Core Strategy
Development Plan Document
Appropriate Assessment
Screening Report

December 2007
Version 2: Natural England comments incorporated
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2: Description of the Core Strategy DPD</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3: Description of Plans and Strategies to be considered “in combination”</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4: AA Screening Methodology, Approach &amp; Key Tasks</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5: Natura 2000 and Ramsar Sites Potentially Affected by the Core Strategy DPD</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 6: Screening Assessment of the Core Strategy DPD</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 7: Consultation</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 8: Conclusion</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1: Summary of Other Relevant Plans</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 2: Information on the European Sites</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 3: Maps (separate inserts)</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 4: Screening Matrices for AA</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the first stage of the Appropriate Assessment of the Rother Core Strategy Development Plan Document, to meet the requirement of the Habitats Directive. It has been prepared by Rother District Council, as the relevant competent authority.

The Assessment provides a screening to examine whether the Core Strategy is likely to have any significant impacts on European designated conservation sites, either alone or in combination with other projects and plans, in view of the European site’s conservation objectives. The Assessment:

- Provides details of the Plan and its proposals
- Identifies European sites within and outside the Plan area that may potentially be affected by the Core Strategy
- Identifies the characteristics of these European sites and their conservation objectives
- Identifies whether the Core Strategy, alone or in combination with other relevant plans or projects is likely to have a significant impact on the European sites.

The Assessment has been undertaken following a precautionary approach in accordance with the Habitats Directive and examines all European sites within the District boundary and within 15km of the District boundary.

OUTCOME OF ASSESSMENT

The following potential impacts have been identified and trigger the requirement to proceed to the next stage of Appropriate Assessment:

- Dungeness SAC:
  - Potential for impacts from housing provision and associated infrastructure on water quality and quantity that could affect the integrity of the site
  - Potential for impacts on species that forage outside the site’s boundary
  - Potential for increased recreational pressure and disturbance that could affect the integrity of the site
  - Potential for changes in pollution levels from increased traffic levels related to housing provision and associated infrastructure

- Dungeness to Pett Level SPA and proposed Ramsar Site:
  - Potential for impacts from housing provision and associated infrastructure on water quality and quantity that could affect the integrity of the site
  - Potential for impacts on species that forage outside the site’s boundary
Potential for increased recreational pressure and disturbance that could affect the integrity of the site

Potential for changes in pollution levels from increased traffic levels related to housing provision and associated infrastructure

• Pevensey Levels Ramsar Site¹:
  o Potential for impacts from housing provision and associated infrastructure on water quality and quantity that could affect the integrity of the site
  o Potential for changes in pollution levels from increased traffic levels related to housing provision and associated infrastructure

• Hastings Cliffs SAC:
  o Potential for increased recreational pressure and disturbance that could affect the integrity of the site

¹ In line with Government policy in PPS9 paragraph 6, this assessment also relates to Ramsar sites which support internationally important wetland habitats
1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This report is an Assessment of the Rother District Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD), to meet the requirements of the Habitats Directive. It has been prepared by Rother District Council, as the relevant competent authority.

**The Habitats Directive**

1.2 The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) sets out the requirement for Assessment of plans and projects affecting Natura 2000 sites. Article 6(3) established the requirement for Habitats Directive Assessment (also referred to as Appropriate Assessment) and states:

> “Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.”

1.3 Article 6(4) goes on to discuss alternative solutions and compensatory measures. It states:

> “If in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, the member states shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted.

> Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or priority species, the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, of beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.”

**Natura 2000 Sites**

1.4 Natura 2000 is a Europe-wide network of sites of international importance for nature conservation established under European Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive). This has been transposed into UK law as the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations (1994 ‘Habitats Regulations’).
1.5 The Natura 2000 network comprises special areas of conservation (SAC) designated by Member States in accordance with the provisions of the Directive, and special protection areas (SPA) classified pursuant to Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds (the ‘Birds Directive’).

1.6 Member States must take all necessary measures to guarantee the conservation of habitats in SACs and avoid their deterioration. Member States must therefore:

- Encourage the management of features of the landscape which are essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species
- Establish systems of strict protection for those animal and plant species which are particularly threatened (Annex IV Habitats Directive) and study the desirability of reintroducing those species in their territory
- Prohibit the use of non-selective methods of taking, capturing or killing certain animal and plant species (Annex V Habitats Directive)

1.7 The application of the Habitats Directives involves the precautionary principle; that is that plans and projects can only be permitted having ascertained no adverse effect on the integrity of the site. Plans and projects may, however, still be permitted if there are no alternatives, and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest as to why they should go ahead.

1.8 In line with Government policy in PPS9 paragraph 6, this assessment also relates to Ramsar sites although these are not strictly part of Natura 2000. These sites support internationally important wetland habitats and are listed under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention 1971).

**Integration with Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

1.9 Plans and programmes that have been determined to require Appropriate Assessment pursuant to the Habitats Directive are also subject to an assessment procedure under the SEA Directive (Article 3(2) (b)). Therefore a combined process can be carried out provided it fulfils the procedural steps required by the SEA Directive and the substantive test regarding the effect on protected sites required by the Habitats Directive.

1.10 However, as the SA/SEA for the Core Strategy Development Plan Document is already advanced, the Screening for Appropriate Assessment has remained separate. For subsequent DPDs a screening exercise can be carried out in line with the approach in Regulation 9 of the SEA regulations, which requires key stakeholders to be consulted. If no significant effects are identified the Screening Statement can be included in the SA Report.
The Appropriate Assessment Process

1.11 Appropriate Assessment (AA) is an assessment of the potential effects of a proposed plan – ‘in combination’ with other plans and projects – on one or more European sites (broadly SACs, SPAs and Ramsars).

1.12 The ‘assessment’ proper is a statement which says whether the plan does or does not affect the integrity of a European site. However the process of determining whether or not the plan will affect the site(s) is also commonly referred to as ‘appropriate assessment’.


1.14 There are four key stages of the AA process as set out in the European Commission guidance “Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites – Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC” (November 2001). Stages 1 and 2 relate to Article 6(3) and Stages 3 and 4 relate to Article 6(4).

1.15 The stages are described below:

- **Stage 1: Screening**
  o Determines whether the plan – ‘in combination’ with other plans and projects – is likely to have a significant effect on the interest features of a European site either directly or indirectly

- **Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment**
  o Determining whether in view of the site’s conservation objectives, the plan either alone ‘in combination’ with other plans and projects – would have an adverse effect (or risk of this) on the integrity of the site(s). If it doesn’t or if any adverse impact can be adequately mitigated for such as modifying a policy or proposal, further to consulting Natural England and JNCC, the plan can proceed.

- **Stage 3: Assessment of Alternative Solutions**
  o Where the plan is assessed as likely to have a significant effect (or risk of this) on the integrity of a site(s), there should be an examination of alternatives

- **Stage 4: Assessment where no alternative solutions remain and where adverse impacts remain**
  o The ‘IROPI test’ (Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest) and compensatory measures. Compensatory measures are required for any remaining adverse effects, but only where the plan would be necessary for imperative reasons of overriding public interest.
1.16 If it is concluded at the screening stage that there will be no significant impacts, there is no need to carry out subsequent stages. This Screening Report addresses the First Stage only of the Appropriate Assessment process.

1.17 The Habitats Directive promotes a hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation and compensatory measures as shown in Figure 1 below\(^2\)

![Figure 1: Hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation, compensatory measures](image)

**Significant Effects**

1.18 A judgement on the significance of effects on a European site should be undertaken in relation to the designated interest features and conservation objectives of the site using sound judgement, and with a scientific basis where available. If insufficient information is available to make clear judgement, it should be assumed that a significant effect is possible in line with the precautionary principle.

1.19 AA requires ecological expertise in order that sound judgements on impacts on site integrity can be made. The following sources of ecological expertise may be drawn upon during the AA process:

- Natural England
- The county ecologist
- The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
- The Sussex Wildlife Trust
- The Environment Agency

\(^2\) Figure taken from “Appropriate Assessment of Plans” (September 2006) Scott Wilson; Levett-Therivel; Treweek Environmental Consultants; Land Use Consultants
Structure of the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

Section 2: Description of the Core Strategy DPD

Section 3: Description of Plans and Strategies to be considered “in combination” with the Core Strategy

Section 4: AA Screening Methodology sets out the approach used and specific tasks undertaken

Section 5: Natura 2000 and Ramsar Sites Potentially Affected by the Core Strategy DPD, identifies and describes the Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites that could potentially be affected by the Core Strategy DPD, including describing the conservation objectives for each site and the potential sensitivities to adverse effects

Section 6: Screening Assessment of the Core Strategy DPD, considers whether there are likely to be any significant effects of the Core Strategy DPD, alone or in combination with other relevant plans and projects, on European sites

Section 7: Consultation

Section 8: Conclusion, summary the findings of the AA Screening
2 DESCRIPTION OF THE CORE STRATEGY DPD

2.1 The Local Development Framework (LDF) comprises a number of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that set out policies and proposals for the development and use of land in the district. The various documents will be prepared at different times, in a phased manner. The Council’s timetable for work on the LDF is set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS), which sets out a three-year work programme. The LDS is updated annually and is available on the Council’s website at www.rother.gov.uk.

2.2 One of the first DPDs to be produced will be the Core Strategy, which will set out the long-term spatial vision for the Rother District, and the strategic policies to deliver that vision. It will be a pivotal document in that once adopted, all other DPDs must be in conformity with it. Planning Policy Statement 12 states that the Core Strategy should seek to implement the spatial and transport policies of the Regional Spatial Strategy and incorporate its housing requirement. It should also draw on any strategies of the Local Authority and other organisations that have implications for the development and use of land. It is not directly connected to or necessary for the management of Natura 2000 or Ramsar sites.

2.3 The profile for the Core Strategy document as outlined in the LDS (March 2007) is shown in the table below.

Table 1: Core Strategy Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Details</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role &amp; Subject</td>
<td>Statement of the vision, objectives and spatial strategy for the District to include the scale, type and broad distribution of development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographical Coverage</td>
<td>District-wide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>DPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformity</td>
<td>South East Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeframe</td>
<td>2006 to 2026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Milestones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early community involvement</td>
<td>April – August 2006 - Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues &amp; options consultation</td>
<td>October– November 2006 - Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred options &amp; proposals</td>
<td>Spring 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission</td>
<td>November 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-examination meeting</td>
<td>April 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination</td>
<td>July 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption</td>
<td>January 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management arrangements</td>
<td>See Section 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information requirements</td>
<td>Housing land supply assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employment land review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Retail forecasting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4 The Core Strategy will set the overall level of growth (at least 280 dwellings per annum) and the broad spatial locations for development. Given the strategic nature of the Core Strategy, it is considered most helpful to assess whether the proposed strategic objectives (that will guide development options) are in themselves likely to have significant effects on European sites. Moreover this approach enables sensitivities (i.e. potential effects) to be highlighted that can inform option formulation.

2.5 There are a number of District-wide strategic objectives and a series of area based objectives as identified below. These are in the draft stage at this juncture and could be revised as the Plan is prepared and appraised using the tools of Appropriate Assessment, Sustainability Assessment incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment and informed by evidence based projects such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

**District-wide Objectives:**

- To maintain the high quality and improve the stewardship of the natural and built environment
- To continue to support and further develop vibrant, safe and inclusive communities
- To increase educational and skills levels in concert with growing the local business base and range of local job opportunities
- To further improve the relationship between housing supply and local needs
- To provide a higher level of accessibility to jobs and services, including healthcare and leisure

**Area-based Objectives:**

- For Bexhill: to fulfil a strategic housing and employment role, linked to new infrastructure and green space, and supporting a more balanced demographic profile, within an integrated approach to the economic regeneration of Bexhill and Hastings.
- For the High Weald: to effectively conserve the ‘natural beauty’ of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and to meet the needs of its communities in a way consistent with its distinctive landscape character and cultural identity
- For the countryside: to protect and promote its character, its role as a living and working landscape and as an ecological, leisure and tourism asset
- For coastal areas: to protect coastal communities from flooding and manage risk, protect and manage the high quality ecology, support economic development, including leisure/tourism
- For Battle and Rye: to maintain and enhance their ‘market town’ roles consistent with their important historic and environmental character and setting
• For Battle: to increase opportunities for people to work locally, improve the use of the town centre and accessibility by non-car modes

• For Rye: to improve learning and economic opportunities, support the Port of Rye and to manage development, tourism and traffic within and around the historic Citadel area

2.6 The main elements that have potential to impact on the nature conservation interest of sites in and adjacent to the District are, broadly: housing, employment, services and facilities that will be additionally provided in the District. Area-specific elements with potential to impact on sites are the Bexhill, Rye and coastal areas objectives and in due course spatial strategies.
3 DESCRIPTION OF THE RELEVANT PLANS AND STRATEGIES TO BE CONSIDERED ‘IN COMBINATION’

South East Plan

3.1 The Core Strategy plans for the development proposed in the forthcoming Regional Spatial Strategy, currently the Draft South East Plan. The draft South East Plan sets out a spatial strategy for the region and includes policies and proposals relating to a range of issues including the economy, housing, communications and transport, sustainable natural resource management and countryside and landscape management. Key aspects of the draft South East Plan are shown below:

