



Thanet District Council

Thanet Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment

Information to support an assessment under Regulation 105
of the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017*



Report for

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Executive summary

Thanet District Council (TDC) is submitting a new Local Plan that will guide development and regeneration decisions and investment over the period to 2031. Once adopted, the Plan will form the statutory planning framework for determining planning applications in Thanet and will replace the 'saved' policies from the Thanet Local Plan 2006.

TDC commissioned Wood (formerly Amec Foster Wheeler Ltd.) to assist with the assessment of its plan against the provisions of Regulation 105 of the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017* (the 'Habitats Regulations'). The process by which Regulation 105 is met is known as Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

The HRA has been undertaken iteratively alongside the plan's development, with emerging policies and proposals assessed and reviewed, and recommendations made to improve the performance of the plan in relation to European sites and interest features. Appropriate assessment, that is appropriate to the strategic nature of the plan and the anticipated outcomes, has been undertaken for those plan aspects where the possibility of 'significant' effects on European sites could not be clearly or self-evidently excluded without recourse to specific mitigation commitments.

This report summarises Wood's assessment of the submission version of the Local Plan against the conservation objectives of any European sites that may be affected, summarises the iterative HRA process that has been undertaken to support the development of the Local Plan and ensure that it meets the requirements of Regulation 105. The report accompanies the submission version of the plan and so primarily reflects and assesses the currently intended content of the final plan (see Appendix E for a review of the policies that are included in the final plan); however the report also documents the iterative assessment process that has been followed, and so reviews of earlier versions of the plan (preferred options) are included within Appendix C for completeness and to illustrate the plan evolution¹.

The report provides a conclusion on the likely effects of the Local Plan, based on the current proposals, taking account of any measures incorporated to ensure that the plan does not adversely affect any European sites.

In summary, the screening of the proposed policies demonstrated that the vast majority will have no effect on any European sites. However, significant effects on the **Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA, Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar** and (to a lesser extent) **Sandwich Bay SAC** could not be excluded due to:

- ▶ The potential for turnstone using the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA and Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar to be affected by increased disturbance due to recreational pressure; and
- ▶ The potential for golden plover to be affected when using non-designated functional habitats outside the SPA boundary.

These aspects were subject to more detailed appropriate assessments, with suitable policy-based mitigation measures incorporated into the plan. In summary:

- **Recreational Pressures:** The wide-scale and regional nature of recreational pressures means that the possibility of associated significant effects cannot be excluded based on either the available data for the European sites, or through the use of allocation-specific avoidance or mitigation measures (e.g. greenspace provision). In the Pre-Submission Local Plan, TDC has therefore included policy commitments to the Thanet Coast Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Plan (SAMM). The SAMM will include measures that have been successfully

¹ Therefore, some policies that have subsequently been abandoned or substantially modified appear in Appendix C.

employed for other European sites, and this plan-level mitigation measure is therefore considered to be both achievable and likely to be effective and so can be relied on to ensure that proposals coming forward under the Local Plan will not adversely affect site integrity. Additional provisions and masterplanning requirements are also included in policy, with allocation-specific measures (e.g. the provision of greenspace) that will help minimise effects on the European sites set out.

- **Functional land:** A review of the allocation sites has concluded that it is unlikely that any of the sites coincide with functionally-significant non-designated areas of land that are likely to be critical to the integrity of any European sites (particularly with reference to Golden plover), as far as this can be determined at the plan-level. However, the variability in the use of many fields by golden plover means it is possible that some allocation areas will, in the future, become valuable for this species. The mitigation within the plan therefore creates a policy structure whereby assessments for impacts on golden plover are specifically required for the various allocations as they are brought forward by developers, with a requirement for appropriate mitigation should likely significant effects be identified. The plan is not prescriptive on this point, as the mitigation requirements will depend on the scale and type of effects (if any); importantly, however, the plan ensures that there is sufficient flexibility for significant effects to be avoided, should these be identified during lower tier assessments.

The assessment of the Pre-Submission Local Plan has taken into account the measures incorporated into the plan following the appropriate assessment process, and it is concluded that **there will be no adverse effects on any European sites as a result of the TDC plan, alone or in combination.** The key measures underpinning this conclusion (the provision of the SAMM and its incorporation into the Local Plan development control policies) have been agreed with the relevant consultees, including Natural England. It will be necessary to review any post-examination changes that are made to the plan, to ensure that the HRA conclusions remain applicable. A formal assessment conclusion against the requirements of Regulation 105 will be made at that point.

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Thanet District Council Local Plan

Thanet District Council (TDC) began preparing a new Local Plan in 2013 following two significant changes in national planning policy:

- The government decision to revoke the Regional Spatial Strategies, including the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East; and
- The introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which replaced the previous Planning Policy Statements and Local Development Framework.

TDC's new Local Plan will include strategic planning guidance, development management policies and site allocations; these elements will guide development and regeneration decisions and investment over the period to 2031. Once adopted, the Plan will form the statutory planning framework for determining planning applications in Thanet and will replace the 'saved' policies from the Thanet Local Plan 2006.

TDC carried out a consultation on the Issues and Options for the new Local Plan between 3 June and 14 August 2013. This consultation considered the level of development needed in Thanet and broadly where this should be located, as well as options for detailed policies on housing, employment, environment, quality of life and transport. The results of the Issues and Options consultation were used to inform the development of the Preferred Options, which were subject to public consultation in 2015. Following this, additional options and allocations were identified, requiring an additional round of consultation by TDC. The Local Plan has been finalised following completion of this additional consultation.

1.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment

Regulation 105 of the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017* (the 'Habitats Regulations') states that if a land-use plan is "(a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site² or a European offshore marine site³ (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects); and (b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site" then the plan-making authority must "...make an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of that site's conservation objectives" before the plan is given effect.

The process by which Regulation 105 is met is known as Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)⁴. An HRA determines whether there will be any 'likely significant effects' (LSE) on any European site as a result of a plan's implementation (either on its own or 'in combination' with other plans or projects) and, if so, whether

² Strictly, 'European sites' are: any Special Area of Conservation (SAC) from the point at which the European Commission and the UK Government agree the site as a 'Site of Community Importance' (SCI); any classified Special Protection Area (SPA); any candidate SAC (cSAC); and (exceptionally) any other site or area that the Commission believes should be considered as an SAC but which has not been identified by the UK Government. However, the term is also commonly used when referring to potential SPAs (pSPAs), to which the provisions of Article 4(4) of Directive 2009/147/EC (the 'new wild birds directive') apply; and to possible SACs (pSACs) and listed Ramsar Sites, to which the provisions of the Habitats Regulations are applied as a matter of Government policy (NPPF para. 118) when considering development proposals that may affect them. 'European site' is therefore used in this report in its broadest sense, as an umbrella term for all of the above designated sites. Additional information on European site designations is provided in Appendix A.

³ 'European offshore marine sites' are defined by Regulation 15 of *The Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007* (as amended); these regulations cover waters (and hence sites) over 12 nautical miles from the coast.

⁴ The term 'Appropriate Assessment' has been historically used to describe the process of assessment; however, the process is now more accurately termed 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' (HRA), with the term 'Appropriate Assessment' limited to a specific stage within the process (see Box 1).

these effects will result in any adverse effects on the site's integrity. TDC has a statutory duty to prepare the Local Plan and is therefore the Competent Authority for an HRA.

Regulation 105 essentially provides a test that the final plan must pass; there is no statutory requirement for HRA to be undertaken on draft plans or similar developmental stages (e.g. issues and options; preferred options). However, as with Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) it is accepted best-practice for the HRA of strategic planning documents to be run as an iterative process alongside the development of the local plan, with the emerging policies or options reviewed during development to ensure that potentially significant effects on European sites can be identified at an early stage, so providing time for the effects (and any mitigation) to be appropriately assessed. This is undertaken in consultation with Natural England (NE) and other appropriate consultees.

1.3 Purpose of this Report

TDC commissioned Wood (formerly Amec Foster Wheeler Ltd.) to assist with the HRA of its Local Plan following the completion of the Issues and Options consultations. The HRA has been undertaken iteratively alongside the plan's development, with emerging policies and proposals assessed and reviewed, and recommendations made to improve the performance of the plan in relation to European sites and interest features. Appropriate assessment, that is appropriate to the strategic nature of the plan and the anticipated outcomes, has been undertaken for those plan aspects where the possibility of 'significant' effects on European sites could not be clearly or self-evidently excluded without recourse to specific mitigation commitments.

This report summarises Wood's assessment of the submission version of the Local Plan against the conservation objectives of any European sites that may be affected, summarises the iterative HRA process that has been undertaken to support the development of the Local Plan and ensure that it meets the requirements of Regulation 105. The report accompanies the submission version of the plan and so reflects and assesses the currently intended content of the final plan. The report therefore provides a conclusion on the likely effects of the Local Plan, based on the current proposals, taking account of any measures incorporated to ensure that the plan does not adversely affect any European sites. The report therefore includes the following aspects.

- Details of the approach used for the HRA of the Local Plan (Section 2).
- A summary of the baseline conditions of the European sites and interest features that are potentially vulnerable (exposed and sensitive) to the likely effects of the plan, and the relevant impact pathways (Section 3).
- An initial screening assessment, identifying those European sites and interest features that will not be affected by the plan proposals, and those plan aspects (policies or allocations) which will not significantly affect any European sites (Section 4), due to an absence of effect pathways.
- Appropriate assessments of the likely effects of the plan on those European sites and features that are vulnerable to the plan proposals, taking account of mitigation measures identified for inclusion in the final plan (Sections 5 – 7).
- A summary of the conclusions of the HRA of the Local Plan (Section 8).

The assessment will be reviewed following any amendments that are made to the final plan post-examination. A formal assessment conclusion against the requirements of Regulation 105 will be made at that point (as this is a test that the final plan must pass), although this report sets out the proposed conclusion for the final assessment based on the investigations completed to date and content of the submission version of the Local Plan.

2. Approach to the HRA of the Local Plan

2.1 Overview

An HRA involves determining whether there will be any LSEs on any European sites as a result of a plan's implementation (either on its own or 'in combination' with other plans or projects) and, if so, whether it can be concluded that these effects will not have an adverse effect on the sites' integrity. European Commission guidance⁵ suggests a four-stage process for HRA, although not all stages will always be required (see Box 1).

Box 1 – Stages of Habitats Regulations Assessment

Stage 1 – Screening:

This stage identifies the likely impacts upon a European Site of a project or plan, either alone or 'in combination' with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant.

Stage 2 – Appropriate Assessment:

Where there are likely significant effects, or where this is uncertain, this stage considers the effects of the plan or project on the integrity of the relevant European Sites, either alone or 'in combination' with other projects or plans, with respect to the sites' structure and function and their conservation objectives. Where it cannot be concluded that there will be no adverse effects on sites' integrity, it is necessary to consider potential mitigation for these effects.

Stage 3 – Assessment of Alternative Solutions:

Where adverse effects remain after the inclusion of mitigation, this stage examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of European Sites.

Stage 4 – Assessment Where No Alternative Solutions Exist and Where Adverse Impacts Remain:

This stage assesses compensatory measures where it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI). The EC guidance does not deal with the assessment of IROPI.

The 'screening' test or 'test of significance' is a low bar: a plan should be considered 'likely' to have an effect if the competent authority (in this case TDC) is unable (on the basis of objective information) to exclude the possibility that the plan could have 'significant' effects on any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects; an effect will be 'significant' if it could undermine the site's conservation objectives. It should be noted that recent case law⁶ has reinforced the 'low bar' interpretation of the screening test, suggesting that 'mitigation measures' should not be included at the screening stage but instead considered through 'appropriate assessment'.

The 'appropriate assessment' stage provides a more detailed examination of the plan (or its components) where the effects are significant or uncertain⁷, to determine whether there will be 'adverse effects on integrity' (AEoI) of any sites as a result of the plan. It should be noted that the approach to the 'appropriate assessment' is not prescribed: it must simply be 'appropriate' to the plan being considered and the scale and nature of the likely effects, and be sufficient to remove any residual uncertainties regards the effect of the plan on site and feature integrity.

The approach summarised in Box 1 works well at the project-level where the scheme design is usually established and possible effects on European sites can be assessed (usually quantitatively). In contrast, land-use plans and similar strategies present a number of distinct challenges for HRA and rigid application of the 'staged' approach to assessment suggested by Box 1 is not always appropriate. In particular, it is preferable for sustainable policies to be developed from the beginning of the plan-making process rather than HRA

⁵ European Commission (2002) *Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*. European Commission, Brussels.

⁶ Case C 323/17 Court of Justice of the European Union: People Over Wind

⁷ i.e. 'likely significant effects', where the possibility of significant effects cannot be excluded.

being a purely retrospective assessment exercise towards the end. Therefore, it is important to recognise that the *process* of strategic HRA is as much about guiding the development of the plan (and demonstrating that effects on European sites have been considered appropriately) as it is about (ultimately) assessing its effects.

2.2 Guidance

The following guidance has been used during the review and assessment of the TDC Local Plan:

- DTA Publications (2016) *The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook* [online]. Available at: <http://www.dtapublications.co.uk/handbook/>. Accessed 11.11.16;
- SNH (2017) *Habitats Regulations Appraisal of Plans: Guidance for plan-making bodies in Scotland*. Scottish Natural Heritage;
- DCLG (2006). *Planning for the Protection of European Sites: Appropriate Assessment. Guidance for Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents*. Department for Communities and Local Government, HMSO, London;
- English Nature, (1997-2001). *Habitats Regulations Guidance Notes 1-9*, Natural England, Peterborough;
- European Commission, (2002). *Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*. European Commission, Brussels;
- European Commission, (2001). *Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites*. European Commission, Brussels;
- European Communities, (2007). *Managing Natura 2000 sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/433/EEC*. European Commission, Brussels.

2.3 Summary of Approach

Screening and appropriate assessment

As noted, this HRA has been undertaken as a process, concurrent with the plan-development, rather than solely as a retrospective assessment of the final plan. The assessment has therefore included the following key stages, which both assess and guide the plan at the various stages in its development.

Initial Screening

The principles⁸ of 'screening' were initially applied to the emerging Local Plan or its components (i.e. policies and site allocations) to identify those areas where further investigation through 'appropriate assessment' is required to determine the scale of any effects and / or any bespoke mitigation that is necessary. The initial screening is also used to 'screen-out' European sites and plan components from further assessment, if it is possible to determine that significant effects will not occur (e.g. if sites or interest features are clearly not vulnerable (i.e. both exposed and sensitive) to the outcomes of a plan due to the absence of any reasonable impact pathways). The 'screening' process is applied to the Local Plan 'as a whole', to the European sites themselves and to the key components of the plan (the policies and allocations). The initial screening is obviously undertaken at an early stage in the plan-development process, although the outcomes of this are re-visited throughout plan evolution to ensure that they remain robust. The screening is intended to be a

⁸ Note, from a strict procedural perspective, the 'screening' and 'appropriate assessment' stages can only be formally applied to the finalised plan, and not to its various phases or iterations; therefore the term 'screening' is used advisedly within this document.

coarse filter for identifying potential effect pathways that cannot be self-evidently discounted rather than a detailed assessment in its own right.

Appropriate Assessment

'Appropriate assessments' are used to provide a more detailed examination of those plan aspects where significant effects are likely, or (commonly) where there is a residual uncertainty which the assessment is intended to resolve. The 'appropriate assessment' stage may therefore conclude that the proposals are likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of a site (in which case they should be abandoned or modified); or that the effects will be 'significant' but not adverse (i.e. an effect pathway exists, but those effects will not undermine site integrity, perhaps due to mitigation proposed for inclusion within the plan); or that the effects would, if screening were re-visited, be 'not significant' (taking into account the assessment conclusions and / or avoidance measures that can be incorporated into the plan). The approaches used at the appropriate assessment stage vary according to the sites affected and the effect-pathways; these are detailed in the relevant Sections 5 – 7.

'In-combination' assessment

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires that the potential effects of the plan on European sites must be considered 'in combination with other plans or projects'. The 'in-combination' assessment must also consider within-plan effects (i.e. between policies or allocations). Consideration of 'in-combination' effects is not a separate assessment, but is integral to the screening and appropriate assessment stages and the development of avoidance/ mitigation measures.

There is limited guidance available on the scope of the 'in-combination' element, particularly which plans should be considered. However, the assessment should not necessarily be limited to plans at the same level in the planning hierarchy and there is consequently a wide range of plans that could have potential 'in combination' effects with the TDC plan due to its scale. There is also limited guidance on the mitigation that may be appropriate if a European site is already being significantly affected by other plans; this is possible, since some plans will pre-date the requirement for HRA of plans, and therefore cannot be relied on to have no significant effect in their own right.

The plans identified by the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) have provided the basis for the assessment of 'in combination' effects; these plans were reviewed to identify any potential effects and these were then considered (as necessary) within the screening or appropriate assessment. The assessment does not generally include national strategies, national policy or legislation since the Local Plan must be compliant with these. It is considered that in combination effects are most likely in respect of other regional and sub-regional development plans and strategies. The plans considered 'in combination', and the results of the screening, are summarised in Appendix D.

Mitigation and avoidance

The development of avoidance or mitigation measures is a valuable part of the HRA process. Avoidance measures are integral to the plan development, and are essentially minor policy amendments that are identified as part of the iterative plan review process to improve plan performance and / or minimise the risks of 'adverse effect' policies being pursued (for example, dropping a policy or allocation entirely if significant adverse effects appear certain and unavoidable at the scheme-level). Mitigation measures are used where significant effects are possible (in which case 'appropriate assessment' is undertaken) in order to prevent adverse effects on a site's integrity.

Avoidance or mitigation measures should aim to reduce the probability or magnitude of impacts on a European site until 'no adverse effects on integrity' are anticipated, and will generally involve the development and adoption of (for example) wording changes or additional policies. Measures must be specific and targeted, and likely to work; it is not appropriate to re-state existing legislation or policy, such as

by adding “and must have no significant effect on any European site” (or similar) to every policy. The avoidance or mitigation should also account for the limited influence that the Council can exert on non-planning issues, and should not generally exceed requirements set by national planning policy or guidance.

People Over Wind

The recent “People Over Wind” judgement⁹ states that “...it is not appropriate, at the screening stage, to take account of the measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects [mitigation] of the plan or project on that site”. This contrasts with established practice in this area (based on the “Dilly Lane” judgment¹⁰) where avoidance and mitigation measures are often taken into account at the screening stage, particularly for projects.

The broader context of the ‘People over Wind’ case suggests that the judgement is principally focusing on those instances where specific measures are included in a scheme to avoid a specific effect that has been identified, and which would otherwise be significant; the judgement argues that this presupposes that it is likely that the site is affected significantly, and that the effectiveness of any such measures should therefore be examined through an appropriate assessment stage.

There is currently little information on the practical implementation of the ‘People over Wind’ judgement, particularly for plan-level HRAs where much of the assessment is concurrent with plan development. Indeed, many ‘recommendations’ derived from an iterative policy review process might be interpreted as ‘avoidance’ or ‘mitigation’ measures if viewed solely in terms of their implications for European sites, but it is clear that an exhaustive examination of the plan’s genesis to see if any aspects might count as ‘mitigation’ for screening purposes would not be proportionate, or (arguably) consistent with the intent of the Habitats Directive or the ‘People over Wind’ judgement.

Most of the HRA work undertaken in support of the TDC plan has pre-dated the ‘People over Wind’ judgement. However, the approach that has been employed is consistent with this judgment: the ‘screening’ is applied at an early stage as a low-bar ‘trigger’ test, with European sites or plan aspects only excluded from an ‘appropriate assessment’ where there is self-evidently either ‘no effect’ or ‘no significant effect’. As a result, the key areas of uncertainty are taken forward to an ‘appropriate assessment’ stage, with appropriate mitigation examined at that stage.

The screening **does not** therefore take account of any specific measures that are included in response to a specific identified effect on a European site, and which are intended to avoid or reduce that effect. However, non-specific policy amendments that have been recommended and adopted during plan-development to improve policy performance, or which would be included irrespective of the presence of any European sites (either as a legal requirement, or as a matter of standard practice), are considered to be an inherent part of the plan being screened; for example:

- A policy promoting the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) is a fairly standard inclusion that would be incorporated regardless of the presence of European sites; this would not be considered mitigation unless the HRA relied entirely on this policy to prevent a specific identified risk occurring (in which case its effectiveness would be examined through an ‘appropriate assessment’).
- A general policy that provides policy safeguards for designated sites (including European sites) is a standard inclusion in virtually all land-use plans, and it would clearly be illogical to attempt to screen a hypothetical version of the plan that did not include such a policy.

⁹ Court of Justice of the European Union (ECJ) Case C-323/17 - People Over Wind and Sweetman, preliminary ruling.

¹⁰ Hart District Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government [2008] EWHC 1204

Uncertainty and 'down the line' assessment

For most policies, even at the strategic level, it will be clear if adverse effects are likely at an early stage, and in these instances the policy should not be included within the plan since plans should not include proposals which would be likely to fail the Habitats Regulations tests at the project application stage. For other options, however, the effects may be uncertain and it is therefore important that this uncertainty is addressed either through additional investigation or appropriate mitigation measures.

It is usually possible to incorporate caveats or 'avoidance measures' within policy text that are sufficient to ensure that significant adverse effects will not occur. However, for other policies this may not be possible because there is insufficient available information about the nature of the development that is being proposed through the policy to enable a robust conclusion to be reached about whether there will be any LSEs. In these instances, current guidance¹¹ indicates that it may be appropriate for assessment to be undertaken 'down-the-line' at a lower tier in the planning hierarchy. For this to be acceptable, the following conditions must be met:

- The higher tier plan appraisal cannot reasonably predict the effects on a European site in a meaningful way; whereas;
- The lower tier plan, which will identify more precisely the nature, scale or location of development, and thus its potential effects, retains enough flexibility within the terms of the higher tier plan over the exact location, scale or nature of the proposal to enable an adverse effect on site integrity to be avoided; and
- Habitats Regulations Appraisal of the Plan at the lower tier is required as a matter of law or Government policy.

¹¹ SNH (2017) *Habitats Regulations Appraisal of Plans: Guidance for plan-making bodies in Scotland*. Scottish Natural Heritage

3. Scope of Assessment and Baseline Summary

3.1 Study Area

The spatial scope of any plan-level HRA should be based on:

- The likely environmental outcomes of the plan and the anticipated range of any effects (the 'zone of influence'); and
- The interest features of the European sites that may be affected and their potential vulnerabilities.¹²

The zone of influence of the Local Plan will vary according to the aspect being considered (for example, noise effects would rarely extend more than a few hundred metres from the source), and so it is not usually appropriate to employ 'arbitrary' spatial buffers to determine those European sites that should be considered within an HRA; however, as distance strongly influences the scale and likelihood of most effects, the considered use of a suitably precautionary search area as a starting point for the screening (based on a thorough understanding of both the plan outcomes and European site interest features) has some important advantages. Using buffers allows the systematic identification of European sites using GIS, so minimising the risk of sites or features being overlooked, and also ensures that sites where there are no reasonable impact pathways can be quickly and transparently excluded from any further screening or assessment. It also has the significant advantage of providing a consistent point of reference for consultees following the assessment process, allowing the 'screening' to focus on the potential effects, rather than on explaining why certain sites may or may not have been considered in relation to a particular aspect of the plan.

This study considers potential effects on all European sites within 15km¹³ of the TDC boundary, together with any additional sites that may be hydrologically linked to the plan's zone of influence. This is considered to be a suitably precautionary starting point for the assessment of the plan. The sites listed in Table 3.1 are therefore included in the assessment (see also Figure 3.1).

Table 3.1 European sites within study area

Site	Approximate location relative to TDC area
Blean Complex SAC	Approximately 4.8km west of TDC boundary.
Dover to Kingsdown Cliffs SAC	Approximately 14.9km south of TDC boundary.
Sandwich Bay SAC	On southern boundary of TDC area.
Stodmarsh SAC	Approximately 2.4km south west of TDC boundary.
Thanet Coast SAC	Northern and eastern coastlines of TDC area.
Margate and Long Sands SAC	Offshore SAC approximately 1.1km from northern coast of TDC area.
Tankerton Slopes and Swalecliffe SAC	Approximately 9.5km west of TDC area, on North Kent Coast.
Outer Thames Estuary SPA	On TDC boundary; offshore SPA extending from northern coast of TDC area.

¹² The vulnerability of an interest feature will depend on its 'sensitivity' and 'exposure' to a potential effect.

¹³ 15km is a standard distance typically employed in the HRA of Local Plans, and is sufficiently precautionary to capture most potential impact pathways in most situations. Additional sites beyond this distance may be considered in consultation with NE.

