**Habitats Regulations Assessment**

**Screening of Development Proposals to determine their likely significant effect on a European site under the Conservation of Natural Habitats, &c Regulations 1994**

**Background**

Hull City Council (HCC) is proposing a STRATEGY covering the City of Hull. As the competent authority, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, HCC must undertake a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening opinion to determine whether a plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on any European (Special Areas of Conservation or Special Protection Area) or International (RAMSAR) site designated for environmental conservation purposes, and hence whether or not an Appropriate Assessment is required.

**1. Details of proposal**

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| **Name (Project):** | Hull City Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy |
| **Location:** | **Citywide** |
| **Reference:** | |
| **Description of proposal:** To comply with the requirements of the Flood and Water Management Act, 2010, Hull City Council as Lead Local Flood Authority must produce a strategy to identify how flood risk will be managed in the city. | |

**2. Name of European site affected by the application and current designation status, including name of component SSSI (if relevant)**

HCC has identified the following sites which fall within or partly within 15km of the development footprint, which any HRA will need to take into account as part of the assessment:

| Site Name | Designation | Distance from Development Proposal |
|---|---|---|
| **River Humber** | **SSSI, SAC, SPA, Ramsar** | **Adjacent – approximately 8km (Max)** |

**3. Features of European qualifying interest, whether priority or non-priority; and conservation objectives for qualifying interests.**

**SAC Qualifying Features**

| Qualifying Features | Conservation Objectives |
|---|---|
| **Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site:**<br>• Estuaries<br>• Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide<br><br>**Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site:**<br>• Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time<br>• Coastal lagoons * Priority feature<br>• *Salicornia* and other annuals colonising mud and sand<br>• Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-* | **Avoid the deterioration of the qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species, and the significant disturbance of those qualifying species, ensuring the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes a full contribution to achieving Favourable Conservation Status of each of the qualifying features.**<br><br>**Subject to natural change, to maintain or restore:**<br>The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species;<br>The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats and |

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| *Puccinellietalia maritimae*)<br>• Embryonic shifting dunes<br>• Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* (`white dunes`)<br>• Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation (`grey dunes`) * Priority feature<br>• Dunes with *Hippophae rhamnoides*<br><br>**Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection**<br>• Sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*<br>• River lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis*<br>• Grey seal *Halichoerus grypus* | habitats of qualifying species;<br>The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species rely;<br>The populations of qualifying species;<br>The distribution of qualifying species within the site. |

**SPA Qualifying Features**

| Qualifying Features | Conservation Objectives |
|---|---|
| **Article 4.1 Qualification (79/409/EEC) during the breeding season the area regularly supports:**<br>Great bittern *Botaurus stellaris*<br>Eurasian marsh *harrier Circus aeruginosus*<br>Pied avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*<br>Little tern *Sterna albifrons*<br><br>**Over winter the area regularly supports:**<br>Great bittern *Botaurus stellaris*<br>Hen harrier *Circus cyaneus*<br>Bar-tailed *godwit Limosa lapponica*<br>European golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria*<br>Pied avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*<br><br>**On passage the area regularly supports:**<br>Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*<br><br>**Article 4.2 Qualification (79/409/EEC)**<br>**Over winter the area regularly supports:**<br>Dunlin *Calidris alpina alpina*<br>Red knot *Calidris canutus*<br>Black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa islandica*<br>Common shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*<br>Common redshank *Tringa totanus*<br><br>**On passage the area regularly supports:**<br>Dunlin Calidris *alpina alpina*<br>Red knot *Calidris canutus*<br>Black-tailed *godwit Limosa limosa islandica*<br>Common redshank *Tringa totanus*<br><br>**Article 4.2 Qualification (79/409/EEC) An Internationally Important Assemblage of Birds**<br>In the non-breeding season the area regularly | **Avoid the deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying features, and the significant disturbance of the qualifying features, ensuring the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes a full contribution to achieving the aims of the Birds Directive.**<br><br>Subject to natural change, to maintain or restore:<br>• The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features;<br>• The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features;<br>• The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely;<br>• The populations of the qualifying features;<br>• The distribution of the qualifying features within the site. |

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|---|---|
| supports 153,934 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1996/7 to 2000/1) Including*: Anas crecca, Anas penelope, Anas platyrhynchos, Arenaria interpres, Aythya ferina, Aythya marila, Botaurus stellaris, Branta bernicla bernicla, Bucephala clangula, Calidris alba, Calidris alpina alpina*, *Calidris canutus, Charadrius hiaticula, Haematopus ostralegus, Limosa lapponica, Limosa limosa islandica, Numenius arquata, Numenius phaeopus, Philomachus pugnax, Pluvialis apricaria, Pluvialis squatarola, Recurvirostra avosetta, Tadorna tadorna, Tringa nebularia, Tringa totanus, Vanellus vanellus* | |