- 28,900 new dwellings p.a.
- Majority of development concentrated on 9 sub-regions
- Investment focused on 21 Regional Hubs
- Development focused on urban areas
- 60% new housing on brownfield sites
- New and enhanced infrastructure to support development
- Improved access to international and regional gateways
- 3 regional freight transport interchanges
- Expand renewable energy

3.2 Importantly, the draft South East Plan includes a policy to provide for “the highest level of protection for nationally and internationally designated sites” (Policy NRM4). The key environmental trends identified in the Sustainability Appraisal of the Draft South East Plan are as follows:

Negative trends where the environment is deteriorating or environmental pressure is increasing:

- Water demand and availability including supply demand balance, annual abstraction rates, household consumption, leakage and water demand
- Energy consumption
- Waste arising
- Road traffic/traffic emissions
- Emissions from regulated processes
- Nitrates in groundwater
- Biodiversity including distribution of water voles, salmon populations and wild bird populations
- Flood risk
• Future climate change in the South East, including sea level changes
• Recreational pressure on European sites

Positive trends where the environment is improving or environmental pressure is decreasing:
• Household water metering
• Concentrations of SO$_2$, NO$_2$ and particulates
• Biological quality of river water
• Levels of phosphate in rivers
• Water pollution incidents
• New homes built on previously developed land
• Area under agri-environment schemes
• Land pollution from agriculture and other sources
• Biodiversity including the condition of SSSIs, the area of woodland, the distribution of otters and the population of sea trout
• UK greenhouse gas emissions

3.3 The Appropriate Assessment of the South East Plan carried out by Scott Wilson and Levett-Therivel$^3$ concluded that “there is a risk of adverse effects on the integrity of many European sites from the proposal in the Draft South east Plan. These relate primarily to the risk of effects from air pollution, from water abstraction, from eutrophication of watercourses and estuarine waters, and from increased recreational use.” It goes on to say that these effects can largely be mitigated: “the potential adverse effects can be controlled by the implementation of appropriate avoidance or mitigation measures at regional or local level, so long as supported by:
• Commitment
• Adequate funding
• Appropriate timing of avoidance / mitigation measures”

3.4 In many instances it is not inevitable that there will be adverse effects on European sites as it will depend upon how the policies and proposals in the Plan are implemented on the ground. It is therefore recognised that AA will also be applied to lower tier land use plans.

Other Relevant Plans

3.5 The Screening Assessment concentrates on the ‘in combination’ effects of the Core Strategy with other LDF level plans, including the LDFs of nearby authorities and minerals and waste plans for East Sussex. The plans

---

$^3$ Appropriate Assessment of the Draft South East Plan Final Report (October 2006) Scott Wilson Levett-Therivel
considered in the assessment are listed below. A brief summary of each plan is set out in Appendix 1:

3.6 County-wide Plans affecting Rother:
- East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Waste Local Plan
- East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Minerals Local Plan
- East Sussex Local Transport Plan (LTP2)
- Environment Agency Catchment Flood Management Plan: Rother and Romney (in progress)
- South Foreland to Beachy Head Shoreline Management Plan
- Rother Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy
- Cuckmere and Sussex Havens Catchment Flood Management Plan

3.7 Other Plans for areas outside Rother:
- Hastings Borough Local Plan
- Approved Non-Statutory Wealden District Local Plan
- Shepway Local Plan
- Ashford Borough Local Plan
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan
- Eastbourne Borough Plan
4 AA SCREENING METHODOLOGY APPROACH & KEY TASKS

4.1 The Appropriate Assessment of the Core Strategy has been carried out in line with the following guidance documents:

- Department for Communities and Local Government: Planning for the Protection of European Sites: Appropriate Assessment (August 2006)
- English Nature: Habitat Regulations Guidance Note (May 1997)
- Scott Wilson, Levett-Therivel, Treweek Environmental Consultants, Land Use Consultants: Appropriate Assessment of Plans (September 2006)

Task 1: Identification of the Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites which may be affected by the Core Strategy and the factors contributing to and defining the integrity of these sites

4.2 An initial investigation was undertaken to identify Natura 2000 sites and Ramsar sites within Rother District and those outside the District with potential to be affected by the Core Strategy. This involved the use of GIS data as well as consultation with the Natural England Kent and Sussex Division. In line with the precautionary approach, sites at distance from the Rother District boundary were included in the study. The sites identified as potentially affected by the Core Strategy are identified in Section 4. The attributes which contribute to and define the integrity of these sites were identified and described (including the conservation objectives) and this information was appropriate to inform a screening decision.

Task 2: Completion of the Appropriate Assessment Screening Matrix for the Core Strategy

4.3 An Appropriate Assessment Screening Matrix was completed for the Core Strategy, which looks at each European site in turn. The screening gives particular consideration to the possible significant effects of the plan on features contributing to the integrity of the Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites (e.g. increased disturbance, changes in water quality, etc). A risk-based approach involving application of the precautionary principle was adopted in the assessment of likely effects, such that an assessment of ‘no significant effect’ was only made where it was considered unlikely, based on current knowledge and information available, that the Core Strategy could have a significant effect on the integrity of the site. The identification of potential effects involved an examination of potential ‘in-combination’ effects of the Core Strategy with other plans and projects identified in Section 2.
5 NATURA 2000 AND RAMSAR SITES POTENTIALLY AFFECTED BY THE
CORE STRATEGY DPD

5.1 There are two Natura 2000 sites within Rother District:

- **Dungeness SAC** (Dungeness SSSI, Rye Harbour SSSI) designated for three qualifying features, namely:
  - Annual drift line vegetation
    - The Dungeness foreland has a very extensive and well-developed shoreline, although with sparse vegetation and in places some human disturbance. It is one of two representatives of Annual vegetation of drift lines on the south coast of England. The strandline community on this site comprises Babington’s orache Atriplex glabriuscula, which occurs mostly on the accreting eastern shoreline, although it is also present on the eroding southern shoreline.
  - Perennial vegetation of stony banks
    - Dungeness is the UK’s largest shingle structure and represents the habitat type on the south-east coast of England. The total area of exposed shingle covers some 1,600 ha, though the extent of the buried shingle ridges is much greater. Despite considerable disturbance and destruction of the surface shingle, the site retains very large areas of intact parallel ridges with characteristic zonation of vegetation. It still has the most diverse and most extensive examples of stable vegetated shingle in Europe, including the best representation of scrub on shingle, notably prostrate forms of broom Cytisus scoparius and blackthorn Prunus spinosa. A feature of the site, thought to be unique in the UK, is the small depressions formed within the shingle structure, which support fen and open-water communities.
  - Populations of great crested newts
    - Dungeness in south-east England has the largest shingle expanse in Europe and contains a large number of waterbodies within its 2,000 ha. This extensive site hosts a large and viable great crested newt Triturus cristatus population in a range of natural and anthropogenic habitats. These include natural pools and those resulting from gravel extraction and other activities. Terrestrial habitat of importance for feeding and shelter is provided by a range of open shingle vegetation with scrub in the vicinity of some of the waterbodies.

---

4 Environment Agency – Southern Region: *Denge Beach Profiling, 2006 to 2015 Study to Inform Appropriate Assessment* (October 2006)
- **Dungeness to Pett Level SPA** (Dungeness SSSI, Rye Harbour SSSI, Camber Sands and Rye Salttings SSSI and Pett Levels SSSI) important for:
  - **During the breeding season:**
    - Common Tern Sterna hirundo, 266 pairs representing at least 2.2% of the breeding population in Great Britain (5 year mean, 1993-1997)
    - Little Tern Sterna albifrons, 35 pairs representing at least 1.5% of the breeding population in Great Britain (5 year mean, 1993-1997)
    - Mediterranean Gull Larus melanocephalus, 2 pairs representing at least 20.0% of the breeding population in Great Britain (5 year mean, 1993-1997)
  - **On passage:**
    - Aquatic Warbler Acrocephalus paludicola, 30 individuals representing at least 44.8% of the population in Great Britain (Count as at 1997)
  - **Over winter:**
    - Bewick's Swan Cygnus columbianus bewickii, 179 individuals representing at least 2.6% of the wintering population in Great Britain (5 year peak mean, 1992/3-1996/7)
  - This site also qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following migratory species:
    - **Over winter;** Shoveler Anas clypeata, 419 individuals representing at least 1.0% of the wintering Northwestern/Central Europe population (5 year peak mean 1991/2 - 1995/6)

5.2 Sites that lie outside the District boundary that have been considered in the Assessment include:

- **Hastings Cliffs SAC**\(^5\) (2km from Rother boundary) designated for:
  - Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.
  - Hastings Cliffs are an area of actively eroding soft cliff on the south coast of England. They include the most southerly exposures of the lower Hastings Beds. The site contains three valleys cut into the strata, which support woodland and scrub habitats with an unusual ‘Atlantic’ bryophyte flora. Closer to the sea the maritime influence stunts the trees, but other bryophytes become important here, with one species, Lophocolea fragrans, at its only south-east England locality. Maritime scrub and

\(^5\) Joint Nature Conservation Committee SAC Description
http://www.jncc.gov.uk/ProtectedSites/SACselection/sac.asp?EUCode=UK0030165
coastal heathland are found closer to the cliff edge, with grassland supporting maritime species such as thrift Armeria maritima. The clay cliff slopes are eroding and support a range of habitats from bare ground and flushes to maritime grassland and scrub, reflecting the successional development of vegetation following cliff-falls.

- **Ashdown Forest SAC**\(^6\) (15km from Rother boundary) designated for:
  - Northern Atlantic wet heaths
    - Ashdown Forest contains one of the largest single continuous blocks of lowland heath in south-east England, with both 4030 European dry heaths and, in a larger proportion, wet heath. The M16 Erica tetralix – Sphagnum compactum wet heath element provides suitable conditions for several species of bog-mosses Sphagnum spp., bog asphodel Narthecium ossifragum, deergrass Trichophorum cespitosum, common cotton-grass Eriophorum angustifolium, marsh gentian Gentiana pneumonanthe and marsh clubmoss Lycopodiella inundata. The site supports important assemblages of beetles, dragonflies, damselflies and butterflies, including the nationally rare silver-studded blue Plebejus argus, and birds of European importance, such as European nightjar Caprimulgus europaeus, Dartford warbler Sylvia undata and Eurasian hobby Falco subbuteo.
  - European dry heaths
    - The dry heath in Ashdown Forest is an extensive example of the south-eastern H2 Calluna vulgaris – Ulex minor community. This vegetation type is dominated by heather Calluna vulgaris, bell heather Erica cinerea and dwarf gorse Ulex minor, with transitions to other habitats. It supports important lichen assemblages, including species such as Pycnothelia papillaria. This site supports the most inland remaining population of hairy greenweed Genista pilosa in Britain.
  - Great crested newt Triturus cristatus is the largest native British newt. Breeding sites are mainly medium-sized ponds, though ditches and other waterbody types may also be used less frequently. Ponds with ample aquatic vegetation (which is used for egg-laying) seem to be favoured.

- **Ashdown Forest SPA** (15km from Rother boundary) designated for:
  - Together with the nearby Wealden Heaths SPA and Thames Basin Heath SPA, Ashdown Forest forms part of a complex of heathlands in southern England that support breeding bird populations of European importance.
    - During the breeding season;

\(^6\) Joint Nature Conservation Committee SAC Description [http://www.jncc.gov.uk/ProtectedSites/SACselection/n2kforms/UK0030080.pdf](http://www.jncc.gov.uk/ProtectedSites/SACselection/n2kforms/UK0030080.pdf)
• Dartford Warbler Sylvia undata, 29 pairs representing at least 1.8% of the breeding population in Great Britain (Count as at 1994)

• Nightjar Caprimulgus europaeus, 35 pairs representing at least 1.0% of the breeding population in Great Britain (Two year mean, 1991 & 1992)

5.3 The conservation objectives for each SPA or SAC are designed to ensure that the qualifying interest of each site is maintained in the long term. Whilst these are specific to each site, there are some general principles including:

• To maintain the population of the habitat / species as a viable component of the site

• To maintain the distribution of the habitat / species within the site

• To maintain the distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species

• To maintain the structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species

• To ensure that there is no significant disturbance of the species

5.4 For the purposes of assessment Ramsar and proposed Ramsar sites are included, there is one site and one proposed site within the district:

• **Pevensey Levels Ramsar Site** designated for:
  - An outstanding assemblage of wetland plants and invertebrates including many British Red Data Book species
  - 68% of vascular plant species in Great Britain that can be described as aquatic.
  - It is probably the best site in Britain for freshwater molluscs, one of the five best sites for aquatic beetles and supports an outstanding assemblage of dragonflies7

• **Dungeness to Pett Level proposed Ramsar Site** (Dungeness SSSI, Rye Harbour SSSI, Camber Sands and Rye Saltings SSSI, Pett Levels SSSI and Walland Marsh SSSI) important for:
  - Wetland that comprises a mosaic of habitats, including shingle beaches, artificial lakes, grazing marshes, intertidal sands and mudflats
  - It provides breeding and winter habitats for important assemblages of wetland bird species, particularly wildfowl, waders and terns8

---

7 Joint Nature Conservation Committee Ramsar Citation [http://www.jncc.gov.uk/pdf/RIS/UK11053.pdf](http://www.jncc.gov.uk/pdf/RIS/UK11053.pdf)

8 Dungeness to Pett Levels CHaMP – Executive Summary [http://www.english-nature.org.uk/livingwiththesea/project_details/good_practice_guide/HabitatCRR/ENRestore/CHaMPs/Dungeness-PettLevels/DungenessCHaMP.pdf](http://www.english-nature.org.uk/livingwiththesea/project_details/good_practice_guide/HabitatCRR/ENRestore/CHaMPs/Dungeness-PettLevels/DungenessCHaMP.pdf)
5.5 For Ramsar sites the main aims are to promote the conservation of the wetland to avoid deterioration of the wetland habitats of Ramsar interest and to avoid significant disturbance of associated species.