Site	Approximate location relative to TDC area
Stodmarsh SPA	Approximately 2.8km south west of TDC boundary.
Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA	Northern and eastern coastlines of TDC area, plus Sandwich Bay to the south.
The Swale SPA	Approximately 12.8km west of TDC area, on North Kent Coast.
Stodmarsh Ramsar	Approximately 2.8km south west of TDC boundary.
Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar	Northern and eastern coastlines of TDC area, plus Sandwich Bay to the south.
The Swale Ramsar	Approximately 12.8km west of TDC area, on the North Kent Coast.

Data on the European site interest features, their distribution, and their sensitivity to potential effects associated with the plan were obtained from various sources and reports, including the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and Natural England (NE) websites (citations; boundaries; etc.); site condition was based on the NE condition assessments for corresponding SSSI units. Additional information on particular sites or features was obtained from other sources where available, including the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS).

3.2 European Site Features and Condition

The interest features of the European sites within the study area, and the current factors affecting them, are summarised in Table 3.2. A summary of the Conservation Objectives is provided below Table 3.2. The percentage of the site in favourable or unfavourable condition was estimated using the NE condition assessments for the corresponding SSSI units, although it must be noted that the boundaries of the component SSSI units (to which the condition assessments relate) do not always match the European site boundaries exactly (i.e. the SSSIs are usually larger) and it is not always possible to split SSSI units to determine the precise area of the European site (or interest feature) that is in each condition category¹⁴. The current pressures on and threats to the sites are identified, based on the Site Improvement Plans (SIPs).¹⁵

There are many factors currently affecting the European sites over which the Local Plan will have no or little influence. Analysis of the available site data indicates that the most common reasons for an 'unfavourable' condition assessment of component SSSI units are inappropriate management of some form (e.g. over- or undergrazing, scrub control, water-level management etc.) or secondary effects from agriculture (e.g. local drainage, run-off, grazing pressure etc.). The potential mechanisms by which the Local Plan could affect these sites are discussed in Section 3.3. Note that the following sites are grouped together for presentation purposes due to the similarity of the interest features and/or the factors and processes affecting them:

- Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA and Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar ('Thanet Coast sites');
- Stodmarsh SAC, Stodmarsh SPA and Stodmarsh Ramsar ('Stodmarsh sites'); and
- The Swale SPA and The Swale Ramsar ('The Swale sites').

¹⁴ This is evident in Table 3.1, where the proportion of the site area in each condition category does not always total 100%.

¹⁵ Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/5458594975711232>

Table 3.2 European sites and interest features within 15km of Thanet District

Site and interest features†	Condition (%)**	Summary of current threats and potential vulnerabilities to the outcomes of the Thanet Local Plan
Blean Complex SAC		
<u>Annex I features:</u> Oak-hornbeam forests*	F: 100.5% UR: 0.2%	This woodland SAC is almost entirely in favourable condition; coppice management is the key issue in the site unit that is unfavourable. The site is an NNR and managed in partnership by NE, RSPB and the Woodland Trust which helps ensure its largely favourable status. The site is nearly 5km from Thanet and direct impacts on this site as a result of the Thanet plan are likely to be limited. It could potentially be vulnerable to changes in air quality or visitor pressure that may be associated with the overall quantum of development, although it should be noted that neither of these aspects is currently identified as a pressure at the site, based on the SIP. However, air quality (specifically N-deposition) is identified as a potential threat in the SIP, and further investigations into this aspect are proposed.
Dover to Kingsdown Cliffs SAC		
<u>Annex I features:</u> Calcareous dry grassland and scrub; Vegetated sea cliffs*	F: 56.5% UR: 36.4% UF: 7.2%	The SAC citation states that this site "...is an 8 km stretch of undefended sea cliff subject to natural coastal erosion. The main pressure is on cliff-top grassland, which is being squeezed between the eroding cliff and arable land behind." Most of the site's SSSI units are in favourable condition; those in unfavourable condition are primarily affected by poor or limited management of encroaching scrub and grazing of the calcareous grassland; as a result, the main issues affecting this site are coastal squeeze and management, which will not, at this site, be influenced by the Thanet plan. The SIP indicates that the main pressures at the site are associated with management (inappropriate scrub control and undergrazing) and air quality (N deposition), although the latter factor will not change substantially as a result of the Thanet plan (the HRA of the Dover District Local Development Framework concluded that this plan would not affect the site in this regard).
Margate and Long Sands SAC		
<u>Annex I features:</u> Sub-tidal sandbanks*	Uncertain: 100%	There is limited information on the current condition of this recently designated offshore SAC. The Regulation 35 advice states that "the interest features and associated biological communities of the Margate and Long Sands cSAC are sensitive to physical loss, physical damage, toxic and non-toxic contamination, and biological disturbance". However, it should be noted that the site is at least 1km offshore from Thanet and the Thanet Plan will not generally exert any influence over the most damaging activities (i.e. offshore activities such as dredging): the Regulation 35 advice notes that the exposure of the interest features to aspects associated with land-based activities (e.g. toxic and non-toxic contamination) is low. The SIP identifies commercial fisheries as the main pressure on the site, although the Thanet plan will not directly influence this aspect.

Table 3.2 (cont'd) European sites and interest features within 15km of Thanet District

Site and interest features†	Condition (%)**	Summary of current threats and potential vulnerabilities to outcomes of Thanet Local Plan
Sandwich Bay SAC		
<u>Annex I features</u> : Dunes with creeping willow*; White dunes*; Grey dunes*; Embryonic shifting dunes*; Humid dune slacks	F: 62.2% UR: 27.4% UF: 10.6%	<p>This site supports the most important sand dune system and sandy coastal grassland in south east England. The SAC's SSSI units that are in unfavourable condition are affected by management (Unit 22, associated with a golf course) and hydro-ecological changes that have degraded some fixed dunes (Unit 18), the causes of which are currently under investigation (although these are likely to be due to local hydrological changes). The features of the SAC are vulnerable to a range of potential impacts including direct encroachment; coastal squeeze or developments (etc.) that alter the natural geomorphological processes; visitor pressure; management; air quality changes; and local water quality / quantity changes (note, current abstraction and discharge consents are not having an adverse effect on the site, based on Review of Consent data). The SIP identifies a number of current pressures to the SAC interest features including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • public access (Embryonic shifting dunes; Grey dunes) • hydrological changes (Grey dunes); • air pollution (Embryonic shifting dunes; White dunes; Grey dunes; Dunes with creeping willow; Humid dune slacks).
Stodmarsh SAC		
<u>Annex II features</u> : Desmoulin's whorl snail*	F: 75.8% UR: 21.1% UF: 2.5%	<p>This wetland site is predominantly in 'favourable' condition; the 'unfavourable' SSSI units are in this condition due to localised management issues, either of scrub encroachment or water levels (note, the water level issues are not due to over-abstraction). Most of the site is an NNR or managed under Stewardship agreements, and so most potential impacts have suitable control mechanisms (e.g. control of water levels; management; visitor pressure; etc.). However, the interest features of the site (and their habitats) are vulnerable to various effects associated with the broader 'quantum of development' impacts which the Thanet plan may contribute to, notably water abstraction (increases in development may require increased abstraction from local sources, which could affect the SAC, although this is not required based on Southern Water's Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP)) and air quality changes. However, the SIP does not currently identify any threats or pressures relating to the SAC interest feature.</p>
Tankerton Slopes and Swalecliffe SAC		
<u>Annex II features</u> : Fisher's estuarine moth*	F: 100%	<p>Fisher's estuarine moth has a localised population distribution in the UK, due to its specific habitat requirements; this site supports its food plant hog's fennel, together with areas of neutral grassland that are also required by the species for egg laying. The SSSI unit that forms the SAC is in favourable condition but is heavily used by dog walkers and is vulnerable to under-management. The site is approximately 10km outside Thanet and so unlikely to be directly affected by the outcomes of the Thanet plan. There is currently no SIP for this site.</p>

Table 3.2 (cont'd) European sites and interest features within 15km of Thanet District

Site and interest features†	Condition (%)**	Summary of current threats and potential vulnerabilities to outcomes of Thanet Local Plan
Thanet Coast SAC		
<u>Annex I features</u> : Sea caves*; Reefs*	F: 11.1% UR: 8.0% Uncertain: 80.9%	This site is partly within Thanet and potentially vulnerable to the outcomes of the plan. The condition of most of the site is 'uncertain', since most of the offshore areas are not SSSI units and detailed information on condition is not available. However, the Regulation 35 advice for the site indicates that the features would be vulnerable to physical damage (removal, erosion, smothering); developments (etc.) that alter the natural geomorphological processes; toxic or non-toxic contamination; and invasive species. As a result, the features will be mainly sensitive to direct effects only (i.e. encroachment or factors that alter the geomorphological processes that otherwise dominate the condition of the features). The SIP indicates that the invasive Pacific oyster is a current pressure on the Reefs feature, although the spread of this species cannot be directly influenced by the TDC plan.
Outer Thames Estuary SPA		
<u>Article 4.1 qualification</u> : Red-throated diver (W)	Uncertain: 100%	Red-throated divers <i>Gavia stellata</i> are sensitive to non-physical disturbance by noise and visual presence during the winter; generally they will not be particularly exposed to disturbance associated with the Thanet plan (or within Thanet's control) due to their preference for offshore areas, although some aspects (e.g. recreational boating) may have an effect. The SIP indicates that commercial fishing is a current pressure, although this is not controlled by TDC.
Stodmarsh sites		
Stodmarsh SPA <u>Article 4.1 qualification</u> : Bittern (W); Hen harrier (W)	F: 72.7% UR: 24.8% UF: 2.9%	As with Stodmarsh SAC, this wetland site is predominantly in 'favourable' condition; the 'unfavourable' SSSI units are in this condition due to localised management issues, either of scrub encroachment or water levels (note, the water level issues are not due to over-abstraction). There are thought to be local disturbance issues associated with angling and shooting in some units. However, most of the site is an NNR or managed under Stewardship agreements, and so most potential impacts have suitable control mechanisms (e.g. control of water levels; management; visitor pressure; etc.). However, the interest features of the SPA (and their habitats) are vulnerable to diffuse 'quantum of development' impacts which the Thanet plan may contribute to, notable water abstraction (increases in development may require increased abstraction from local sources, which could affect the SAC, although this is not required based on Southern Water's WRMP) and air quality changes. The SIP notes the following pressures for the SPA bird interest features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • water pollution (bittern, gadwall) • invasive species (New Zealand pigmyweed <i>Crassula helmsii</i> – bittern, gadwall, shoveler, hen harrier; breeding bird assemblage; waterbird assemblage); • air pollution (N deposition – bittern, gadwall, shoveler, hen harrier; breeding bird assemblage; waterbird assemblage).
<u>Article 4.2 qualification</u> : Gadwall (B-,W-); Shoveler (W-); Breeding bird assemblage (B-)		
Stodmarsh Ramsar <u>Criterion 2</u> - Endangered etc species / communities (6 RDB invertebrates; 2 nationally rare plants; 5 nationally scarce species; a diverse assemblage of rare wetland birds inc. gadwall, bittern, hen harrier, shoveler)		

Table 3.2 (cont'd) European sites and interest features within 15km of Thanet District

Site and interest features†	Condition (%)**	Summary of current threats and potential vulnerabilities to outcomes of Thanet Local Plan
Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay sites		
<p>Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA <u>Article 4.1 qualification:</u> Golden plover (W-); Little tern (B-) <u>Article 4.2 qualification:</u> Turnstone (W)</p>	<p>F: 68.3% UR: 30.4% UF: 1.7%</p>	<p>The main current pressure to the integrity of this site is disturbance of feeding and roosting birds by recreational activities (particularly dog walking, although other activities, such as kite sailing, are thought to have local impacts); this is reflected in the condition assessments for the SSSI units that are in unfavourable condition (Sandwich Bay SSSI units 3, 35 – 39, 63 and Thanet Coast SSSI units 11, 12, 14, 16, 18 and 20). The SSSI condition assessment for Unit 3 of Sandwich Bay SSSI notes that the "<i>Bird Disturbance Study 2010-11 published by Kent Wildlife Trust Oct 2012 provides strong evidence indicating that recreational and commercial activities including dog walking, walking without dogs, bait digging and kite surfing are having a detrimental impact on bird populations in Pegwell Bay. The most disturbing activity, particularly in the north section of the bay, is dog walkers with dogs off leads</i>". The assessments for the unfavourable Thanet Coast SSSI units all state that the units "...[remain] unfavourable recovering due to effects of dog walkers on birds feeding and roosting".</p>
<p>Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar <u>Criterion 2</u> - Endangered etc species / communities (15 RDB invertebrates) <u>Criterion 6</u> - 1% of a waterbird population (Turnstone)</p>		<p>The SIP notes the following pressures on the SPA interest features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes in species distributions (regional scale changes that may be influencing numbers of turnstone and little tern, that are unlikely to be connected to activities directly within or near the sites); • invasive species (Pacific oyster affecting turnstone foraging); • public access and disturbance (turnstone, little tern, golden plover); • commercial fisheries (turnstone, little tern, golden plover). <p>The habitats of the SPA are vulnerable to the same aspects as Sandwich Bay SAC and Thanet Coast SAC (see above) although the relationship between the habitat condition and the status of the SPA interest features is complex, and effects on the habitats will not always directly and negatively affect the SPA interest features (for example, nutrient enrichment would degrade some habitats but is likely to enhance foraging conditions for turnstone). The main Local Plan issue for this site is therefore the overall quantum of development in Thanet (and neighbouring authorities) and the consequent potential for recreational use of the beaches to increase during key periods. The plan will need to develop mitigating policies and safeguards to minimise the effect of this.</p>

Table 3.2 (cont'd) European sites and interest features within 15km of Thanet District

Site and interest features†	Condition (%)**	Summary of current threats and potential vulnerabilities to outcomes of Thanet Local Plan
The Swale sites		
<p>The Swale SPA <u>Article 4.1 qualification:</u> Avocet (B+,W+); Marsh harrier (B+); Mediterranean gull (B+); Bar-tailed godwit (W+); Golden plover (W+); Hen harrier (W+) <u>Article 4.2 qualification:</u> Dark-bellied brent goose (W-); Ringed Plover (P+); Black-tailed godwit (W+); Dunlin (ssp. alpina) (W-); Knot (W+); Pintail (W+); Shoveler (W+); Waterfowl assemblage (W); Breeding bird assemblage (B-)</p> <p>The Swale Ramsar <u>Criterion 2</u> - Endangered etc species / communities (nationally scarce plants; seven RDB invertebrates) <u>Criterion 5</u> - 20,000 or more waterbirds (77501 waterfowl in winter) <u>Criterion 6</u> - 1% of a waterbird population (Redshank, Dark-bellied brent goose, Grey plover)</p>	<p>F: 67.9% UF: 2.2% Uncertain: 29.9%</p>	<p>There is evidence of rapid erosion of intertidal habitat within the site due to natural processes and the effects of sea defences and clay extraction. Research is being undertaken on mudflat recharge using dredging spoil as a potential means of countering the erosion. The intertidal area is also vulnerable to disturbance from waterborne recreation. This is being addressed as part of an estuary management plan.</p> <p>The terrestrial part of the site depends on appropriate grazing and management of water quality and quantity. The availability of livestock for grazing may be addressed through management agreements. The effects of abstraction on the availability of water for other land uses and drainage for arable cultivation will be addressed through the consent review process under the Habitats Regulations. Impacts on this site are less likely as a result of the Thanet plan due to the distance (>12km) but in combination effects with other plans may occur.</p>
Key		
†	Interest features are abbreviated; see also Appendix B	
*	Interest features (habitats or species) that are a primary reason for designation; all other habitats and species are qualifying features	
W	Wintering species	
P	Passage migrants	
B	Breeding species	
-	Species included on the original SPA citation but proposed for removal following the SPA Review (Stroud <i>et al.</i> 2001; the second SPA review proposed amendments to the interest features of some sites, based on revised survey data, although these amendments have not yet been enacted)	
+	Species not included on the original SPA citation but added following the SPA Review	
Annex I / II	Habitats or species listed on Annex I or II (respectively) of <i>Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora</i> (the 'Habitats Directive')	
Article 4.1 / 4.2	Bird species qualifying under Article 4.1 or 4.2 of <i>Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds</i> (the 'new Wild Birds Directive')	
Criterion 2, 5, 6	Ramsar criteria; there are nine criteria used as a basis for selecting Ramsar sites; see Appendix B	
**	The condition is based on the condition assessments of the SSSI units that correspond to the relevant European sites (as this is how NE report site condition). Note: the total percentage does not always equal 100% as the boundaries of the component SSSI units (which the condition assessments relate to) do not always match the European site boundaries exactly (i.e. the SSSIs are usually larger, but it is not possible to split SSSI units to determine the precise quantity of the European site that is in each condition category).	

NE condition assessment categories:

F	Favourable
UR	Unfavourable recovering
UF	Unfavourable no change
UD	Unfavourable declining
Uncertain	Uncertain (due to absence of data, typically where parts of the site are not associated with an SSSI).

Conservation Objectives

The conservation objectives for all of the sites have been revised by NE in recent years to increase consistency of assessment and reporting. As a result, the high-level conservation objectives for all sites are effectively the same:

For SACs:

- With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and/or species for which the site has been designated (the 'Qualifying Features'...), and subject to natural change; ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring [as applicable to each site];
 - ▶ *The extent and distribution of the qualifying natural habitats;*
 - ▶ *The extent and distribution of the habitats of qualifying species;*
 - ▶ *The structure and function (including typical species) of the qualifying natural habitats;*
 - ▶ *The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species;*
 - ▶ *The supporting processes on which the qualifying natural habitats rely;*
 - ▶ *The supporting processes on which the habitats of qualifying species rely;*
 - ▶ *The populations of qualifying species; and,*
 - ▶ *The distribution of qualifying species within the site.*

For SPAs:

- With regard to the SPA and the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified (the 'Qualifying Features'...), and subject to natural change; ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring:
 - ▶ *The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features;*
 - ▶ *The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features;*
 - ▶ *The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely;*
 - ▶ *The population of each of the qualifying features; and*
 - ▶ *The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.*

The conservation objectives for Ramsar sites are taken to be the same as for the corresponding SACs / SPAs (where sites overlap). The conservation objectives are considered when assessing the potential effects of plans and policies on the sites; information on the sensitivities of the interest features also informs the assessment.

3.3 Outcomes of Local Plan and Impact Pathways

Analysis of the available European site data and the SSSI condition assessments indicate that the most common reasons for an 'unfavourable' condition assessment of the component SSSI units are inappropriate management of some form (e.g. over- or undergrazing, scrub control, water-level management etc.) or secondary effects from agriculture (e.g. local drainage, run-off, grazing pressure etc.). These are aspects over

which the TDC local plan will have no or little influence, although it is important to understand the pressures currently experienced (particularly when considering 'in combination' effects).

The main mechanisms by which the Local Plan could affect these sites are through spatial allocations that have direct or indirect effects on European sites or through policies that direct development (or do not control development) such that significant effects are likely. The main environmental aspects (e.g. air quality changes; visitor pressure; etc.), and the pathways by which the Local Plan could potentially affect European sites, are summarised in the following sections together with any available baseline data on those aspects to inform the assessment. European sites that are especially vulnerable (i.e. both sensitive and likely to be exposed) to a particular aspect are identified.

Recreational Pressure

Many European sites will be vulnerable to some degree of impact as a result of recreational pressure, although the effects of recreational pressure are complex and very much dependent on the specific conditions and interest features at each site.

The most typical mechanisms for recreational effects are through direct damage of habitats, or disturbance of certain species. Habitat damage will most often be accidental or incidental, but many sites are particularly sensitive to soil or habitat erosion caused by recreational activities and require careful management of recreational activities to minimise any effects – for example, through the provision and maintenance of 'hard paths' (boardwalks, stone slabs etc.) and signage to minimise soil erosion along path margins.

Disturbance of species due to recreational activities can be a significant problem at some sites, although the relationship is highly variable and depends on a range of factors including the species, the time of year and the scale, type and predictability of disturbance. Most studies have focused on the effects on birds, either when breeding or foraging. Of particular relevance to this study is a long-term monitoring project by Natural England on the Thanet Coast that has found that turnstones (a shoreline-feeding waterbird) are particularly vulnerable to disturbance from dogs, which interrupts their feeding behaviour and can prevent them from gaining sufficient body fat for overwintering or migration.

With regard to European sites within the study area, all will be sensitive to recreational pressure to some extent, although the most sensitive to the outcomes of the TDC plan will be **Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA** and **Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar** (due to the sensitivity of the bird species, particularly turnstones); and **Sandwich Bay SAC** (due to the sensitivity of the sand dune habitats).

Most recreational activities with the potential to affect European sites are 'casual' and pursued opportunistically (e.g. walking, walking dogs, riding) rather than being structured (e.g. organised group activities or trips to specific discrete attractions). This means that it can be harder to quantify or predict either the uptake or the impacts of these activities on European sites and (ultimately) harder to control or manage. It also means it is difficult to explore in detail all of the potential aspects of visitor pressure at the strategic level. However it is possible for plans and strategies to influence recreational use of European sites through the planning process, for example by increasing the amount of green-space required within or near developments if potentially vulnerable European sites are located nearby.

Attempts to predict the effects of increased recreation on European sites that may be associated with development or allocations derived from strategic plans typically aim to identify the distance within which a certain percentage of visits originate. Site-specific questionnaire surveys can be undertaken to identify visitor origin and to characterise the typical use of a site; these are then used to identify the 'buffer zones' or 'zones of influence' within which new development would be considered likely to have significant effects on a site, unless appropriately mitigated. Probably the most common metric used for 'buffer zones' or 'zones of influence' is the distance within which approximately 70 - 75% of visitors live. Some examples are summarised in **Table 3.3**. It should be noted that these are necessarily selective as not all studies considering visitor pressure have necessarily reported percentiles; however, they provide some good

examples for European sites that have similarities to sites near Thanet, including the presence of nearby urban areas.

Table 3.3 Travel distances for ~70 – 75% of visitors recorded by previous studies

Study	European sites and key issues	Summary of findings
Solent Disturbance and Mitigation Project (Fearnley <i>et al.</i> 2010)	Solent Maritime SAC Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA Pagham Harbour SPA Chichester and Langstone Harbours Ramsar Pagham Harbour Ramsar (Coastal sites; major urban areas; disturbance of birds)	Half of all visitors arriving on foot lived within 0.7km; half of all visitors arriving by car lived more than 4km away. Average travel distance (excluding holidaymakers): 5.04km. 75% of visits from postcodes within 5.6km.
Thames Basin Heaths (Liley <i>et al.</i> 2005)	Thames Basin Heaths SPA (Heathland sites; urban areas; disturbance of birds)	70% of visitors travel 5km or less to access sites.
Whitehall and Bordon Ecotown (EPR 2012)	Wealden Heaths SPA Shortheath Common SAC Woolmer Forest SAC Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham SAC Thursley and Ockley Bogs Ramsar site (Heathland and woodland sites; urban areas; disturbance of birds; damage to heath)	Average travel distance: 6.7km. 70% of visitors travel 4.3km or less to access sites. 70% distance values for following component sites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frensham Common: 10.7km • Kingsley Common: 7.4km • Bramshott Common: 4.5km • Woolmer Forest: 3.4km • Longmoor Enclosure: 3.2km • Ludshott Common: 2.9km • Broxhead Common: 2.1km • Hogmoor Inclosure: 0.9km • Shortheath Common: 0.6km • Bordon Enclosure: 0.5km
Ashdown Forest (University of Brighton 2009)	Ashdown Forest SPA (Heathland sites; urban areas; disturbance of birds)	76% of visitors travel 5km or less to access sites.
Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay (Fearnley <i>et al.</i> 2014)	Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA / Ramsar; Thanet Coast SAC (coastal sites, disturbance of birds)	75% of 'regular visitors' live within 4.9km; 75% of all visitors live within 9.8km.
Dorset Heaths (English Nature 2006)	Dorset Heaths SAC (plus other sites; heathland sites; urban areas; disturbance of birds)	75% of visitors coming to a site on foot come from within a straight-line distance of 500m. 75% of visitors by car live within 5.3km of the site.
South-East Devon European Site Mitigation Strategy (Liley <i>et al.</i> 2014)	Exe Estuary SPA (coastal sites, disturbance of birds); Dawlish Warren SAC (sand dunes, visitor damage); East Devon Pebblebed Heaths SAC / SPA (heathland, visitor damage, disturbance of birds)	75% of visitors to Exe Estuary, Dawlish Warren, and East Devon Pebblebed Heaths live within 7.8km, 14.4km and 6.9km of the site boundary respectively (based on household survey); 75% of visitors to Exe Estuary and Dawlish Warren live within 14.3km and 14.7km the site boundary respectively (based on on-site visitor surveys). Other metrics for determining 75% distances also used.
Deben Visitor Survey (Lake <i>et al.</i> 2014 for the Deben Estuary Partnership)	Deben Estuary SPA / Ramsar	75% of visitors on a day trip / from home live within 13.2km.