**Ramsar Qualifying Features**

| **Site Name** | Humber Estuary |
|---|---|
| Area (ha) | 37,987.8 |
| Criterion 1 | The site contains a representative, rare, or unique example of natural or near-natural wetland types found within the appropriate biogeographic region:<br><br>The site is a representative example of a near-natural estuary with the following component habitats: dune systems and humid dune slacks, estuarine waters, intertidal mud and sand flats, saltmarshes, and coastal brackish/saline lagoons. |
| Criterion 2 | The site supports populations of animal species important for maintaining the biological diversity of a particular biogeographic region:<br><br>The Humber Estuary Ramsar site supports a breeding colony of grey seals *Halichoerus grypus* at Donna Nook. It is the second largest grey seal colony in England and the furthest south regular breeding site on the east coast. The dune slacks at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on the southern extremity of the Ramsar site are the most north-easterly breeding site in Great Britain of the natterjack toad *Bufo calamita*. |
| Criterion 5 | The site regularly supports 20,000 or more waterbirds:<br>In the non-breeding season, the area regularly supports 153,934 individual waterbirds (5 year peak mean 1996/97 – 2000/01). |
| Criterion 6 | The site regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of waterbird in any season:<br>Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* – wintering<br>Golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria* - wintering<br>Knot *Calidris canutus* – wintering<br>Dunlin *Calidris alpina* – wintering<br>Black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa* – wintering<br>Bar-tailed godwit *Limosa lapponica* – wintering<br>Redshank *Tringa totanus* – wintering<br>Golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria* - passage<br>Knot *Calidris canutus* – passage<br>Dunlin *Calidris alpina* – passage<br>Black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa* – passage<br>Redshank *Tringa totanus* - passage |

| SSSI Qualifying Features |
|---|

**No other European Sites are considered to be impacted upon as a result of this strategy either due to distance/tidal direction or lack of hydrological connection.**

**4. Screening the Proposed Strategy**

| Nature of Effects | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|
| **Will the proposal increase development pressures or** | | |
| • require water abstraction outwith approved level? | | **No** |
| • cause siltation? | | **No** |
| • discharge effluent or other pollutants? | | **No** |
| • affect capacity of waste water treatment facility? | | **No** |
| • undertake waste treatment works? | | **No** |
| • involve waste management works affecting Natura 2000 site? | | **No** |
| • involve infrastructure development affecting Natura 2000 site? | | **No** |
| • increase deposition of air pollutants affecting Natura 2000 site? | | **No** |
| • cause disturbance to species (e.g. noise and visual)? | | **No** |
| **Will the proposal affect the aquatic environment or** | | |
| • affect protected site(s) located upstream/downstream? | | **No** |
| • affect protected site(s) located near river bank/river? | | **No** |
| • affect protected site(s) located near an estuary? | | **No** |
| • have any other hydrological links to the site? | | **No** |
| Will the proposal affect mobile species or | | |
| • have any ecological links with the protected sites/species? | | **No** |
| • affect migratory species and/or birds? | | **No** |
| **Will the proposal increase recreational pressure or** | | |
| • attract local visitors to the protected site? | | **No** |
| • attract external visitors to the protected site? | | **No** |
| **Will the proposal affect sites along/around the coast or** | | |
| • be located in the same coastal cell as Natura 2000 site? | | **No** |
| • be part of the same coastal ecosystem? | | **No** |
| • interact with different coastal processes affecting Natura 2000 site? | | **No** |
| **Will the proposal have in-combination effect with other projects** | | |
| • **have in-combination effects with another proposal or plan?** | **YES** | |

**5. Conclusions**

**(i) Is the proposal likely to have significant effect on European sites listed in this assessment, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects or proposals?**

As a strategy there will be no adverse impact on protected sites, however the requirements on future developments of having to comply with the strategy could have an impact. The strategy may have a positive impact arising from its requirements regarding discharges, pollution prevention etc.

The table overleaf shows the links to strategies and objectives which support this conclusion:

| HFRMS Objective | Outcome | Effect on International Site |
|---|---|---|
| **1) Prevention** Understand Hull's development needs and environmental management responsibilities to better align with flood risk obligations | Reduced numbers and distress of affected areas for residents during and after a flood incident. | +ve |
| **2) Protection** To seek environmental enhancement opportunities and multi benefits wherever possible through the implementation of integrated flood risk management measures and schemes | Creating habitat areas and improved water quality throughout the city. Community trust in future flood schemes. Involvement and ownership of local flood risk issues and schemes. Using multi-functional space for reducing flood risk | +ve |
| **3) Protection** Maximise coordination, support and partnership working with all Risk Management Authorities to deliver a sustainable way of maintaining existing and future flood defence works and watercourses which meet aspirations and requirements under the WFD | Key organisations that manage water will play a pivotal role in advocating collaboration and integration of water management. Delivery and support from a wider range of sectors. | +ve |
| **3) Preparing** Encourage proactive, appropriate maintenance of privately owned defences and drainage assets, such as defences along the River Hull. | Raising awareness and engaged people on their flood risk concerns and responsibilities. | -/+ve |

**(ii) Is an Appropriate Assessment Required?**

Whilst an Appropriate Assessment is not required for the LFRMS, future developments which need to comply with the LFRMS may have to carry out an Appropriate Assessment.