5.6 Details of the European sites being assessed and their relevant conservation objectives are provided in Appendix 2 of this assessment. Maps of the sites are attached in Appendix 3.
6 SCREENING ASSESSMENT OF THE CORE STRATEGY DPD

6.1 There are a wide range of potential impacts of development plans on designated sites, but the impacts examined can be summarised as:

- Land take by developments
- Impact on protected species found within but which travel outside the protected sites, may be relevant where development could result in effects on qualifying interest species within the Natura 2000 or Ramsar site, for example through the loss feeding grounds for an identified species
- Increased disturbance, for example from recreational use resulting from new housing development and / or improved access due to transport infrastructure projects
- Impact on water quality and quantity:
  - Changes in water availability, increased demands for water treatment, and changes in groundwater regimes due to increased impermeable areas
  - Changes in water quality as a result of development, for example from sewage treatment works and urban runoff; potential impacts of water pollution include phosphate stripping and eutrophication
- Changes in atmospheric pollution levels due to increased traffic, waste management facilities etc. Pollution discharges from developments such as industrial developments, quarries and waste management facilities

6.2 An Appropriate Assessment Screening Matrix is presented in Appendix 4. This assesses the potential impacts, as set out above, of the Core Strategy on the conservation interests of the European sites, taking account of the policy option elements of the plan.
CONSULTATION

7.1 Natural England is the principal consultee for the Appropriate Assessment of the Core Strategy and their response to this screening exercise is documented in the table below.

**Table 2 Natural England Consultation response**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>LA Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Page 6, Section 20</td>
<td>We note this section which applies to appropriate assessment and would advise that the following is incorporated such that it reads:</td>
<td>Amended accordingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Stage 1 Screening</strong>: determining whether the plan either alone or ‘in combination’ with other plans and projects – is likely to have a significant effect on the interest features of a European site, either directly or indirectly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment</strong>: determining whether in view of the site’s conservation objectives, the plan either alone ‘in combination’ with other plans and projects – would have an adverse effect (or risk of this) on the integrity of the site(s). If it doesn’t or if any adverse impact can be adequately mitigated for such as modifying a policy or proposal, further to consulting Natural England and JNCC, the plan can proceed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page 10 Section 1.7</td>
<td>Natural England would recommend that a greater emphasis is given to biodiversity enhancement for habitats and species than is currently cited in this section.</td>
<td>Duly noted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page 16 Section 4.2</td>
<td>Natural England would advise that for the purposes of carrying out an appropriate assessment greater clarity and detail is needed in this section. For example Bewick Swan has been identified as a qualifying species but the SPA is designated for a number of species, only one of which is the Bewick Swan.</td>
<td>Amended accordingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4.3</td>
<td>The report has omitted the Ashdown Forest SPA designation which should be included in this section. The Ashdown Forest has been afforded the status of SPA due the fact it contains nationally important breeding populations of the Dartford warbler Sylvia undata and nightjar Caprimulgus europaeus. Natural England would also advise that Ashdown Forest has an additional qualifying feature of the great crested newt which should be include in this section.</td>
<td>Amended accordingly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Page 18
Section 5.2
We would recommend that the potential impacts of water pollution on international sites is more clearly emphasised in this section. For example, Pevensey Levels Ramsar is currently deleteriously impacted by eutrophication. This direct impact comes via sewage effluent entering the ditches within the Ramsar Site from the Hailsham Sewage Treatment works.

Amended accordingly

Page 20
Section 7.4
Natural England would advise that the impacts of visitor pressure and atmospheric pollution should be included as potential impacts to Dungeness SAC and SPA as explained below.

Potential impacts now screened in

Protected Species outside the SAC
Natural England requires further clarification as to the inference that there will be no impact on protected species outside the SAC. It must be clearly evidenced that no proposed development site within the LDF has the potential to support populations of great crested newts within the SAC. Natural England would advise that for the purposes of dismissing this as a potential impact on the SAC additional information on the allocated sites is required with clear justification as to why they are unsuitable for this species.

Recreation Pressure and Disturbance
Natural England would not agree from the evidence provided that the potential impact of recreation and disturbance on the SAC can be ruled out at this stage. We would require additional information and clear evidence to be produced prior to this potential impact being ruled out.

The shingle vegetation within he SAC is highly vulnerable to disturbance. Rye Harbour is a very popular visitor attraction and Natural England would not agree that a 5km radius is an appropriate cut off point beyond which it is inferred that people will not regularly visit the site. We require justification as to why this distance has been cited particularly with reference to the precautionary principle. We would also require evidence regarding the statement that:

The core strategy does not propose a significant quantity of new dwellings in the eastern side of the district.

We advise that this does not negate the requirement for an Appropriate Assessment. Natural England recommends that the report clearly references the quantities of housing proposed together with justification as to why such numbers are not deemed significant for the purposes of carrying out an Appropriate Assessment on the potential impacts of recreational disturbance on the SAC. This effect

Agreed - potential impact now screened in
Changes in pollution levels
We advise that this potential impact should be considered in-combination with neighbouring districts as per the requirements of the Habitats Regulations. This is particularly pertinent when considering the existing high levels of atmospheric pollutants and their impacts on sensitive habitats within the SAC. The screening matrix only mentions development in the proximity of the site within the Council’s ownership. Natural England would require an assessment of air pollution to be considered in combination with other local authority’s plans and projects. This has not been carried out and therefore the impact of air pollution on the SAC cannot be dismissed at this stage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page 51 Impact on Protected Species outside the Protected Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Again Natural England would require clarification of the nature of the proposed development sites and evidence to clearly demonstrate that these areas are not used by protected species within the SPA. Such information would be necessary as a minimum prior to dismissing this as a potential impact to the SPA.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dungeness SPA  
Page 51-52

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recreational pressure &amp; Disturbance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural England reiterates comments made on this potential impact to the SPA. Again we would require clear evidence to show why 5km has been used as a boundary beyond which this impact is negated. We would strongly advise that this is revised with appropriate evidence, giving due regard to the precautionary principle.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page 52 Changes in Pollution Levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We reiterate our comments provided above with regard to the SAC. Again we would advise that an in-combination assessment is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We also advise that potential impacts to Ashdown Forest SPA are included in this section.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

9 Scott Wilson, Levett-Therivel Sustainability Consultants, Treweek Environmental Consultants and Land Use Consultants  
*Appropriate Assessment of Plans* (September 2006)
8 CONCLUSION

8.1 The Rother Core Strategy has been assessed to determine whether there are likely to be any significant effects arising from the Plan, in accordance with the Habitats Directive Articles 6(3) and (4).

8.2 The Appropriate Assessment has:

- Provided details of the Plan and its proposals
- Identified European sites within and outside the Plan area that may potentially be affected by the Core Strategy
- Identified the characteristics of these European sites and their conservation objectives
- Tested the Core Strategy alone and in combination with other relevant plans or projects, to identify any significant impacts on the European sites.

8.3 It cannot be unequivocally concluded that the Rother Core Strategy will have no significant effects on the integrity of European Sites within or adjacent to its boundaries. It is possible to conclude that there are not likely to be significant effects on the Ashdown Forest SAC due mainly to its distance from Rother’s boundary and particularly its distance from the strategic growth area of Bexhill.

8.4 The following potential impacts have been identified and trigger the requirement to proceed to the next stage of Appropriate Assessment:

- Dungeness SAC:
  - Potential for impacts on protected species that forage outside the protected site
  - Potential for impacts on water quality and quantity that could affect the integrity of the site
  - Potential for increased recreational pressure and disturbance that could affect the integrity of the site
  - Potential for increased atmospheric pollution

- Dungeness to Pett Level SPA and proposed Ramsar:
  - Potential for impacts on protected species that forage outside the protected site
  - Potential for impacts on water quality and quantity that could affect the integrity of the site
  - Potential for increased recreational pressure and disturbance that could affect the integrity of the site
  - Potential for increased atmospheric pollution

- Pevensey Levels Ramsar:
- Potential for impacts on water quality and quantity that could affect the integrity of the site
- Potential for changes in pollution levels from increased traffic levels

- Hastings Cliffs SAC:
  - Potential for increased recreational pressure and disturbance that could affect the integrity of the site
## Appendix 1 Summary of Other Relevant Plans and Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Relevant Plans</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County-wide Plans affecting Rother</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Sussex and Brighton &amp; Hove Waste Local Plan</td>
<td>The Waste Local Plan sets out a strategy for the management and disposal for all types of waste generated in the plan area; guidance for developers on the type and location of waste facilities required to achieve this strategy and a policy framework to assess acceptability of applications for planning permission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Sussex and Brighton &amp; Hove Minerals Local Plan</td>
<td>The key issue in the Local Plan is to balance, through its proposals, the essential need for minerals against the protection of the environment and local amenity. Plan inset areas or relevance to the Rother District LDF: Bexhill; Rye Harbour and Winchelsea Beach; North East of Camber.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Sussex Local Transport Plan (LTP2)</td>
<td>Aims to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• improve transport systems and services to facilitate business growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• widen sustainable transport choices and reduce harmful impacts on the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• offer more accessible transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• reduce crime and the fear of crime, so that people feel safe when out walking or using public transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• provide for a healthier community by tackling pollution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• provide safe, sustainable access to education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment Agency Catchment Flood Management Plan: Rother and Romney (in progress)</td>
<td>The aim of the CFMP is to identify long-term, sustainable policies to manage flood risk within the catchment. These policies will form the basis for development of Strategy Plans, covering all or part of the overall catchment area, which will identify in more detail appropriate flood defence measures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Foreland to Beachy Head Shoreline Management Plan</td>
<td>The Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) provides a large-scale and long-term assessment of the risks associated with coastal flooding and erosion and presents a policy framework to address these risks to people and the developed, historic and natural environment in a sustainable manner. The recommended present-day policies for this SMP provide a high degree of compliance with objectives to protect existing communities against flooding and erosion. The recommended long-term policies promote greater sustainability for parts of the shoreline where natural process and evolution provide a practical means of managing the coastline. However, the protection of the significant assets present along much of the shoreline remains a strong focus for the long-term sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Rother Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy** | The aim of this document is twofold:  
- to present the abstraction licensing strategy for the Rother CAMS area for the next six years  
- to outline the actions that the Environment Agency will complete during the next six years  
Target: 8 to 21% of current levels of per capita water consumption may be saved in new houses and up to 80% water savings can be made from businesses. |
| **Cuckmere and Sussex Havens Catchment Flood Management Plan** | The Cuckmere and Sussex Havens CFMP identifies long-term policies and actions that need to be taken over the next 50 to 100 years to deliver a better, more environmentally sustainable approach for managing flood risk. It will plan for the likely impacts of climate change, future land use change and further development in the catchment area and provides a strategic direction for guiding future flood risk management investment, efforts and resources in the Cuckmere and Sussex Havens catchment. |
| **Other Plans for areas outside Rother** |  |
| **Hastings Borough Local Plan** | The Local Plan concentrates on making the most of opportunities for change which can be identified within the existing urban framework, whilst at the same time protecting those areas which should be conserved for the benefit of Hastings’ people now and in the future.  
**Plan Strategy:**  
- Economic regeneration – Town Centre  
- Economic regeneration – employment  
- Social regeneration – housing  
- Physical regeneration – environment  
- Integrated regeneration  
- Working with the community  
- Area policies for: town centre, seafront, central St Leonards, Old Town, West St Leonards, Broomgrove, Holmhurst St Mary |
| **Approved Non-Statutory Wealden District Local Plan** | A summary of the key aims of the strategy are:  
- Improve quality of life and equality of opportunities  
- Achieve a balance between development and conservation/enhancement of the District’s environment  
- Provide new housing, business and associated growth, looking to achieve the efficient use of land with good design and better accessibility  
- Meet the housing needs of the whole community, including affordable housing  
- Promote a healthy and diverse local economy  
- Promote an efficient and sustainable transport system  
- Ensure the provision for a full range of community facilities and services |
| **Shepway Local Plan** | • To move towards more sustainable patterns of development  
• To concentrate new development in or adjoining the main urban areas, wherever possible, whilst protecting identified areas of open and undeveloped space with recreational or amenity value  
• To improve people’s employment opportunities and support the local economy  
• To maintain an adequate supply of suitable housing and meet the challenges of affordability, dereliction and decay  
• To support the vitality and viability of Folkestone Town Centre as the main retail, commercial and cultural centre  
• To protect the countryside from inappropriate development and to safeguard areas with particular importance for landscape and nature conservation  
• To enhance people’s quality of life through meeting economic and social needs in a way that ensures the protection and enhancement of the environment and of resources for leisure, arts, recreation and sporting activities |
| **Ashford Borough Local Plan** | • Managing development to make the best use of resources Borough-wide  
• Protecting and improving the environment Borough-wide  
• Responding to travel needs Borough-wide  
• Limiting the impact of development Borough-wide  
• Ensuring the provision of community facilities and infrastructure Borough-wide  
• Encouraging high design quality Borough-wide  
Geographical policies for: Ashford, Tenterden, and the villages and rural areas. |
| **Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan** | The Planning Strategy relies on locating development appropriately within a hierarchy of settlements.  
3 Strategic Objectives:  
• To protect the unique, high-quality environmental character of the area and to promote enhancement by encouraging excellence in the quality of all development  
• To conserve finite, non-renewable resources such as land, energy, water, soil and air quality  
• To retain and provide an appropriate level and distribution of development to meet identified housing, economic and community needs. |
| **Eastbourne Borough Plan** | The Plan adopts the following key development principles:  
• To conserve and enhance Eastbourne’s valued “green” environments whether natural or man-made, including the promotion of biodiversity within the Borough  
• To value the best of Eastbourne’s urban environment and enhance the rest so that the town remains an attractive place to live, work and visit  
• To provide at least 60% of new residential development within the existing built-up area in well designed schemes that make efficient use of urban land |
- To provide a supply of housing which will satisfy projected needs and requirements, including providing affordable housing
- To provide for a strong and sustainable local economy which will benefit all sections of the community
- To promote the use of more sustainable means of transport including locating developments in locations accessible not only by the private car but by other means as well, including walking, cycling and public transport
- To limit the amount of long-distance commuting by seeking to retain and develop a stock of business and industrial premises within the town so that employment is available locally for residents
- To promote the Town Centre as the main centre for shopping, leisure and service provision
- To ensure that shopping, community and other facilities which contribute to the quality of urban living are available locally
- To sustain the Town's role as a quality destination for tourism
Appendix 2 Information on the European Sites

