the Morecambe Bay SPA and Ramsar site and the Ribble and Alt SPA and Ramsar site.</p> <p>Given the distance of these sites from Borough boundary (approximately 12.9 km and 14.7 km away, respectively), only pink-footed goose, lapwing and golden plover are considered likely to travel far enough to utilise habitats within Ribble Valley [as determined by information provided by NE, within Appendix C]. However, sensitivity is reduced beyond 10 km for lapwing and golden plover.</p>

Potential impacts and effects of the Local Plan	European sites and features potentially affected
Disturbance/displacement of species as a result of construction activities/ operational stage	Disturbance/displacement of foraging wintering wildfowl and waders using agricultural land (i.e. functionally-linked land) associated with the Morecambe Bay SPA and Ramsar site and the Ribble and Alt SPA and Ramsar site. Given the distance of these sites from the Borough boundary (approximately 12.9 km and 14.7 km away, respectively), only pink-footed goose, lapwing and golden plover are considered likely to travel far enough to utilise habitats within Ribble Valley [as determine by information provided by NE, within Appendix C]. However, sensitivity is reduced beyond 10 km for lapwing and golden plover.
Changes in water quality where sites are hydrologically linked to European sites	The River Ribble flows through Ribble Valley and forms part of the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar, therefore any impacts upon the water quality within the river has the potential to impact upon this European site.

## 4.4 Relevant European Sites Outside of Ribble Valley

4.4.1 As a result of details provided in Table 4, the following European designated sites outside Ribble Valley will be considered further in this Screening Report.

Table 5: Summary of European Sites Outside of the Ribble Valley Boundary

Name of Site	Identification Number	Designation	Approximate Distance
Morecambe Bay	UK9005081	SPA	12.9km
Morecambe Bay	UK11045	Ramsar site	12.9km
Ribble and the Alt Estuaries	UK9005103	SPA	14.7km
Ribble and the Alt Estuaries	UK11057	Ramsar site	14.7km

4.4.2 Appendix A provides further information regarding the European sites, including current conservation status, threats and the results of the most recent condition assessments where available.

4.4.3 The sites displayed in Table 6 (below) are located outside of Ribble Valley, within a 20km buffer of the Borough boundary. These sites have been considered within this assessment; however, no impact pathways between the designated sites and Ribble Valley's DPD have been identified and these sites have therefore been screened out of further assessment.

4.4.4 Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary pSPA is currently under consultation. The plan being to combine these two existing large SPAs. Potential effects on the Morecambe Bay SPA will be considered in the assessment. Given the distance of Duddon Estuary SPA from Ribble Valley (more than 40km away), no potential impact pathways have been identified between this designated sites and Ribble Valley's DPD, hence Duddon Estuary SPA has been screened out of further assessment.

Table 6: European sites outside of Ribble Valley where no impact pathway has been identified

Name of site	Identification number	Designation	Approximate distance
Malham Tarn	UK11038	Ramsar site	12.6km
South Pennine Moors Phase 2	UK9007022	SPA	10km
South Pennine Moors	UK0030280	SAC	10km
North Pennine Moors	UK9006272	SPA	19.3km
North Pennine Moors	UK0030033	SAC	19.3km
Craven Limestone Complex	UK0014776	SAC	12.2km
Calf Hill and Crag Woods	UK0030106	SAC	8.5km
Ingleborough Complex	UK0012782	SAC	7km
Morecambe Bay Pavements	UK0014777	SAC	19.9km
Morecambe Bay	UK0013027	SAC	12.9km
Morecambe Bay and Duddon	Not applicable	pSPA	12.9km
Liverpool Bay	UK9020294	SPA	20km

## 4.5 Conservation Objectives of the European Sites

4.5.1 Under Regulation 35(3) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) the appropriate statutory nature conservation body (in this case Natural England) has a duty to communicate the conservation objectives for a European site to the relevant/competent authority responsible for that site. The information provided under Regulation 35 must also include advice on any operations which may cause deterioration of the features for which the site is designated.

4.5.2 The conservation objectives for a European site are intended to represent the aims of the Habitats and Birds Directives in relation to that site. To this end, habitats and species of European Community importance should be maintained or restored to 'favourable conservation status' (FCS), as defined in Article 1 of the Habitats Directive below:

*The conservation status of a natural habitat will be taken as 'favourable' when:*

- *Its natural range and the area it covers within that range are stable or increasing;*
- *The specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future; and*
- *Conservation status of typical species is favourable as defined in Article 1(i).*

*The conservation status of a species will be taken as favourable when:*

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

- 4.5.3 Guidance from the European Commission<sup>4</sup> indicates that the Habitats Directive intends FCS to be applied at the level of an individual site, as well as to habitats and species across their European range. Therefore, in order to properly express the aims of the Habitats Directive for an individual site, the conservation objectives for a site are essentially to maintain (or restore) the habitats and species of the site at (or to) FCS.
- 4.5.4 Conservation Objectives for Bowland Fells SPA, North Pennine Dales Meadows SAC, Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar site and Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site, were obtained from Natural England's website and are provided in Appendix B<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. (European Commission 2000)

<sup>5</sup> <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/4582026845880320> accessed 16/11/16



## **5 SCREENING**

### **5.1 Overview**

- 5.1.1 Each proposed development allocation has been checked for the likelihood of it leading to a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in-combination with other allocations within the same DPD or with other plans or projects. The detailed screening of the Ribble Valley HED DPD in relation to the European sites is presented in Table 7. Table 8 provides a summary of the screening in reference to the allocation sites.

Table 7: Screening European Sites within and outside of Ribble Valley Borough boundaries