Typically, the distance within which 75% of visitors live is less than 6 – 7km, although in practice this distance is as likely to reflect the local settlement and population distributions, and journey times (which are not generally examined in detail), as much as the attractiveness of the European site. However, it is important to note that there is no standard method for defining the 'zone of influence' and a range of approaches have been adopted for different sites. For example, in a study for Canterbury City Council, Fearnley *et al.* (2014) suggested several possible options for a 'zone of influence' around the Thanet Coast SAC, on which mitigation proposals could be based; these ranged from 4.9km (the distance within which 75% of all 'regular visitors'¹⁶ live) to 7.2km (the distance within which 90% of all 'regular visitors' live), to 9.8km (the distance within which 75% of all visitors live). Indeed, Fearnley *et al.* (2014) note that "*The identification of a 'zone of influence' is really an exercise in identifying a boundary which seems pragmatic, representative of visitor patterns to the site, the physical features of the site, infrastructure, current housing distribution and the nature of the surrounding area*". The South-East Devon European Site Mitigation Strategy (Liley *et al.* 2014) identifies several alternative approaches for determining the a 'zone of influence' around the Exe Estuary SPA (and hence the appropriate area for seeking developer contributions towards mitigation); these ranged from 7.8km from the SPA boundary to 14.3km, with a distance of 10km ultimately selected for the purposes of seeking developer contributions.

A difficulty with using solely travel distance is that it treats all visitors as 'equal users', whereas in reality a relatively small number of visitors will be responsible for most visits to a site (and hence most disturbance risk). NE, as part of its input to the County Durham Plan, has noted that it adopts a '75% rule' to determine significance, whereby recreational buffers are based on the distance within which 75% of visits, as opposed to visitors, originate (i.e. taking account of frequency of visits as well as distance travelled); for the Durham Coast SAC, Northumbria Coast SPA / Ramsar and Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA / Ramsar this distance was 6km. For the Thanet Coast study (Fearnley *et al.* 2014), 75% of all 'regular visitors' lived within 4.9km. Furthermore, it is likely that journey time plays a role in choice of visit location and frequency, although this aspect is not substantially explored in much of the literature reviewed as part of this report.

Some visitor survey data are available for Pegwell Bay and Sandwich Bay, based on recent studies for Dover District Council (DDC 2012; Milnes 2012). These data indicate that most visits to Pegwell Bay and Sandwich Bay are made by individuals living within 5km (Ramsgate, Sandwich, Deal, Cliff's End, Broadstairs, Margate). However, the survey methodologies were different in each case and therefore the results must be treated cautiously and are not entirely suitable for the derivation of typical travel distances or distances within which 75% of visits originate. Visitor survey data for the remainder of the Thanet Coast (i.e. Ramsgate to Herne Bay) are limited, other than the Canterbury City Council study (Fearnley *et al.* 2014.). In the absence of specific data for the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA / Ramsar and Sandwich Bay SAC, the available data from other studies is used as a proxy. However, given the geography of Thanet, all allocations are within 6km of the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA / Ramsar, and most are within 6km of Sandwich Bay SAC; therefore all allocations are likely to contribute to increased visitor pressure on these sites 'in combination', even if individually their contribution is limited.

Additional buffers are sometimes identified to reflect the variation in visitor behaviour, particularly for those that live in close proximity to a site. For example, the studies supporting the County Durham Plan adopted a 400m buffer also, since 59% of respondents living within the 0 – 400 metre buffer were high risk users, i.e. visit the coast between one and three times a day (see also 'Urbanisation' below). This distance has also been used as a threshold for seeking contributions towards mitigation for the Thames Basin Heaths SAC, and is employed in this HRA to identify allocations that are potentially high-risk due to their proximity to the sites.

Urbanisation

European sites can be affected by urbanisation. Other than the effects of recreational pressure, which has been discussed separately (above), urbanisation can result in activities such as fly-tipping or vandalism, and

¹⁶ People visiting at least once a week.

in increased populations of cats, which can predate birds and other species (Woods *et al.* 2003). The effects of these activities/changes depend on the vulnerabilities of the sites, which in turn are influenced by their qualifying features.

As a broad guide, urbanisation effects (excluding recreation) are more likely when developments are within a few hundred metres of a designated site, whereas people will typically travel further for recreation. Consequently, development buffers of around 400m are typically used to minimise the effects of urbanisation as well as recreational pressure: for example, Natural England has identified a 400m zone around the Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA within which housing development should not be located due to the potential effects of urbanisation (particularly the risk of chick predation by cats, which cannot be mitigated).

Although parts of the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay sites are immediately adjacent to the urban areas of Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate, none of the condition assessments for the European sites within the study area identify urbanisation effects (excluding recreation) as a particular pressure or threat; however, a 400m buffer is employed in this HRA to identify allocations that are potentially high-risk due to their proximity to the sites.

Atmospheric Pollution

A number of pollutants have a negative effect on air quality; however, the most relevant to habitats and species (particularly plant species) are the primary pollutants sulphur dioxide (SO₂, typically from the combustion of coal and heavy fuel oils), nitrogen oxides (NO_x, mainly from vehicles) and ammonia (NH₃, typically from agriculture), which (together with secondary aerosol pollutants¹⁷) are deposited as wet or dry deposits. These pollutants affect habitats and species mainly through acidification and eutrophication. Acidification increases the acidity of soils, which can directly affect some organisms but which also promotes leaching of some important base chemicals (e.g. calcium), and mobilisation and uptake by plants of toxins (especially metals such as aluminium). Air pollution contributes to eutrophication within ecosystems by increasing the amounts of available nitrogen (N)¹⁸. This is a particular problem in low-nutrient habitats, where available nitrogen is frequently the limiting factor on plant growth, and results in slow-growing low-nutrient specialists being out-competed by faster growing species that can take advantage of the increased amounts of available N.

Table 3.4 Main air pollutants, pathways and effects

Pollutant	Pathway	Summary of Effects
Ammonia (NH₃)	Primarily from agriculture through decomposition of animal manure and slurry.	Emissions contribute to acidification and (particularly) eutrophication.
Nitrogen oxides (NO_x)	All combustion processes produce oxides of nitrogen (NO _x) into the air; road transport is the main source, followed by the electricity supply industry. NO _x emissions have decreased with increased fuel efficiency and catalytic converters	Emissions contribute to acidification and eutrophication; emissions also contribute to the formation of secondary pollutants and ground level ozone.
Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂)	Sulphur dioxide is released when fuels containing sulphur are burnt, especially coal and heavy fuel oils. The energy industry was the primary source, although this has decreased as the use of coal has decreased.	SO ₂ dissolves readily in water to form an acid which contributes to acidification of soils and water.

¹⁷ Secondary pollutants are not emitted, but are formed following further reactions in the atmosphere; for example, SO₂ and NO_x are oxidised to form SO₄²⁻ and NO₂⁻ compounds; ozone is formed by the reaction of other pollutants (e.g. NO_x or volatile organic compounds) with UV light; ammonia reacts with SO₄²⁻ and NO₂⁻ to form ammonium (NH₄⁺).

¹⁸ Nitrogen that is in a form that can be absorbed and used by plants.

Overall in the UK, there has been a significant decline in SO_x and NO_x emissions in recent years and a consequent decrease in acid deposition; in England, SO_x and NO_x emissions have declined by 90% and 65% respectively since 1990 (NAEI 2014), this being the result of a switch from coal to gas and nuclear for energy generation, and increased efficiency and emissions standards for cars. These emissions are generally expected to decline further in future years. In contrast, emissions of ammonia have remained largely unchanged in recent years: they declined by 20% in England from 1990 – 2008 (NAEI 2014), but have remained largely stable since 2008 (1% decrease from 2008 – 2011; 2.8% increase from 2011 – 2012).

The effect of SO_x and NO_x decreases on ecosystems has been marked, particularly in respect of acidification, and the key contributor to acidification is now thought to be deposited nitrogen, for which the major source (ammonia emissions) has not decreased significantly. Indeed, although it is estimated that the proportion of UK semi-natural ecosystems that exceed the critical loads¹⁹ for eutrophication will decline from 40% to 32% by 2010 (NEGTAP 2001), eutrophication from N-deposition (again, primarily from ammonia) is now considered the most significant air quality issue for many habitats.

The UK Air Pollution Information System (APIS) has been interrogated to identify those European sites and features where critical loads for N-deposition and acidification are met or exceeded. APIS provides a robust source of information on air pollution and the effects on habitats and species and although there are limitations to the data (see SNIFFER 2007), particularly related to the scale at which data can be modelled, this provides the best basis for assessing the impacts of air emissions in the absence of site-by-site monitoring data.

Table 3.5 summarises the APIS data for European sites in the study area with features that are sensitive to changes to air quality. All other sites are either not sensitive to air emissions, or do not have the Critical Load (CL) exceeded. It should be noted that CL values are generally provided for habitats rather than species, and that watercourses are not included as eutrophication of most watercourses due to air emissions is negligible compared to run-off from agricultural land.

¹⁹ 'Critical Loads' are the threshold level for the deposition of a pollutant above which harmful indirect effects can be shown on a habitat or species, according to current knowledge (APIS 2009).

Table 3.5 Summary of APIS Interrogation

Site	Air quality sensitive features	Over CL?	
		Acid	N
Blean Complex SAC	Oak-hornbeam forests	+	++
Dover to Kingsdown Cliffs SAC	Calcareous dry grassland and scrub	-	+
	Vegetated sea cliffs	n/a	n/a
Sandwich Bay SAC	Dunes with creeping willow	+	+
	White dunes	n/a	+
	Grey dunes	+	++
	Embryonic shifting dunes	n/a	+
	Humid dune slacks	+	+

Table Notes:

CL	Critical load
Acid	Acidification
N	Eutrophication
n/a	Critical load not set for feature / feature not sensitive
-	below minimum CL for that habitat
+	minimum CL for that habitat is exceeded
++	maximum CL for that habitat is exceeded

The principal source of air pollution associated with the TDC plan will be changing patterns of vehicle use associated with new development and housing sites. The Department of Transport's *Transport Analysis Guidance*²⁰ states that "beyond 200m, the contribution of vehicle emissions from the roadside to local pollution levels is not significant" and therefore this distance is used to determine the potential significance of any local effects associated with the plan. Environment Agency guidance (EA 2007) also states that "Where the concentration within the emission footprint in any part of the European site(s) is less than 1% of the relevant long-term benchmark (EAL, Critical Level or Critical Load), the emission is not likely to have a significant effect alone or in combination irrespective of the background levels".

However, recent case-law²¹ states that thresholds such as these have been applied inappropriately to the consideration of potential 'in combination' air quality effects, and so the potential for the TDC plan to affect sites with air quality sensitive features is considered in this context, with significant 'in combination' effects excluded only where it is clear that Thanet's contribution will be inconsequential. With regard to the sites in Table 3.5, only **Sandwich Bay SAC** is within the TDC boundary, or within 200m of it; within the TDC area, Sandwich Bay SAC has two A- or B-roads within 200m of it (A256 and A299).

More broadly, the TDC plan proposals may indirectly contribute to wider diffuse pollution within and beyond the TDC boundary, in combination with other developments, plans and programmes. There is little guidance on the assessment of diffuse pollution; NE have previously indicated to Runnymede Borough Council²² that the HRA of its local plan "can only be concerned with locally emitted and short range locally acting pollutants". This is arguably correct, since trans-boundary air pollution can only be realistically addressed by national legislation or higher-tier plans, policies or strategies. As a result, any assessment must focus on the development of suitable mitigating policy that will minimise the contribution of plan-supported development to overall diffuse pollution.

²⁰ <http://www.dft.gov.uk/webtag/documents/expert/unit3.3.3.php#013>; accessed 15/06/14

²¹ *Wealden District Council v. Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Lewes District Council and South Downs National Park Authority* [2017]

²² NE advice to Runnymede Council, reported in the Runnymede BC Habitats Regulations Assessment (June 2016); https://www.runnymede.gov.uk/media/15443/Runnymede-Habitats-Regulations-Assessment-IOPA-July-2016/pdf/Runnymede_Local_Plan_IOPA_JULY_2016_HRA.pdf

Water Resources and Flow Regulation

The exploitation and management of water resources is connected to a range of activities, most of which are subject to separate consenting regimes and not directly controlled or influenced by the Local Plan; for example, agriculture, flood defence, recreation, power generation, fisheries and nature conservation. Much of the water supply to water-resource sensitive European sites is therefore managed through specific consenting regimes that are independent of the Local Plan.

Development promoted or supported by the Local Plan is likely to increase demand for water, which could indirectly affect some European sites. When assessing the potential effects of increased water demand it is important to understand how the public water supply (PWS) system operates and how it is regulated with other water-resource consents. Southern Water (SW) is responsible for water supply to the Thanet area, which is within its Eastern Supply Area (Kent Thanet Water Resource Zone (WRZ)). Thanet receives most of its supply from groundwater (75%) with the remainder from the River Medway, River Stour or pipeline transfer from the Kent Medway WRZ.

Under the Water Act 2003 all water companies must publish a Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) that sets out their strategy for managing water resources across their supply area over the next 25 years. WRMPs use calculations of Deployable Output (DO) to establish supply/demand balances; this enables water companies to identify those WRZs with potential supply deficits over the planning period²³. The calculations account for any reductions in abstraction that are required to safeguard European sites²⁴ and so the WRMP process (with other regulations) helps ensure (as far as is achievable) that future changes in demand will not affect any European sites²⁵.

SW have accounted for the growth predicted by TDC and other LPAs in its forecasting, and have identified small supply-demand deficits in the Kent Thanet WRZ over the planning period. SW will meet this predicted deficit through a combination of:

- Leakage reduction;
- Water efficiency measures; and
- Catchment management to reduce nitrate levels in abstracted water.

The WRMP has been subject to HRA, which has concluded that the preferred options will have no significant effect on any European sites, including those water-resource sensitive sites within the study area (e.g. Stodmarsh SAC / SPA / Ramsar). The WRMP provides the best estimate of future water resource demand, and therefore it is reasonable to assume that the growth predicted within the TDC plan can be accommodated without significant effects on any European sites due to PWS abstractions. Furthermore, since the WRMP explicitly accounts for the growth predicted by TDC and other LPAs, significant 'in

²³ Forecasts are completed in accordance with the Water Resources Planning Guidelines (EA 2016) and take into account (*inter alia*) economic factors (economic growth, metering, pricing), behavioural factors (patterns of water use), demographic factors (population growth, inward and outward migration, changes in occupancy rate), planning policy (LPA land use plans), company policies (e.g. on leakage control and water efficiency measures) and environmental factors, including climate change. The WRMP accounts for these demand forecasts based on historical trends, an established growth forecast model and through review of local and regional planning documents.

²⁴ For example, sustainability reductions required by the Review of Consents (RoC) or the Environment Agency's Restoring Sustainable Abstractions (RSA) programme. It should be noted that, under the WRMP process, the RoC changes (and non- changes to licences) are considered to be valid over the planning period. This means that the WRMP (and its underlying assumptions regarding the availability of water and sustainability of existing consents) is compliant with the RoC and so the WRMP can only affect European sites through any new resource and production-side options it advocates to resolves deficits, and not through the existing permissions regime.

²⁵ Calculations of DO include for Target Headroom (precautionary 'over-capacity' in available water) to buffer any unforeseen variation in predicted future demand; the WRMP is also reviewed on a five-yearly cycle to ensure it is performing as expected and to account for any variations between predicted and actual demand.

combination' effects between the Local Plan and the WRMP are not likely to occur. Having said that, the Local Plan can help manage demand and promote water efficiency measures through its policy controls.

Water Quality

Most waterbodies and watercourses in Thanet are affected to some extent by point or diffuse sources of pollutants, notably nitrates and phosphates. Point sources are usually discrete discharge points, such as wastewater treatment works (WWTs) outfalls, which are generally managed through specific consenting regimes that are independent of the Local Plan; the major treatment works serving the Thanet area are located at Minster and Weatherlees, discharging to the Stour and to sea via a Long Sea Outfall (LSO) at Foreness Point. In contrast, diffuse pollution is derived from a range of sources (e.g. agricultural run-off; road run-off) that cannot always be easily traced or quantified. Development promoted or supported by the Local Plan is likely to increase demand on WWTs, and potentially increase run-off which could indirectly affect some European sites. The South East River Basin Management Plan identifies a number of water quality issues in the Thanet area, notably contamination of groundwater sources by diffuse agricultural pollution and control of discharges from Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs). With regard to effects on European sites, the Environment Agency's Review of Consents determined that there was no adverse effect on the integrity of any European sites, including the Thanet Coast sites, from nutrient enrichment due to Environment Agency permits (e.g. associated with sewage treatment). The TDC plan does not promote any developments that are individually likely to result in significant effects due to increased sewerage requirements and, provided that the planning process allows for timely delivery of additional treatment capacity, new developments should not have any significant 'in combination' effects.

Run-off from impermeable surfaces can have considerable effects on waterbodies and watercourses, in both urban and rural areas. Development has traditionally sought to capture rain and run-off, and divert it to the nearest watercourse or treatment facility as quickly as possible; extensive drainage networks have been developed to facilitate this. However, as the extent of development has increased so the total volumes and flow rates of run-off have increased. This has two principal effects: firstly, pollution-risk increases as impermeable surfaces provide very little resistance to the mobilisation and transport of pollutants; and secondly, flow rates and volumes often exceed the capacity of the receiving drains or watercourses, causing localised flooding or the operation of CSOs²⁶. The effects of run-off from developed areas can be mitigated by the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and by increasing the area of permeable surfaces (both natural and artificial) within developed areas. These measures offer effective attenuation by reducing the volumes of surface run-off. They also increase the retention of pollutants and, in the case of some SuDS, can allow for the treatment of pollutants.

The European sites that are most vulnerable to water quality impacts due to development in Thanet will be the downstream sites – i.e. the Thanet Coast sites and Sandwich Bay SAC. However, the interest features of these sites are not especially vulnerable to water quality changes associated with population growth, either because they are not particularly sensitive to water quality issues (e.g. Sea Caves), or are not likely to be exposed to any environmental changes (e.g. the dune features of Sandwich Bay SAC). Since the water quality effects of the plan are ultimately either controlled by existing permitting regimes (which must undergo HRA) or have diffuse 'in combination' effects that are difficult to quantify, any assessment must focus on the development of suitable mitigation that will minimise the impacts of plan-supported development on water quality.

²⁶ All sewerage systems have a certain capacity, determined by the size of the pipes and the receiving WTW. At times of high rainfall this capacity can be exceeded, with the risk of uncontrolled bursts. CSOs provide a mechanism to prevent this, by allowing untreated sewerage to mix with surface water run-off when certain volumes are exceeded. This is then discharged to the nearest watercourse.

There is no risk of other water quality-sensitive sites in the study area being affected (e.g. Stodmarsh SAC / SPA / Ramsar) due to the absence of impact pathways (i.e. the sites are not downstream of Thanet or linked by other pathways for water quality effects).

Flooding and Water Level Management

Catchment Flood Management Plans (prepared by the Environment Agency) and Shoreline Management Plans (prepared by coastal Local Authorities and the Environment Agency) set out long term policies for flood risk management. The delivery of the policies from these long term plans will help to achieve the objectives of flood risk management and the River Basin Management Plans.

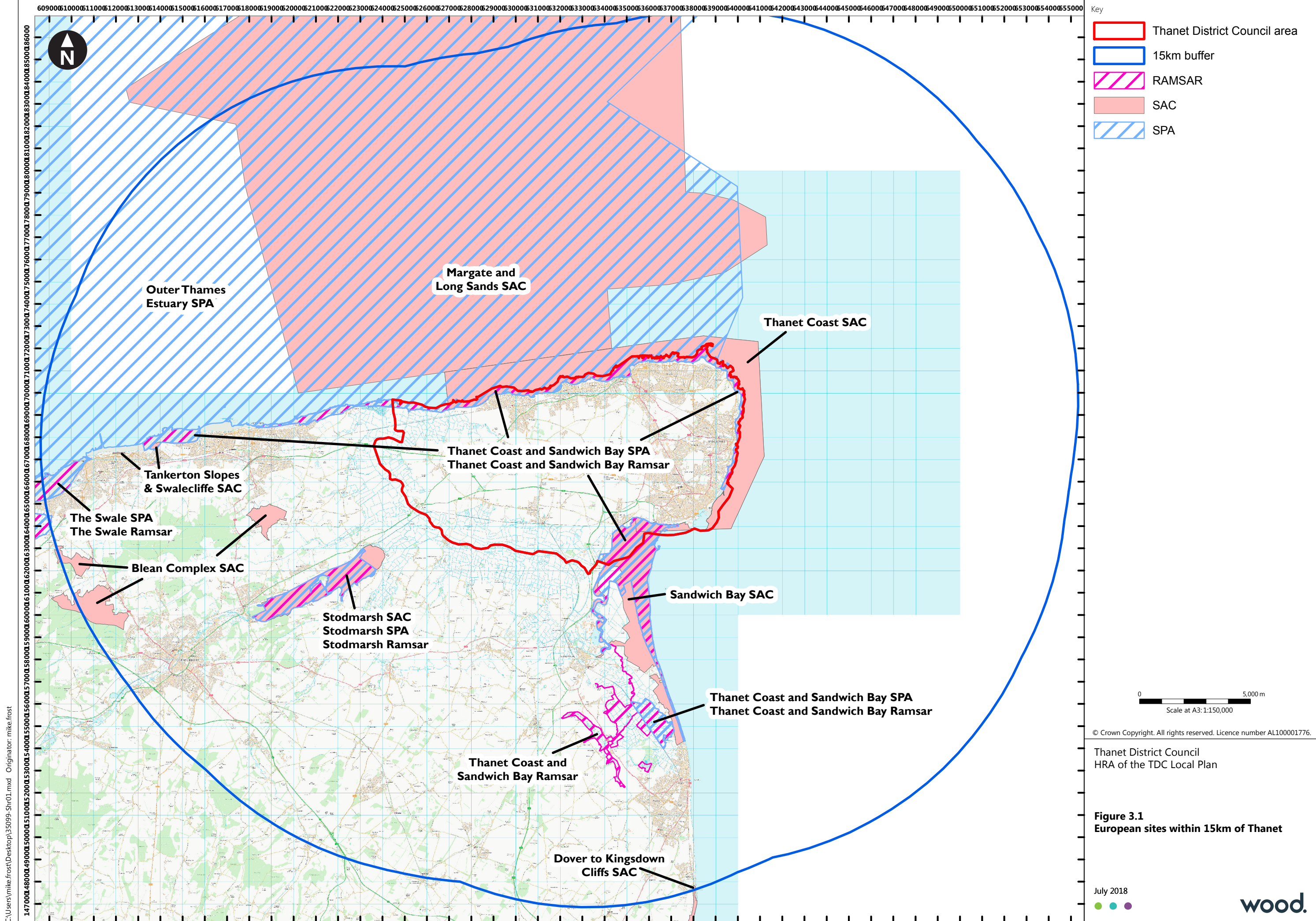
Much of the TDC area has a high flood risk, which is mostly associated with the flooding of low-lying coastal areas by the sea rather than fluvial flooding. Development supported by the Local Plan is unlikely to alter the regional flood risk levels, but may exacerbate the effects of local flooding: run-off flow rates and volumes from impermeable surfaces often exceed the capacity of the receiving drains or watercourses. This can lead to local water quality impacts on European sites. The effect of run-off from developed areas can be mitigated by the use of SuDS and by increasing the area of permeable surfaces (both natural and artificial) within developed areas.

Effects on Habitats Outside of European Sites

The provisions of the Habitats Regulations ensure that 'direct' (encroachment) effects on European sites as a result of land use change (i.e. the partial or complete destruction of a European site) are extremely unlikely under normal circumstances. No such effects will occur as a result of the TDC Local Plan. However, many species that are European interest features (particularly more mobile animal species) may use undesignated habitats outside of European sites. In these circumstances, developments some way from a European site can have an effect on its interest features, potentially affecting site integrity; this can result from any of the above aspects (recreation, water resources, etc.).