Dungeness SAC

UK SAC data form

NATURA 2000
STANDARD DATA FORM
FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:
   1.1 Type K
   1.2 Site code UK0013059
   1.3 Compilation date 199601
   1.4 Update 200101
   1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites
   1.6 Respondent(s) International Designations, JNCC, Peterborough
   1.7 Site name Dungeness
   1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates
      date site proposed as eligible as SCI 199601
      date confirmed as SCI 200412
      date site classified as SPA
      date site designated as SAC 200504

2. Site location:
   2.1 Site centre location
      longitude 00 57 10 E
      latitude 50 55 08 N
   2.2 Site area (ha) 3223.56
   2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region
   NTs code Region name % cover
   UK531 East Sussex 24.00%
   UK57 Kent 76.00%

2.6 Biogeographic region
   Alpine Atlantic Boreal Continental Macaronesia Mediterranean

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats
Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annex I habitat</th>
<th>% cover</th>
<th>Representativeness</th>
<th>Relative surface</th>
<th>Conservation status</th>
<th>Global assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coastal lagoons</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dungeness
Natura 2000 Data Form Page 1
Produced by JNCC. Version 2.1, 17/05/06
3.2 Annex II species

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species name</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Site assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Phorusa cristata</em></td>
<td>1001-10,000</td>
<td>B C B C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Site description

4.1 General site character

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat classes</th>
<th>% cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marine areas, Sea mists</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tidal rivers, Estuaries, Mud flats, Sand flats, Lagoons (including saltwork basins)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt marshes, Salt pastures, Salt steps</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal sand dunes, Sand beaches, Machair</td>
<td>64.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shingle, Sea cliff, Islets</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogs, Marshes, Water fringed vegetation, Fens</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath, Scrub, Maquis and garigue, Phragmegrass</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry grassland, Steppes</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humid grassland, Mesophile grassland</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpine and sub-alpine grassland</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved grassland</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other arable land</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad-leaved deciduous woodland</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coniferous woodland</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evergreen woodland</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed woodland</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland rocks, Sands, Permanent snow and ice</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total habitat cover</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1 Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:
- Nutrient-poor, Shingle

Geomorphology & landscape:
- Coastal, Lagoon

4.2 Quality and importance

- Annual vegetation of drift lines
  - for which this is one of only four known outstanding localities in the United Kingdom
  - which is considered to be rare as its total extent in the United Kingdom is estimated to be less than 100 hectares.

- Perennial vegetation of stony banks
4.3 Vulnerability

The shingle vegetation is very vulnerable to disturbance by vehicles and walkers, although the coastal shingle (drift-line) vegetation has much greater potential for recovery than the perennial vegetation of shingle banks that occurs further inland. Extensive areas of the site are now managed as a Nature Reserve at both Dungeness and Rye Harbour, with emphasis on interpretation of the site's value and on appropriate public access. A ranger helps to enforce local bylaws which aim to prevent damage from trampling, motorbike activity and illicit gravel extraction.

The wetlands which support great crested newt were formerly grazed, maintaining open unshaded vegetation. This practice largely ceased in the 1950s, and since then there has been invasion of ponds by willows shading the water. Management by hand has now been undertaken to reduce this problem, and restoration of light grazing is being investigated.

Abstraction of water is thought to have damaged some of the shingle wetlands as well as components of the perennial vegetation of the shingle beach. This will be addressed through the relevant review provisions of the Habitats Regulations.

The site is close to an active airport which carries a potential risk from air pollution, although current levels of air traffic and motor vehicles are not thought to cause a problem.

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>% cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dungeness to Pett Level SPA

UK SPA data form

NATURA 2000
STANDARD DATA FORM
FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:
1.1 Type J
1.2 Site code UK9012091
1.3 Compilation date 199908
1.4 Update
1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites
   UK 0 0 0 1 3 0 5 9
1.6 Respondent(s) International Designations, JNCC, Peterborough
1.7 Site name Dungeness to Pett Level

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates
   Date site proposed as eligible as SCI
   Date confirmed as SCI
   Date site classified as SPA 199908
   Date site designated as SAC

2. Site location:
2.1 Site centre location
   Longitude 00 44 59 E
   Latitude 50 55 50 N
2.2 Site area (ha) 1474.04
2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUTS code</th>
<th>Region name</th>
<th>% of cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK331</td>
<td>East Sussex</td>
<td>58.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK57</td>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>42.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.6 Biogeographic region

Alpine Atlantic Boreal Continental Macaronesia Mediterranean

X

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats
Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annex I habitat</th>
<th>% cover</th>
<th>Representativity</th>
<th>Relative surface</th>
<th>Conservation status</th>
<th>Global assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Dungeness to Pett Level
Standard Natura 2000 Data Form

Page 1 of 1
Produced by JNCC, Version 1.1, 05/05/05
3.2 Annex I birds and regularly occurring migratory birds not listed on Annex I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Species name</th>
<th>Resident</th>
<th>Migratory</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Conservation</th>
<th>Isolation</th>
<th>Global</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A035</td>
<td>Anas platyrhynchos</td>
<td></td>
<td>395 I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A037</td>
<td>Cygnus columbianus</td>
<td></td>
<td>179 I</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A176</td>
<td>Larus melanocephalus</td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt;=2 P</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A195</td>
<td>Sterna albifrons</td>
<td></td>
<td>35 P</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A193</td>
<td>Sterna hirundo</td>
<td></td>
<td>200 P</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Site description:

4.1 General site character

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat classes</th>
<th>% cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marine areas. Sea inlets</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats.</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lagoons (including saltworks basins)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Malar Dams</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shingle. Sea cliffs. Inlets</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phragmites</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry grassland. Steppes</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humid grassland. Mesophiles grassland</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpine and sub-alpine grassland</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved grassland</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other arable land</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad-leaved deciduous woodland</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coniferous woodland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evergreen woodland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed woodland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, shrubets)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland rocks. Sands. Permanent snow and ice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1 Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:

Geomorphology & landscape:
- Coastal. Floodplain. Lowland

4.2 Quality and importance

ARTICLE 4.1 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

During the breeding season the area regularly supports:

- *Larus melanocephalus* at least 9.1% of the GB breeding population
  5 year mean, 1993-1997
- *Sterna albifrons* (Eastern Atlantic - breeding) 1.5% of the GB breeding population
  5 year mean, 1993-1997

Diagreements to Peat Level

Standard Nnace 2000 Data Form  

Page 2 of

Produced by NCC. Version 1.1. 05/05/06

35
4.3 Vulnerability

This site is vulnerable to coastal erosion, particularly the areas of coastal shingle at Dungeness and Rye Harbour, which are likely to erode in the longer term due to natural processes.

Breeding bird populations are at serious risk of predation by species such as fox, badger and mink. There is a localised programme of pest control on part of the site. The site is reasonably well protected from visitor disturbance, although the possible disturbance from aircraft using a nearby airfield is being investigated. Recreational and leisure activities are a problem in some areas, particularly at North Point Pit which is used for wind surfing. The area is zoned to try and control this activity.

Much of the shingle is uncultivated and is either nature reserve or open land. The site is vulnerable to changing agricultural practices, particularly ploughing of grassland for arable crops, or changes to turf production on adjacent land, which may influence the site’s bird population. These practices could be controlled by management agreements. Most of the grassland within the SPA is heavily grazed and there is a continuing problem of lowering water levels; both problems are being addressed through management agreements and water level management plans.

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>% cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hastings Cliffs SAC

NATURA 2000
STANDARD DATA FORM
FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:
1.1 Type  B  1.2 Site code  UK0030165
1.3 Compilation date  200103  1.4 Update  
1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites  
1.6 Respondent(s)  International Designations, JNCC, Peterborough
1.7 Site name  Hastings Cliffs

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date indication</th>
<th>Date of eligibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site proposed as SCI</td>
<td>200103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date confirmed as SCI</td>
<td>200412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date site classified as SPA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date site designated as SAC</td>
<td>200504</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Site location:
2.1 Site centre location
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Longitude (E)</th>
<th>Latitude (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>00 39 08 E</td>
<td>50 52 07 N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 Site area (ha)  183.72
2.3 Site length (km)  

2.5 Administrative region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUTS code</th>
<th>Region name</th>
<th>% cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK351</td>
<td>East Sussex</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.6 Biogeographic region

- Alpine
- Atlantic [X]
- Boreal
- Continental
- Macaronesia
- Mediterranean

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats

Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annex I Habitat</th>
<th>% cover</th>
<th>Representative</th>
<th>Relative</th>
<th>Conservation</th>
<th>Global</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hastings Cliffs
Natura 2000 Data Form  Page 1  Produced by JNCC. Version 2.1, 17/05/06
3.2 Annex II species

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species name</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Site assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>Migratory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breed</td>
<td>Winter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Site description

4.1 General site character

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat classes</th>
<th>% cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marine areas. Sea inlets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tidal rivers, Estuaries, Mud flats, Sand flats, Lagoons (including saltmarsh basins)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt marshes, Salt pastures, Salt steppes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal sand dunes, Sand beaches, Maclear</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shingle. Sea cliffs, Islets</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogs, Marshes, Water fringed vegetation, Fens</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath, Scrub, Bog, Musg, and garrigue, Phragmites</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry grassland, Steppes</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humid grassland, Mesophyte grassland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpine and sub-alpine grassland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved grassland</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other arable land</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad-leaved deciduous woodland</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coniferous woodland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evergreen woodland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed woodland</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland rocks, Scrags, Sands, Permanent snow and ice</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total habitat cover</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1 Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:
- Acidic, Clay, Mud, Neutral, Nutrient-poor, Nutrient-rich, Sand, Sandstone, Shingle

Geomorphology & landscape:
- Cliffs, Coastal, Crags/ledges, Hilly, Lowland, Slope, Valley

4.2 Quality and importance

Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts
- For which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.

4.3 Vulnerability

Hastings Cliffs is a short section of almost natural coastline of dramatic eroding cliffs. It is relatively unaffected by coastal protection and is dependent upon physical processes. The very nature of this soft eroding material results in expansive landslides, with vegetation changing from year to year. The effects on the rate of erosion by surrounding coastal protection measures and offshore activities is unknown but may have an impact. The SAC includes part of a country park where there are pressures to manage visitors. Habitats and footpaths erode rapidly, particularly during winter storms, as a result of the undulating nature of the cliffs with their soft constituents. Adjacent farming practices may also be having an effect on the vegetation.
5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>% cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK94 (SSSI/ASSE)</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS)

*Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7, as amended by Resolution VIII.15 of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.*

Note for compilers:
1. The RIS should be completed in accordance with the attached *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines for completing the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands*. Compilers are strongly advised to read this guidance before filling in the RIS.
2. Once completed, the RIS (and accompanying map(s)) should be submitted to the Ramsar Secretariat. Compilers are strongly urged to provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of maps.