Potential impact pathway	European Sites within Ribble Valley boundary		European Sites outside Ribble Valley boundary	
	Bowland Fells SPA	North Pennine Dales and Meadows SAC	Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar site	Ribble and the Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site
Direct loss of habitat associated with European sites	<p>Bowland Fells SPA is located along the north-western boundary of the Borough and North Pennine Dales and Meadows SAC is located at the north of the Borough. None of the proposed housing or employment allocation sites lie within either of these European sites (the closest allocation site being more than 6km away from Bowland Fells SPA and 10km away from North Pennine Dales and Meadows SAC).</p> <p>There will be no LSE in relation to direct habitat loss within either of these European sites as a result of the DPD.</p>	<p>Not applicable, designated sites outside of the Ribble Valley Borough boundary.</p>	<p>Not applicable, designated sites outside of the Ribble Valley Borough boundary.</p>	<p>Not applicable, designated sites outside of the Ribble Valley Borough boundary.</p>
Direct loss of habitat within Ribble Valley that is functionally linked to a European site	<p>All of the allocation sites lie within 20km from the Bowland Fells SPA; however, the closest site is more than 6km away, with the remaining sites at least 10km away.</p> <p>Breeding hen harrier and merlin are listed as Annex 1 qualifying features of this SPA. It is considered unlikely that that these species would range far beyond the edge of the SPA when provisioning young during the breeding season. In addition, all of the allocation sites are located within, or directly adjacent to built-up areas, therefore none of the allocation sites (or land directly adjacent) would provide suitable foraging habitat for hen harrier and merlin. Therefore, none of the allocation sites would constitute functionally linked land to this SPA for these species.</p> <p>Lesser black-backed gull is also a qualifying feature of the SPA during the breeding season. Although the habitats within, and adjacent to the allocation sites, could provide some potential foraging opportunities for this species, given that lesser black-backed gull forage over a wide area, and within a wide range of habitat types including arable land (which are not limiting in this part of Lancashire), it is considered unlikely that the allocation sites would constitute important functionally linked land to the Bowland Fells population. In addition, the three main colonies in the northwest are located at Ribble (more than 15km away), Wainey (more than 20km away) and Bowland Fells which are all to the west of the allocation sites.</p> <p>Therefore, there will be no LSE in relation to direct loss of habitat within Ribble Valley that is functionally-linked to Bowland Fells SPA, as a result of the DPD.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>The closest allocation sites to both the Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar site and the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA/Ramsar site lie approximately 17km away from both sites. Of the 59 allocation sites, only nine allocations would be within 20km of either of these designated sites. The remaining sites are all more than 20km away.</p> <p>Of the overwintering qualifying features of these SPA/Ramsar sites, only pink-footed geese, lapwing and golden plover are considered likely to range far enough to utilise habitats within the Ribble Valley boundary (refer to Table 4 and Appendix C). Only the areas within south and west of the Borough which fall within 20km of the two European sites would be considered to be within range of the species associated with the SPA/Ramsar sites (as defined by the information provided in Appendix C).</p> <p>Although the habitats within, and adjacent to, the allocation sites could provide some potential foraging opportunities for these species, given that the nine allocation sites within 20 km are all small sites in close proximity to existing development, it is considered unlikely that the allocation sites would constitute important areas land functionally linked to the Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar site and Ribble and Alt SPA/Ramsar site. In addition, given the distances to the SPAs (more than 20km for most allocation sites), even if any of these species were to occasionally use the habitat within and surrounding the allocation sites, the likelihood of birds utilising these habitats in significant enough numbers such that they would affect the integrity of these two European sites, is considered to be very low.</p> <p>Therefore, it is considered unlikely that there will be any LSE in relation to direct loss of habitat within Ribble Valley that is functionally-linked to the Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar site and the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA/Ramsar site, as a result of the DPD.</p>	<p>The closest allocation sites to both the Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar site and the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA/Ramsar site lie approximately 17km away from both sites. Of the 59 allocation sites, only nine allocations would be within 20km of either of these designated sites. The remaining sites are all more than 20km away.</p> <p>Of the overwintering qualifying features of these SPA/Ramsar sites, only pink-footed geese, lapwing and golden plover are considered likely to range far enough to utilise habitats within the Ribble Valley boundary (refer to Table 4 and Appendix C). Only the areas within south and west of the Borough which fall within 20km of the two European sites would be considered to be within range of the species associated with the SPA/Ramsar sites (as defined by the information provided in Appendix C).</p> <p>Although the habitats within, and adjacent to, the allocation sites could provide some potential foraging opportunities for these species, given that the nine allocation sites within 20 km are all small sites in close proximity to existing development, it is considered unlikely that the allocation sites would constitute important areas land functionally linked to the Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar site and Ribble and Alt SPA/Ramsar site. In addition, given the distances to the SPAs (more than 20km for most allocation sites), even if any of these species were to occasionally use the habitat within and surrounding the allocation sites, the likelihood of birds utilising these habitats in significant enough numbers such that they would affect the integrity of these two European sites, is considered to be very low.</p> <p>Therefore, it is considered unlikely that there will be any LSE in relation to direct loss of habitat within Ribble Valley that is functionally-linked to the Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar site and the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA/Ramsar site, as a result of the DPD.</p>
Disturbance/displacement of species as a result of construction activities/operational stage	<p>As described in relation to loss of functionally linked land. It is thought unlikely that hen harrier and merlin would use the habitats within and adjacent to the allocation sites as a foraging resource during the breeding season. Hence, disturbance/ displacement of these species as a result of the DPD is considered unlikely.</p> <p>There is the potential to disturb/ displace lesser black-backed gull which could occasionally use habitat within and/or adjacent to the allocation sites (as part of their larger foraging range during the breeding season). However, it is considered unlikely that birds would be utilising the habitat</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>There is the potential to disturb/ displace pink-footed geese, lapwing and golden plover which could occasionally use habitat within and/or adjacent to the allocation sites (as part of their larger foraging range during the winter). However, given that none of the allocation sites lie within the NE pink-footed goose index squares (or buffer zone), and that the majority of the allocation sites are small, and located in more urban settings, it is considered unlikely that birds would be utilising these habitats in significant enough numbers such that they would trigger an effect on the integrity of Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar site and the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA/Ramsar site.</p> <p>Therefore, there will be no LSE in relation to disturbance/displacement of species associated with Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar site and the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA/Ramsar site, as a result of the DPD.</p>	<p>There is the potential to disturb/ displace pink-footed geese, lapwing and golden plover which could occasionally use habitat within and/or adjacent to the allocation sites (as part of their larger foraging range during the winter). However, given that none of the allocation sites lie within the NE pink-footed goose index squares (or buffer zone), and that the majority of the allocation sites are small, and located in more urban settings, it is considered unlikely that birds would be utilising these habitats in significant enough numbers such that they would trigger an effect on the integrity of Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar site and the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA/Ramsar site.</p> <p>Therefore, there will be no LSE in relation to disturbance/displacement of species associated with Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar site and the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA/Ramsar site, as a result of the DPD.</p>