With regard to the European sites within the study area, effects on habitats outside of European sites is only considered a potential issue for the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA and Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar, specifically in relation to golden plover and turnstone which are known to use areas outside of the SPA boundaries for foraging and roosting. In summary:

- Golden plover: Studies suggest that some lowland farmland areas may be more important for this species than many coastal and wetland areas typically associated with wintering waders. The species' use of farmland is variable according to cropping patterns, with limited field fidelity from year to year (Mason & MacDonald 1999). This behaviour is not well-recorded by the standard Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) methodology.
- Turnstone: Turnstones are more tied to coastal areas than golden plover, and do not make significant use of inland terrestrial habitats for foraging. Some high-tide turnstone roosts are outside the boundaries of the designated site although the known major roosts are all within or immediately adjacent to the site.



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4. Initial Screening Assessments

4.1 Initial Screening of European Sites

All European sites within 15km of the TDC boundary have been included in the scope of the HRA. Often, however, sites or interest features within a study area can be excluded from further assessment at an early stage ('screened out') because the plan will self-evidently have either 'no effect' or 'no significant effect' on these sites either alone or in combination with other plans or with projects or programmes (i.e. the interest features are not sensitive to environmental changes caused by the plan or are not likely to be exposed to these changes due to the absence of any impact pathways).

The following sections provide a brief summary of the screening of the European sites and their interest features based on the baseline data summarised in **Section 3** and the emerging policies and proposals of the Local Plan. It should be noted that this aspect of the screening process is a 'low bar', with sites, aspects or features only 'screened out' if they will self-evidently be unaffected by the Local Plan (i.e. it is aiming to identify those aspects that will clearly have 'no effect' or 'no significant effect' (alone or in combination) due to an absence of impact pathways).

The screening of the sites and interest features takes account of those general protective policies that are proposed within the Local Plan. In addition, it is appropriate to assume that all relevant lower tier consents and permissions (etc.) will be correctly assessed and controlled, and that any activities directly or indirectly supported by the Local Plan will adhere to the relevant legislative requirements and all normal best-practice (e.g. it would be inappropriate to assume that normal controls on, for example, the installation of a new discharge to a watercourse, would not be correctly followed).

Blean Complex SAC

Blean Complex SAC is a woodland site approximately 4.8km west of the TDC boundary. The site is an NNR and managed in partnership by NE, RSPB and the Woodland Trust, and is almost entirely in favourable condition; coppice management is the key issue in the site unit that is unfavourable. No other factors are identified as having an effect on the site.

Table 4.1 Summary of site screening based on impact pathways

Aspect	Screening summary	Consider further?
Recreational pressure	This site is over 6.8km from nearest TDC allocation, and further (>10km) taking into account road access routes. Access to the site is managed via footpaths and by the Woodland Trust and visitor pressure is not identified as having any negative effect on the condition of the interest features.	No
Urbanisation	There are no TDC development proposals within 500m of the site. Therefore the TDC plan will have no effect via this pathway.	No

Aspect	Screening summary	Consider further?
Atmospheric pollution	<p>Oak-hornbeam forests are not particularly sensitive to atmospheric pollutants and the major road routes into Thanet (the A299 and A28) which are likely to experience increased traffic volumes are over 2km from the woodland.</p> <p>The main road passing the SAC is the A290 between Canterbury and Whitstable; this was subject to traffic modelling as part of the Canterbury Local Plan, which concluded that there would be increases in total traffic volume of around 1667 Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) over that expected without the Canterbury Local Plan being adopted; this would result in an increase of N-deposition equivalent to ~0.8% of the critical load for the site. It was concluded that this would not have a significant effect as it is under 1% of the Critical Load for the site. The above calculations incorporate predicted growth generally but not the specific proposals of the Thanet Local Plan. However, a review of these data has indicated that the TDC plan will not substantially alter these figures: essentially, due to the orientation and position of the A290, and its distance from the TDC area, the Thanet plan will not result in significant additional traffic volumes on this road (any increase would be within the error margin for standard traffic models), and so significant effects alone would not be expected. 'In combination' effects are theoretically possible if a strict additive approach to traffic increases is applied, although the evidence from the Canterbury study (1660 vehicle increase results in ~0.8% of the N-critical load) suggests that the Thanet plan (and others, e.g. Dover) would need to add several hundred additional trips per day to this road to substantially increase the N-deposition over the nominal 1% threshold. As a result, in combination effects are not considered likely.</p>	No
Water resources	Oak-hornbeam forests are not considered to be water-resource sensitive features and therefore will not be affected by increased residential development within the TDC area.	No
Water quality	The site is not hydrologically connected to the Thanet area and so will not be affected by the outcomes of the TDC plan.	No
Flooding / water management	The site is not hydrologically connected to the Thanet area and so will not be affected by the outcomes of the TDC plan.	No
Effects on mobile species away from site	The site does not support any mobile interest features that rely upon land outside the designated site.	No

Dover to Kingsdown Cliffs SAC

This site is an undefended sea cliff approximately 14.9km south of TDC's boundary. The main issues affecting this site are coastal squeeze and grassland management. The site is mostly in favourable condition; those units in unfavourable condition are primarily affected by poor or limited management of encroaching scrub and inappropriate grazing of the calcareous grassland. Part of the SAC is owned by the National Trust (the 'White Cliffs of Dover' estate); access is well-managed and visitor pressure is not identified as an issue at the site.

Table 4.2 Summary of site screening based on impact pathways

Aspect	Screening summary	Consider further?
Recreational pressure	The site is over 15km from the nearest allocation in the TDC plan. Access to the site is available from the coastal path, although visitor pressure is not identified as having any negative effect on the condition of the interest features. Development within Thanet is unlikely to result in a measurable increase in recreational pressure on the site, alone or in combination, such that the interest features could be significantly affected due to the distance of the site from Thanet.	No

Aspect	Screening summary	Consider further?
Urbanisation	There are no TDC development proposals within 500m of the site, and so the TDC plan will have no effect via this pathway.	No
Atmospheric pollution	The minimum critical load for nitrogen deposition is currently exceeded at the site. Data from APIS suggests that the major source for this is shipping (mainly associated with the port at Dover). The majority of the site is well over 200m from the nearest roads; modelling undertaken for the HRA of the Dover Land Allocations Local Plan (DDC 2012) indicated that development in Dover will not result in N deposition over 1% of the long-term benchmark. Development within Thanet will not significantly influence the use of roads within 200m of the SAC and so effects on air quality at this site as a result of the TDC plan will not be significant and are not considered further.	No
Water resources	The calcareous dry grassland and scrub feature is not a water-resource sensitive feature and so will not be affected by population growth within the TDC area. Vegetated sea cliffs are theoretically water-resource sensitive (partly dependent on cliff seepages often associated with local aquifers) but abstraction in the Dover area does not supply Thanet, and so there will be no effects on this feature.	No
Water quality	The site is not hydrologically connected to the Thanet area and so will not be affected by the outcomes of the TDC plan.	No
Flooding / water management	The site is not hydrologically connected to the Thanet area and so will not be affected by the outcomes of the TDC plan.	No
Effects on mobile species away from site	The site does not support any mobile interest features that rely upon land outside the designated site	No

Sandwich Bay SAC

This site is on the southern boundary of the TDC area and supports important sand dune systems and sandy coastal grassland, although the interest features (dune habitats) are generally associated with Sandwich Bay rather than Pegwell Bay (which is the closest part of the SAC to Thanet). The site is mostly in favourable condition; other areas are in unfavourable condition due to inappropriate management and hydro-ecological changes that have degraded some fixed dunes (although these are likely to be due to local hydrological changes). The features of the SAC are vulnerable to a range of potential impacts including direct encroachment, coastal squeeze or coastal developments that alter the natural geomorphological processes; visitor pressure; inappropriate management; air quality changes; and local water quality / quantity changes (note, current abstraction and discharge permits are not having an adverse effect on the site, based on Review of Consents data).

Table 4.3 Summary of site screening based on impact pathways

Aspect	Screening summary	Consider further?
Recreational pressure	Interest features are vulnerable to recreational pressure, particularly trampling / damage of dune habitats. There is limited data on the effects of this on the SAC but this aspect may require more detailed consideration in the HRA.	Yes
Urbanisation	There are few TDC allocations within 500m of the site and none are near the more sensitive dune habitats, and therefore the TDC plan is unlikely to have any significant effects via this pathway.	No

Aspect	Screening summary	Consider further?
Atmospheric pollution	The minimum critical load for nitrogen deposition is currently exceeded at the site for all of the features, although the majority of the site is over 200m from the nearest roads.	Yes
Water resources	Some of the dune features (e.g. humid dune slacks) are water-level sensitive terrestrial ecosystems, although current abstraction and discharge permits are not having an adverse effect on the site, based on Review of Consent data. Furthermore, source protection zones for the abstractions that partly supply Thanet do not intersect the most sensitive areas of the site. It is therefore considered that the TDC plan is unlikely to affect the SAC via this mechanism.	No
Water quality	Development in Thanet could potentially affect the lower reaches of the Great Stour, which forms part of the SAC. This could be through diffuse pollution and discharges from WTWs; and through direct run-off and discharges to the Pegwell Bay section of the site. The management of this is largely determined by Southern Water and the EA, who have not predicted treatment capacity constraints to TDC as the result of the plan proposals that would require specific policy-based mitigate measures (although the Thanet plan policies allow for the early identification of infrastructure requirements to minimise the risks of sewerage headroom being compromised).	No
Flooding / water management	Development in Thanet could potentially affect the lower reaches of the Great Stour although most development is located outside this catchment and significant effects as a result of changes to the flooding regime would not be expected.	No
Effects on mobile species away from site	The SAC does not have any mobile interest features.	No

Stodmarsh SAC / Stodmarsh SPA / Stodmarsh Ramsar

Stodmarsh SPA and Stodmarsh Ramsar are approximately 2.8km south west of the TDC boundary; Stodmarsh SAC is larger and so approximately 2.4km south west. Stodmarsh is a wetland site associated with the River Great Stour, and supports a range of wetland habitats including open water, extensive reedbeds, grazing marsh and wet woodland. The site supports a number of uncommon wetland invertebrates and plants, and provides wintering habitats for wetland bird species. The interest features of the sites are all water-resource dependent to some extent. The site is predominantly in 'favourable' condition; the 'unfavourable' condition SSSI units are in this condition due to localised management issues, related to scrub encroachment or water levels (note, the water level issues are not due to over-abstraction). Most of the site is an NNR or managed under Environmental Stewardship agreements, and so most potential impacts have suitable control mechanisms in place (e.g. control of water levels, visitor pressure management; etc.).

Table 4.4 Summary of site screening based on impact pathways

Aspect	Screening summary	Consider further?
Recreational pressure	The site is within 6km of the nearest TDC allocation. Visitor pressure is not identified as an issue affecting the site, and the wetland nature of the site and controlled access ensures visitor pressure is appropriately managed; increasing the population of Thanet is likely to increase the number of visitors to this site, but, due to the controls, this will not increase damage to the habitats supporting the SAC / Ramsar interest features, or increase direct disturbance of the SPA features.	No
Urbanisation	There are no TDC development proposals within 500m of the site, therefore the TDC plan will have no effect via this pathway.	No

Aspect	Screening summary	Consider further?
Atmospheric pollution	No critical loads are set for the features at this site and they are not considered particularly sensitive to N-deposition from traffic (aquatic habitats); effects on air quality at this site as a result of the TDC plan will not be significant as the site is over 200m from the nearest roads, and this aspect is not considered further.	No
Water resources	The site features are water resource-sensitive, and potentially vulnerable to increased abstraction (although this is not currently affecting the site). However, the WRMP for Southern Water will not have any significant effects on this site (based on the HRA of SW's WRMP), and therefore growth within Thanet can be accommodated. The Thanet plan will have no significant effect on this aspect, although policies should allow for the early identification of infrastructure requirements.	No
Water quality	The site is not hydrologically connected to the Thanet area and so will not be affected by the outcomes of the TDC plan.	No
Flooding / water management	The site is not hydrologically connected to the Thanet area and so will not be affected by the outcomes of the TDC plan.	No
Effects on mobile species away from site	Some of the mobile interest features will use habitats outside the site, potentially including some reedbed habitats associated with parts of the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar. However, there is not likely to be a significant interdependency between these sites and development in Thanet will therefore have only weak indirect effects on the mobile interest features of the SPA. The mitigation required for the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA / Ramsar will also be sufficient to prevent indirect effects on Stodmarsh SPA / Ramsar. The qualifying feature of the SAC (Desmoulin's whorl snail) will not be affected.	No

Thanet Coast SAC

The Thanet Coast SAC covers the northern and eastern coastlines of the TDC area. The site features are essentially marine or intertidal habitats (sea caves, reefs) and are mainly sensitive to direct effects only (i.e. through direct encroachment or factors that alter the geomorphological processes that otherwise dominate the condition of the qualifying features). As a result, they will have a limited exposure and sensitivity to the effects of the TDC plan, despite their proximity.

Table 4.5 Summary of site screening based on impact pathways

Aspect	Screening summary	Consider further?
Recreational pressure	The marine and intertidal nature of the interest features and their locations ensure that they are neither particularly exposed or sensitive to recreational pressure. Any effects are not likely to be significant, although the measures required for the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA / Ramsar will also benefit the SAC.	No
Urbanisation	There are several TDC allocations within 500m of the site and so urbanisation impacts are possible, although the marine and intertidal nature of the interest features and their location ensures that they are unlikely to be exposed to substantial urbanisation pressures, or be particularly sensitive to such pressures.	No
Atmospheric pollution	The qualifying features are not sensitive to air quality effects.	No
Water resources	The qualifying features are not sensitive to effects on water resources.	No

Aspect	Screening summary	Consider further?
Water quality	Some reef features are potentially sensitive to water quality changes, particularly if this results in eutrophication or smothering although the tidal fluxes attenuate local effects to some extent. Impacts from WTW discharges are very unlikely (these enter the sea via long sea outfalls (LSOs) and so effects on this feature are only really possible from diffuse pollution or local point sources such as CSOs or unconsented discharges. These will largely be controlled by the EA although the Thanet plan includes standard policies that will help ensure that run-off is managed appropriately.	No
Flooding / water management	The qualifying features are not sensitive to changes in flooding regime, and are not dependent on water-level management.	No
Effects on mobile species away from site	The SAC does not have any mobile interest features.	No

Margate and Long Sands SAC

This marine SAC is approximately 1.1km offshore from the northern coast of the TDC area. It is designated for its sub-tidal sandbanks. It will not be exposed or sensitive to the likely effects of the TDC plan (no effects likely, and so no potential for 'in-combination' effects to occur) and therefore is not considered further; the general protective policies of the TDC plan will be sufficient to ensure the integrity of this site is not affected.

Tankerton Slopes and Swalecliffe SAC

This coastal grassland site is approximately 9.5km west of TDC area, on the North Kent Coast. It is designated for its population of Fisher's estuarine moth which has a localised population distribution in the UK due to its specific habitat requirements; this site supports its food plant hog's fennel, together with areas of neutral grassland, which is required by the species for egg laying. The SSSI unit that forms the SAC is in favourable condition but is heavily used by dog walkers and is vulnerable to under-management.

Table 4.6 Summary of site screening based on impact pathways

Aspect	Screening summary	Consider further?
Recreational pressure	The site is over 10km from the nearest TDC allocation. Access to the site is available by footpaths and the site is vulnerable to visitor pressure due to its location within Herne Bay, although it is a small site that will not attract significant additional recreation from Thanet. Development within Thanet is unlikely to result in a measurable increase in recreational pressure on the site, alone or in combination, such that the interest features are not likely to be significantly affected.	No
Urbanisation	There are no TDC development proposals within 500m of the site. Therefore the TDC plan is not likely to have an effect via this pathway.	No
Atmospheric pollution	No critical loads are set for the features at this site, and they are not considered sensitive to N-deposition or other air quality impacts. In addition, there are no roads within 200m of the site; effects on air quality at this site as a result of the TDC plan will not be significant and are not considered further.	No
Water resources	The feature is not water resource-sensitive (the food plant, hog's fennel, is a coastal plant favouring moist conditions) and the Thanet plan will have no effect on this aspect.	No
Water quality	The site is not hydrologically connected to the Thanet area and so will not be affected by the outcomes of the TDC plan.	No

Aspect	Screening summary	Consider further?
Flooding / water management	The site is not hydrologically connected to the Thanet area and so will not be affected by the outcomes of the TDC plan.	No
Effects on mobile species away from site	The interest feature is particularly sedentary, and rarely found more than 10m from its food plant which itself is uncommon; the integrity of this population will not be dependent on any habitats in Thanet and therefore development within Thanet will not affect this species if using land outside the SAC boundaries.	No

Outer Thames Estuary SPA

This site is an offshore SPA part of which adjoins the northern coast of the TDC area. The site is designated for its wintering red-throated divers, which are sensitive to disturbance by noise and the presence of people, and for foraging little tern and common terns from breeding colonies on the Essex coast. However, these are very much offshore species and hence they will not be particularly exposed to disturbance associated with the Thanet plan.

Table 4.7 Summary of site screening based on impact pathways

Aspect	Screening summary	Consider further?
Recreational pressure	The site is located on the TDC boundary but the interest features will not be exposed to disturbance effects due to the TDC plan, or effects that are within the control of TDC. Effects on the site integrity will not occur.	No
Urbanisation	Features are not exposed to urbanisation effects (offshore distribution).	No
Atmospheric pollution	No critical loads are set for the features at this site; features not sensitive to changes in air quality that may occur due to development in the TDC area.	No
Water resources	The features are not water resource-sensitive.	No
Water quality	The site receives discharges from the Thanet area which may affect prey species, although this effect is not likely to be significant. Water quality effects associated with pollution from shipping could also affect the SPA. However, there are no likely effects from shipping as a result of the Thanet plan.	No
Flooding / water management	Features are not vulnerable to this aspect.	No
Effects on mobile species away from site	Red-throated divers are mobile but not reliant on terrestrial habitats, and so will not be vulnerable to effects due to the TDC plan. The TDC plan will not affect non-designated offshore areas that may be used by this species. The tern species are associated with colonies on the Essex coast which will not be affected by the TDC plan.	No

Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA / Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar

The Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA and Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar cover most of the coastal areas of Thanet, extending from north of Deal to Herne Bay on the North Kent coast. The SPA and Ramsar sites are not entirely coincident, with the Ramsar site including some local wet grasslands in the Lydden Valley, south of Sandwich Bay, that are not covered by the SPA. However, the SPA and Ramsar boundaries are effectively the same within the Thanet area.

Table 4.8 Summary of site screening based on impact pathways

Aspect	Screening summary	Consider further?
Recreational pressure	The main current threat to the integrity of these sites is the disturbance of feeding and roosting waders, notably overwintering turnstones, by recreational activities (particularly dog walking, although other activities, such as kite sailing, are thought to have local impacts). The habitats of the SPA and Ramsar will be vulnerable to the same aspects as Sandwich Bay SAC and Thanet Coast SAC (see above) although the relationship between the habitat condition and the status of the SPA / Ramsar bird interest features is complex, and effects on the habitats will not always directly and negatively affect these features. The main Local Plan issue for this site is therefore the overall quantum of development in Thanet (and neighbouring authority areas) and the consequent potential for recreational use of the beaches to increase in suitable weather conditions. The plan will need to develop mitigating policies and safeguards to minimise recreational effects.	Yes
Urbanisation	Urbanisation effects are possible as some allocations are within 400m of the site boundary, although these are generally small allocations and urbanisation effects are not currently considered a substantial threat for most of the site based on the SIP.	Yes (with recreational pressure)
Atmospheric pollution	No critical loads are set for the features at this site; the bird interest features and the Ramsar habitats are not sensitive to changes in air quality that may occur due to development in the TDC area (Ramsar habitat features are predominantly aquatic and so not particularly sensitive to N-deposition; bird features are reliant on inter-tidal areas that are not particularly sensitive to N-deposition).	No
Water resources	The Ramsar habitat features are water resource sensitive, and potentially vulnerable to increased abstraction (although this is not currently affecting the site). However, the WRMP for Southern Water will not have any significant effects on this site, based on its HRA, and therefore growth within Thanet can be accommodated. The Thanet plan will have no significant effect on this aspect, although policies allow for the early identification of infrastructure requirements to ensure sufficient provision for water supply is made.	No
Water quality	Development in Thanet could potentially affect some features of these sites (particularly the Ramsar habitats) through diffuse pollution and discharges from WTWs, and through direct run-off and other discharges. The management of this is largely determined by Southern Water and the EA, who have not predicted treatment capacity constraints to TDC as the result of the plan proposals that would require specific policy-based mitigate measures (although the Thanet plan policies allow for the early identification of infrastructure requirements to minimise the risks of sewerage headroom being compromised).	No
Flooding / water management	Development in Thanet could potentially affect the lower reaches of the Great Stour although most development is located outside its catchment and there are no likely significant effects as a result of changes to the flooding regime. However, the Thanet plan policies should allow for flood risk to be mitigated.	No
Effects on mobile species away from site	The bird interest features are mobile and some high-tide turnstone roosts may be outside the boundaries of the designated site, although the known major roosts are all immediately adjacent to the site. Golden plover make use of agricultural fields outside the SPA boundary so are potentially exposed to urbanisation or proximity effects associated with the allocations.	Yes (with recreational pressure)

The Swale SPA / The Swale Ramsar

These sites are approximately 12.8km west of the TDC area at their closest point. The sites are a large complex of brackish and fresh water, floodplain grazing marsh with ditches, and intertidal saltmarshes and mud-flats. They are potentially vulnerable to a range of environmental aspects, including: visitor pressure (thought to be having a significant effect); abstraction and changes in water quality associated with point

discharges (although the EA Review of Consents HRA concludes that these changes are not likely to adversely affect the sites); water quality associated with diffuse pollution (possible significant effect on terrestrial components); coastal squeeze and erosion of intertidal habitat; and inappropriate management.

Table 4.9 Summary of site screening based on impact pathways

Aspect	Screening summary	Consider further?
Recreational pressure	The sites are over 12km from the TDC boundary at their closest point; the majority of the sites are substantially further away. Recreational pressure is considered a significant issue at these sites although visitor surveys by Footprint Ecology (2012) recorded only two visitors from Thanet out of 521 visitors surveyed. Development in Thanet is therefore unlikely to result in a measurable increase in recreational pressure on the sites, alone or in combination.	No
Urbanisation	There are no TDC development proposals within 400m of the site and so the TDC plan will have no effect via this pathway.	No
Atmospheric pollution	The terrestrial features of the Ramsar site are potentially sensitive to atmospheric pollutants although the major road routes into Thanet (the A299 and M2), which may experience increased traffic volumes as a result of development in Thanet, are over 200m from the sites, with the exception of a very small part of the Seasalter Level, west of Whitstable). Effects on air quality at this site as a result of the TDC plan will not be significant and are not considered further.	No
Water resources	The features of The Swale SPA / Ramsar are water resource-dependent and so are potentially exposed to development pressures within the Thanet area since abstractions in North Kent can be used to support Thanet through transfer from the Kent Medway WRZ. However, as with the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA / Ramsar, significant effects on this site are not likely to occur due to the long-term planning and assessment in Southern Water's WRMP: the future water resource requirements of Thanet are factored into SW's abstraction regime, such that they will not affect European sites (i.e. the growth provided for by the Thanet plan is in line with SW predictions for local growth (which are provided for in its current abstraction strategy) and will not increase water resources pressure on any European sites, alone or in combination).	No
Water quality	The site is not hydrologically connected to the Thanet area and so will not be affected by the outcomes of the TDC plan.	No
Flooding / water management	The site is not hydrologically connected to the Thanet area and so will not be affected by the outcomes of the TDC plan.	No
Effects on mobile species away from site	Some of the mobile interest features use habitats outside the sites, including some intertidal habitats around Thanet. This applies particularly to golden plover, which is an interest feature of both The Swale SPA and the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA. However, development in Thanet is all over 15km from the Swale and so golden plover from this SPA are unlikely to make significant use of habitats within Thanet. The mitigation required for the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA / Ramsar will also be sufficient to prevent indirect effects on The Swale.	No

Summary

Most sites and features within the 15km study area will not be significantly affected by the TDC plan, due either to the feature or site not being exposed and/or sensitive to the likely effects of the plan, or because the standard protective policies included within the plan, and the operation of lower tier legislative and consenting regimes, can be relied on to ensure that significant effects will not occur. The main exceptions to this are the Thanet Coast sites, which are exposed and sensitive to recreational pressure. With regard to the water resource sensitive sites (the Stodmarsh sites and The Swale sites), Southern Water's WRMP does not predict a deficit within Thanet that would require resolution with additional abstraction.