## 1. Name and address of the compiler of this form:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and address of the compiler of this form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joint Nature Conservation Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monkstone House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peterborough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridgeshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE11JY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone/Fax: +44 (0)1733 - 562 626 / +44 (0)1733 - 555 948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:RIS@JNCC.gov.uk">RIS@JNCC.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

- Designated: 02 February 1999

## 3. Country:

- UK (England)

## 4. Name of the Ramsar site:

- Pevensey Levels

## 5. Map of site included:

Refer to Annex III of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines*, for detailed guidance on provision of suitable maps.

- a) hard copy (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): yes ✓ no
- b) digital (electronic) format (optional): Yes

## 6. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude):

- 50 50 30 N
- 00 20 32 E

## 7. General location:

Include in which part of the country and which large administrative region(s), and the location of the nearest large towns.

- Nearest town/city: Eastbourne
- Pevensey Levels is located on the Sussex coast between Eastbourne and Hastings.

### Administrative region:
- East Sussex

## 8. Elevation (average and/or max. & min.) (metres):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 9. Area (hectares):

- 3577.71

---

**Ramsar Information Sheet: UK1053**

Page 1 of 8

Produced by JNCC, Version 3.0, 01/01/2006
10. **Overview:**
Provide a short paragraph giving a summary description of the principal ecological characteristics and importance of the wetland.

Pevensey Levels is one of the largest and least-fragmented lowland wet grassland systems in southeast England. The low-lying grazing meadows are intersected by a complex system of ditches which support a variety of important wetland communities, including nationally rare and scarce aquatic plants and invertebrates. The site also supports a notable assemblage of breeding and wintering wildfowl. A small area of shingle and intertidal muds and sands is included within the site.

11. **Ramsar Criteria:**
Circle to underline each Criterion applied to the designation of the Ramsar site. See Annex II of the **Explanatory Notes and Guidelines** for the Criteria and guidelines for their application (adopted by Resolution VII.11).

2, 3

12. **Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 11. above:**
Provide justification for each Criterion in turn, clearly identifying to which Criterion the justification applies (see Annex II for guidance on acceptable forms of justification).

**Ramsar criterion 2**
The site supports an outstanding assemblage of wetland plants and invertebrates including many British Red Data Book species.

**Ramsar criterion 3**
The site supports 68% of vascular plant species in Great Britain that can be described as aquatic. It is probably the best site in Britain for freshwater molluscs, one of the five best sites for aquatic beetles Coleoptera and supports an outstanding assemblage of dragonflies Odonata.

See Sections 19/20 for details of noteworthy species

13. **Biogeography** (required when Criteria 1 and/or 3 and/or certain applications of Criterion 2 are applied to the designation):
Name the relevant biogeographic region that includes the Ramsar site, and identify the biogeographic regionalisation system that has been applied.

a) biogeographic region:
Atlantic

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

14. **Physical features of the site:**
Describe, as appropriate, the geology, geomorphology, origins - natural or artificial, hydrology, soil type, water quality, water depth, water permanence, fluctuations in water level, tidal variations, downstream area, general climate, etc.

<p>| Soil &amp; geology | basic, shingle, sand, mud, clay, alluvium, peat, nutrient-poor, sedimentary |
| Geomorphology and landscape | lowland, coastal, floodplain, shingle bar, open coast (including bay) |
| Nutrient status | eutrophic, mesotrophic |
| pH | circumneutral |
| Salinity | fresh |
| Soil | mainly mineral |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Water permanence</th>
<th>usually permanent, usually seasonal / intermittent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summary of main climatic features</td>
<td>Annual averages (Eastbourne, 1971–2000) (<a href="http://www.metoffice.com/climate/uk/averages/19712000/sites/eastbourne.html">www.metoffice.com/climate/uk/averages/19712000/sites/eastbourne.html</a>) Max. daily temperature: 13.7°C Min. daily temperature: 5.3°C Days of air frost: 15.9 Rainfall: 789.7 mm Hrs. of sunshine: 1848.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General description of the Physical Features:
No information available

15. Physical features of the catchment area:
Describe the surface area, general geology and geomorphological features, general soil types, general land use, and climate (including climate type).
No information available

16. Hydrological values:
Describe the functions and values of the wetland in groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilization, etc.
Shoreline stabilization and dissipation of erosive forces, Recharge and discharge of groundwater, Flood water storage / desynchronisation of flood peaks, Maintenance of water quality (removal of nutrients)

17. Wetland types
Inland wetland, Marine/coastal wetland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>% Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Sand / shingle shores (including dune systems)</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Freshwater lakes: permanent</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Seasonally flooded agricultural land</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Reservoirs / barrages / dams</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Canals and drainage channels</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>83.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. General ecological features:
Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site.

Pevensesy Levels supports a range of important communities of wetland flora and fauna. Various stages of succession are present in the ditches. Floating and submerged aquatic plants such as duckweeds Lemma spp., pondweeds Potamogeton spp. or water fern Azolla spp. represent the pioneer stages. These are followed by larger floating or emergent plants such as frogbit Hydrocharis morsus-ranae, bur-reed Sparganium erectum and arrow-head Sagittaria sagittifolia. Finally, common reed Phragmites australis or hardhorn Typha angustifolia becomes dominant. Left undredged, the ditches lose their diversity and varied structure. A rich bankside flora is also present on site. An area of shingle and intertidal muds and sands is another important component of the site. Some flora associated with the shingle is present. For example, yellow horned-poppy Glaucium flavum and sea squill Drimia maritima.

The site supports outstanding invertebrate populations and is a top site for Mollusca and aquatic Coleoptera. Over 15 species of dragonfly (Odonata) have been recorded, including several scarce
species. One of Britain's largest and rarest spiders, the fen raft spider *Dolomedes plantarius* has its stronghold at Pevensey.

The lowland wet grassland supports a variety of bird species. For example, wintering lapwing and snipe. Breeding bird species include sedge warblers, reed warblers which nest in the scrub and reeds in the ditches respectively.

19. **Noteworthy flora:**

Produce additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g. which species/comunities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc. Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.

**Nationally important species occurring on the site.**

**Higher Plants.**

*Alisma plantago-aquatica, Ceratophyllum demersum, Crambe maritima, Potamogeton acutifolius, Potamogeton crispus, Potamogeton trichoides, Sten lapathifolium, Stratiotes aloides*

20. **Noteworthy fauna:**

Produce additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g. which species/comunities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc., including counts. Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.

**Species Information**

**Nationally important species occurring on the site.**

**Invertebrates.**

*Segestria senegala, Antis verticillaris, Valvata nereis, Hydropsyche psenis, Gyraurus safranini, Elisomopus brevicollis, Boops spicatolila, Dolomedes plantarius, Atylus vanneus, Odontonyx armatus, Pterobella argyra, Pseudeadies zephyri, Limnopis picripes, Tipula marginata, Planocera costata*

Assemblage of International importance

The site supports an appreciable assemblage of rare, vulnerable or endangered species or sub-species of plant or animal. Pevensey Levels is probably one of the best sites in Great Britain for freshwater molluscs, one of the very best sites for aquatic Coleoptera and also supports an outstanding assemblage of Odonata.

21. **Social and cultural values:**

E.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological sites, social relations with the wetland, etc.

Distinguish between historical/archaeological/religious significance and current socio-economic values.

- Aesthetic
- Aquatic vegetation (e.g. reeds, willows, seaweed)
- Archaeological/historical site
- Environmental education/interpretation
- Livestock grazing
- Non-consumptive recreation
- Scientific research
- Sport fishing
- Sport hunting
- Tourism
- Traditional cultural
22. Land tenure/ownership:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ownership category</th>
<th>On-site</th>
<th>Off-site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-governmental organisation (NGO)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local authority, municipality etc.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public/communal</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23. Current land (including water) use:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>On-site</th>
<th>Off-site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature conservation</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current scientific research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing: recreational/sport</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arable agriculture (unspecified)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent arable agriculture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent pastoral agriculture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay meadows</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting: recreational/sport</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewage treatment/disposal</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flood control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic water supply</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24. Factors adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land (including water) use and development projects:

Explanation of reporting category:
1. Those factors that are still operating, but it is unclear if they are under control, as there is a lag in showing the management or regulatory regime to be successful.
2. Those factors that are not currently being managed, or where the regulatory regime appears to have been ineffective so far.

NA = Not Applicable because no factors have been reported.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adverse Factor Category</th>
<th>Reporting Category</th>
<th>Description of the problem (Newly reported Factors only)</th>
<th>On-Site</th>
<th>Off-Site</th>
<th>Major Impact?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction/invasion of non-native plant species</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollution – domestic sewage</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For category 2 factors only.

What measures have been taken / are planned / regulatory processes invoked, to mitigate the effect of these factors?

Introduction/invasion of non-native plant species - Floating pennywort Hydrocotyle ranunculoides: Strategy being worked up and research conducted into chemical treatment. Effective solution has not yet been found.
Crassula *Crassula helmsii*: Work currently being undertaken (October 2004) to remove *Crassula* by mechanical diggers.

Pollution – domestic sewage - Sewage Treatment Works: Phosphate-stripping has been introduced. Further study of pollution likely under the water company’s Asset Management Plan AMP4.

Is the site subject to adverse ecological change? **NO**

### 25. Conservation measures taken:

List national category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site; management practices, whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it is being implemented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conservation measure</th>
<th>On-site</th>
<th>Off-site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site/ Area of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI/ASSI)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Nature Reserve (NNR)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land owned by a non-governmental organisation for nature conservation</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management agreement</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site management statement/plan implemented</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 26. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

*e.g.* management plan in preparation, official proposal as a legally protected area, etc.

No information available

### 27. Current scientific research and facilities:

*E.g.* details of current research projects, including biodiversity monitoring, existence of a field research station, etc.

**Contemporary.**

A survey of *Dolomium plantarum* is shortly to be undertaken, repeating the one done in 1990 (Jones 1990), to monitor its status. The National Nature Reserve is comprehensively monitored by English Nature and the Sussex Wildlife Trust.

**Completed.**

Surveys of ditch flora, invertebrates, Odonata, Mollusca and Coleoptera have been carried out, as have routine river corridor surveys. Overwintering and breeding bird surveys have also been done by the RSPB. All these are likely to be repeated from time to time to monitor any changes.

### 28. Current conservation education:

*E.g.* visitor centre, observation hides and nature trails, information booklets, facilities for school visits, etc.

The National Nature Reserve Site Managers lead guided walks on the NNRs, and teach students from local Universities and Schools. East Sussex County Council also have programmes for site visits by the general public.

There are a few interpretive panels at Pevensey Castle.

**Future activities:** There are proposals for a nature trail and further interpretive panels on the less sensitive parts of the NNR. In the long term, an interpretive centre may be set up.

### 29. Current recreation and tourism:

State if the wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type(s) and their frequency/intensity.

Activities and facilities provided.
Land-based recreation:
Walking (including dog walking) and horse riding occur on the many public footpaths and bridleways. There is a golf course on the south-east corner. The roads within the site are used for recreational cycling. Two fields are used for the flying of radio-controlled model aircraft under time-limited conditions.

Water-based recreation:
The Wallers Haven is occasionally used for rowing training by a local school. All the major Havens are used for angling.

Hunting:
There is a beagle pack located on the site which regularly hunts hares. The site is also used for occasional fox hunting and by bloodhounds. Illegal hunting of hares, and taking of cubs also go on. A few owners have licences to shoot wildfowl.

Facilities provided:
The coastal area to the South of the Site has caravan parks and is used as a beach resort.

Seasonality:
Mainly during the summer months. Shooting is over winter.

30. Jurisdiction:
Include territorial, e.g. state/region, and functional/sectoral, e.g. Dept. of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment, etc.
Head, Nature 2000 and Ramsar Team, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, European Wildlife Division, Zone 1/07, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6EB

31. Management authority:
Provide the name and address of the local officer(s) or organisation(s) directly responsible for managing the wetland. Wherever possible provide also the title and or name of the person or persons in this office with responsibility for the wetland.
Site Designations Manager, English Nature, Sites and Surveillance Team, Northminster House, Northminster Road, Peterborough, PE1 1UA, UK

32. Bibliographical references:
Scientific-technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 13 above), list full reference citation for a scheme.