Potential impact pathway	European Sites within Ribble Valley boundary	European Sites outside Ribble Valley boundary
	Bowland Fells SPA	Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar site
	North Pennine Dales and Meadows SAC	Ribble and the Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site
	<p>in significant enough numbers such that they would trigger an effect on the integrity of Bowland Fells SPA.</p> <p>Therefore, there will be no LSE in relation to disturbance/displacement of species associated with Bowland Fells SPA, as a result of the DPD.</p>	
Disturbance of species and habitats through increased recreational pressure as a result of population growth within Ribble Valley	<p>Although the potential exists for increased disturbance through a rise in visitor pressure as the housing developments are progressively completed, the risk is low that residents in the new housing developments will choose to regularly visit European sites more than 10km away, in preference to more local destinations. All but one of the European sites are more than 10km away from the allocation sites (with Bowland Fells being 6km away from the nearest allocation). A recreational disturbance study carried out by Footprint Ecology for the Morecambe Bay Partnership<sup>6</sup> identified that visitors to Morecambe Bay who were on a day-trip/short visit from home travelled a median distance of 3.454km to get to the designated site. Therefore, increased disturbance to birds, and/or impacts on important habitats (as a result of recreational pressure) at all of these European sites (or on functionally linked land associated with them) is considered unlikely.</p> <p>Therefore, there will be no LSE in relation to increased recreational pressure at Bowland Fells SPA, North Pennine Dales and Meadows SAC, Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar site and the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA/Ramsar site, as a result of the DPD.</p>	
Habitat degradation as a result of increased air pollution	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
Changes in water quality where sites are hydrologically linked to European sites	<p>The majority of the allocation sites are located to the south and east of the Borough, in particular along the A59 corridor.</p> <p>Given the nearest allocation site to the North Pennine Dales and Meadows SAC is 10km away, and the fact that air quality effects usually manifest themselves within 500m (air quality effects may occur up to 500m from large sites, 200m from medium sites and 50m from small sites, as measured from the site exit<sup>7</sup>), any effects as a result of increased air pollution are considered to be negligible.</p> <p>Therefore, there will be no LSE on North Pennine Dales and Meadows SAC in relation to increases in air pollution, as a result of the DPD.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
	<p>Bowland Fells SPA, and Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA/Ramsar site are all located upstream of the allocation sites and would therefore not be affected as a result of hydrological changes.</p>	<p>Although Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site has been identified as being hydrologically linked to watercourses within Ribble Valley; adverse impacts on water quality are considered to be unlikely, given the small scale of the developments and distance from the European sites which are over 10 km downstream.</p> <p>In addition, the implementation of standard mitigation measures that are required of all new developments (such as pollution prevention) to meet with National Policies and frameworks will also provide a 'safety</p>

<sup>6</sup> Liley, D., Underhill-Day, J., Panter, C., Marsh, P. & Roberts, J. (2015). Morecambe Bay Bird Disturbance and Access Management Report. Unpublished report by Footprint Ecology for the Morecambe Bay Partnership

<sup>7</sup> Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) (2011) Guidance on the assessment of the impacts of construction on air quality and determination of their significance [http://iaqm.co.uk/text/guidance/construction\\_guidance\\_2011.pdf](http://iaqm.co.uk/text/guidance/construction_guidance_2011.pdf) accessed 18/11/16

Potential impact pathway	European Sites within Ribble Valley boundary	European Sites outside Ribble Valley boundary	
	Bowland Fells SPA	North Pennine Dales and Meadows SAC	Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar site
			Ribble and the Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site
			<p>net' to ensure that significant damage to European sites is avoided.</p> <p>Therefore, there will be no LSE on the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/ Ramsar site in relation to changes in water quality, as a result of the DPD.</p>

Table 8: Screening summary in relation to employment and housing allocation sites within Ribbles Valley

	Conclusion (based on information presented within Table 7)	Significant alone	Significant in-combination	HRA Assessment Category
Employment allocation sites (14 sites, refer to Section 2.2)	<p>Given that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All of the European sites are more than 6km from the nearest allocation sites, with the majority of the allocation sites being more than 10km away from a European site;</li> <li>The majority of the sites are small (12 of the 14 employment sites are less than 5ha; and 36 of the 45 housing sites are less than 5ha);</li> <li>The one large committed site (Higher Standen Farm, 45.25 ha), is located over 20 km from the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site and over 13 km from the Bowland Fells SPA. The Ecological Impact Assessment undertaken as part of the planning application did not identify any impacts upon European designated sites (AMEC, 2012<sup>8</sup>);</li> <li>All of the allocation sites are located within, or adjacent to built-up areas (with the two larger employment and eight larger housing sites all being positioned within the more urbanised areas around Clitheroe, Longbridge, Barrow and Langho);</li> <li>None of the allocation sites would constitute important functionally-linked land to a European site;</li> </ul> <p>Then: Development of the 45 housing and 14 employment sites would not give rise to LSE on the European sites considered within this assessment, either alone or in-combination with each other.</p>	N	N	H
Housing allocation sites (45 sites, refer to Section 2.2)		N	N	H
Preferred Options sites (5 sites, refer to Section 2.2)		N	N	H

<sup>8</sup> AMEC (2012) Trustees of the Standen Estate, Land South of Clitheroe, Environmental Statement.

## 5.2 Screening Summary

5.2.1 Following the initial screening of the Ribble Valley HED DPD, a number of European sites were screened out completely from further assessment. This was on the basis of no identifiable impact pathway linking the allocation sites with the European sites (refer to **Section 4**). The European sites taken through to the screening process included Bowland Fells SPA, North Pennine Dales and Meadows SAC, Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar site and the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA/Ramsar site.

5.2.2 Potential impact types identified for consideration comprised:

- Direct habitat loss within European sites.
- Direct loss of habitat within Ribble Valley that is functionally linked to a European site
- Disturbance/displacement of species as a result of construction activities/ operational stage
- Disturbance of species and habitats through increased recreational pressure as a result of population growth within Ribble Valley
- Habitat degradation as a result of increased air pollution
- Changes in water quality where sites are hydrologically linked to European sites

### Allocation sites

5.2.3 All 59 housing and employment allocation sites were examined to determine the need for further assessment. The sites have been split into those identified within the DPD as development allocations for housing, and those areas included as employment sites.

5.2.4 Following the review of potential impacts (set out within **Section 3.6**), a conclusion has been drawn as to whether any of the individual sites could have a potentially significant impact upon European sites either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects.

5.2.5 Based on the information provided within Table 7, and as set out in the screening summary in Table 8, it is concluded that none of the allocation sites or preferred options would give rise to significant effects on the integrity of the European sites considered within this assessment alone.

5.2.6 It is assumed that all allocation sites with planning permission have already gone through the planning process and appropriate mitigation/ compensation put in place to ensure no likely significant effects on European sites. All of the allocation sites with planning permission would have been required to adhere to the avoidance/mitigation measures included within the Adopted Core Strategy. This includes Key Statement EN4 which provides for ensuring that negative impacts upon biodiversity through development are avoided (refer to **Section 3.7**).

## 5.3 In-Combination Effects

5.3.1 The HRA needs to consider not only the allocations sites within the DPD that may lead to significant impacts upon European sites on their own, but also those that may have a significant impact in combination with other plans and projects within the local area, refer to Table 1 (which outlines relevant plans and projects that were considered in-combination with the DPD). In addition, it is also necessary to consider in-combination effects between the various elements of the DPD itself.