4.2 Review and Screening of Policies

Overview

The principles of HRA are applied to the emerging plan and its components (i.e. the policies and allocations) as part of an iterative review process, to ensure that

- Any necessary technical assessments focus on those plan aspects that are likely to result in significant effects on European sites; and
- That the policies of the adopted plan are drafted to provide appropriate overarching safeguards that help (with any subsequently identified mitigation) to ensure that the adopted plan will have no significant effects or no significant adverse effects.

The emerging policies were therefore informally 'screened' during the different stages of plan development (Issues and Options, Preferred Options); the reviews of the 'preferred options' policies and the additional options and allocations identified in 2016 are summarised in Appendix C.

Reviews of Draft Policies

When considering the likely effects of a policy, it is recognised that some policy 'types' cannot result in impacts on any European sites. Different guidance documents suggest various classification and referencing systems to help identify those policies that can be screened out on that basis; the general characteristics of these policy types are summarised in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10 Policy 'types' that can usually be screened out

Broad Policy Type	Notes
General statements of policy / aspiration	The European Commission recognises* that plans or plan components that are general statements of policy or political aspirations cannot have significant effects; for example, general commitments to sustainable development.
General design / guidance criteria or policies that cannot lead to or trigger development	A general 'criteria based' policy expresses the tests or expectations of the plan-making body when it comes to consider proposals, or relates to design or other qualitative criteria which do not themselves lead to development (e.g. controls on building design); however, policies with criteria relating to specific proposals or allocations should not be screened out.
External plans / projects	Plans or projects that are proposed by other plans and are referred to in the plan being assessed for completeness (for example, Highways Agency road schemes; specific waste development proposals promoted by a County Minerals and Waste Plan).
Environmental protection policies	Policies designed to protect the natural or built environment will not usually have significant or adverse effects (although they may often require modification if relied on to provide sufficient safeguards for other policies).
Policies which make provision for change but which could have no conceivable effect	Policies or proposals that cannot affect a European site (due to there being no impact pathways and hence no effect; for example, proposals for new cycle path several kilometres from the nearest European site) or which cannot undermine the conservation objectives, either alone or in combination, if impact pathways exist.

* EC, 2000, Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC April 2000 at 4.3.2

It must be noted that it is inappropriate to uncritically apply a policy classification tool (as in Table 4.10) to all policies of a certain type. There will be some occasions when a policy or similar may have potentially significant effects, despite being of a 'type' that would normally be screened out.

The criteria in Table 4.10 were applied critically to the screening of the draft policies within the Local Plan to identify the following policy groups:

- **'No effect'** policies: policies that will have 'no effect' (i.e. policies that, if included as drafted, self-evidently would not have any effect on a European site due to the type of policy or its operation; for example a policy controlling town centre shop signage, a policy setting out sustainable development criteria that developments must meet). It should be noted that 'no effect' policies cannot have in combination effects.
- **'No likely significant effect'** policies: policies where impact pathways theoretically exist but the effects will self-evidently be 'not significant' (alone or in combination).
- **'Uncertain effect'** policies: policies where the precise effects on European sites (either alone or in combination) are uncertain, and hence additional investigation (appropriate assessment) or policy modification is required. It should be noted that further investigation will often demonstrate that there is no significant effect or allow suitable mitigation or avoidance measures to be identified to ensure this.
- **'Likely significant effect'** policies: policies which are likely to have significant effects (either alone or in combination) and hence which required additional investigation (appropriate assessment) or policy modification. It should be noted that 'likely significant effect' policies are more likely to require the policy be amended, abandoned or re-worked to avoid significant effects.

The reviews of the Preferred Options draft policies are summarised in Appendix C. It should be noted that this review was undertaken during the policy development phase to assist TDC with the drafting of the policies and any appropriate mitigation or avoidance measures; suggestions for policy changes or amendments were not intended to be prescriptive and a number of approaches for ensuring 'no significant effects' would be acceptable (for example, a policy with a potential significant effect could have been abandoned; or modified; or cross-referenced to an over-riding protective policy). In summary, the vast majority of the draft policies were categorised as 'no effect' or 'no significant effect' policies.

4.3 Review and Screening of Site Allocations

The possible allocation sites considered by TDC, and their proposed uses, were reviewed to identify those which (if developed) could result in significant effects on a European site. The review largely focused on the identification of specific effects that might be associated with specific allocations (and which may therefore require the inclusion of allocation-specific mitigation within the plan) rather than the broader 'quantum of development' effects²⁷. The risk of effects is obviously strongly dependent on how a particular development is implemented at the project stage and in most cases potential effects can be avoided using best-practice and standard scheme-level avoidance measures which do not necessarily need to be specified for each allocation (for example, scheduling construction works near the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA for the summer period to avoid potential disturbance of over-wintering turnstones). However, in some instances there may not be sufficient flexibility or safeguards provided within the plan to ensure that a particular allocation, if bought forward, could be delivered without significant effects.

The review of the allocations concluded that most of the allocation sites would not, if developed, have any significant effects on their own that could not be avoided or mitigated using standard measures, and that the plan provided sufficient flexibility (and protective policies) to ensure this. However, the larger residential allocation sites (e.g. Westwood (SP16), Birchington (SP14), Westgate (SP15), Manston Green (SP13)) could arguably, due to their size, result in significant effects on their own due to increases in recreational pressure, particularly on the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA. However, all of the Thanet allocations are within

²⁷ Effects due to the overall quantum of development are essentially a within-plan 'in combination' effect.

6km of the Thanet Coast sites (see Section 3.3) and therefore will have 'in-combination' effects due to recreational pressure. Bespoke mitigation within the plan (or referred to by it), rather than general protective policies, is therefore appropriate to help prevent this occurring. Other 'quantum of development' in-combination effects may occur in respect of those aspects that operate regionally, notably water resources and water quality. The review of the allocations determined that some policies relating to specific allocations would be need to include suitable mitigation to prevent adverse effects occurring as a result of allocation development. There may be a small risk of some allocations affecting fields used by golden plover away from the SPA boundaries; the potential effects of this are considered further in Section 6.

4.4 Summary of Initial Screening

The emerging plan was drafted iteratively, taking into account reviews of early policy drafts and of the preferred options; this has also included a review of the proposed allocations, and the European sites potentially exposed and sensitive to the likely outcomes of the plan. The initial screening concluded that:

- The effects of the plan on the following sites are likely to be nil (no impact pathways) or sufficiently weak that significant effects are not likely to occur (alone or in combination), provided all normal protective policies and safeguards are included within the plan:
 - ▶ Blean Complex SAC;
 - ▶ Dover to Kingsdown Cliffs SAC;
 - ▶ Margate and Long Sands SAC;
 - ▶ Tankerton Slopes and Swalecliffe SAC;
 - ▶ Outer Thames Estuary SPA.
- Potential pathways exist for the following sites to be affected, although the scale of any effects will depend on separate consenting (etc.) regimes that the TDC plan must complement and support through appropriate policy controls (typically sites potentially exposed to regional water resource or water quality effects); in these instances the normal policy arrangements within the plan will be sufficient to ensure significant effects are avoided:
 - ▶ Thanet Coast SAC;
 - ▶ Stodmarsh SAC;
 - ▶ Stodmarsh SPA;
 - ▶ Stodmarsh Ramsar;
 - ▶ The Swale SPA;
 - ▶ The Swale Ramsar.
- The following sites are potentially exposed to significant effects as a direct result of the TDC plan, and so require bespoke mitigation measures (i.e. controls beyond generic policies) to ensure that these effects do not occur or are suitably mitigated:
 - ▶ Sandwich Bay SAC;
 - ▶ Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA;
 - ▶ Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar.

The effects of the plan (based on the final consultation draft of the plan) on Sandwich Bay SAC, Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA, and Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar are subject to 'appropriate assessments'

in the following sections, taking into account the mitigation measures incorporated into the preferred options. This allows those aspects where there is a risk of significant effects to be explored in more detail, and the likely effectiveness of any bespoke measures to be tested.

5. Appropriate Assessment: Sandwich Bay SAC

5.1 Current Issues and Threats to Interest Features

Sandwich Bay SAC is designated for its sand dune habitats, which are sensitive to direct damage (trampling, erosion etc.) and localised eutrophication (e.g. associated with dog faeces). To some extent, the dune systems rely on disturbance to maintain the various successional stages, and the early successional stages are essentially disturbance-generated communities; however, the later successional stages are more sensitive to trampling and localised erosion, which can result in otherwise stable dune habitats being re-mobilised. Kent Wildlife Trust, which manages parts of the SAC, has noted that, with limited formal parking, cars are frequently parked on the dunes, damaging some of the valued habitats. However, this is not noted in the SSSI condition assessment and this aspect is outside Thanet DC's direct control, as the dune habitats are all within the adjacent Dover District Council area.

The minimum critical load for nitrogen deposition is currently exceeded at the site for all of the air quality sensitive features (Dunes with creeping willow; White dunes; Grey dunes; and Embryonic shifting dunes). The Local Plan does not include any proposals for developments that are likely to result in potentially significant new point-sources of emissions, therefore the main mechanism by which the Local Plan may influence the baseline air emissions locally will be through changes in patterns of vehicle use associated with the growth promoted by the Plan. Having said that, it is important to note that there has been a significant decline in NOx emissions in recent years, partly due to increased efficiency standards for cars, and this decline is expected to continue.

5.2 Recreational Pressure and Urbanisation

Proposed / Incorporated Mitigation

The interest features of this SAC are all outside Thanet, and so the extent to which the TDC plan can directly manage or mitigate current pressures through policy controls (etc.) is limited. For example, parking on the dune habitats has been identified as one of the key pressures on the site, but the TDC plan cannot substantially influence this aspect through its planning controls. Therefore, no bespoke mitigation measures are identified within the TDC plan for managing recreational pressure at this site. Having said that, the Local Plan includes a number of policies that will help minimise additional recreational pressure on designated sites, including the following:

- SP12 (General Housing Policy): Requires that, *inter alia*, proposed developments contribute to the SAMM and SP26, and assessment of the development site's functional linkages with the SPA.
- SP24 (Green Infrastructure): Requires that developments make a positive contribution to Thanet's green infrastructure through, *inter alia*, provision and management of new accessible open space for informal recreation/walking and dog walking.
- SP25 (Protection of the International and European Designated Sites): Reiterates the legal requirements of the Habitats Regulations.
- SP26 (Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Plan (SAMM)): Requires that all new residential development complies with the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Plan (SAMM) in order to mitigate against the in-combination effects of new development, with other development considered on a case-by-case basis.

- SP27 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets): Provides policy-level safeguards for land that may be functionally linked to the SPA.
- SP31 (Provision of Accessible Natural and Semi Natural Green Space, Parks, Gardens and Recreation Grounds): Requires provision of green space to help manage the demands for passive recreation generated by residential development.

Assessment of Effects

Public access to the dune systems is limited by the number of public footpaths and the presence of private golf clubs, which ensure that there are access restrictions. Natural England note that the SSSI units that are in unfavourable (recovering) condition within the SAC are affected primarily by management (Unit 22, associated with a golf course) and hydro-ecological changes that have degraded some fixed dunes (Unit 18); recreational activities, particularly vehicles accessing the foreshore, are identified as a pressure in the SIP for the SAC but specific locations are not identified by the SSSI condition assessments.

The growth of Thanet will increase visitor numbers to the site, although it is likely that any increase will be relatively easily to manage since the dune habitats are not 'access land' under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, and the effects will generally be local to the existing PRoWs and Permissive Paths; the absence of open access limits the exposure of the interest features to effects associated with visitor pressure. Consequently, there are a number of factors that are likely to limit the exposure of the interest features to additional recreational pressure, and significant effects are not likely.

With regard to mitigation, the plan includes a number of policies that will help minimise additional recreational pressure, such as SP23 (Green Infrastructure) and SP27 (Provision of Green Space). There may also be opportunities to enhance the management of the SAC alongside the delivery of the Thanet Coast SPA Mitigation Strategy, since there will be many areas of overlap. The effects of the Thanet plan on the SAC will be weak (certainly in comparison with the DDC plan), and the contribution of Thanet to in combination visitor pressure effects will be relatively limited also. The Thanet plan includes measures that are likely to help moderate effects on this site, as far as the plan is able to, and therefore no adverse effects would be expected alone or in combination.

5.3 Atmospheric Pollution

Proposed / Incorporated Mitigation

As with recreational pressure, the interest features of this SAC are all outside Thanet and so the extent to which the TDC plan can directly manage or mitigate current pressures through policy controls (etc.) is limited. Therefore, no bespoke mitigation measures are identified within the TDC plan although the plan includes a number of general policies that will indirectly help minimise the potential for air quality impacts on the dune features of the SAC (e.g. promotion of public transport, etc.).

Assessment of Effects

The Department of Transport's Transport Analysis Guidance²⁸ states that "*beyond 200m, the contribution of vehicle emissions from the roadside to local pollution levels is not significant*" and therefore this distance is used to determine the potential significance of any local effects associated with the plan. There are two A- or B-roads within Thanet and within 200m of Sandwich Bay SAC, namely the A256 between Sandwich and Cliff's End, and the A299 in Ramsgate. However, these roads are some distance from the emissions-sensitive features of the SAC: the dune systems are primarily associated with the section of coast between the Great Stour estuary and Deal, and so are at least a kilometre from the nearest section of main road (the A256

²⁸ <http://www.dft.gov.uk/webtag/documents/expert/unit3.3.3.php#013>; accessed 15/06/14

around Richborough). In addition, none of the major allocations are within 2km of the dune systems, so local air quality changes associated with these developments (and increased traffic in their vicinity) are unlikely to affect the integrity of the SAC. It is therefore unlikely that any increases in emissions from vehicles that could be associated with the Thanet plan (alone, or in combination with other local plans) would adversely affect the integrity of this SAC²⁹.

5.4 Conclusion

The interest features of the Sandwich Bay SAC are all outside of the TDC area. Whilst a number of ongoing pressures and threats are identified for the site interest features, the exposure of the interest features to the effects of the TDC plan is likely to be limited (certainly in comparison with the DDC plan). Furthermore, the TDC has limited scope to prevent or moderate local effects on the sand dune features, except through general policies designed to encourage recreation close to allocation sites (e.g. SP24 (Green Infrastructure)). However, the plan includes measures that are likely to help moderate effects on this site, as far as the plan is able to, and so no adverse effects would be expected alone or in combination.

²⁹ It is worth noting that modelling undertaken for the Dover Land Allocations Local Plan (DDC 2012) indicated that development in Dover will not result in N deposition over 1% of the long-term benchmark (so no adverse effect) on the Dover to Kingsdown Cliffs SAC, which is substantially closer to main population areas and roads than the emissions-sensitive features of Sandwich Bay.

6. Appropriate Assessment: Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA / Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar

6.1 Current Issues and Threats to Interest Features

Turnstone

Recent investigations by the Kent Wildlife Trust have provided evidence that disturbance caused by recreational and commercial activities around the Thanet coastline may be having a detrimental effect on the populations of overwintering waders associated with the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA, especially overwintering turnstones. The most notable disturbing activity, particularly in the northern section of Sandwich Bay, is thought to be walking dogs off the lead (although other activities such as walking, bait digging, and kite surfing may have local impacts). Studies have shown that turnstones are particularly vulnerable to disturbance from dogs, which interrupt their feeding behaviour so affecting their ability to gain sufficient body fat for overwintering or migration.

Population increases associated with new housing provision in Thanet and its neighbouring districts will increase recreational pressure on the SPA as more people are likely to make use of the coastline for leisure and work. Most recreational activities are 'casual' and pursued opportunistically (e.g. walking, walking dogs, bike riding) rather than being structured (e.g. organised group activities or trips to specific discrete attractions). This can make it difficult to quantify the impacts of these activities on European sites and (ultimately) makes it harder to control or manage them. Natural England have suggested that, in the absence of mitigation, the quantum of growth facilitated by the Thanet Plan is likely to have a significant effect on the interest features of the SPA (notably turnstone) which could adversely affect the integrity of the site.

Golden Plover

Golden plover are less dependent on the coastal SPA habitats than turnstone. Several studies suggest that some areas of lowland farmland may be as important for this species as the habitats of the coastal and wetland SPAs typically associated with wintering waders (e.g. Mason & MacDonald 1999; Gillings 2003), and perhaps even more so. Broadly, it appears that golden plover retain an association with wetland or coastal sites, typically remaining within a few kilometres of these (except where significant regional movements of flocks occur in response to (for example) weather conditions), but will often spend several tidal cycles (or more) foraging and roosting in farmland, both during the day and night. This behaviour is known to be under-recorded by the standard Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) monitoring technique, with the result that increasing attention is being paid to the use of agricultural areas by overwintering golden plover. Indeed, the 2016 SPA Review (JNCC 2016) includes golden plover in a broad group of species that are known to be reliant on cropped habitats, which are under-represented in the SPA network (although the SPA Review suggests that this should be addressed outside the SPA Review process through "*wider countryside measures to preserve and promote permanent pasture as feeding and roosting habitat for the species*").

However, whilst there is evidence of regional site fidelity (i.e. birds associated with the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA will predominantly use available habitats within a few kilometres of the site), the species' use of farmland appears variable according to cropping patterns and rotations, with limited field fidelity from year to year (Mason & MacDonald 1999) except where favoured habitats are consistently or intentionally maintained. There is evidence that certain crops may be favoured, and larger fields are favoured over smaller ones, but distributions will often be variable from year to year. Gillings *et al.* (2007) found that flocks

occupied only a fraction of the available fields in a given area, concentrating mostly in large fields with open boundaries and where manure had been applied. The Thanet plan could arguably affect golden plover through direct disturbance of birds using the SPA due to increased recreational pressure (as per turnstone), or by affecting associated functional habitat and favoured non-SPA areas due to the allocations themselves (direct loss of functional habitat) or through increased recreational pressure associated with developments.

It should be noted that the second and third SPA Reviews (Stroud *et al.* 2001 and Stroud *et al.* 2016 respectively) have both suggested that golden plover be removed as an interest feature from this SPA, and it is understood that the third review is likely to be implemented in the near future.

Little Tern

The SPA is designated in part for its breeding little terns, which, up until the 1990s had colonies on Shell Ness at the mouth of the Great Stour in Pegwell Bay, and at Plum Pudding Island on the north coast of the Thanet peninsula, near Minnis Bay. Around 30 pairs regularly nested in Pegwell Bay at the time of designation (1992), although this had dropped from a peak of over 60 pairs in the mid-80s. This decline has continued in recent years such that the 2nd SPA Review suggests that little tern might be removed as an interest feature, and the SIP notes that "*previous attempts at habitat conservation and management to encourage this species to breed within the site again have been unsuccessful*". Kent Wildlife Trust (2012) note that "*breeding little terns abandoned the site in the 1990s*". The reasons for the decline are uncertain, but disturbance has been suggested as a possible cause. However, the site appears to remain unused despite management measures to moderate this, and recent surveys (e.g. for the Richborough grid connection project (National Grid 2016)) have not recorded little tern breeding at Shell Ness. The Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory identifies them as 'migrants' rather than breeders in its sightings list. It is possible that wider population-scale changes have resulted in local declines, or there may have simply been a minor shift in site conditions or preferences which has led to abandonment of the breeding locations.

Although the conditions at former breeding colonies appear to remain suitable and habitat conservation and management measures have been employed to ensure this, population increases associated with new housing provision in Thanet and its neighbouring districts will increase recreational pressure on the SPA as more people are likely to make use of the coastline for leisure and work; if this is not managed then it is unlikely that favourable conditions for future re-colonisation of the site by little terns will be achieved.

6.2 Recreational Pressure and Urbanisation

Proposed / Incorporated Mitigation

Disturbance effects on birds within the SPA

One of the most common approaches to mitigation for recreational impacts involves developer contributions, usually linked to catchment areas and development size (see Section 3.3). Natural England has indicated to TDC that provision of a wardening scheme would provide a suitable approach to mitigation, supported by funding for access management measures such as rationalisation of access points and car park locations, and the provision of interpretation.

Dover District Council (DDC) has, within its Land Allocations Document, proposed a Mitigation Strategy for the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA that is funded from a tariff system of developer contributions. DDC is drafting a charging schedule setting out four different residential contribution rates based on proximity to the SPA, although a directly-equivalent approach (i.e. identification of catchment areas) is not considered appropriate for Thanet due to the proximity of all allocations to the SPA.

There are several policies within the Thanet Local Plan that will help minimise or manage additional recreational pressure on the SPA, including:

- SP12 (General Housing Policy): Requires that, *inter alia*, proposed developments contribute to the SAMP and SP26, and requires an assessment of a development site's functional linkages with the SPA.
- SP24 (Green Infrastructure): Requires that developments make a positive contribution to Thanet's green infrastructure through, *inter alia*, provision and management of new accessible open space for informal recreation/walking and dog walking.
- SP25 (Protection of the International and European Designated Sites): Reiterates the legal requirements of the Habitats Regulations.
- SP26 (Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Plan (SAMP)): Requires that all new residential development complies with the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Plan (SAMP) in order to mitigate against the in-combination effects of new development, with other development considered on a case-by-case basis.
- SP27 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets): Provides policy-level safeguards for land that may be functionally linked to the SPA.
- SP31 (Provision of Accessible Natural and Semi Natural Green Space, Parks, Gardens and Recreation Grounds): Requires provision of green space to help manage the demands for passive recreation generated by residential development.

The most notable of these is **SP26**, which refers to the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Plan (SAMP) for the Thanet coast (essentially, a plan for mitigating the potentially adverse effects of housing growth in Thanet on the SPA), and requires that developers demonstrate how they are meeting this. The SAMP (TDC 2016) has been finalised in consultation with NE, and is available from the TDC website³⁰. In summary, the mitigation package presented in the SAMP comprises:

- a wardening service between October and April, providing an on-site presence throughout the SPA within Thanet District when turnstones and golden plover numbers are at their peak;
- educational measures to support longer-term compliance;
- a co-ordination role to manage the wardening presence and to coordinate activities throughout the year;
- localised access-management; and
- regular monitoring of birds and visitors.

These measures will be funded by a developer tariff, based on the number of new dwellings, which will cover annual mitigation costs (i.e. seasonal wardening, coordination, monitoring, etc.) and any capital investment required (e.g. signage etc.) in perpetuity. The SAMP will be reviewed after a period of no more than ten years, or sooner if monitoring results identify potentially significant issues which are not being addressed by the SAMP. The SAMP will be principally targeted at the wintering interest features using the SPA (i.e. turnstone and golden plover), but could potentially be extended to support little tern should future monitoring suggest that a population recovery is underway that would benefit from these measures.

This strategic mitigation approach covers strategic housing allocations included in the plan, plus likely windfall sites. The SAMP was initially drafted on the basis of an allocation of 12,000 new homes over the planning period. The appropriateness of the SAMP to the revised allocation (17,140 by 2031) has been evaluated, and it is considered that the measures proposed for the 12,000 allocation can be scaled up to address the higher housing figures; this is consistent with NE's position on other strategic mitigation schemes (for example, in relation to the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, or the SPAs associated with the Solent and nearby

³⁰ Available at: <https://www.thanet.gov.uk/media/3307595/Thanet-DC-SAMP-MAIN-REPORT-Final-21st-April-2016.pdf>

harbours). Other development which may come forward (e.g. windfall development) may require separate assessment at the discretion of the Local Planning Authority. TDC is also working with neighbouring Canterbury City Council on co-ordinating the mitigation approach for the SPA, and as part of the North East Kent Marine Protected Area (NEKMPA) Management Group.

The policies within the Local Plan reflect the SAMM. Financial contributions will address the cumulative 'in combination' impact of the developments allocated for development in this Plan. Project-level HRA will also be required to determine any site- or scheme-specific details that may require additional measures, notwithstanding the requirements of the SAMM.

Effects on functional habitats

Effects on associated functional habitats in close proximity to the SPA (principally roost sites adjacent to the SPA) will be managed and minimised by the measures proposed within the SAMM. However, golden plover are known to make significant use of fields outside of the SPA, and potential effects on this interest feature in these locations are unlikely to be directly mitigated by the SAMM (as usage is too variable, depending on cropping patterns, for targeted wardening). Areas that are known to regularly support significant aggregations of golden plover (e.g. fields around Pegwell Bay) have been avoided through the allocations process, but the key difficulty in designing appropriate mitigation for this aspect is the variability in the use of many fields by golden plover, depending on annual cropping patterns. Simply avoiding certain fields in the allocation process is unlikely to guarantee that there will be no adverse effects. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that species that are known to be reliant on cropped habitats can only really be supported by "*wider countryside measures to preserve and promote permanent pasture as feeding and roosting habitat for the species*" (JNCC 2016), which TDC can have limited influence over. Having said that, the plan can ensure that this aspect is explicitly considered by developers when bringing forward proposals that could affect the feature.