Site-relevant references
Dolley, AJF (1968) The Level and Port of Pevensey in the Middle Ages. Sussex Archaeological Collections, 104, 26-45
Hingley, MR (1979) The colonisation of newly-dug drainage channels on the Pevensey Levels (East Sussex), with special reference to gastropods. Journal of Conchology, 39, 105-122


Salzmann, LF (1910) The mining of Peversey Levels. Sussex Archaeological Collections, 53, 30-00


Please return to: Ramsar Secretariat, Rue Maneverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland
Telephone: +41 22 999 0170 • Fax: +41 22 999 0169 • email: ramsar@ramsar.org

Ramsar Information Sheet: UK11653 Page 5 of 5 Peversey Levels

Produced by NCC: Version 3.0, 05/05/2006
Ashdown Forest SAC

NATURA 2000
STANDARD DATA FORM
FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:
   1.1 Type K
   1.2 Site code UK0030808
   1.3 Compilation date 200103
   1.4 Update
   1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites
   UK 9 0 1 2 1 8 1
   1.6 Respondent(s) International Designations, JNCC, Peterborough
   1.7 Site name Ashdown Forest

   1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates
   - date site proposed as eligible as SCI 200103
   - date confirmed as SCI 200412
   - date site classified as SPA
   - date site designated as SAC 200504

2. Site location:
   2.1 Site centre location
   longitude latitude
   00 04 14 E 51 03 21 N
   2.2 Site area (ha) 2729
   2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUTS code</th>
<th>Region name</th>
<th>% cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK591</td>
<td>East Sussex</td>
<td>100.02%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.6 Biogeographic region
- Alpine
- Atlantic X
- Boreal
- Continental
- Macaronesia
- Mediterranean

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats
Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annex I habitat</th>
<th>% cover</th>
<th>Representative type</th>
<th>Relative surface</th>
<th>Conservation status</th>
<th>Global assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix</td>
<td>44.51</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European dry heaths</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ashdown Forest
Nature 2000 Data Form Page 1
Produced by JNCC. Version 2.1, 17/05/06
3.2 Annex II species

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species name</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Site assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>Migratory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breed</td>
<td>Winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triturus cristatus</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Site description

4.1 General site character

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat classes</th>
<th>% cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marine areas. Sea inlets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Pinygrass</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry grassland. Steppes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpine and sub-alpine grassland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved grassland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other arable land</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad-leaved deciduous woodland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coniferous woodland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evergreen woodland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed woodland</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland rocks. Scrées. Sands. Permanent snow and ice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total habitat cover</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1 Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:
- Acidic, Clay, Nutrient-poor, Sandstone

Geomorphology & landscape:
- Lowland

4.2 Quality and importance

Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*:
- for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.

European dry heaths
- for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.

*Triturus cristatus*:
- for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.
4.3 Vulnerability

Ashdown Forest is one of the most extensive areas of heathland in south-east England. The optimum management for this site is grazing, however, only approximately 19% of the SAC is grazed. Spread of scrub and bracken is a major threat to the SAC.

The majority of the SAC (including the grazed area) is managed sympathetically by the Conservators of Ashdown Forest but there is high demand on resources for scrub clearance, bracken mowing, etc., particularly in the ungrazed area. There is ongoing liaison with the Conservators and other land owners/managers to increase the area of grazed heathland. Obstacles to grazing include public opposition to fencing, availability of graziers/suitable livestock, and constraints on dog-walkers. In general, public access is not a threat to the SAC, unless it prevents expansion of the grazed area.

Also, possible long-term drying out of the site may take place, due to borehole extraction and transpiration from increase in vegetation cover. Consultations with the Environment Agency over the possible impact of extraction are ongoing. Recent increased scrub clearance is likely to have a beneficial effect on wet heath.

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>% cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ashdown Forest SPA

UK SPA data form

NATURA 2000

STANDARD DATA FORM

FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:
   1.1 Type J
   1.2 Site code UK9012181
   1.3 Compilation date 199603
   1.4 Update 199902
   1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites
       UK 00 10 05 0
   1.6 Respondent(s) International Designations, JNCC, Peterborough
   1.7 Site name Ashdown Forest

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates
   date site proposed as eligible as SCI
   date confirmed as SCI
   date site classified as SPA 199603
   date site designated as SAC

2. Site location:
   2.1 Site centre location
       longitude 00 04 12 E
       latitude 51 03 44 N
   2.2 Site area (ha) 3207.08
   2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUTS code</th>
<th>Region name</th>
<th>% cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK51</td>
<td>East Sussex</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.6 Biogeographic region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alpine</th>
<th>Atlantic</th>
<th>Boreal</th>
<th>Continental</th>
<th>Macaronesia</th>
<th>Mediterranean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats

Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annex I habitat</th>
<th>% cover</th>
<th>Representativeness</th>
<th>Relative surface</th>
<th>Conservation status</th>
<th>Global assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
3.2 Annex I birds and regularly occurring migratory birds not listed on Annex I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Species name</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Site assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>Migratory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Brand</td>
<td>Winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A224</td>
<td>Coperus europaenus</td>
<td>35 P</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A302</td>
<td>Sylvia undata</td>
<td>20 P</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Site description:

4.1 General site character

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat classes</th>
<th>% cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marine areas, Sea inlets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tidal rivers, Estuaries, Mud flats, Sand flats, Lagoons (including saltwork basins)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt marshes, Salt pastures, Salt steppes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal sand dunes, Sand beaches, Machair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shingle, Sea cliffs, Islets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogs, Marshes, Water fringed vegetation, Fen</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath, Scrub, Maquis and garigue, Phrygana</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry grassland, Steppes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humid grassland, Mesophile grassland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpine and sub-alpine grassland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved grassland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other arable land</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad-leaved deciduous woodland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coniferous woodland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evergreen woodland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed woodland</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, delicas)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland rocks, Scrags, Sands, Permanent snow and ice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total habitat cover</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1 Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:
Acidic, Clay, Nutrient-poor, Sand

Geomorphology & landscape:
Lowland

4.2 Quality and importance

**ARTICLE 4.1 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)**

During the breeding season the area regularly supports:

- *Coperus europaenus* 1% of the GB breeding population
  Count as at 1991 and 1992

- *Sylvia undata* 1.3% of the GB breeding population
  Count as at 1994

**ARTICLE 4.2 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)**

#Acknowledgements

Steadman Nature 2000 Data Form

Page 2 of

Produced by JNCC. Version 1.1, 05/05/96
4.3 Vulnerability

Lack of management is the main threat to the site. Succession from open heathland to woodland is rapidly taking place and a lack of resources makes appropriate and sustainable management difficult.

The majority of the site is managed by the Conservators of Ashdown Forest, who manage the site sympathetically and according to an agreed management plan. The key vulnerability is the lack of grazing which is now being addressed through a Grazing Strategy. Obstacles to grazing include the need for fencing, constraints on dog walkers and other forms of informal recreation, the availability of appropriate stock and the fragmentation of the heathland blocks within the site. The spread of invasive/non-native species, such as bracken and rhododendron, also poses a threat. The areas not under the Conservators' remit tend not to be grazed and have varying degrees of conservation management.

Most of the recreation on the site is informal, such as walking and horse riding. However, in places the use is intense creating damage to rights of way and disturbance to the Forest. Where possible these problems are being addressed through the Integrated Management Plan of the Conservators of Ashdown Forest and through a horse riding permit system.

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>% cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3 Maps
Appendix 4 Appropriate Assessment Screening Matrices
Screening Matrix for European Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name, location and summary of conservation objectives of European Site:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dungeness SAC (within the District Boundary):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Annual drift line vegetation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Perennial vegetation of stony banks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Populations of great crested newts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Area includes two shingle beaches, at Dungeness and Rye Harbour, which have a common origin, and the grazing marshes and arable land lying behind them. Also included is Pett Level grazing marshes, bounded by the Royal Military Canal to the west, the Pannel Valley wetlands and saltmarshes at the mouth of the River Rother. Many plant and animal species of restricted distribution occur here. The shingle system at Rye Harbour has similarities to that at Dungeness, though it is far less extensive. Many uncommon species are found associated with the shingle ridge habitats.

**Vulnerability:**

The shingle vegetation is very vulnerable to disturbance by vehicles and walkers, although the coastal shingle (drift-line) vegetation has much greater potential for recovery than the perennial vegetation of shingle banks that occurs further inland. Extensive areas of the site are now managed as a Nature Reserve at both Dungeness and Rye Harbour, with emphasis on interpretation of the site's value and on appropriate public access. A ranger helps to enforce local bylaws which aim to prevent damage from trampling, motorbike activity and illicit gravel extraction.

The wetlands which support great crested newt were formerly grazed, maintaining open unshaded vegetation. This practice largely ceased in the 1950s, and since then there has been invasion of ponds by willows shading the water. Management by hand has now been undertaken to reduce this problem, and restoration of light grazing is being investigated.

Abstraction of water is thought to have damaged some of the shingle wetlands as well as components of the perennial vegetation of the shingle beach. This will be addressed through the relevant review provisions of the Habitats Regulations. The site is close to an active airport which carries a potential risk from air pollution; although current levels of air traffic and motor vehicles are not thought to cause a problem.

**Are there other projects or plans together with the Core Strategy DPD that could affect Dungeness SAC?**

The Core Strategy seeks to protect coastal communities from flooding and manage risk, protect and manage the high quality ecology, support economic development, including leisure/tourism. For the Rye area (adjacent to the Site) the strategic objective is to improve learning and economic opportunities, support the Port of Rye and to manage development, tourism and traffic within and around the historic Citadel area. These two objectives together with the plans listed below could theoretically affect Dungeness SAC:
### Nature of Potential Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>How the Core Strategy DPD (alone or ‘in combination’) is likely to affect the European Site</th>
<th>AA</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Land Take</strong></td>
<td>The Core Strategy will not propose any development within the European site. The Shepway Local Plan does not propose any development within the Site.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>It can be concluded that there would be no significant effects from land take on the Site due to the Core Strategy in combination with any other plans or projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact on Protected Species outside the Protected Site</strong></td>
<td>The SAC is designated for great crested newts that breed in ponds but spend much of their lives on land, sometimes venturing several hundred metres from the pond. Their populations are often dependent on there being several ponds close together, linked by suitable land habitats. Dungeness SAC contains a large number of waterbodies within its 2,000 ha. This extensive site hosts a large and viable great crested newt population in a range of natural and anthropogenic habitats. These include natural pools and those resulting from gravel extraction and other activities. Terrestrial habitat of importance for feeding and shelter is provided by a range of open shingle vegetation with scrub in the vicinity of some of the waterbodies. The strategic objective for the Rye area is one of small scale development to boost learning and economic opportunities supporting the Port of Rye and managing tourism and traffic. Development would primarily be focused within the Development Boundary and Employment Area (as indicated on the Proposals Map) where practicable, though these boundaries may be reviewed during the development of the Spatial Strategy for Rye. Both the development boundary and the employment boundary are within several hundred metres of the SAC and therefore it cannot be concluded at this stage that no proposed development site has the potential to support great crested newts and therefore Appropriate Assessment would be required.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Both the development boundary and the employment boundary are within several hundred metres of the SAC and therefore it cannot be concluded at this stage that no proposed development site has the potential to support great crested newts and therefore Appropriate Assessment would be required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
several hundred metres of the SAC and therefore it cannot be concluded at this stage that no proposed development site has the potential to support great crested newts and therefore Appropriate Assessment would be required.

| **Recreational Pressure & Disturbance** | The shingle vegetation is very vulnerable to disturbance by vehicles and walkers though the Nature Reserves in place on the site focuses emphasis on interpretation of the site's value and on appropriate public access. A ranger helps to enforce local bylaws which aim to prevent damage from trampling, motorbike activity and illicit gravel extraction.

The Core Strategy does not propose a significant quantity of new dwellings in the eastern side of the District and so the likely additional visitor numbers generated through the new development is not thought to constitute significant recreational pressure or disturbance, particularly given that the site is managed for appropriate public access and has a ranger to enforce this. However it is not possible to conclude categorically that there will be no additional recreational pressure and disturbance and therefore Appropriate Assessment is recommended. |
| --- | It is not thought that the small-scale new development proposed for the eastern side of the District will give rise to a significant effect on recreational pressure or disturbance on this site; however in line with Natural England advice and the 'precautionary principle' Appropriate Assessment is screened in. |

| **Water Quality and Quantity** | The site is sensitive to changes in water flows and levels. The majority of licensed abstraction within the Rother catchment is for purposes of public water supply (78%). Approximately 60% of water abstracted in the catchment is drawn from groundwater sources and the remaining 40% from surface water. Abstraction of water is thought to have damaged some of the shingle wetlands as well as components of the perennial vegetation of the shingle beach. It is believed that there has been over abstraction in the River Rother. It is thought that the Core Strategy in combination with the Shepway Local Plan and the Ashford Local Plan could place additional demand for water abstraction and wastewater treatment on the area and could potentially affect water quantity and quality. Furthermore there are known issues of contamination and pollution of controlled waters identified by the Environment Agency. |
| --- | There is potential for the Core Strategy in combination with the Shepway and Ashford Local Plans to give rise to potentially significant effects on the water quality and quantity of the Site. |

| **Changes in Pollution** | The site is close to an active airport which carries a potential risk from air pollution; although current levels of air traffic and motor vehicles are not |
| --- | The proposals for development in the area in proximity to the Site may |
Levels | thought to cause a problem. New development proposals for the eastern side of the District including the Rye area adjacent to the Site would be relatively small scale and are consequently not thought to significantly contribute to increased traffic levels in the area or give rise to significant changes in air pollution levels on their own but may have potential for in-combination effects with development proposed in Shepway District.