### Ribble Valley HED DPD

5.3.2 It is considered unlikely that there would be significant in-combination effects on European sites as a result of the development of the employment, housing and preferred option allocation sites listed with Ribble Valley HED DPD. In all instances where HRA has been undertaken, it was determined that there would be no significant effects on European sites either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects inside or outside of Ribble Valley.

5.3.3 The only sites where in-combination effects cannot be ruled are those which have not yet been through the planning system [i.e. the option sites]. However, in order to comply with Key Statement EN4 within the Core Strategy, projects with the potential for significant effects upon a European site would require a project-specific HRA, and therefore any in-combination effects that could arise from these developments would need to be appropriately mitigated in order for planning consent to be granted.

- 5.3.4 Therefore, it is concluded that none of the allocation sites would give rise to significant effects on the integrity of the European sites considered within this assessment, alone or in combination with other sites within the DPD.

### **Other Plans and projects**

- 5.3.5 Only the effects of other plans or projects which (like those of the DPD under consideration here) alone would not be likely to be significant, need to be included in the in-combination assessment. If the effects of other plans or projects will already be significant on their own, they are not added to those associated with the DPD.
- 5.3.6 To be relevant to the in-combination assessment, the residual effects of other plans or projects will need to either make the unlikely effects of the Ribble Valley HED DPD likely, or insignificant effects of the plan significant, or both. An assessment has therefore been made of the 'other' plans and projects listed in Table 1 with a view to determining whether or not they would result in impacts which, in combination with the allocation sites set out in the DPD could lead to significant effects on European sites.
- 5.3.7 The screening exercise has identified that there are no potential effects on European sites, which could be made 'likely' when considering other plans and project within the wider area. The larger strategic sites (with the potential for in-combination effects) within adjacent planning authorities are concentrated around urban locations away from designated sites. In addition, the allocation sites within the Ribble Valley HED DPD fall within the proposed spatial strategy set out in the over-arching Adopted Core Strategy. The HRA of the Adopted Core Strategy (002-WX42439-06-F) did not identify any significant in-combination effects as a result of implementing the Core Strategy, and as such this Screening Report is in agreement with the HRA conclusions of the Adopted Core Strategy HRA.
- 5.3.8 Therefore, it is concluded that implementation of the Ribble Valley HED DPD would not give rise to significant effects on the integrity of the European sites considered within this assessment, alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

## 6 Conclusion

- 6.1.1 This HRA Screening of the Ribble Valley HED DPD has considered the potential implications of the plan for European Sites within and near to the Borough boundary.
- 6.1.2 The housing and employment allocations identified within the HED DPD have all been assessed for the potential for impacts upon European sites. None of the proposed development allocations within the Ribble Valley HED DPD were considered likely to give rise to significant effects on the European sites considered within this assessment alone.
- 6.1.3 The assessment of in-combination effects of the Ribble Valley HED DPD itself revealed that only a small number of the allocations were located within areas that could potentially support bird species associated with the Ribble and Alt Estuaries and Morecambe Bay SPA/Ramsar sites, all of which were small scale and located on the edge of existing development and therefore considered unlikely to support significant numbers of birds, especially given the distance close to the edge of the range for foraging pink-footed geese, lapwing and golden plover. In addition, developers will be required to comply with Key Statement EN4 within the Core Strategy to further ensure any potential impacts upon European sites are fully assessed before planning permission can be granted. No other in-combination impact pathways have been identified. Therefore, it is not considered that the Ribble Valley HED DPD would contribute to significant in-combination effects which is in agreement with the HRA conclusions of the Adopted Core Strategy HRA.
- 6.1.4 It has, therefore, been concluded that the Ribble Valley HED DPD is unlikely to have any significant effects on the European sites identified, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects.



## **APPENDIX A**

### **European Sites within and surrounding Ribble Valley**

Table A 1 European Sites that could be adversely affected by the DPD

Site Name	Qualifying Features		Current Condition and Vulnerability <sup>9</sup>	Site Condition Assessment March 2013
	Habitats	Species		
Morecambe Bay SPA	N/A	<p>This site qualifies under <b>Article 4.1</b> of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following species listed on Annex I of the Directive:</p> <p><b>During the breeding season;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Little Tern <i>Sterna albifrons</i></li> <li>▪ Sandwich Tern <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Over winter;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i></li> <li>▪ Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i></li> </ul> <p>This site also qualifies under <b>Article 4.2</b> of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following migratory species:</p> <p><b>During the breeding season;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i></li> <li>▪ Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>Larus fuscus</i></li> </ul> <p><b>On passage;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i></li> <li>▪ Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Over winter;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i></li> <li>▪ Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i></li> <li>▪ Grey Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i></li> </ul>	<p>The site is subject to a wide range of pressures such as land-claim for agriculture, overgrazing, dredging, overfishing, industrial uses and unspecified pollution. However, overall the site is relatively robust and many of those pressures have only slight to local effects and are being addressed thorough Management Plans. The breeding tern interest is very vulnerable and the colony has recently moved to the adjacent Duddon Estuary. Positive management is being secured through management plans for non-governmental organisation reserves, Natural England's Site Management Statements, European Marine Site Management Scheme, and the Morecambe Bay Partnership.</p>	<p>Area favourable 94.23%</p> <p>Area unfavourable but recovering 5.77%</p> <p>Area unfavourable no change 0%</p> <p>Area unfavourable declining 0%</p> <p>Area destroyed / part destroyed 0%.</p>

<sup>9</sup> Taken from Natura 2000 Standard Data Forms (SAC and SPA) and Ramsar Information Sheets.

Site Name	Qualifying Features		Current Condition and Vulnerability <sup>9</sup>	Site Condition Assessment March 2013
	Habitats	Species		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i></li> <li>▪ Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>,</li> <li>▪ Pink-footed Goose <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i></li> <li>▪ Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i></li> <li>▪ Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i></li> <li>▪ Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i></li> <li>▪ Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i></li> </ul> <p>Assemblage qualification: A seabird assemblage of international importance</p> <p>The area qualifies under <b>Article 4.2</b> of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by regularly supporting at least 20,000 seabirds</p> <p>During the breeding season, the area regularly supports 61,858 individual seabirds (5 year peak mean for 1991/92 to 1995/96) including: Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i>, Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>Larus fuscus</i>, Little Tern <i>Sterna albifrons</i>, Sandwich Tern <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>.</p> <p>Assemblage qualification: A wetland of international importance.</p> <p>The area qualifies under <b>Article 4.2</b> of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by regularly supporting at least 20,000 waterfowl</p> <p>Over winter, the area regularly supports 210,668 individual waterfowl (5 year peak mean for 1991/92 to 1995/96)</p>		

Site Name	Qualifying Features		Current Condition and Vulnerability <sup>9</sup>	Site Condition Assessment March 2013
	Habitats	Species		
Morecambe Bay Ramsar site	N/A	<p><b>Ramsar criterion 4</b> The site is a staging area for migratory waterfowl including internationally important numbers of passage ringed plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>.</p> <p><b>Ramsar criterion 5</b> Assemblages of international importance: Species with peak counts in winter: 223709 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003)</p> <p><b>Ramsar criterion 6 – species/populations occurring at levels of international importance.</b> Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation): Species regularly supported during the breeding season:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lesser black-backed gull, <i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>,</li> <li>▪ Herring gull, <i>Larus argentatus</i></li> <li>▪ Sandwich tern, <i>Sterna (Thalasseus) sandvicensis</i></li> </ul> <p>Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Great cormorant, <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i></li> <li>▪ Northern pintail, <i>Anas acuta</i>,</li> <li>▪ Common eider, <i>Somateria mollissima</i>,</li> <li>▪ Eurasian oystercatcher, <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i></li> </ul>	N/A	See above.