The TDC plan therefore adopts a policy-led mitigation approach to the potential effects on functionally-linked land, to ensure that this potential issue is appropriately considered at the site level when developments are brought forward, including:

- SP12 (General Housing Policy): Requires that, *inter alia*, proposed developments contribute to the SAMM and SP26, and assessment of the development site's functional linkages with the SPA.
- SP25 (Protection of the International and European Designated Sites): Reiterates the legal requirements of the Habitats Regulations.
- SP27 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets): Provides policy-level safeguards for land that may be functionally linked to the SPA.

Policy SP12 is a cross-cutting policy that requires that developers "*5) Include an assessment of the site's functionality as a roosting or feeding resource for the interest features of the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA Special Protection Area, including areas within 400m of the development site's boundary, and provide mitigation where necessary.*" The supporting text then notes the following reasoning for this:

- Wintering birds associated with the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA, particularly golden plover, can use terrestrial habitats outside the SPA boundary for roosting or feeding;
- No evidence has been found of allocations coinciding with favoured sites supporting notable aggregations away from the coast, but usage of terrestrial habitats varies over time; and so
- It is appropriate for applicants to establish whether the proposed development site, and other areas within 400m, have any functional linkages with the SPA that may be significantly affected by the development.

Assessment of Effects

Turnstone

Turnstone population surveys undertaken in 2013 and 2014 by the Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Trust (SBBOT) for NE recorded notable declines in turnstone numbers, compared to surveys undertaken between 2001 and 2010. This is reflected in WeBS sector count data. Although recreational disturbance has been cited as a potential factor in this decline, the studies of such disturbance on the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA have not established a relationship between the observed disturbance levels and reduced productivity or increased mortality of the SPA interest features. However, that is not to say that potential increases in visitor pressure are not an issue that needs to be appropriately managed.

With regard to the prediction of effects, it is not possible to accurately model the likely increase in the number of visits to the SPA / Ramsar site without substantial investigations into the current behaviour of residents in the Thanet area. As noted (see Section 3.3), most attempts to predict the significance of increased recreation on European sites generally aim to identify the distance within which a certain percentage of visits originate (i.e. taking account of frequency of visits as well as distance travelled); this is typically 75%. Analysis of the literature suggests that, for most European sites studied, this distance is usually around 5 – 7km from the site boundary. However, the merits of this for Thanet are limited as all of the TDC area is within 6km of the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA and, as the Thanet peninsula is only around 6km from north to south and the main population centres are clustered around the coast, the majority of the population is within 2km. The vast majority of visitors during winter will therefore originate from Thanet, and all of the allocations will be within the typical travel distance for casual recreation. It is possible that some allocations may have a disproportionate effect due to their proximity to the SPA / Ramsar site; the allocations that are within 0 – 2km of the SPA may be of more concern, partly as many of these are within existing urban areas and so there will be limited space to provide alternative local recreational opportunities, and partly as they are so close to the SPA that the site will almost always be the first-choice location for casual recreation.

Provided that sufficient funds are available, management can be designed to minimise disturbance. It is therefore important that the Local Plan provides control mechanisms for monitoring, managing and mitigating any potential effects. Other local authorities' plans have adopted a range of measures in similar situations, but most commonly these involve developer contributions to site management; and the provision of well-designed green infrastructure that integrates with the developments and allows easy walking access to local greenspace and the wider countryside (i.e. attractive local areas that are more convenient than protected areas). Studies have repeatedly shown that the most important factors influencing dog owners' choice of recreational area are the ability to take their dog off its lead, the proximity to home and an absence of traffic. Measures that reduce the attractiveness of the Thanet Coast in this regard and that increase the accessibility and value of local greenspace are likely to be successful in mitigating some potential increases in recreational pressure.

The proposed mitigation scheme (the SAMM) is considered likely to be successful in managing the effects of population growth and recreational pressure, such that there are not likely to be any adverse effects on turnstone.

Little Tern

The potential effects of the Thanet Plan on little tern are difficult to quantify, particularly considering the current absence of the species despite there being apparently suitable conditions for breeding. In the absence of future management or control measures it is unlikely that favourable conditions for breeding little tern would be maintained. However, the relatively discrete distribution of little tern at the site ensures that any potential disturbance due to recreation can potentially be managed. The SAMM can be relied on to help ensure that favourable conditions (as far as these are influenced by the Thanet plan) are maintained. On this basis, the plan would have no significant effect on the little tern interest feature.

Golden Plover

As noted, golden plover are less dependent on the coastal SPA habitats than turnstone, so whilst the SAMM will have some benefit for this species, this will principally relate to its use of the SPA (although improving the condition of this by reducing and managing disturbance will logically increase resource availability within Thanet and hence increase the resilience to loss of some terrestrial foraging opportunities). Assessing the effects of population growth on this aspect is difficult at the strategy level, as:

- There is limited data on the distribution, within Thanet, of golden plover and its key foraging areas; and, particularly
- Distributions and the use of fields will vary year to year according to local and regional conditions, and cropping patterns (e.g. cold winters may increase use of some terrestrial habitats).

The principal sources of data on the use of terrestrial habitats by golden plover in Thanet are

- The English Nature Research Report No. 569 (Numbers and distribution of the wintering golden plover population in and around the Thanet Coast & Sandwich Bay SPA 2002/2003; EN (2004));
- Ad hoc surveys and records, including Kent Ornithological Society sightings data (online, accessed June 2017) and surveys reported for the Richborough Grid Connection project (National Grid (2016)); and
- Surveys of the allocation sites, completed in early 2016 and repeated in 2016 / 2017 (Sutherland 2016; see Appendix F).

Determining the numbers of golden plover that are associated with the SPA and potentially exposed to the effects of the plan is not simple, and is complicated somewhat by the likelihood that golden plover will be removed as a feature of this SPA following the 2016 SPA Review. Currently, the SPA citation indicates that the site supports 0.2% of the GB population (a 5-year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96 of 411 birds), although the original citation noted a 5-year peak mean of 1,980 birds. Having said that, the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS; BTO (2016)) data (Table 6.1) show that larger aggregations have been recorded in the Pegwell Bay and the Thanet Coast count areas, although their distributions do not coincide exactly with the SPA or Ramsar site boundaries. In addition, *ad hoc* records (see "*Known important areas*" below) show that large aggregations do occur (including in areas not covered by the WeBS). Inland aggregations of some birds, including golden plover, are known to be under-recorded by the WeBS.

Table 6.1 WeBS 5-year peak means for golden plover in Pegwell Bay and the Thanet Coast count areas

5 Year Period	Peak Mean	
	Pegwell Bay	Thanet Coast
2000/2001 - 2005/2006	6912	1112
2001/2002 - 2006/2007	6346	885
2002/2003 - 2007/2008	6125	117
2003/2004 - 2008/2009	5100	130
2004/2005 - 2009/2010	4664	201
2005/2006 - 2010/2011	4064	206
2006/2007 - 2011/2012	3958	200

5 Year Period	Peak Mean	
	Pegwell Bay	Thanet Coast
2007/2008 - 2012/2013	3724	189
2008/2009 - 2013/2014	3424	192
2009/2010 - 2014/2015	3285	88

Note: the decline in numbers between 2000/01 and 2014/15 broadly mirrors national trends for this species.

When considering thresholds for significance, 1% of the relevant population is typically used; so, for golden plover, the threshold for designation as an international site is 4,000 birds, based on the currently estimated UK population of golden plover of 400,000 (Stroud *et al.* 2016). This 1% value is often used for HRAs of projects – so a project likely to affect 1% of an SPA's population of a species could potentially have a significant effect (in HRA terms). As the population of golden plover associated with the SPA is uncertain (particularly with regard to the future inclusion of the species as a feature), it is considered appropriate to use the current WeBS 5 year peak mean for Pegwell Bay and Thanet Coast (around 3370 birds if combined) and the GB population (400,000) to provide guidance on appropriate thresholds; on this basis, aggregations of 34 – 40 birds (i.e. 1% of the 5 year peak mean, and 0.1% of the threshold for SPA designation) would be considered potentially notable, such that significant effects could potentially occur.

Known important areas and allocation sites

Historically, golden plover have roosted in large numbers (+10,000 birds) at low tide on the intertidal mudflats of Pegwell Bay, with Musgrove *et al.* (2003) indicating that golden plover were largely confined to the area by the outflow of the Great Stour. Other datasets identify areas outside Pegwell Bay itself where potentially notable numbers of golden plover have been recorded:

- EN (2004): the largest aggregations of golden plovers identified in this report are largely outside Thanet, in fields adjacent to Sandwich Bay; three sites that appear particularly important for golden plover are identified and recommended for inclusion in the SPA (these either form part of the Ramsar site, or are immediately adjacent to the SPA). In addition, the fields around Reculver periodically support aggregations of golden plover.
- Surveys undertaken for the Richborough Grid Connection project (National Grid 2016) between 2012 and 2015 recorded several larger aggregations of golden plover on or near the grid connection route, notably:
 - ▶ 1200 north-east of Sevenscore, in December 2012;
 - ▶ 180 in fields north of Weatherlees WWTW in January 2013;
 - ▶ 1500 near Richborough Castle in November 2013;
 - ▶ 540 near Stonelees in February 2014;
 - ▶ Several flocks of over 200 birds were also recorded flying during vantage point surveys of the route, particularly over Ash Level.
- Kent Ornithological Society (KOS) have several records from the last eight years where peak counts of golden plover exceed 100 birds at sites in Thanet, most notably from:
 - ▶ Pegwell Bay (peak count of 1600 from November 2010); and

- ▶ The fields and marshes between Reculver and Birchington (several hundred birds recorded in most years).
- KOS also have older incidental records of large aggregations in the fields around Nicholas St Wade (3,950 feeding on winter wheat in 2003) and around Reculver – Birchington (3,941 individuals recorded on one occasion in 2003).

Overall, the principal non-SPA areas within Thanet that appear to be commonly used by golden plover are:

- The fields between Richborough and Ramsgate, near Pegwell Bay, south and east of the A299 and A256³¹; and
- The fields between Reculver and Birchington on the north coast, north of the railway at this location.

Areas immediately outside of these 'core areas' appear to be used periodically or on an opportunistic basis, including: the fields between Westwood and Kingsgate; Minster Marshes, south east of Minster; and around Cliff End, north of the A299. These areas are illustrated on Figure 4.1.

It should be noted that golden plover from the SPA also disperse to areas outside Thanet, including fields around Ash (Dover District Council) and south to New Downs and Worth Marshes, although the majority of the birds associated with the SPA (over 80%, based on EN (2004)) appear to use areas of permanent pasture within and immediately outside the SPA to the south of the Great Stour, associated with Sandwich Bay (also illustrated on Figure 4.1).

Urbanisation or disturbance effects are typically considered likely if development takes place within around 400m of a designated site³². Although not directly applicable to functional land³³, all of the allocations are over 500m from the 'core' areas noted above, with the exception of:

- Eurokent, Haine Road – approximately 300m north of the fields north of Pegwell Bay (although separated from these by the A299);
- S426 (Jentex Site, Cliffsend) – approximately 420m north of the fields north of Pegwell Bay (although separated from these by the A299);
- S455 (Young's Nursery, Cliffsend) – approximately 420m north of the fields north of Pegwell Bay (although separated from these by the A299);
- S468 (Site A, Cliffsend) – approximately 280m north of the fields north of Pegwell Bay (although separated from these by the A299);
- S435(2) (Cliff View Road, Cliffsend) – adjacent to the fields north of Pegwell Bay; and
- S416 & S541 (Cottington Road, Cliffsend) – adjacent to the fields north of Pegwell Bay.

The 2016 survey data (Sutherland 2016) recorded two potentially notable aggregations of golden plover (i.e. over 34 birds) from the areas surveyed:

- A group of 60 birds in fields east of Woodchurch Road; and

³¹ Although it should be noted that this is based on data from EN (2004), which predates the completion of the A256 / A299 road construction, which cuts directly through this area.

³² For example, 400m has been identified as the distance from the Thames Basin Heaths SPA and the Solent and Harbours SPAs within which development should not occur due to the risk of significant effects on the SPAs themselves.

³³ SPAs typically support higher value and more unique habitats where concentrations of (usually dependent) species are found; agricultural land is more ubiquitous and so pressure on, say, an individual field would not typically carry the same degree of risk as pressure on an equivalent area of an SPA.

- A group of 84 birds in fields west of St. Peter's Lane, Westwood (29 birds were also recorded in this location on a separate occasion).

The fields in Westwood are over 500m from the nearest allocations, although the Woodchurch Road site is approximately 380m from the Westgate strategic allocation site (Policy SP15).

The closest records to allocation sites are summarised in Table 6.1; it should be noted that no records of golden plover were returned from the 'core area' fields north of Pegwell Bay (see above) during the 2016 surveys.

Table 6.2 Closest records of golden plover to allocation sites, based on 2016 survey data

Allocation	Location	Summary of golden plover distribution
S426	Jentex Site, Cliffsend	15 birds recorded from a field north of Canterbury Road West, approx. 350m east of the allocation.
S455	Young's Nursery, Cliffsend	15 birds recorded from a field north of Canterbury Road West, approx. 200m east of the allocation.
S468	Site A, Cliffsend	15 birds recorded from a field north of Canterbury Road West, approx. 360m east of the allocation.
SS33	Eurokent, Haine Road	15 birds recorded from a field north of Canterbury Road West, approx. 320m west of the allocation.
SP15	Westgate Strategic Allocation Site	7 birds recorded in a field north of Shottendane Road, approx. 170m from the southern boundary of the allocation. 3 birds recorded in a field south of Shottendane Road, approx. 500m from the southern boundary of the allocation. 60 birds recorded in a field south of Shottendane Road / east of Woodchurch Road, ~540m from the southern boundary of the allocation.
SP16	Westwood Village, Westwood Cross	2 birds recorded within the allocation boundary; 4 additional birds were recorded within 500m (within the S535 & S549 allocation sites).
S535 & S549	Coldswold Road, Ramsgate	4 birds recorded within allocation boundaries; 2 additional birds were recorded within 500m (within the Westwood Village allocation site).

Wider landscape-scale effects

Analysis of land use can be used to estimate potential impacts across Thanet as a whole, although this approach must be used cautiously due to the resolution and age of the available data. Approximately 98% of the land area of Thanet district is within 5km of the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA (all but approximately 250 ha. in the south-west corner). Based on the CORINE land use dataset from 2012 (CEH 2016), approximately 60% of this area (~6400 ha.) is undeveloped agricultural land (pasture or irrigated arable land), which is theoretically available to golden plover for roosting and foraging depending on annual cropping patterns. Of the remainder, approximately 33% (~3600 ha.) is developed (urban areas, airports, ports, green urban spaces, etc.) and 7% comprises coastal habitats (beaches, dunes, salt marshes, intertidal flats).

Assessment

The proposed allocations will occupy approximately 352 ha. of arable or pasture within 5km of the SPA, which is around 5.5% of the total area of arable or pasture within Thanet that is within 5km of the SPA; this

area will not be available to golden plover in the future. Translating this crude spatial analysis into a robust assessment of impacts is difficult, however, as golden plover will not be evenly distributed across the theoretically available areas due to local factors that cannot be easily identified at the strategic or landscape scale³⁴, and many agricultural areas will not be suitable for short- and long-term reasons (e.g. fields too small; annual cropping patterns; etc.). In addition, the vast majority of the allocations are on the edge of existing settlements, in areas likely to be less favoured by golden plover in any case

Whilst some golden plover are likely to periodically use allocation fields, there does not appear to be any evidence to suggest that particular allocation sites are favoured, or that potentially significant annual aggregations will be displaced. Whilst the allocations will occupy over 300 ha. of greenfield land, several thousand hectares of land (within Thanet alone) will remain available for this species.

All of the allocations are at least 400m from the estimated 'core areas' that are within Thanet, with the exception of small allocations around Cliffsend and the southernmost tip of the Eurokent site which are in or near a 'core area' around the north-eastern edge of Pegwell Bay. However, the use of this area has been influenced by the construction of the A256 and A299, which pass through this core area and which post-date the EN (2004) surveys. It is also evident that the vast majority of golden plover associated with the SPA (at least 80% based on EN (2004)) tend to remain in areas of permanent pasture to the south of the Great Stour, outside Thanet District. On this basis, the exposure of golden plover associated with the SPA to the effects of the Thanet Local Plan is limited.

The allocations in the TDC plan will not substantially reduce the habitat areas potentially available to golden plover. Having said that, the variability in the use of many fields by golden plover, often depending on annual cropping patterns, creates a risk of potential effects that cannot be avoided by simply excluding certain fields in the allocation process, and it is possible that some allocation areas will, in the future, become valuable for this species. Given this and whilst golden plover remains an interest feature of the SPA, it is appropriate for the species to be considered within the development proposals for specific sites.

The mitigation within the plan creates a policy structure whereby assessments for impacts on golden plover are specifically required for the various allocations as they are brought forward by developers, with a requirement for appropriate mitigation should likely significant effects be identified. The plan is not prescriptive on this point, as the mitigation requirements will depend on the scale and type of effects (if any); importantly, however, the plan ensures that there is sufficient flexibility for significant effects to be avoided, should these be identified during lower tier assessments. Therefore, the plan will have no significant effects (alone) on golden plover using functional land, based on the wider availability of habitats, the relatively localised effects of the allocations, and the measures incorporated within the plan.

With regard to 'in combination' effects, particularly with allocations from adjacent authorities, it is evident that TDC has managed its impacts on the identified core golden plover areas within its control as far as it is able, and that its effects on the species' population associated with the SPA (which also use the Canterbury City or Dover District areas) are nominal. There are a few allocations within these neighbouring authorities that could affect the non-SPA core areas that have been identified, although mitigation measures incorporated into the CCC and DDC plans will minimise the effects of this, and on this basis significant 'in combination' effects are not anticipated.

Additional mitigation opportunities

The plan is not prescriptive on mitigation requirements, although as species that are known to be reliant on cropped habitats can only really be supported by "*wider countryside measures to preserve and promote permanent pasture as feeding and roosting habitat for the species*" (JNCC 2016) it may be useful for a policy

³⁴ For example, Mason & MacDonald (1999) found that fields over 15 ha. were favoured by golden plover, with fields of less than 10 ha. being used less often than their proportion in the study area and fields greater than 15 ha being used more often; this may suggest that targeting allocations at fields less than 10 ha. in size might help minimise impacts although these would not necessarily be well located in respect of other environmental impacts, and would increase impacts on biodiversity features associated with smaller fields (e.g. a greater density of boundary features such as hedges and ditches).

mechanism or advisory text to be included to support such an approach (e.g. landscape-scale measures, including support for offsetting or off-site enhancements of 'core areas'), in addition to the existing policy requirements; this measure could be applied as a post-examination enhancement, although it must be stressed that the inclusion of such an enhancement measure is not essential for the plan (as drafted) to be compliant with the Habitats Regulations.

6.3 Water Resources

Southern Water is responsible for water supply to the Thanet area, which is within its Eastern Supply Area (Kent Thanet Water Resource Zone (WRZ)). Thanet receives most of its supply from groundwater (75%) with the remainder from the River Medway, River Stour or pipeline transfer from the Kent Medway WRZ. Some of the features of the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA Swale SPA / Ramsar are water-resource dependent, notably those associated with the Ramsar site and the lower reaches of the River Stour; they are therefore potentially exposed to increased residential development within the Thanet area.

SW's WRMP for the next 25 years explicitly accounts for any reductions in abstraction that are required to safeguard European sites (see Section 3) and for the growth predicted by TDC and other LPAs in its forecasting. Therefore, the future water resource requirements of Thanet are factored into the abstraction regime, such that the requirements will not affect European sites (i.e. the growth provided for by the Thanet plan is in line with SW predictions and will not increase water resources pressure on any European sites, alone or in combination).

6.4 Water Quality

Some of the non-avian Ramsar features are associated with the lower reaches of the Great Stour, and the nearby marshes. Development promoted or supported by the Local Plan is likely to increase demand on wastewater treatment works, and potentially increase run-off which could indirectly affect some European sites. The major treatment works serving the Thanet area are located at Minster and Weatherlees, discharging to the Stour and to sea via a Long Sea Outfall (LSO) at Foreness Point; these are managed through specific consenting regimes that are independent of the Local Plan, although it is important that the plan requires that suitable wastewater infrastructure and capacity be in place prior to the occupation of any developments. This requirement is specified within relevant policies in the plan.

With regard to effects on European sites, it should be noted that the Environment Agency's Review of Consents determined that there was no adverse effect on the integrity of any European sites, including the Thanet Coast sites, from nutrient enrichment due to Environment Agency permits (i.e. associated with sewage treatment).

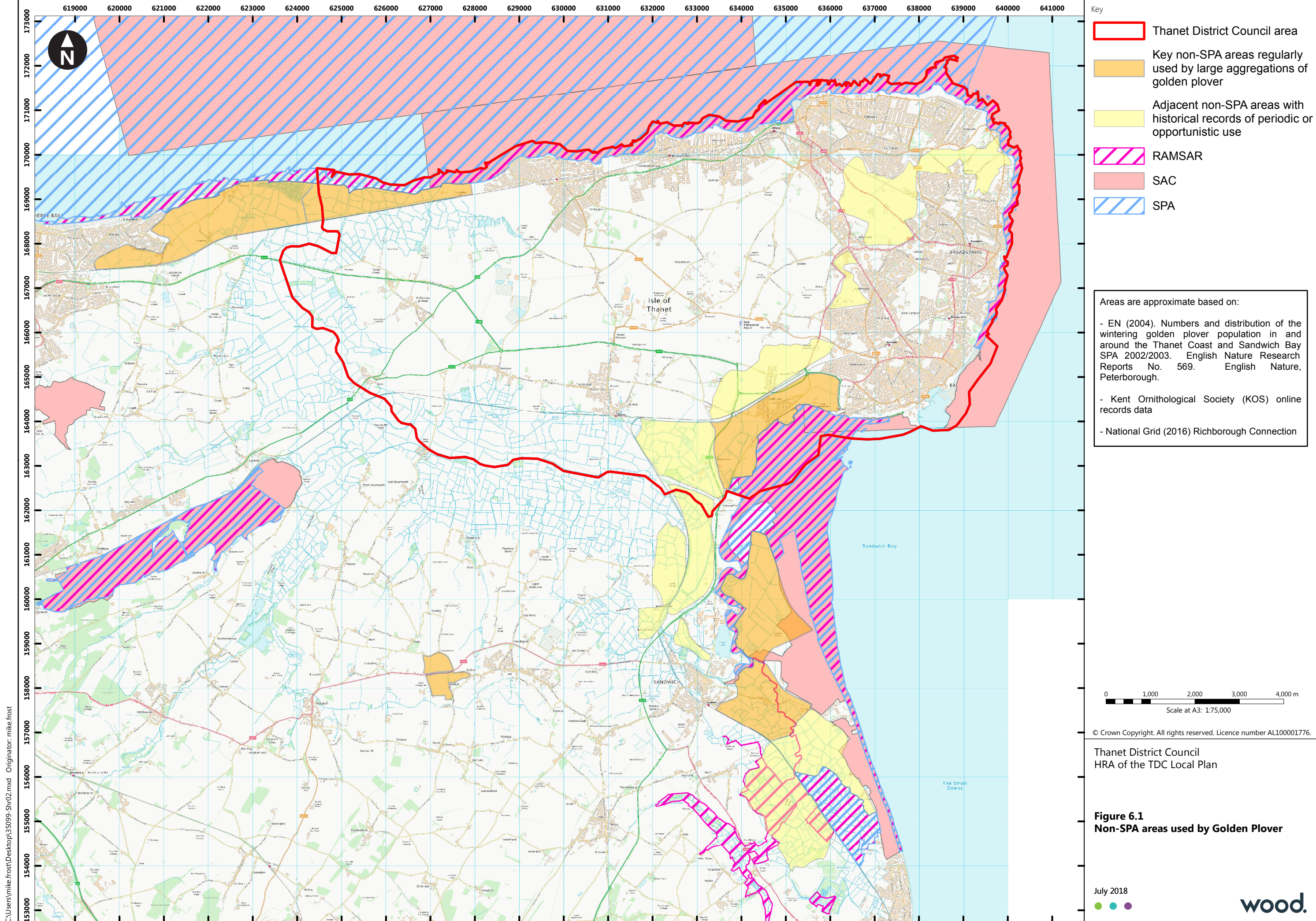
The effects of run-off from developed areas can be mitigated or reduced by the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and by increasing the area of permeable surfaces (both natural and artificial) within developed areas.