---

| Name, location and summary of conservation objectives of European Site:

**Dungeness to Pett Level SPA and proposed Ramsar Site (within the District Boundary):**

- Breeding and wintering waterbirds (SPA & proposed Ramsar)
- Passage warblers and breeding terns, which feed outside the SPA in nearby shallow waters
- Bewick’s Swans
- Wetland that comprises mosaic of habitats including shingle ridge beaches, artificial lake, grazing marshes, intertidal sands and mudflats (proposed Ramsar)

The Dungeness to Pett Level SPA has been designated under the EU Birds Directive as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the Great Britain population of four Annex I species (Bewick’s swan, common tern, little tern and Mediterranean gull) and as it is used regularly by wintering shoveler. In addition, the site supports nationally important numbers of gadwall, pochard, sanderling, little grebe, cormorant, coot, smew, little stint and ruff. Consideration is currently being given to including the aquatic warbler as a designated feature of the SPA. The wetland habitats of the Pannel Valley provide a stopover for this species on its autumn migration to Africa. Up to 20 individuals have been recorded, making this the most important site for the species in the UK.

**Vulnerability:**

This site is vulnerable to coastal erosion, particularly the areas of coastal shingle at Dungeness and Rye Harbour, which are likely to erode in the longer term due to natural processes. Breeding bird populations are at serious risk of predation by species such as fox, badger and mink. There is a localised programme of pest control on part of the site. The site is reasonably well protected from visitor disturbance, although the possible disturbance from aircraft using a nearby airfield is being investigated.

Recreational and leisure activities are a problem in some areas, particularly at Northpoint Pit which is used for wind surfing. The area is zoned to try and control this activity. Much of the shingle is uncultivated and is either nature reserve or open land. The site is vulnerable to changing agricultural practices, particularly ploughing of grassland for arable crops, or changes to turf production on adjacent land, which may influence the site’s bird population. These practices could be controlled by management agreements. Most of the grassland within the...
SPA is heavily grazed and there is a continuing problem of lowering water levels; both problems are being addressed through management agreements and water level management plans.

**Are there other projects or plans together with the Core Strategy DPD that could affect Dungeness to Pett Level SPA?**

The Core Strategy seeks to protect coastal communities from flooding and manage risk, protect and manage the high quality ecology, support economic development, including leisure/tourism. For the Rye area (adjacent to the Site) the strategic objective is to improve learning and economic opportunities, support the Port of Rye and to manage development, tourism and traffic within and around the historic Citadel area. These two objectives together with the plans listed below could theoretically affect Dungeness to Pett Level SPA:

- Environment Agency Catchment Flood Management Plan: Rother and Romney (in progress)
- Rother Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy
- Shepway Local Plan
- Ashford Borough Local Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Potential Impact</th>
<th>How the Core Strategy DPD (alone or ‘in combination’) is likely to affect the European Site</th>
<th>AA</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Take</td>
<td>The Core Strategy will not propose any development within the European site. The Shepway Local Plan does not propose any development within the Site. Therefore development will not result in the direct fragmentation of habitats.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>It can be concluded that there would be no significant effects from land take on the Site due to the Core Strategy in combination with any other plans or projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on Protected Species outside the Protected Site</td>
<td>It is possible that Bewick swans, passage warblers and breeding terns will forage outside the protected site and therefore the impacts on these protected species cannot at this stage be ruled out.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Appropriate Assessment is required to determine whether there will be significant adverse effects on species that forage outside the protected site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational Pressure &amp; Disturbance</td>
<td>Increasing the dwelling stock in the District by nearly 6,000 dwellings could increase demand for countryside recreation. Within the District the SPA is predominantly within the Rye Harbour Nature Reserve, with a small area to the west of Winchelsea being in</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>It is not considered that the level of public use of the SPA would greatly increase as a result of the Core Strategy. Notwithstanding the current pressures at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Water Quality and Quantity</strong></td>
<td>There is a continuing problem of lowering water levels in the SPA and additional pressures from increased water demand could exacerbate the situation. The development proposed by the Core Strategy in combination with development proposed through the Shepway and Ashford Local Plans could potentially give rise to significant adverse impacts on the SPA.</td>
<td>Northpoint pit which are significantly exaggerated by the high level of tourism at Camber, it is not thought the additional development proposed by the core Strategy would exacerbate this. However in line with Natural England advice and the ‘precautionary principle’ Appropriate Assessment is screened in.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Changes in Pollution Levels** | Deposition of atmospheric pollutants as well as exposure to high concentrations of pollutants represents a significant threat to sensitive ecosystems. In particular, nitrogen deposition and elevated concentrations of ground-level ozone are priority concerns. The SPA in places runs very close to the A259 – the main link road between Hastings and Rye, which is known for congestion issues particularly in the summer when visitor numbers are high. The proposed development identified in the Core Strategy would not be significant in the eastern side of the District and is not considered to give rise to significant rises in traffic levels and atmospheric pollution on its own but may have potential for in-combination effects with development. | The proposals for development in the area may in-combination with Shepway District have potential for significant effects on air pollution. |
Name, location and summary of conservation objectives of European Site:

**Pevensey Levels Ramsar Site (within the District Boundary):**
- An outstanding assemblage of wetland plants and invertebrates including many British Red Data Book species
- 68% of vascular plant species in Great Britain that can be described as aquatic.
- It is probably the best site in Britain for freshwater molluscs, one of the five best sites for aquatic beetles and supports an outstanding assemblage of dragonflies

**Vulnerability:**
Inland, grazing marshes are being damaged by poor water management, low water levels have resulted in the habitat drying out, preventing wading birds from feeding their young.

Are there other projects or plans together with the Core Strategy DPD that could affect Pevensey Levels Ramsar Site?

The Core Strategy proposes that Bexhill fulfils a strategic housing and employment role, linked to new infrastructure and green space, and supporting a more balanced demographic profile, within an integrated approach to the economic regeneration. This objective together with the non-Statutory Wealden Local Plan could potentially affect the integrity of this Site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Potential Impact</th>
<th>How the Core Strategy DPD (alone or ‘in combination’) is likely to affect the European Site</th>
<th>AA</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Land Take</strong></td>
<td>The Core Strategy does not propose any development within the Pevensey Levels Ramsar site neither does the non-Statutory Wealden Local Plan.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Neither Plan proposes development within the Ramsar Site and so no land-take is required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact on Protected Species outside the Protected Site</strong></td>
<td>The Site is probably the best site in Britain for freshwater molluscs, one of the five best sites for aquatic beetle Coleoptera and supports an outstanding assemblage of dragonflies Odonata. This together with an outstanding assemblage of wetland plants and invertebrates including many British Red Data Book species provides the justification for the Ramsar notification. Development proposed through the Core Strategy</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Due to the relatively localised territory of the species important for the integrity of the site (water beetles, dragonflies, molluscs, flies and craneflies, hairy dragonfly, white-legge damselfly, variable damselfly and fen raft spider) it...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and the non-Statutory Wealden Local Plan will not have a significant impact on the species important to the integrity of the site. No development is proposed that directly abuts the site or falls within the territorial range of the identified species.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recreational Pressure &amp; Disturbance</th>
<th>Due to the main interest of this RAMSAR site being aquatic invertebrates and plants found in the waterways and ditches it is not thought that additional visitor numbers would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Land-based recreation:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Due to the main interest of this RAMSAR site being aquatic invertebrates and plants found in the waterways and ditches it is not thought that additional visitor numbers would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking (including dog walking) and horse riding occur on the many public footpaths and bridleways.</td>
<td><strong>Due to the main interest of this RAMSAR site being aquatic invertebrates and plants found in the waterways and ditches it is not thought that additional visitor numbers would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a golf course on the south-east corner. The roads within the site are used for recreational cycling. Two fields are used for the flying of radio-controlled model aircraft under time-limited conditions.</td>
<td><strong>Due to the main interest of this RAMSAR site being aquatic invertebrates and plants found in the waterways and ditches it is not thought that additional visitor numbers would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water based recreation:</td>
<td><strong>Due to the main interest of this RAMSAR site being aquatic invertebrates and plants found in the waterways and ditches it is not thought that additional visitor numbers would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wallers Haven is occasionally used for rowing training by a local school. All the major Havens are used for angling.</td>
<td><strong>Due to the main interest of this RAMSAR site being aquatic invertebrates and plants found in the waterways and ditches it is not thought that additional visitor numbers would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting:</td>
<td><strong>Due to the main interest of this RAMSAR site being aquatic invertebrates and plants found in the waterways and ditches it is not thought that additional visitor numbers would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a beagle pack located on the site which regularly hunts hares. The site is also used for occasional fox hunting and by bloodhounds. Illegal hunting of hare and taking of eels also go on. A few owners have licences to shoot wildfowl.</td>
<td><strong>Due to the main interest of this RAMSAR site being aquatic invertebrates and plants found in the waterways and ditches it is not thought that additional visitor numbers would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities provided:</td>
<td><strong>Due to the main interest of this RAMSAR site being aquatic invertebrates and plants found in the waterways and ditches it is not thought that additional visitor numbers would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The coastal area to the South of the Site has caravan parks and is used as a beach resort.</td>
<td><strong>Due to the main interest of this RAMSAR site being aquatic invertebrates and plants found in the waterways and ditches it is not thought that additional visitor numbers would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasonality:</td>
<td><strong>Due to the main interest of this RAMSAR site being aquatic invertebrates and plants found in the waterways and ditches it is not thought that additional visitor numbers would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainly during the summer months. Shooting is over winter.</td>
<td><strong>Due to the main interest of this RAMSAR site being aquatic invertebrates and plants found in the waterways and ditches it is not thought that additional visitor numbers would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Core Strategy is seeking to focus the majority of development in and around Bexhill, with one strategic location already being identified to the north east of Bexhill for approximately 1,000 dwellings and further work necessary to identify land for an another approximate 2,500 dwellings over the 20 year Plan period. It cannot be satisfactorily argued that this amount of development will have no adverse effects on</td>
<td><strong>Due to the main interest of this RAMSAR site being aquatic invertebrates and plants found in the waterways and ditches it is not thought that additional visitor numbers would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the integrity of the Ramsar site; therefore AA is screened in at this stage.

| Water Quality and Quantity | Inland, grazing marshes are being damaged by poor water management, low water levels have resulted in the habitat drying out, preventing wading birds from feeding their young. The Pevensey Levels are also very vulnerable to nutrient pollution from wastewaters. The Core Strategy has the potential in combination with the Wealden Local Plan to place additional pressure on the water quality and quantity of the Levels. Any development of a strategic scale identified for the west of Bexhill could be at risk of adversely affecting the water quality as this area is within the catchment area for the Levels. Pressure for expansion in and around Hailsham on the edge of the Levels could increase the likelihood of in combination effects. Both Plans would place additional demands on wastewater treatment and this has implications for water quality in the Levels. |
| Changes in Pollution Levels | Ramsar wetland sites are susceptible to air pollution. Concentrations in air and deposition of particles onto vegetation can damage the vegetation directly or affect plant health and productivity. Deposition of pollutants to the ground and vegetation can alter the characteristics of the soil, affecting the pH and nitrogen availability that can then affect plant health and productivity and species composition. Road transport |
| It cannot be concluded that the Core Strategy will not have a significant adverse effect on the water quality and quantity. The Environment Agency has an important role in regulating proposals for wastewater treatment and drainage. They are also governed by the Habitats Directive, and the Urban Wastewater Directive. The quality of water released from wastewater treatment works is also a matter for regulation by the EA. There is also a general requirement to implement SuDS where practicable and for new development to be linked to demand management and increasing efficiency of water use. These aspects may go some way to mitigating the negative effects on water quality and quantity of the Levels but cannot at this stage be sufficient to conclude that there would be no significant adverse effects of the Plan in combination with the development proposed through the Wealden Plan. | It cannot be guaranteed that significant new development at Bexhill would not add to traffic levels and air pollution levels along this route and that this in turn would not adversely affect the Ramsar site. |
emits a number of air pollutants including oxides of nitrogen, volatile organic compounds, ammonia, heavy metals and particulates.

The A259 (Pevensey to Bexhill stretch) dissects the Pevensey Levels Ramsar site and traffic levels have been near to the normal upper limit for a single carriageway since 1994 when proposals were put forward to dual the carriageway. It cannot therefore be concluded that significant new development at Bexhill would not add to traffic levels along this route and consequently to air pollution levels and that the increase in pollution levels would not adversely affect the Ramsar site.

Name, location and summary of conservation objectives of European Site:
Hastings Cliffs SAC (less than 5km from District boundary):
- Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom

Vulnerability:
Hastings Cliffs is a short section of almost natural coastline of dramatic eroding cliffs. It is relatively unaffected by coastal protection and is dependent upon physical processes. The very nature of this soft eroding material results in extensive landslides, with vegetation changing from year to year. The effects on the rate of erosion by surrounding coastal protection measures and offshore activities are unknown but may have an impact. The SAC includes part of a country park where there are pressures to manage visitors. Habitats and footpaths erode rapidly, particularly during winter storms, as a result of the undulating nature of the cliffs with their soft constituents. Adjacent farming practices may also be having an effect on the vegetation.