Site Name	Qualifying Features		Current Condition and Vulnerability <sup>9</sup>	Site Condition Assessment March 2013
	Habitats	Species		
Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ringed plover, <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>,</li> <li>▪ Grey plover, <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>,</li> <li>▪ Sanderling, <i>Calidris alba</i>,</li> <li>▪ Eurasian curlew, <i>Numenius arquata</i>,</li> <li>▪ Common redshank, <i>Tringa totanus</i>,</li> <li>▪ Ruddy turnstone, <i>Arenaria interpres</i>,</li> <li>▪ Lesser black-backed gull, <i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>,</li> </ul> <p>Species with peak counts in winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Great crested grebe, <i>Podiceps cristatus</i>,</li> <li>▪ Pink-footed goose, <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i></li> <li>▪ Eurasian wigeon, <i>Anas Penelope</i></li> <li>▪ Common goldeneye, <i>Bucephala clangula</i>,</li> <li>▪ Red-breasted merganser, <i>Mergus serrator</i></li> <li>▪ European golden plover, <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>,</li> <li>▪ Northern lapwing, <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>,</li> <li>▪ Red knot, <i>Calidris canutus islandica</i>,</li> <li>▪ Dunlin, <i>Calidris alpina</i>,</li> <li>▪ Bar-tailed godwit, <i>Limosa lapponica</i>,</li> </ul> <p>This site qualifies under <b>Article 4.1</b> of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the</p>	Overall, the dunes, intertidal flats and saltmarsh enjoy a relatively robust status and a favourable condition. However, the site is, in places, subject to pressure from	Area favourable <b>99.10%</b> Area unfavourable but recovering <b>0%</b>

Site Name	Qualifying Features		Current Condition and Vulnerability <sup>9</sup>	Site Condition Assessment March 2013
	Habitats	Species		
		<p>following species listed on Annex I of the Directive:</p> <p>During the breeding season;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i></li> <li>▪ Ruff <i>Philomachus pugnax</i>,</li> </ul> <p><b>Over winter;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i></li> <li>▪ Bewick's Swan <i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i></li> <li>▪ Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>,</li> <li>▪ Whooper Swan <i>Cygnus cygnus</i>,</li> </ul> <p>This site also qualifies under <b>Article 4.2</b> of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following migratory species:</p> <p><b>During the breeding season;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>Larus fuscus</i></li> </ul> <p><b>On passage;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i></li> <li>▪ Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Over winter;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa</i></li> <li>▪ Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina</i></li> <li>▪ Grey Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i></li> <li>▪ Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i></li> <li>▪ Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>,</li> </ul>	<p>recreation, built development (including coastal defence), wildfowling and industry, including sand-winning. Wildfowling is not considered to have a significant impact in terms of direct take; resulting disturbance is effectively managed through the provision of refuge areas and strict regulation on shooting activities. Military activities only take place at Altcar Rifle Range which is adjacent to the Alt Estuary. Recreation is informal and of relatively low intensity along most of the Sefton Coast and in the Ribble Estuary. There is no longer a registered beach airfield at Sefton, however occasional landing of pleasure craft may be requested during large events. Beach activities are managed by the Beach Management Plan. Sand-winning was addressed during a Public Inquiry in August 2001, with the result that detailed environmental monitoring will now be incorporated into the renewed planning permission. Much of the site attracts beneficial land management via the implementation of agreed plans for three NNRs, two LNRs and other initiatives developed by the Sefton Coast Partnership. These plans/initiatives are addressing a number of these pressures, whilst other pressures will be addressed following procedures under the Habitat Regulations. Wider land management issues are being developed via the neighbouring Ribble and</p>	<p>Area unfavourable no change <b>0.90%</b></p> <p>Area unfavourable declining 0%</p> <p>Area destroyed / part destroyed 0%</p>

Site Name	Qualifying Features		Current Condition and Vulnerability <sup>9</sup>	Site Condition Assessment March 2013
	Habitats	Species		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pink-footed Goose <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i></li> <li>▪ Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i></li> <li>▪ Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i></li> <li>▪ Sanderling <i>Callidris alba</i></li> <li>▪ Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i></li> <li>▪ Teal <i>Anas crecca</i></li> <li>▪ Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i></li> </ul> <p>Assemblage qualification: A seabird assemblage of international importance</p> <p>The area qualifies under <b>Article 4.2</b> of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by regularly supporting at least 20,000 seabirds</p> <p>During the breeding season, the area regularly supports 29,236 individual seabirds.</p> <p>Assemblage qualification: A wetland of international importance.</p> <p>The area qualifies under <b>Article 4.2</b> of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by regularly supporting at least 20,000 waterfowl</p>	<p>Mersey Estuary Strategies. The issue of grazing pressure on the saltmarsh will be addressed through a management agreement to reduce the grazing pressure. Although there is little evidence of sea-level rise so far, the extent and distribution of habitats remains vulnerable to changes in the physical environment, either natural or man-induced. In contrast the coast at Forby Point and Ainsdale is suffering intense erosion which is being investigated through the Sefton Shoreline Management Plan, and beach management practices have effectively encouraged the creation of considerable areas of embryo dunes on the upper shore elsewhere. The Ribble Estuary is also evolving as sediment patterns are changing and saltmarsh continues to accrete following past land-claim and the closure of Preston Docks. The intertidal habitats are vulnerable to accidental pollution from the nearby Mersey Estuary and the Irish Sea oil and gas fields. Oil spill contingency plans are being updated to deal with such events. The Ribble in particular has failed to meet the requirements of the Bathing Waters Directive. Government Office North West and the Environment Agency are investigating likely sources of pollution that may have caused this.</p>	