6.5 Summary

The principal mechanisms by which the TDC plan could affect the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA and Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar are:

- Disturbance of wintering turnstone using the shoreline due to increased recreational pressure; and
- Displacement of golden plover using non-SPA functional habitat through the delivery of allocation sites.

Little tern are not substantially exposed to the likely effects of the plan. The plan provides mitigation for the potential effects noted above through Policy SP26 (which requires that developers meet the requirements of the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SAMP; and through requirements for an assessment of potential effects on golden plover when allocations are brought forward. These measures are considered to be available, achievable and likely to be effective. On this basis, and (for golden plover) the likelihood of only limited exposure to the effects of the plan, it is considered that the plan will have no adverse effects on the SPA or Ramsar, alone or in combination.

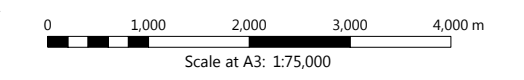


Key

- Thanet District Council area
- Key non-SPA areas regularly used by large aggregations of golden plover
- Adjacent non-SPA areas with historical records of periodic or opportunistic use
- RAMSAR
- SAC
- SPA

Areas are approximate based on:

- EN (2004). Numbers and distribution of the wintering golden plover population in and around the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA 2002/2003. English Nature Research Reports No. 569. English Nature, Peterborough.
- Kent Ornithological Society (KOS) online records data
- National Grid (2016) Richborough Connection



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Thanet District Council
HRA of the TDC Local Plan

Figure 6.1
Non-SPA areas used by Golden Plover

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7. Review of Pre-Submission Local Plan and Conclusions

7.1 Pre-Submission Local Plan Review

As detailed in **Section 4**, all of the policies of the Pre-Submission Local Plan have been reviewed to ensure that the conclusions of the HRA of the Preferred Options Consultation Document (see **Section 4.2**) remain valid, and that any recommended mitigation has been appropriately incorporated or reflected in the Local Plan. This review is contained at **Appendix E** to this report and demonstrates that the issues identified at the Preferred Options stage and considered through appropriate assessment have been appropriately addressed in the policies that comprise the Pre-Submission Local Plan, to ensure that European sites are safeguarded. The overall summary and conclusions of the HRA of the Pre-Submission Local Plan are set out below

7.2 HRA Summary and Conclusions

TDC is developing a new Local Plan to guide development and regeneration decisions, and investment over the period to 2031; the plan will include strategic planning guidance, development management policies and site allocations. Once adopted, the Plan will form the statutory planning framework for determining planning applications and will replace the 'saved' policies from the Thanet Local Plan 2006.

TDC carried out a consultation on the Issues and Options for the new Local Plan between 3 June and 14 August 2013. This consultation considered the level of development needed in Thanet and broadly where this should be located, as well as options for detailed policies on housing, employment, environment, quality of life and transport. The results of the Issues and Options consultation were used to inform the development of the Preferred Options, which were subject to public consultation in 2015. Following this, additional options and allocations were identified, which TDC consulted on. The submission version of the plan has now been finalised following completion of this additional consultation.

TDC commissioned Wood to assist with the HRA of its Local Plan following the completion of the Issues and Options consultations. This assistance included a review of the emerging policies and the assessment of the Preferred Options against the requirements of the Habitats Regulations. The HRA has been undertaken iteratively alongside the plan development, with emerging policies and proposals reviewed and recommendations made to ensure that the final plan is not likely to result in any significant or significant adverse effects on any European sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Additional assessment, appropriate to the strategic nature of the plan and the anticipated outcomes, has been undertaken for those plan aspects where the possibility of 'significant' effects on European sites could not be clearly or self-evidently excluded during the plan development and review process.

The screening of the preferred option policies demonstrated that the vast majority will have no effect on any European sites. In some instances, recommendations were made to improve the performance of the preferred option policies with respect to European sites, and the inclusion of these amendments (or similar) will help ensure that the plan (as a whole) has no significant effects on any European sites. The screening of the emerging plan identified the following principal issues:

- Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA, Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar and (to a lesser extent) Sandwich Bay SAC are potentially vulnerable to regional 'in combination' effects due to visitor pressure, to which the Local Plan will contribute, specifically through

- ▶ The potential for turnstone using the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA and Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar to be affected by increased disturbance due to recreational pressure; and
- ▶ The potential for golden plover to be affected when using non-designated functional habitats outside the SPA boundary.
- The effects of the plan on Blean Complex SAC, Dover to Kingsdown Cliffs SAC, Margate and Long Sands SAC, Tankerton Slopes and Swalecliffe SAC, and Outer Thames Estuary SPA are likely to be nil (no impact pathways) or sufficiently weak that significant effects are self-evidently not likely (alone or in combination), taking account of the general best-practice protective policies and safeguards included within the plan.
- Potential pathways for changes that could result in significant effects exist for Thanet Coast SAC, Stodmarsh SAC, Stodmarsh SPA, Stodmarsh Ramsar, The Swale SPA, and The Swale Ramsar. These would principally involve hydrological changes, although the scale of any effects will depend on separate permitting regimes (e.g. abstraction consenting) that the TDC plan do not control but can only complement and support through its policy controls (typically sites potentially exposed to regional water resource or water quality effects).

These aspects have been subject to more detailed assessment and appropriate policy-based mitigation measures have been identified where the possibility of significant effects could not be objectively excluded. This is to ensure that proposals coming forward under the Local Plan either avoid affecting designated sites entirely (no significant effect) or will not adversely affect site integrity where potential effect pathways remain.

In summary:

- **Recreational Pressures:** The wide-scale and regional nature of recreational pressures means that the possibility of associated significant effects cannot be excluded based on either the available data for the European sites, or through the use of allocation-specific avoidance or mitigation measures (e.g. greenspace provision). In the Pre-Submission Local Plan, TDC has therefore included policy commitments to the Thanet Coast Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Plan (SAMM). The SAMM will include measures that have been successfully employed for other European sites, and this plan-level mitigation measure is therefore considered to be both achievable and likely to be effective and so can be relied on to ensure that proposals coming forward under the Local Plan either avoid affecting the designated sites entirely (no significant effect) or will not adversely affect site integrity where potential effect pathways remain. Additional provisions and masterplanning requirements are also included in policy, with allocation-specific measures (e.g. the provision of greenspace) that will help minimise effects on the European sites set out.
- **Functional land:** A review of the allocation sites has concluded that it is unlikely that any of the sites coincide with functionally-significant non-designated areas of land that are likely to be critical to the integrity of any European sites (particularly with reference to Golden plover), as far as this can be determined at the plan-level. However, the variability in the use of many fields by golden plover means it is possible that some allocation areas will, in the future, become valuable for this species. The mitigation within the plan therefore creates a policy structure whereby assessments for impacts on golden plover are specifically required for the various allocations as they are brought forward by developers, with a requirement for appropriate mitigation should likely significant effects be identified. The plan is not prescriptive on this point, as the mitigation requirements will depend on the scale and type of effects (if any); importantly, however, the plan ensures that there is sufficient flexibility for significant effects to be avoided, should these be identified during lower tier assessments.

With regard to the allocations, the geography of Thanet and the proximity of all allocations to the coast ensures that all allocation sites are likely to contribute to 'in combination' effects on the Thanet Coast sites (principally in respect of recreational pressure). Consequently, directing allocations to particular areas will not provide a reliable method for ensuring significant adverse effects are avoided. Having said that, the general allocation strategy that has been pursued (large-scale strategic developments located inland, away from the coastline as far as is achievable) is probably the 'best-performing' from an HRA perspective, if impacts on the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA and Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar are considered as the primary factor influencing distribution. The commitments within the plan to a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Plan (SAMM) will help ensure that significant adverse effects due to the quantum of development proposed by the plan will not occur.

The assessment of the Pre-Submission Local Plan has taken into account the measures incorporated into the plan following the appropriate assessment process, and it is concluded that **there will be no adverse effects on any European sites as a result of the TDC plan, alone or in combination.** The key measures underpinning this conclusion (the provision of the SAMM and its incorporation into the Local Plan development control policies) have been agreed with the relevant consultees, including Natural England. It will be necessary to review any post-examination changes that are made to the plan, to ensure that the HRA conclusions remain applicable. A formal assessment conclusion against the requirements of Regulation 105 will be made at that point.

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Appendix A

European Site Terminology

Table A.1 European site terminology

Name	Abbreviation	Notes
Special Area of Conservation	SAC	Designated under the EU <i>Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora</i> , and implemented in the UK through the <i>Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017</i> , and the <i>Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995</i> (as amended).
Sites of Community Importance	SCI	Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) are sites that have been adopted by the European Commission but not yet formally designated by the government of each country. Although not formally designated they are nevertheless fully protected by <i>Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora</i> , the <i>Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017</i> , and the <i>Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995</i> (as amended).
Candidate SAC	cSAC	Candidate SACs (cSACs) are sites that have been submitted to the European Commission, but not yet formally adopted as SCIs. Although these sites are still undergoing designation and adoption they are still fully protected by <i>Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora</i> , the <i>Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017</i> and the <i>Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995</i> (as amended).
Possible SACs	pSAC	Sites that have been formally advised to UK Government, but not yet submitted to the European Commission. As a matter of policy the Governments in England, Scotland and Wales extend the same protection to these sites in respect of new development as that afforded to SACs.
Draft SACs	dSAC	Areas that have been formally advised to UK government as suitable for selection as SACs, but have not been formally approved by government as sites for public consultation. These are not protected (unless covered by some other designation) and it is likely that their existence will not be established through desk study except through direct contact with the relevant statutory authority; however, the statutory authority is likely to take into account the proposed reasons for designation when considering potential impacts on them.
Special Protection Area	SPA	Designated under <i>EU Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds</i> (the 'old Wild Birds Directive') and <i>Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds</i> (the 'new Wild Birds Directive', which repeals the 'old Wild Birds Directive'), and protected by Article 6 of <i>Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora</i> . These directives are implemented in the UK through the <i>Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981</i> (as amended), the <i>Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017</i> , the <i>Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985</i> , the <i>Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) Order 1985</i> and <i>The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 1995</i> (as amended) and the <i>Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 2007</i> .
Potential SPA	pSPA	These are sites that are still undergoing designation and have not been designated by the Secretary of State; however, ECJ case law indicates that these sites are protected under Article 4(4) of <i>Directive 2009/147/EC</i> (which in theory provides a higher level of protection than the Habitats Directive, which does not apply until the sites are designated as SPAs), and as a matter of policy the Governments in England, Scotland and Wales extend the same protection to these sites in respect of new development as that afforded to SPAs, and they may be protected by some other designation (e.g. SSSI).

Name	Abbreviation	Notes
Ramsar	-	The <i>Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat</i> (Ramsar Convention or Wetlands Convention) was adopted in Ramsar, Iran in February 1971. The UK ratified the Convention in 1976. In the UK Ramsar sites are generally underpinned by notification of these areas as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) (or Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) in Northern Ireland). Ramsar sites therefore receive statutory protection under the <i>Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981</i> (as amended), and the <i>Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) Order 1985</i> . However, as a matter of policy the Governments in England, Scotland and Wales extend the same protection to listed Ramsar sites in respect of new development as that afforded to SPAs and SACs.

Appendix B

Interest Feature Abbreviations

Table B.1 Interest Feature Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Formal name of interest feature
Calcareous dry grassland and scrub	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>)
Desmoulin`s whorl snail	<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>
Dunes with creeping willow	Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>)
Embryonic shifting dunes	Embryonic shifting dunes
Fisher`s estuarine moth	<i>Gortyna borelii lunata</i>
Grey dunes	Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation ("grey dunes")
Humid dune slacks	Humid dune slacks
Oak-hornbeam forests	Sub-Atlantic and medio-European oak or oak-hornbeam forests of the <i>Carpinion betuli</i>
Reefs	Reefs
Sea caves	Submerged or partially submerged sea caves
Sub-tidal sandbanks	Sub-tidal sandbanks
Vegetated sea cliffs	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts
White dunes	Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ("white dunes")
Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
Bar-tailed godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>
Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>
Black-tailed godwit	<i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>
Breeding bird assemblage	Breeding bird assemblage
Dark-bellied brent goose	<i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i>
Dunlin (ssp. alpina)	<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>
Golden plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>
Hen harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>
Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>
Little tern	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>

Abbreviation	Formal name of interest feature
Marsh harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
Mediterranean gull	<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>
Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>
Red-throated diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>
Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>
Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
Waterfowl assemblage	Waterfowl assemblage

Appendix C

Preferred Option Policy Review

Summary

The strategic and non-strategic policies proposed at the preferred options stage were reviewed and ‘screened’ using the principles set out in Section 4.2, taking into account the outcomes of the draft policy review; this screening is set out in Tables C2 and C3 below, and summarised in Table C1. This included a review of the Strategic Priorities for Manston Airport document, which was not previously available. The preferred options review accounted for the key mitigating policies at that point, notably:

- SP23 (Green Infrastructure) – requires provision / enhancement of green infrastructure in developments;
- SP24 (Biodiversity Enhancements) – protects Biodiversity Opportunity Areas and Green Wedges from development;
- SP25 (Protection of the European Sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserve) – sets out requirements and expectations regards effects on European sites, including the need for development to meet the requirements of the SPA Mitigation Strategy (agreed with Natural England);
- SP26 (Protection of Open Space); and
- SP27 (Provision of Accessible Natural and Semi Natural Green Space, Parks, Gardens and Recreation Grounds) – requires that developments include suitable green space or access to this.

In summary, the key issues for European sites (effects of recreational pressure on the Thanet Coast sites) will be mitigated through the SPA Mitigation Strategy.

The colour coding used in the Appendix C tables is as set out in Table C1.

Table C1 Colour coding for initial review of policies

	No LSE – policy will not or cannot affect any European sites and can therefore be screened out (subject to brief review of final policy)
	No LSE, but amendments recommended; policies that are not likely to affect any European sites but which could be enhanced or strengthened
	Policy requires changes to avoid significant effects (e.g. minor re-wording; referencing mitigating policies), or effects are uncertain.
	Significant effects likely; policy should be abandoned or re-worked to include specific mitigation (this may apply to groups of policies)

Note that the inclusion of a policy in the ‘red’ or ‘yellow’ categories does not mean that significant effects are certain since in many instances the review reflected an uncertainty that needed to be explored through further assessment (and it would be possible to undertake an appropriate assessment stage and still conclude (following a further screening) that there will be no adverse effects on integrity). The review also included an assessment of ‘in combination’ effects between policies.

Table C2 Summary of review of strategic and non-strategic policies and recommendations made

Policy Status	Policies / Policy Groups	Notes and recommendations
No LSE, but enhancements recommended	SP02 Economic Growth	General statement of aspirations; no significant effect but policy could be strengthened to reference environmental protection also. Recommendations: e.g. "Development is supported that enhances the rural economy subject to protecting the character, quality and function of Thanet's rural settlements <i>and natural environments</i> "
	SP08 Margate	The policy will direct development to within the existing developed areas of Margate. These are inevitably close to the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA and effects are therefore possible although the protective policies elsewhere should be sufficient to prevent incidental significant effects. More broadly, it is a general statement of policy rather than a specific direction or allocation, although it is possible that Dreamland will be developed residentially; the policy includes safeguards re. visitor pressure but these could be strengthened as per the protective cross reference in the Westwood policy. Recommendations: amend policy to refer to SP25 and the SPA mitigation strategy.
	SP09 Ramsgate	As for SP08
	SP10 Broadstairs	As for SP08
	SP17 Land fronting Nash and Haine Roads (site reference S141)	Policy should reference SP25 as per SP13 – SP16
	SP25 Protection of the European Sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserve	Protective policy; no significant effects. Note this is the key protective policy to which all developmental policies refer and therefore it is important that the safeguards currently required by it are not diluted or reduced. Recommendations: - The policy refers to SP23 but should refer to the requirements of SP27 also. - The second paragraph could be modified to emphasise the importance of the quantum of development in affecting the sites, for example: "Planning permission <i>will</i> only be granted when it can be demonstrated that any <i>potential</i> harm to internationally and nationally designated sites resulting from that development <i>on its own, or cumulatively with other developments</i> , will be <i>avoided or</i> suitably mitigated."
	SP27 Provision of Accessible Natural and Semi Natural Green Space, Parks, Gardens and Recreation Grounds	Protective policy; no significant effects. The policy could usefully be strengthened to encourage the integration of new greenspace with existing networks to maximise its value. Recommendations: "...to accommodate the demands for passive recreation generated by residential development. <i>New greenspace provision must be linked to existing greenspace, green wedges and / or the wider countryside and PRow network away from the coast to maximise its value.</i> "
	CC02 Coastal development	Requirement for SuDS in new developments; mitigating policy; no significant effects; policy could be strengthened by requiring that new developments on greenfield sites maintain greenfield levels of run-off etc with SuDS or similar.
LSE possible; re-wording required	H02C Land fronting Park Lane, Birchington. (site reference ST3)	General statement of policy / criteria; should include reference to Policy SP25 to protect European sites from recreational pressure

Policy Status	Policies / Policy Groups	Notes and recommendations
	H02G Land at Melbourne Avenue, Ramsgate (site reference SS22)	As H02C
	CC03 Coastal development	Policy sets criteria for development near the coast; this should be strengthened to include potential effects on European sites as a specific criteria requiring consideration, for example: "3) will not adversely affect the interest features of any designated nature conservation sites, particularly by exacerbating coastal squeeze or otherwise restricting the capacity of the coastline to adjust to sea-level rise and climate change."
'No effect' or 'no significant effect'	All other policies	All other policies, as drafted, as considered unlikely to result in significant effects on any European sites or their interest features (alone or in combination), primarily due to the nature of the policy; most, in this regard, are 'no effect' policies.
Significant effects likely	No policies	None of the policies are likely to result in significant adverse effects based on the incorporated mitigation measures including, notably, the commitment to the SPA mitigation strategy.

Note, the recommendations in Table C1 summarise guidance provided to TDC during the iterative assessment of the emerging plan, although the suggestions for policy changes or amendments are not intended to be prescriptive and a number of approaches would be acceptable (for example, a policy with a potential significant effect could have been abandoned; or modified; or cross-referenced to an over-riding protective policy). The 'screening' of the draft policies accounts for overarching or cross-cutting protective policies that may potentially be relied on to ensure that other policies, particularly those that promote or support development but which do not specify the scale or location of that development. Note that these policies will not automatically be sufficient to prevent significant effects for all policies, and some policies may require bespoke measures to ensure that significant effects do not occur.

Table C3 Strategic Policies Review

Strategic Policy	Draft text	Review and recommendations
<p>SP01 National Planning Policy Framework</p>	<p>Policy SP01 - National Planning Policy Framework – Presumption in favour of sustainable development When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with polices in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or - Specific policies 	<p>General statement of policy</p>
<p>SP02 Economic Growth</p>	<p>A minimum of 5,000 additional jobs is planned for in Thanet to 2031. The aim is to accommodate inward investment in job creating development, the establishment of new businesses and expansion and diversification of existing firms. Sufficient sites and premises suited to the needs of business are identified and safeguarded for such uses. Manston Business Park will be the key location for large scale job creating development. Land is identified and allocated to accommodate at least 65ha of employment space over the period to 2031. Land and premises considered suitable for continued and future employment use will be identified and protected for such purpose. Thanet's town centres are priority areas for regeneration and employment generating development, including tourism and cultural diversification, will be encouraged. The growth of the Port of Ramsgate is supported as a source of employment and as an attractor of inward investment. New tourism development, which would extend or upgrade the range of tourist facilities particularly those that attract the staying visitor, increase the attraction of tourists to the area and extend the season, will be supported. Development is supported that enhances the rural economy subject to protecting the character, quality and function of Thanet's rural settlements.</p>	<p>General statement of aspirations; no significant effect but policy could be strengthened to reference environmental protection also. Recommendations: e.g. "Development is supported that enhances the rural economy subject to protecting the character, quality and function of Thanet's rural settlements <i>and natural environments</i>"</p>
<p>SP03 Land Allocated for Economic Development</p>	<p>At the following sites land is allocated for business and employment generating purposes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manston Park, Manston 2. Eurokent Business Park, Ramsgate 3. Thanet Reach Business Park, Broadstairs 4. Hedgend Industrial Estate, St Nicholas <p>At Manston Park and Hedgend Industrial Estate development will be restricted to use classes B1 (business), B2 (general industry) and B8 (storage and distribution). Thanet Reach Business Park is also suitable for education uses.</p>	<p>Allocations unlikely to have significant effects on their own, although may operate in combination with residential developments to increase recreational pressure on European sites; this is avoided by Policy SP25.</p>

Strategic Policy	Draft text	Review and recommendations
<p>SP04 Manston Business Park</p>	<p>Manston Business Park is allocated and safeguarded for business purposes within classes B1 (business), B2 (general industry) and B8 (storage and distribution). Development proposals will need to comply with all of the following criteria: 1) Provide green infrastructure to create an attractive environment compatible with its location and boundaries adjoining the countryside. 2) Be accompanied by a transport assessment and travel plan unless the development is considered too small to have a significant impact. This should specifically consider improvements to public transport to enable access from Thanet's main residential areas to Manston Business Park by a range of means of transport. 3) Safeguard land traversing the site to accommodate a new road alignment from Columbus Avenue to the Airport and to take account of the need to safeguard the operational capability of Manston Airport. 4) Safeguard land within the site to enable future extension of Columbus Avenue northwards to link directly with the B2050.</p>	<p>Site specific policy; however, site is located at least 3km from the nearest designated sites and the proposed development for this site is unlikely to have any significant effects on any European site interest features.</p> <p>Recommendations: None</p>
<p>SP05 Manston Airport</p>	<p>The site of Manston Airport and the adjoining area will be designated as an "Opportunity Area" for the purposes of preparing the Manston Airport Area Action Plan" Development Plan Document. The Manston Airport AAP will explore through the development plan process the future development options for the site of the airport and the adjoining area. A consideration of the AAP should be the retention, development and expansion of the airport and aviation operations where supported by a feasibility study and a viable Business Plan, while exploring alternative options for the future development of the area for mixed-use development.</p> <p>While the Manston Airport Area Action Plan is being prepared and until adopted by the Council as a development plan for the Manston Airport area, the following policy for the Manston Airport will apply. Proposals at the airport, that would support the development, expansion and diversification of Manston Airport, will be permitted subject to all of the following requirements.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) That there be demonstrable compliance by the applicants with the terms of the current agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended or subsequent equivalent legislation. 2) That new built development is to be designed to minimise visual impact on the open landscape of the central island. Particular attention must be given to roofscape for the purposes of minimising the mass of the buildings at the skyline when viewed from the south. 3) The provision of an appropriate landscaping scheme, to be designed and implemented as an integral part of the development. 4) That any application for development for the purpose of increasing aircraft movements in the air or on the ground, auxiliary power or engine testing, be supported by an assessment of cumulative noise impact and the effectiveness of mitigation measures to be implemented in order to minimise pollution and disturbance. The acceptability of proposals will be judged in relation to any identified and cumulative noise impact, the effectiveness of mitigation and the social and economic benefits of the proposals. 5) The provision of an air quality assessment in compliance with the Air Quality Management Plan to demonstrate that the development will not lead to a harmful deterioration in air quality. Permission will not be given for development that would result in national air quality objectives being exceeded. 6) That any new development which would generate significant surface traffic must meet requirements for surface travel demand. 7) That it must be demonstrated both that new development cannot contaminate groundwater sources and that appropriate mitigation measures will be incorporated in the development to prevent contamination. 8) There will be no significant harm to Thanet's SSSI/SAC/SPA/Ramsar sites. A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required. 	<p>Policy includes safeguards</p>