Are there other projects or plans together with the Core Strategy DPD that could affect Hastings Cliffs SAC?
The Core Strategy aim for the coastal areas is to protect coastal communities from flooding and manage risk, protect and manage the high quality ecology, support economic development, including leisure/tourism. It is not thought the Core Strategy alone would necessarily significantly adversely affect the integrity of the Hastings Cliff SAC. The Core Strategy may, in combination with the Hastings Local Plan and the South Foreland to Beachy Head Shoreline Management Plan have the potential for adverse effects on the Site.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Potential Impact</th>
<th>How the Core Strategy DPD (alone or ‘in combination’) is likely to affect the European Site</th>
<th>AA</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Take</td>
<td>Neither the Core Strategy nor the Hastings Borough Plan proposes any development that would result in taking land from Hastings Cliffs or its country park setting.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>There are no policies in the Core Strategy or other plans that would directly impact on the Site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on Protected Species outside the Protected Site</td>
<td>The site is important for its flora, it contains three valleys cut into the strata, which support woodland and scrub habitats with an unusual ‘Atlantic’ bryophyte flora. Closer to the sea the maritime influence stunts the trees, but other bryophytes become important here, with one species, Lophocolea fragrans, at its only south-east England locality. Maritime scrub and coastal heathland are found closer to the cliff edge, with grassland supporting maritime species such as thrift Armeria maritime. Whilst the site supports a variety of fauna some of which may be protected, the site is designated for the flora which is well contained within the Site which is contained within the country park, and therefore it is not considered that the Plan in combination with any other plans would impact upon the protected species outside the protected site.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>There are no species, listed as important to the integrity of the site, that travel to forage outside the site and therefore there is not likely to be a significant effect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational Pressure &amp; Disturbance</td>
<td>The SAC includes part of a country park where there are pressures to manage visitors. Habitats and footpaths erode rapidly, particularly during winter storms, as a result of the undulating nature of the cliffs with their soft constituents. It would not be possible to conclude that the development proposed to be delivered through the Core Strategy in combination with the Hastings Borough Plan would not add to visitor numbers and pressure for the country park and the integrity of the Site.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Pressures to manage visitors is identified in the JNCC citation for the site under the vulnerabilities section, therefore considering the precautionary principle approach it is possible that the Core Strategy in combination with the Hastings Borough Plan could add to recreational pressure and disturbance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Quality and Quantity</td>
<td>The site contains three valleys cut into the strata, which support woodland and scrub habitats with an unusual ‘Atlantic’ bryophyte flora. Changes to flood frequency may have an effect on habitats in this location but this will be confined to the valley floors. The South Foreland</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>The Site vulnerabilities in relation to water issues primarily stem from the actions of the sea and the ongoing process of coastal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Beachy Head Shoreline Management Plan states the implication of the Plan on nature conservation for this particular area (Fairlight Cove west to Hastings) is: “the continued erosion of the cliffs maintains the biological and geological assets” (SMP 2006). The SMP policy for this area is one of no active intervention and this policy is deemed to be sustainable over the timescale of the Plan (to 2105) particularly in regard to the biological and geological assets. It is therefore concluded that as the Site is mainly susceptible to water issues from seaward activity (coastal erosion and flooding) that the Core Strategy in combination with the Hastings Borough Plan and SMP would not be likely to give rise to significant adverse effects on the water quality and quantity that would affect the integrity of the Site.

| Changes in Pollution Levels | The orientation and coastal position of the cliffs mean that they are exposed to the onshore south-westerly prevailing winds; localised air quality issues from nearby traffic are therefore not likely to affect the site. It is not thought that the Core Strategy either alone or in combination with other plans would have a significant affect on air pollution levels in the area surrounding the site or that any such increases would adversely affect the integrity of the Site. | The site is not particularly vulnerable to air pollution from nearby traffic sources given the prevailing onshore south-westerly winds. The Core Strategy proposes very little development in the eastern side of the District, particularly so in the rural areas. Therefore it can be concluded that the Core Strategy alone or in combination with the Hastings Borough Plan is not likely to give rise to significant changes in pollution levels and furthermore that for the majority of the time the air affecting the Site is coming across the sea. |
Name, location and summary of conservation objectives of European Site:

- Ashdown Forest SAC (15km from Rother boundary):
  - Northern Atlantic wet heaths
  - European dry heaths

Vulnerability:

Ashdown Forest is one of the most extensive areas of heathland in south-east England. The optimum management for this site is grazing; however, only approximately 19% of the SAC is grazed. Spread of scrub and bracken is a major threat to the SAC. The majority of the SAC (including the grazed area) is managed sympathetically by the Conservators of Ashdown Forest but there is high demand on resources for scrub clearance, bracken mowing, etc., particularly in the ungrazed area. There is ongoing liaison with the Conservators and other land owners/managers to increase the area of grazed heathland. Obstacles to grazing include public opposition to fencing, availability of graziers/suitable livestock, and constraints on dog-walkers. In general, public access is not a threat to the SAC, unless it prevents expansion of the grazed area.

Also, possible long-term drying out of the site may take place, due to borehole extraction and transpiration from increase in vegetation cover. Consultations with the Environment Agency over the possible impact of extraction are ongoing. Recent increased scrub clearance is likely to have a beneficial effect on wet heath.

Are there other projects or plans together with the Core Strategy DPD that could affect Ashdown Forest SAC?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Potential Impact</th>
<th>How the Core Strategy DPD (alone or ‘in combination’) is likely to affect the European Site</th>
<th>AA Required</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Take</td>
<td>There is no land take in Ashdown Forest associated with the Core Strategy</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>The Core Strategy would not result in a requirement for land take in the Ashdown Forest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on Protected Species outside the Protected Site</td>
<td>The Site is 15km from the District boundary at the closest point, it is therefore concluded that there would be no impact on protected species that may forage outside the site designation boundary.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Due to the distance of the site from the District boundary (and even greater distance to the strategic development hub of the District) it is not thought that</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Recreational Pressure & Disturbance | Ashdown Forest has a wide recreational catchment area: people come to visit from far away. The increased housing proposed for the South East region could thus generally increase visitor levels at the site. Ashdown Forest is roughly 15km from Rother’s boundary at the closest point. There are no large settlements on the border, nor are any planned as a result of the Rother Core Strategy. Nevertheless, Ashdown Forest has a larger visitor catchment area than the Thames Basin Heaths (the subject of recent ruling over recreational impacts of new development), so strategic level development at Bexhill resulting from the Core Strategy could potentially affect Ashdown Forest.

A tourist survey of Ashdown Forest carried out by Tourism South East in summer 2004 found that, of 218 visitors surveyed, 72% were day visitors from outside the forest area. However the number of these visitors that came from the Rother area was very small. This suggests that the new housing proposed by the Rother Strategy is unlikely to have a significant impact on Ashdown Forest. | It is not considered that the level of public use of Ashdown Forest would not significantly increase as a result of the Rother Core Strategy alone or in combination with other plans and that there will therefore be no likely significant effects on the Site. |
| Water Quality and Quantity | The Ashdown Forest requires a balanced hydrological regime to maintain the wet heath. The citation indicates possible long-term drying out of the site may take place, due to borehole extraction and transpiration from increase in vegetation cover. Consultations with the Environment Agency over the possible impact of extraction are ongoing. The Appropriate Assessment of the South East Plan however does not identify water quantity or quality as an issue for the Ashdown Forest nor does it identify water as an area of possible impact. This, coupled with the distance from the Rother boundary, leads to the conclusion that the Rother Core Strategy alone or in combination with the Wealden Non-Statutory Local Plan is not likely to give rise to significant adverse effects on the Ashdown Forest. | Water quality and quantity is not identified as a significant issue for the Ashdown Forest. Given this and the distance of Ashdown Forest from the Rother boundary leads to the conclusion that the Core Strategy alone or in combination with other plans is not likely to give result in significant impacts on the site. |
Changes in Pollution Levels

Acid deposition, nitrogen deposition and ozone are particular problems for the South East. Motor vehicles are key contributors to all of these issues. Eutrophication of sensitive habitats through atmospheric deposition is a widely acknowledged phenomenon. In well managed sites, the effects of Eutrophication may to some extent be counteracted through an increase in grazing pressure and Ashdown Forest is a successful example of this technique. As the Site is 15km away from the Rother boundary and due to the Core Strategy focussing on Bexhill to fulfil a strategic housing and employment role, linked to new infrastructure and green space it is not thought that the Core Strategy alone or in combination would contribute significantly to changes in air pollution levels on the site.

Name, location and summary of conservation objectives of European Site:

- **Ashdown Forest SPA (15km from Rother boundary):**
  
  During the breeding season;
  
  - Dartford Warbler Sylvia undata, 29 pairs representing at least 1.8% of the breeding population in Great Britain (Count as at 1994)
  - Nightjar Caprimulgus europaeus, 35 pairs representing at least 1.0% of the breeding population in Great Britain (Two year mean, 1991 & 1992)

Vulnerability:

Lack of management is the main threat to the site. Succession from open heathland to woodland is rapidly taking place and a lack of resources makes appropriate and sustainable management difficult. The majority of the site is managed by the Conservators of Ashdown Forest, who manage the site sympathetically and according to an agreed management plan. The key vulnerability is the lack of grazing which is now being addressed through a Grazing Strategy. Obstacles to grazing include the need for fencing, constraints on dog walkers and other forms of informal recreation, the availability of appropriate stock and the fragmentation of the heathland blocks within the site. The spread of invasive/non-native species, such as bracken and rhododendron, also poses a threat. The areas not under the Conservators remit tend not to be grazed and have varying degrees of conservation management.

Most of the recreation on the site is informal, such as walking and horse riding. However, in places the use is intense resulting in damage to rights of way and disturbance to the Forest. Where possible these problems are being addressed through the Integrated Management Plan of...
the Conservators of Ashdown Forest and through a horse riding permit system.

Are there other projects or plans together with the Core Strategy DPD that could affect Ashdown Forest SPA?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Potential Impact</th>
<th>How the Core Strategy DPD (alone or ‘in combination’) is likely to affect the European Site</th>
<th>AA Required</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Take</td>
<td>There is no land take in Ashdown Forest associated with the Core Strategy</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>The Core Strategy would not result in a requirement for land take in the Ashdown Forest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on Protected Species outside the Protected Site</td>
<td>The Site is 15km from the District boundary at the closest point, it is therefore concluded that there would be no impact on protected species that may forage outside the site designation boundary.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Due to the distance of the site from the District boundary (and even greater distance to the strategic development hub of the District) it is not thought that there would be a significant impact on protected species that may forage outside the site designation boundary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational Pressure &amp; Disturbance</td>
<td>Ashdown Forest has a wide recreational catchment area; people come to visit from far away. The increased housing proposed for the South East region could thus generally increase visitor levels at the site. Ashdown Forest is roughly 15km from Rother's boundary at the closest point. There are no large settlements on the border, nor are any planned as a result of the Rother Core Strategy. Nevertheless, Ashdown Forest has a larger visitor catchment area than the Thames Basin Heaths (the subject of recent ruling over recreational impacts of new development), so strategic level development at Bexhill resulting from the Core Strategy could potentially affect Ashdown Forest. A tourist survey of Ashdown Forest carried out by Tourism South East in summer 2004 found that, of 218 visitors surveyed, 72% were day</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>It is not considered that the level of public use of Ashdown Forest would not significantly increase as a result of the Rother Core Strategy alone or in combination with other plans and that there will therefore be no likely significant effects on the Site.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
visitors from outside the forest area. However the number of these visitors that came from the Rother area was very small. This suggests that the new housing proposed by the Rother Strategy is unlikely to have a significant impact on Ashdown Forest.

### Water Quality and Quantity

The Ashdown Forest requires a balanced hydrological regime to maintain the wet heath. The citation indicates possible long-term drying out of the site may take place, due to borehole extraction and transpiration from increase in vegetation cover. Consultations with the Environment Agency over the possible impact of extraction are ongoing. The Appropriate Assessment of the South East Plan however does not identify water quantity or quality as an issue for the Ashdown Forest nor does it identify water as an area of possible impact. This, coupled with the distance from the Rother boundary, leads to the conclusion that the Rother Core Strategy alone or in combination with the Wealden Non-Statutory Local Plan is not likely to give rise to significant adverse effects on the Ashdown Forest.

### Changes in Pollution Levels

Acid deposition, nitrogen deposition and ozone are particular problems for the South East. Motor vehicles are key contributors to all of these issues. Eutrophication of sensitive habitats through atmospheric deposition is a widely acknowledged phenomenon. In well managed sites, the effects of Eutrophication may to some extent be counteracted through an increase in grazing pressure and Ashdown Forest is a successful example of this technique. As the Site is 15km away from the Rother boundary and due to the Core Strategy focussing on Bexhill to fulfil a strategic housing and employment role, linked to new infrastructure and green space it is not thought that the Core Strategy alone or in combination would contribute significantly to changes in air pollution levels on the site.

| Water Quality and Quantity | X | Water quality and quantity is not identified as a significant issue for the Ashdown Forest. Given this and the distance of Ashdown Forest from the Rother boundary leads to the conclusion that the Core Strategy alone or in combination with other plans is not likely to give result in significant impacts on the site. |
| Changes in Pollution Levels | X | As the site is not in close proximity to the proposed major development area, it is not considered that there is likely to be any significant impact on the nature conservation interests from the Core Strategy alone or in conjunction with other plans. |