Site Name	Qualifying Features		Current Condition and Vulnerability <sup>9</sup>	Site Condition Assessment March 2013
	Habitats	Species		
Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar site	N/A	<p><b>Ramsar criterion 2</b> This site supports up to 40% of the Great Britain population of natterjack toads <i>Bufo calamita</i>.</p> <p><b>Ramsar criterion 5</b> Assemblages of international importance: Species with peak counts in winter: 222,038 waterfowl</p> <p><b>Ramsar criterion 6</b> Species/populations occurring at levels of international importance. Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation): Species regularly supported during the breeding season:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lesser black-backed gull <i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>,</li> </ul> <p>Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ringed plover, <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>,</li> <li>▪ Grey plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i></li> <li>▪ Red knot <i>Calidris canutus islandica</i></li> <li>▪ Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i></li> <li>▪ Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina</i></li> <li>▪ Black-tailed godwit <i>Limosa limosa</i></li> <li>▪ Common redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>,</li> <li>▪ Lesser black-backed gull <i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>,</li> </ul> <p>Species with peak counts in winter:</p>	<p>Coastal erosion is a factor at Formby Point with an estimated loss of 4 metres per year. It is a concern because pine woodland on the sand dunes is causing coastal squeeze and therefore preventing sand dune habitats from rolling back; as such dune slack habitats for natterjack toads are declining/being lost.</p>	See above.



Site Name	Qualifying Features		Current Condition and Vulnerability <sup>9</sup>	Site Condition Assessment March 2013
	Habitats	Species		
Bowland Fells SPA	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tundra swan <i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i></li> <li>▪ Whooper swan, <i>Cygnus cygnus</i></li> <li>▪ Pink-footed goose <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i></li> <li>▪ Common shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i></li> <li>▪ Eurasian wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i></li> <li>▪ Eurasian teal <i>Anas crecca</i></li> <li>▪ Northern pintail <i>Anas acuta</i></li> <li>▪ Eurasian oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i></li> <li>▪ Bar-tailed godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i></li> </ul> <p>This site qualifies under Article 4.1 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following species listed on Annex I of the Directive:</p> <p>During the breeding season;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hen Harrier <i>Circus cyaneus</i></li> <li>▪ Merlin <i>Falco columbarius</i></li> </ul> <p>This site also qualifies under <b>Article 4.2</b> of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following migratory species:</p> <p>During the breeding season;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>Larus fuscus</i></li> </ul>	<p>The expansive blanket bog and heather dominated moorland provides suitable habitat for a diverse range of upland breeding birds. Favourable nature conservation status of the site depends on appropriate levels of sheep grazing, sympathetic moorland burning practice, sensitive water catchment land management practices and on-going species protection. Since designation as an SPA, many localised problems of over-grazing have been controlled through management agreements or the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. To date approximately 20% of SPA is under Section 15 management agreements and Countryside Stewardship to stimulate heather regeneration in order to produce better moorland for grouse and</p> <p>Area favourable 5.28% Area unfavourable but recovering 71.99% Area unfavourable no change 0% Area unfavourable declining 22.72% Area destroyed / part destroyed 0%</p>	

Site Name	Qualifying Features		Current Condition and Vulnerability <sup>9</sup>	Site Condition Assessment March 2013
	Habitats	Species		
			<p>raptors alike. Burning plans and stocking levels have also been agreed for all other areas of the SPA through Site Management Statements, whilst problems of raptor persecution continues to be addressed by the RSPB in conjunction with North West Water, Natural England and Lancashire Constabulary.</p>	
North Pennine Dales and Meadows SAC	<p>Annex 1 habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site: Mountain hay meadows.</p> <p>Annex 1 habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site. Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt laden soils</p>	N/A	<p>The North Pennine Dales Meadows SAC is a series of isolated fields within the higher parts of the enclosed valley bottoms of several north Pennine and Cumbrian valleys. The SAC is comprised of 58 component Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which are located across the counties of Cumbria, Durham, Lancashire, North Yorkshire and Northumberland. It contains the major part of the remaining UK resource of mountain hay meadows and purple moor grass meadows, supporting a characteristic herb-rich vegetation unique to the Pennines and other upland areas of Northern England. The fields are part of the agricultural landscape and economy and are managed by summer cutting for hay; and grazing through the rest of the year.</p>	<p>79% of the component SSSI's combined were classified as 'area favourable,' 19% were classified as 'unfavourable recovering,' and 1.6% were classified as 'unfavourable no change.' The favourable condition status of the site has improved marginally (by 2%) between the condition assessments of 2013 and 2015.</p>

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Conservation Objectives**



## European Site Conservation Objectives for Ribble and Alt Estuaries Special Protection Area Site Code: UK9005103

With regard to the SPA and the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

**Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;**

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

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying *Supplementary Advice* document, which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of the Objectives set out above.

### **Qualifying Features:**

- A037 *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*; Bewick's swan (Non-breeding)
- A038 *Cygnus cygnus*; Whooper swan (Non-breeding)
- A040 *Anser brachyrhynchus*; Pink-footed goose (Non-breeding)
- A048 *Tadorna tadorna*; Common shelduck (Non-breeding)
- A050 *Anas penelope*; Eurasian wigeon (Non-breeding)
- A052 *Anas crecca*; Eurasian teal (Non-breeding)
- A054 *Anas acuta*; Northern pintail (Non-breeding)
- A130 *Haematopus ostralegus*; Eurasian oystercatcher (Non-breeding)
- A137 *Charadrius hiaticula*; Ringed plover (Non-breeding)
- A140 *Pluvialis apricaria*; European golden plover (Non-breeding)
- A141 *Pluvialis squatarola*; Grey plover (Non-breeding)
- A143 *Calidris canutus*; Red knot (Non-breeding)

- A144 *Calidris alba*; Sanderling (Non-breeding)  
A149 *Calidris alpina alpina*; Dunlin (Non-breeding)  
A151 *Philomachus pugnax*; Ruff (Breeding)  
A156 *Limosa limosa islandica*; Black-tailed godwit (Non-breeding)  
A157 *Limosa lapponica*; Bar-tailed godwit (Non-breeding)  
A162 *Tringa totanus*; Common redshank (Non-breeding)  
A183 *Larus fuscus*; Lesser black-backed gull (Breeding)  
A193 *Sterna hirundo*; Common tern (Breeding)  
Waterbird assemblage  
Seabird assemblage

### **This is a European Marine Site**

This SPA is a part of the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European Marine Site (EMS). These Conservation Objectives should be used in conjunction with the Regulation 35 Conservation Advice document for the EMS. For further details about this please visit the Natural England website at <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/marine/protectandmanage/mpa/europeansites.aspx> or contact Natural England's enquiry service at [enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk) or by phone on 0845 600 3078.

### **Explanatory Notes: European Site Conservation Objectives**

These Conservation Objectives are those referred to in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the "Habitats Regulations") and Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. They must be considered when a competent authority is required to make a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' including an Appropriate Assessment, under the relevant parts of this legislation.

These Conservation Objectives and the accompanying Supplementary Advice (where available) will also provide a framework to inform the management of the European Site under the provisions of Articles 4(1) and 4(2) of the Wild Birds Directive and the prevention of deterioration or significant disturbance of its qualifying features under Article 6(2) of the Habitats Directive.

These Conservation Objectives are set for each bird feature for a [Special Protection Area \(SPA\)](#). Where the objectives are met, the site will be considered to exhibit a high degree of integrity and to be contributing to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive.



## European Site Conservation Objectives for Morecambe Bay Special Protection Area Site Code: UK9005081

With regard to the SPA and the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

**Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;**

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

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying *Supplementary Advice* document which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of the Objectives set out above.

### **Qualifying Features:**

- A040 *Anser brachyrhynchus*; Pink-footed goose (Non-breeding)
- A048 *Tadorna tadorna*; Common shelduck (Non-breeding)
- A054 *Anas acuta*; Northern pintail (Non-breeding)
- A130 *Haematopus ostralegus*; Eurasian oystercatcher (Non-breeding)
- A137 *Charadrius hiaticula*; Ringed plover (Non-breeding)
- A141 *Pluvialis squatarola*; Grey plover (Non-breeding)
- A143 *Calidris canutus*; Red knot (Non-breeding)
- A149 *Calidris alpina alpina*; Dunlin (Non-breeding)
- A157 *Limosa lapponica*; Bar-tailed godwit (Non-breeding)
- A160 *Numenius arquata*; Eurasian curlew (Non-breeding)
- A162 *Tringa totanus*; Common redshank (Non-breeding)

A169 *Arenaria interpres*; Ruddy turnstone (Non-breeding)

A191 *Sterna sandvicensis*; Sandwich tern (Breeding)

Waterbird assemblage

Seabird assemblage

### **This is a European Marine Site**

This SPA is a part of the Morecambe Bay European Marine Site (EMS). These Conservation Objectives should be used in conjunction with the Regulation 35 Conservation Advice document for the EMS. For further details about this please visit the Natural England website at <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/marine/protectandmanage/mpa/europeansites.aspx> or contact Natural England's enquiry service at [enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk) or by phone on 0845 600 3078.

### **Explanatory Notes: European Site Conservation Objectives**

These Conservation Objectives are those referred to in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the "Habitats Regulations") and Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. They must be considered when a competent authority is required to make a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' including an Appropriate Assessment, under the relevant parts of this legislation.

These Conservation Objectives and the accompanying Supplementary Advice (where this is available) will also provide a framework to inform the management of the European Site under the provisions of Articles 4(1) and 4(2) of the Wild Birds Directive, and the prevention of deterioration of habitats and significant disturbance of its qualifying features required under Article 6(2) of the Habitats Directive.

These Conservation Objectives are set for each bird feature for a [Special Protection Area \(SPA\)](#). Where the objectives are met, the site will be considered to exhibit a high degree of integrity and to be contributing to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive.



## European Site Conservation Objectives for Bowland Fells Special Protection Area Site Code: UK9005151

With regard to the SPA and the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;

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

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying *Supplementary Advice* document, which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of the Objectives set out above.

### Qualifying Features:

A082 *Circus cyaneus*; Hen harrier (Breeding)

A098 *Falco columbarius*; Merlin (Breeding)



## Explanatory Notes: European Site Conservation Objectives

These Conservation Objectives are those referred to in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the "Habitats Regulations") and Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. They must be considered when a competent authority is required to make a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' including an Appropriate Assessment, under the relevant parts of this legislation.

These Conservation Objectives and the accompanying Supplementary Advice (where this is available) will also provide a framework to inform the management of the European Site under the provisions of Articles 4(1) and 4(2) of the Wild Birds Directive, and the prevention of deterioration of habitats and significant disturbance of its qualifying features required under Article 6(2) of the Habitats Directive.

These Conservation Objectives are set for each bird feature for a [Special Protection Area \(SPA\)](#). Where the objectives are met, the site will be considered to exhibit a high degree of integrity and to be contributing to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive.

**Publication date:** 30 June 2014 (Version 2). This document updates and replaces an earlier version dated 29 May 2012 to reflect Natural England's Strategic Standard on European Site Conservation Objectives 2014. Previous references to additional features identified in the 2001 UK SPA Review have also been removed.



## European Site Conservation Objectives for North Pennine Dales Meadows Special Area of Conservation Site Code: UK0014775

With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and/or species for which the site has been designated (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and
- The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying *Supplementary Advice* document, which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of the Objectives set out above.

### Qualifying Features:

H6410. *Molinia* meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*); Purple moor-grass meadows

H6520. Mountain hay meadows

## **Explanatory Notes: European Site Conservation Objectives**

These Conservation Objectives are those referred to in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the "Habitats Regulations") and Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. They must be considered when a competent authority is required to make a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment', including an Appropriate Assessment, under the relevant parts of this legislation.

These Conservation Objectives and the accompanying Supplementary Advice (where available) will also provide a framework to inform the measures needed to conserve or restore the European Site and the prevention of deterioration or significant disturbance of its qualifying features as required by the provisions of Article 6(1) and 6(2) of the Directive.

These Conservation Objectives are set for each habitat or species of a [Special Area of Conservation \(SAC\)](#). Where the objectives are met, the site will be considered to exhibit a high degree of integrity and to be contributing to achieving Favourable Conservation Status for that species or habitat type at a UK level. The term 'favourable conservation status' is defined in Article 1 of the Habitats Directive.

**Publication date:** 30 June 2014 – version 2. This document updates and replaces an earlier version dated 29 May 2012 to reflect Natural England's Strategic Standard on European Site Conservation Objectives 2014.

**APPENDIX C**

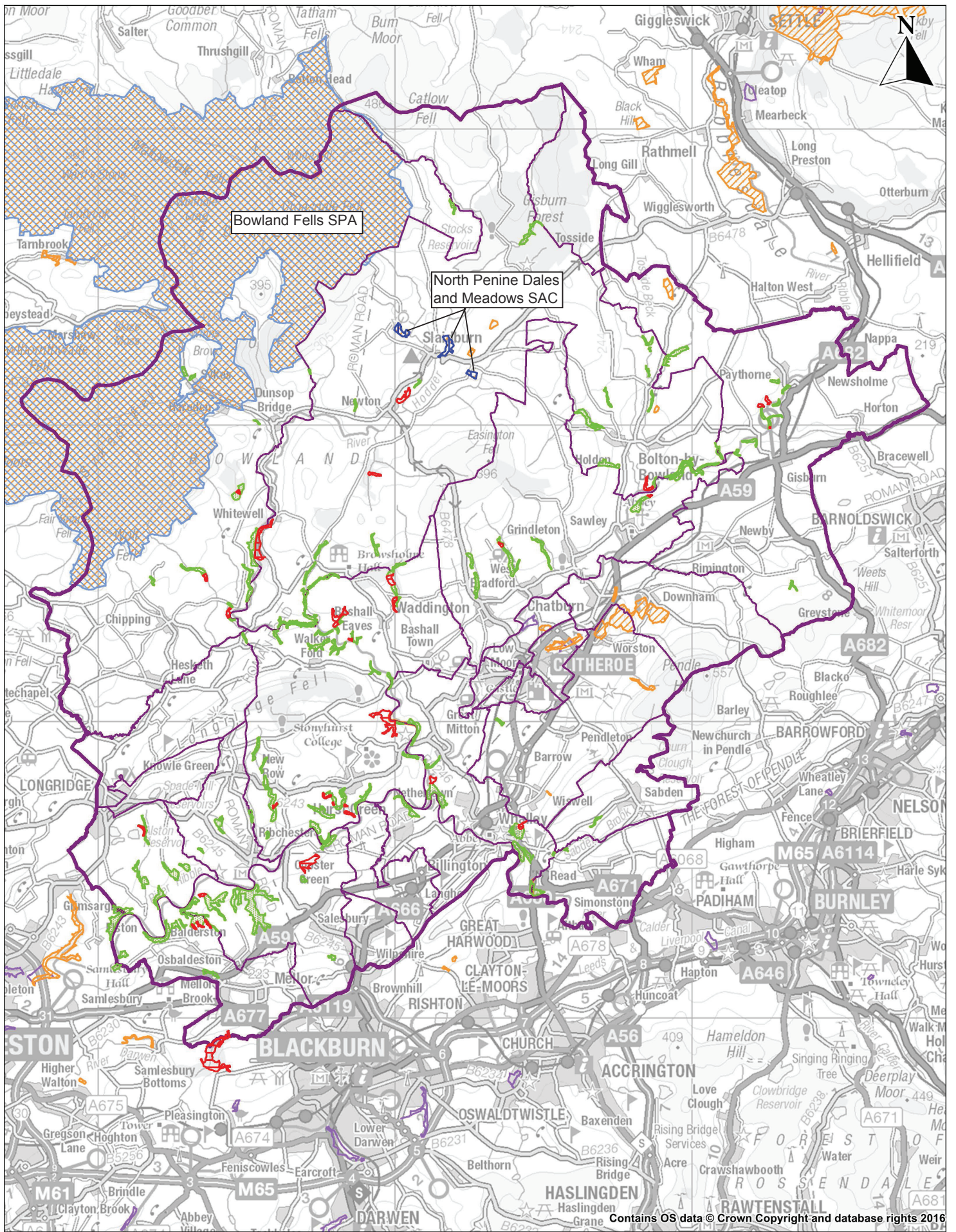
**Information from NE**

Bird Group	Birds	Extent of Functional Habitat from site	Note
<b>Birds 1</b>	All breeding bird assemblages (excluding ground-nesting heathland species, stone-curlew, marsh harrier & nightjar)	<b>500m</b>	Breeding SSSI birds of prey (peregrine, merlin, hen harrier & honey buzzard) can also forage up to 4km. It is not thought likely, however, that these species would make significant use of farmland habitat beyond semi-natural areas encompassed by protected site boundaries.
<b>Birds 2</b>	All wintering birds (except wintering waders and grazing wildfowl; wigeon and geese) <sup>1,2</sup>	<b>500m</b>	Home ranges of dabbling ducks such as teal, mallard and gadwall could extend beyond site boundaries at coastal sites, but less likely to do so at inland water bodies. Where functional habitat of dabbling ducks does extend beyond site boundaries then this is likely to be accommodated by presence of wigeon, geese or waders.  Wintering marsh harrier and hen harrier can forage 10s of km and are likely to make significant use of farmland habitat beyond semi-natural areas encompassed by site boundaries. Owing to extensive presence of farmland within 10s of km and low densities of birds, the standard distance of 500m relating to all wintering birds is deemed acceptable.
<b>Birds 3</b>	Wintering waders (except golden plover and lapwing), brent goose & wigeon <sup>1,3</sup> marsh harrier <sup>4,5</sup>	<b>2km</b>	Breeding marsh harrier can also forage up to 4km and are likely to make significant use of farmland habitat beyond semi-natural areas encompassed by site boundaries. Owing to extensive presence of farmland and low densities of birds, a reduced distance of 2km is deemed acceptable.
<b>Birds 4</b>	Ground nesting heathland species, breeding nightjar & stone curlew	<b>2km</b>	Many sites (e.g. TBH/ Dorset Heath) have issues of recreational disturbance. Buffers need to take into account travel to sites from proposed residential developments.  Nightjar - up to 4km foraging distance for nightjars but unlikely to be >2km beyond site boundary. Likely to need site specific assessment as depending on adjacent land use there may be extensive or no functional habitat beyond the site boundary e.g. discrete heathland SSSI amongst grassland and woodland in comparison to discrete heathland site surrounded by development
<b>Birds 5</b>	Wintering lapwing and golden plover	<b>15-20km</b>	Golden plover can forage up to 15km from a roost site within a protected site. Lapwing can also forage similar distances. Both species use lowland farmland in winter, so difficult to distinguish between designated populations and those present within the wider environment unconnected to a designated site. Reduced sensitivity beyond 10km
<b>Birds 6</b>	Wintering white-fronted goose, greylag goose, Bewick's swan, whooper swan & wintering bean goose.	<b>10km</b>	No information

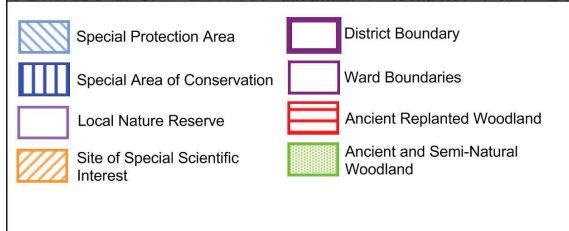
Bird Group	Birds	Extent of Functional Habitat from site	Note
<b>Birds 7</b>	Wintering pink-footed goose, barnacle goose	<b>15-20km</b>	No information

## APPENDIX D


### Designated Sites Figure




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Client



Ribble Valley  
Borough Council



Project

**RIBBLE VALLEY**

Drawing Title

**Figure 1 Ecological Assets**

Status	FINAL	Revision	01
Scale	NTS	Date	19/05/2016
Drawn By	M.MUTALE		
Checked By	D.HOUD		
Approved By	D.HOUD		
Project No.	UA006336	Original Size	A3
Drawing Number	004-UA003663-UE31D-01		



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