Strategic Policy	Draft text	Review and recommendations
SP06 Thanet's Town Centres	Provision is made for a range of town centre uses reflecting the individual role, character and heritage of the town centres, including provision for retail development as referred in Table 1 above.	General criteria policy / statement of expectations; no significant effects.
SP07 Westwood	<p>The Council will seek to support the evolution and development of Westwood as a mixed use business and residential community in line with the following area based policies, indicated on Map 7. Development (in the vicinity of Westwood) will be required to have regard to and contribute towards implementation of a Westwood Relief Scheme. Development that would prejudice implementation of the Scheme will not be permitted. New development should also seek to improve pedestrian connectivity.</p> <p>1) Westwood Town Centre Retail development will be directed to the core town centre area at Westwood and complementary town centre uses will be accommodated within the wider town centre boundary, as defined by the primary and secondary frontages. Any development proposals should ensure there is no net loss in overall commercial floorspace.</p> <p>2) Eurokent Mixed Use Area Development of Eurokent will be for a mix of residential and business purposes, in accordance with a comprehensive development masterplan linking and integrating the development into the wider Westwood community. Land at Eurokent will provide for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · in the region of 350 new dwelling houses, and · the development and retention of 15.5 ha of land for flexible business uses. Town centre uses that cannot be accommodated within the designated town centres due to format and scale can be located here. <p>The masterplan shall incorporate, be informed by and/or address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Small scale convenience retail provision required to accessibly serve the day to day needs of the community · A minimum of 34 ha of publicly accessible natural/semi natural open space in accordance with the requirements of Policy SP27 · A minimum of 30% of all dwellings will be affordable homes in accordance with Policy SP19. The design brief should feature and reflect investigation of the need to incorporate an element of housing to meet the needs of particular groups including specifically sheltered and extra care homes. The proportion of houses as opposed to flats should exceed as much as possible that in Policy SP18 · Contribute to new, or improvements to existing community facilities at Newington · Liaison with service providers to investigate the need to upgrade the capacity of any utility services and infrastructure · Archaeological assessment and the need to preserve and enhance the setting of heritage assets adjoining the site. · A wintering and breeding bird survey to assess impact upon bird populations (including farmland birds) and the need to mitigate/compensate · Clearly demonstrate how the SPA mitigation strategy as set out in Policy SP25 is being met and how it will ensure that development does not increase recreational pressure on designated sites <p>Proposals will be accompanied by a Transport Assessment informing the masterplan and including assessment of impact of development on the local road network and demonstrating measures to promote multi-modal access, including footway and cycleway connections and an extended bus service accessible to the development. Development will be expected to provide an appropriate contribution to offsite highway improvements in respect of Westwood Relief Scheme, improvements to the A256 from Lord of the Manor and any other improvements identified in the Transport Assessment.</p> <p>3) Thanet Reach Mixed Use Area In accordance with Policy SP03, part of Thanet Reach is allocated for employment and education uses. The southern part of the site is allocated for residential development.</p>	<p>The policy will direct development to the Westwood town centre area (or the proposed Eurokent employment allocation) and hence away from any European sites. Direct effects are therefore unlikely as a result of the policy. The policy reflects the wider strategic issue of 'total quantum of development' and possible impacts on (particularly) the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA with reference to the SPA mitigation strategy and Policy SP25.</p> <p>Recommendations: None</p>

Strategic Policy	Draft text	Review and recommendations
<p>SP08 Margate</p>	<p>The Council will seek to support the continued regeneration and development of Margate as a contemporary seaside resort in line with the following area based proposals, indicated on Map 8.</p> <p>1) Margate Town Centre The focus for retail development will be in and around the High Street as defined by the Primary and Secondary Frontages.</p> <p>2) Margate Old Town Margate's Old Town area will continue in its complementary role, contributing to the vitality and viability of Margate's town centre, increasing footfall and enhancing quality and choice of facilities in the town centre. It will be a focal location for creative and cultural industries. Residential development will be permitted above ground floor level only and the Council will resist the loss of existing commercial premises in the area.</p> <p>3) Margate Seafront and Harbour Arm Within the seafront area of Margate and the Harbour Arm as indicated on Map 8, leisure and tourism uses will be permitted, including retail, where they enhance the visual appeal of these areas and protect the seafront character and heritage. Residential development above ground floor will be permitted.</p> <p>4) Dreamland Dreamland will be developed as an amusement park and be a significant visitor attraction supporting the regeneration of the town.</p> <p>Proposals that seek to extend, upgrade or improve the attractiveness of Dreamland as an amusement park will be permitted. Development that would lead to a reduction in the attractiveness, leisure or tourist potential will be resisted. Exceptionally, development of a limited part of the site may be accepted as a part of a comprehensive scheme for the upgrading and improvement of the amusement park. The scheme will be required to demonstrate that the future viability of the amusement park can be assured and the Council will negotiate a legal agreement to ensure that the proposed development and the agreed investment in the amusement park are carried out in parallel.</p> <p>In the event that evidence, in the form of an independent professional assessment, is submitted (and accepted by the Council) as demonstrating that it is not economically viable to operate an amusement park on the whole or majority of the site in the foreseeable future, then proposals for redevelopment may be accepted subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · proposals demonstrating that such redevelopment would sustainably contribute to the economic wellbeing and rejuvenation of Margate, and being supported by a business plan demonstrating that such proposals are economically viable; · the predominant use of the site being for leisure purposes. (an element of mixed residential would be appropriate but only of such a scale needed to support delivery of the comprehensive vision for the site); · compatibility with the context and proposals of the strategic urban design framework, and integration with appropriate proposals for redevelopment/refurbishment of neighbouring sites; · proposals delivering a new road along the southern site boundary to enable the diversion of vehicular traffic from Marine Terrace. (A legal agreement will be required to ensure that a proportionate contribution will be made towards the cost of providing the new road and to appropriate improvements to create a pedestrian priority environment along Marine Terrace); · retention of the Scenic Railway in situ as an operating feature within a green park setting appropriate to its character as a listed building; and · proposals being accompanied by a traffic impact assessment. 	<p>The policy will direct development to within the existing developed areas of Margate. These are inevitably close to the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA and effects are therefore possible although the protective policies elsewhere should be sufficient to prevent incidental significant effects. More broadly, it is a general statement of policy rather than a specific direction or allocation, although it is possible that Dreamland will be developed residentially; the policy includes safeguards re. visitor pressure but these could be strengthened as per the protective cross reference in the Westwood policy.</p> <p>Recommendations: amend policy to refer to SP25 and the SPA mitigation strategy.</p>

Strategic Policy	Draft text	Review and recommendations
	<p>5) Opportunity Sites There are Opportunity Sites identified on Map 8 which are considered suitable for mixed use town centre development. Residential development will be considered acceptable where this does not conflict with the area based criteria above.</p> <p>6) The Lido Proposals for leisure and tourism related uses will be supported at the Lido. Any development must respect and restore the site's status as a significant heritage asset. Any development permitted by this policy must not adversely affect any designated nature conservation sites either directly or as a result of increased visitor pressure.</p>	
<p>SP09</p>	<p>Policy SP09 – Ramsgate The Council will seek to support the continued regeneration and development of Ramsgate focusing on its maritime heritage and developing leisure role, in line with the following area based proposals, indicated on Map 9.</p> <p>1) Ramsgate Town Centre The main focus for retail shall be the central High Street/Queen Street/King Street/Harbour Street area of the town, and complementary town centres uses will be permitted in the wider town centre area, as defined by the primary and secondary frontages.</p> <p>2) Ramsgate Waterfront and Royal Harbour Land at and adjacent to Ramsgate Royal Harbour, as indicated on Map 9, is identified for development for a mixture of leisure, tourism, retail and residential purposes. Any such proposals should have regard to the emerging Ramsgate Maritime Plan or any subsequent plan adopted by the Council. The following activities and development will be supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Eastern Undercliff - mixed leisure, tourism and residential uses; and · Ramsgate Royal Harbour - continued development of mixed leisure and marina facilities, in particular at the Military Road arches. <p>All proposals must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Take particular care in the design, location, use of materials and relationship of land-based facilities with open water, such as to protect important views and preserve or enhance the historical character of the Royal Harbour and seafront. · Ensure that the integrity of nature conservation interests within the adjacent SSSI-SPA-SAC-Ramsar site is maintained. <p>3) Opportunity Sites There are Opportunity Sites identified on Map 9 which are considered suitable for mixed use town centre development. Residential development will be considered acceptable where this does not conflict with the area based criteria above.</p> <p>4) Ramsgate Port The Council supports further development at Ramsgate Port which would facilitate its improvement as a port for shipping, increase traffic through the port, and introduce new routes and complementary land based facilities including marine engineering, subject to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · a demonstrable port-related need for any proposed land based facilities to be located in the area of the port, and a demonstrable lack of suitable alternative inland locations; and · compatibility with the character and function of Ramsgate waterfront and the Royal Harbour as a commercial leisure facility; and · an acceptable environmental assessment of the impact of the proposed development upon the harbour, its setting and surrounding property, and the impact of any proposed land reclamation upon nature conservation, conservation of the built environment, the coast and archaeological heritage, together with any proposals to mitigate the impact. <p>Land reclamation will not be permitted beyond the western extremity of the existing limit of reclaimed land. Any development permitted by this policy must not adversely affect any designated nature conservation sites either directly or as a result of increased visitor pressure.</p>	<p>As for Policy SP08</p>

Strategic Policy	Draft text	Review and recommendations
<p>SP10 Broadstairs</p>	<p>The Council will seek to support proposals that maintain and enhance the role and character of Broadstairs as a popular attractive small seaside town in line with the following area based proposals, indicated on Map 10.</p> <p>1) Broadstairs Town Centre The focus for retail will be the lower High Street and Albion Street with complementary town centre uses in the wider area, in accordance with the Primary and Secondary Frontages. New retail development will be acceptable on the edge of Broadstairs town centre, subject to Policy E05. Proposals will be required to provide direct pedestrian links to the High Street, be well related to the retail core, centres of population and be accessible by a range of means of transport.</p> <p>2) Broadstairs Promenade and Beach Front Opportunities to enhance the use and attractiveness of the promenade, seafront and beach are welcomed, particularly where they achieve improved connectivity between the town centre and beach front. Within this area, small scale leisure and tourism uses will be permitted, including retail, where they do not harm the character and heritage interest of the surrounding area. Within Victoria Gardens, open space policies will prevail. Change of use of existing commercial premises in this area will be resisted. Any development permitted by this policy must not adversely affect any designated nature conservation sites either directly or as a result of increased visitor pressure.</p>	<p>As for Policy SP08</p>
<p>SP11 Housing Provision</p>	<p>Provision is made for a total of 12,000 additional homes in the period to 2031, with notional delivery across the period as indicated below.</p>	<p>General statement of policy; the quantum of development proposed is achievable without significant effects on the SPA, assuming implementation of SP25 and the SPA Mitigation Strategy. Recommendations: None</p>
<p>SP12 Strategic Housing Site Allocations</p>	<p>The sites listed below are identified as Strategic Housing Sites. Applications to develop such sites shall be accompanied by a detailed development brief including an illustrative site masterplan featuring all elements of the proposal and indicating phasing of development and supporting infrastructure. Applications will be determined in light of the following site specific policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A - Westwood B - Birchington C - Westgate on Sea D - Manston Green 	<p>The strategic housing allocation sites have been reviewed and it is considered that none, on their own, are likely to result in significant effects on any European sites with the possible exception of the larger allocations. The key issue is the overall quantum of development in the area rather than single sites; this is thought to be achievable without significant effects on the SPA, assuming implementation of SP25 and the SPA Mitigation Strategy. The Strategic Housing Site policies (SP13 - SP16) reference SP25, although SP17 should do this also. Recommendations: SP17 to reference SP25</p>

Strategic Policy	Draft text	Review and recommendations
<p>SP13 Strategic Housing Sites - Manston Green (sites referenced SS33)</p>	<p>Land is allocated for up to 700 new dwellings at a maximum density of 35 dwellings per hectare net at land known as Manston Green. Built development will be focused at the northern part of the site taking account of the considerations below. Proposals will be judged and permitted only in accordance with a development brief and masterplan for the whole site incorporating</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) a minimum of 9 ha of open space in accordance with the standards set out in Table 7, 2) a fully serviced area of 2.05 ha (to be provided at the cost of the developer) to accommodate a new two-form entry primary school, 3) small scale convenience retail provision required to accessibly serve day to day needs of the development. <p>Phasing of development will be in accordance with Policy H01(1). The development shall provide for construction of the school to one-form entry at such stage of development as required by the County Council as education authority. Masterplanning will be informed by and address:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) pre-design archaeological assessment taking account of presence of significant and sensitive remains, 2) the setting of listed buildings at Ozengell, 3) the need for disposition of development and landscaping to enable a soft edge between the site and open countryside and minimise impact on long views southwards toward Pegwell Bay, 4) predicted aircraft noise, 5) the alignment of the runway and the operational needs of the airport, 6) sustainable urban drainage taking account of the site's location in the Groundwater Source Protection Zone, 7) the need to clearly demonstrate how the SPA mitigation strategy as set out in Policy SP25 is being met and how it will ensure that development does not increase recreational pressure on designated sites, 8) a wintering and breeding bird survey to assess impact on bird populations within the district and the need to mitigate/compensate, 9) liaison with service providers to investigate the need to upgrade the capacity of any utility services and infrastructure, 10) a statement of social impacts arising from the development and how any increased demand on community facilities will be addressed. <p>A minimum of 30% of all dwellings will be affordable homes in accordance with Policy SP19. The design brief should feature and reflect investigation of the need to incorporate an element of housing to meet the needs of particular groups including specifically sheltered and extra care homes. The proportion of houses as opposed to flats should exceed that in policy SP18 as much as possible.</p> <p>Proposals will be accompanied by a Transport Assessment informing the Masterplan including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) assessment of the impact of development on the local road network; in particular capacity issues affecting junctions along Haime Road including that with Staner Hill, 2) demonstrating measures to promote multi-modal access, including footway and cycleway connections and an extended bus service accessible to the residential development. <p>Development will be expected to provide an appropriate contribution to off-site highway improvements.</p>	<p>See Policy SP12</p>

Strategic Policy	Draft text	Review and recommendations
<p>SP14 Strategic Housing Site at Birchington (comprising sites referenced S515, S498 & S499)</p>	<p>Land is allocated for up to 1,000 new dwellings at a maximum density of 35 dwellings per hectare net at Birchington. Proposals will be judged and permitted only in accordance with a development brief and masterplan for the whole site including provision within the site of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) a new link road to serve the development and extending from Minnis Road and the A28, 2) a minimum of 11 ha of open space in accordance with the standards set out in Table 7, 3) a fully serviced site of 2.05 ha (to be provided at the cost of the developer) for a two-form entry primary school, 4) small scale convenience retail provision required to accessibly serve day to day needs of the development. <p>Phasing of development will be in accordance with Policy H01(1). The access road and serviced school site shall be programmed for delivery as agreed by the county council as highway and education authority respectively. Masterplanning will be informed by and address:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) the need to clearly demonstrate how the SPA mitigation strategy as set out in Policy SP25 is being met and how it will ensure that development does not increase recreational pressure on designated sites, 2) a wintering and breeding bird survey to assess impact on bird populations within the district and the need to mitigate/compensate, 3) pre-design archaeological evaluation, 4) liaison with service providers to investigate the need to upgrade the capacity of any utility services and infrastructure including gas supply, 5) a statement of social impacts arising from the development and how any increased demand on community facilities will be addressed, 6) the need to preserve the listed buildings on the site and respect the setting of Quex Park, 7) the need for disposition of development and landscaping to enable a soft edge between the site and open countryside. <p>A minimum of 30% of all dwellings will be affordable homes in accordance with Policy SP19. The design brief should feature and reflect investigation of the need to incorporate an element of housing to meet the needs of particular groups including specifically sheltered and extra care homes. The proportion of houses as opposed to flats should exceed that in policy SP18 as much as possible.</p> <p>Proposals will be accompanied by a Transport Assessment informing the masterplan including assessment of impact on the A28, including at its junction with Park Lane, and of impact on the junction of Manston Road, Park Lane and Acol Hill and demonstrating measures to promote multi-modal access, including footway and cycleway connections and an extended bus service accessible to the residential development. Development will be expected to provide an appropriate contribution to off-site highway improvements including for Birchington Square/Park Lane.</p>	<p>See Policy SP12</p>

Strategic Policy	Draft text	Review and recommendations
<p>SP15 Strategic Housing Site at Westgate-on-Sea (comprising sites referenced ST1 & ST2)</p>	<p>Land to the east and west of Minster Road, Westgate is allocated for up to 1,000 new dwellings at a maximum density of 35 dwellings per hectare net. Phasing of development will be in accordance with Policy H01(1). Proposals will be judged and permitted only in accordance with a development brief and masterplan for the whole site including provision within the site of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) a minimum of 11.1 ha of open space in accordance with the standards set out in Table 7, 2) provision for small scale convenience retail provision required to accessibly serve day to day needs of the development, 3) a fully serviced area of 2.05 ha (to be provided at the cost of the developer) to accommodate a new two-form entry primary school. <p>Development will be expected to provide an appropriate contribution to off-site highway improvements. A minimum of 30% of all dwellings will be affordable homes in accordance with Policy SP19. The design brief should feature and reflect investigation of the need to incorporate an element of housing to meet the needs of particular groups including specifically sheltered and extra care homes. The proportion of houses as opposed to flats should exceed that in policy SP18 as much as possible.</p> <p>Masterplanning will be informed by and address</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) a transport assessment (including modelling of junctions of the A28 with Minster Road, Briary Close and Garlinge High Street, the junction of Minster Road with Shottendane Rd the junction of Brooke Avenue with Maynard Avenue), and incorporate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - measures to promote multi-modal access, including footway and cycleway connections, and an extended bus service accessible to the new dwellings, - appropriate road and junction improvements and signalling, 2) an archaeological evaluation, 3) the need to safeguard the setting of scheduled ancient monuments and the listed Dent de Lion Gateway, 4) the need to clearly demonstrate how the SPA mitigation strategy as set out in Policy SP25 is being met and how it will ensure that development does not increase recreational pressure on designated sites, 5) a wintering and breeding bird survey to assess impact on bird populations within the district and the need to mitigate/compensate, 6) liaison with service providers to investigate the need to upgrade the capacity of any utility services and infrastructure including gas supply, 7) a statement of social impacts arising from the development and how any increased demand on community facilities will be addressed, 8) appropriate arrangements for surface water management in line with Margate Surface Water Management Plan, 9) the need for disposition of development and landscaping to take account of public rights of way and enable a soft edge between the site and open countryside. 	<p>See Policy SP12</p>

Strategic Policy	Draft text	Review and recommendations
<p>SP16 Policy SP16 Westwood Strategic Housing (comprising sites referenced S511, S553 & S447)</p>	<p>Land is allocated for up to 1,450 new dwellings at a maximum density of 40 dwellings per hectare net at Westwood. This allocation adjoins land already subject to planning permission for 1,020 dwellings at the junction of Nash Lane/Haine Road. Proposals will be judged and permitted only in accordance with a development brief and masterplan for the whole site integrating with development at the adjoining site. The masterplan shall incorporate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) highway improvements including widening of Nash Road and links to Nash Road and Manston Road, 2) a minimum of 16.63 ha of open space in accordance with the standards set out in Table 7, 3) small scale convenience retail provision required to accessibly serve day to day needs of the development. <p>Phasing of development will be in accordance with Policy H01(1). The access road shall be programmed for delivery as required by the county council as highway authority.</p> <p>Masterplanning will be informed by and address:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) pre-design archaeological assessment, 2) the need to preserve heritage farm buildings on the site, 3) the need to clearly demonstrate how the SPA mitigation strategy as set out in Policy SP25 is being met and how it will ensure that development does not increase recreational pressure on designated sites, 4) a wintering and breeding bird survey to assess impact on bird populations within the district and the need to mitigate/compensate, 5) liaison with service providers to investigate the need to upgrade the capacity of any utility services and infrastructure, 6) a statement of social impacts arising from the development and how any increased demand on community facilities will be addressed, 7) appropriate arrangements for surface water management in line with Margate Surface Water Management Plan. <p>A minimum of 30% of all dwellings will be affordable homes in accordance with Policy SP19. The design brief should feature and reflect investigation of the need to incorporate an element of housing to meet the needs of particular groups including specifically sheltered and extra care homes. The proportion of houses as opposed to flats should exceed that in policy SP18 as much as possible.</p> <p>Proposals will be accompanied by a Transport Assessment informing the Masterplan including assessment of impact of development on the local road network and demonstrating measures to promote multi-modal access, including footway and cycleway connections and an extended bus service accessible to the residential development. Development will be expected to provide an appropriate contribution to off-site highway improvements including in respect of Westwood Relief Scheme. Development will be expected to provide an appropriate contribution to provision, where required, of a new school off-site. Disposition of development and landscaping will be expected to take account of the presence of the overhead electricity transmission lines, retain an undeveloped corridor as an extension of the open area of Green Wedge to the east of the site, and enable a soft edge between the site and open countryside.</p>	<p>See Policy SP12</p>

Strategic Policy	Draft text	Review and recommendations
SP17 Policy SP17 - Land fronting Nash and Haine Roads (site reference S141)	<p>Land fronting Nash and Haine Roads is allocated for residential development with a notional capacity of 1,020 new dwellings or such capacity as may be demonstrated appropriate in light of the need to provide a school on site and/or any subsequent masterplan reflecting a maximum notional density of 40 dwellings per hectare net. The proportion of houses as opposed to flats should exceed that in policy SP18 as much as possible. The development will incorporate an element of affordable housing in line with policy SP19.</p> <p>Development shall be permitted only in accordance with an agreed masterplan for the whole site and shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Provide for any highway improvements identified as necessary in a traffic assessment and the development masterplan. Individual phases of development will be required to make provision pro-rata towards such improvements, 2) as required provide a fully serviced area of 2.05 ha (to be provided at the cost of the developer) for a new two form entry school as an integral part of the development, 3) incorporate and provide for connections and improvements to footpath and cycle networks facilitating walking, cycling and public transport to, from and within the site, including provision of or contribution to improvements to public transport services, 4) reserve a minimum of 2 ha to enable provision of a medical centre and provide a community assembly facility, 5) reserve and provide a minimum of 1.75 ha as local open space (including an equipped play area and casual/informal play space) together with an area of usable amenity space as an integral part of the design of the development. Where feasible, the area of local open space should be larger than the minimum indicated above having regard to the standards set out in Table 7, 6) incorporate landscaped buffer zones adjacent to any new road infrastructure and along the boundaries to adjacent to open farmland, 7) provide and maintain appropriate equipment for continuous monitoring of local air quality to inform the Council's ongoing air quality review and assessment programme. <p>Applications for successive phases of development will have regard to the need to integrate as far as feasible with any approved masterplans relating to neighbouring areas addressed in this policy and with Westwood Relief Scheme.</p>	See Policy SP12; this policy should also reference SP25
SP18 Type and Size of Dwellings	<p>Proposals for housing development will be expected to address the SHMA recommendations regarding the make-up of market and affordable housing types and sizes needed to meet requirements.</p> <p>The Council will encourage proposals incorporating a higher proportion of houses as opposed to flats than recommended in the SHMA. Proposals for developments incorporating a higher proportion of flats than recommended in the SHMA will be expected to include site specific justification for the proportion and mix proposed.</p> <p>Proposals to revert or convert properties currently used as flats to use as single family or single household accommodation will be permitted where a satisfactory standard of accommodation can be provided.</p> <p>Residential development proposals involving the net loss of dwelling houses suited to modern living requirements will not be permitted, unless the proposal complies with Policy H9 (Houses in Multiple Occupation).</p> <p>In the event of conflict between this policy and the Cliftonville DPD the latter shall prevail.</p>	General statement of policy re. housing mix; no significant effects
SP19 Affordable Housing	Residential development schemes will be expected to include an element of affordable housing of 30%.	General statement of policy; no effects
SP20 Development in the Countryside	Development in the countryside outside of the urban and village confines, as identified in the Thanet Local Plan 2006, and not otherwise allocated for development, will not be permitted unless there is a need for the development that overrides the need to protect the countryside and any adverse environmental effects can be avoided or fully mitigated.	General statement of policy; will not negatively affect any European sites; has been strengthened following review of draft.

Strategic Policy	Draft text	Review and recommendations
<p>SP21 Safeguarding the Identity of Thanet's Settlements</p>	<p>Within the Green Wedges new development (including changes of use) will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the development is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) not detrimental or contrary to the stated aims of the policy; or 2) essential for the proposed development to be located within the Green Wedges. <p>Open sports and recreational uses will be permitted subject to there being no overriding conflict with other policies, the wider objectives of this plan and the stated aims of this policy.</p> <p>Proposals for development that include measures that will create or enhance wildlife habitats and biodiversity within the Green Wedges, or will improve the quality of the green wedges by providing high quality public amenity space will be supported.</p>	<p>Protective policy; no significant effects</p>
<p>SP22 Protection and Enhancement of Thanet's Historic Landscapes</p>	<p>Development proposals should demonstrate that their location, scale, design and materials will protect, conserve and, where possible, enhance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Thanet's local distinctiveness including historical, biodiversity and cultural character, 2) gaps between Thanet's towns and villages, 3) visually sensitive skylines and seascapes, <p>Within the landscape character areas identified, the following policy principles will be applied:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) At Pegwell Bay, priority will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape over other planning considerations; 2) In the former Wantsum Channel area, new development will not normally be permitted; 3) In the Wantsum Channel North Shore Area, development will only be permitted that would provide opportunities for enhancement and would not damage the setting of the Wantsum Channel, and long views of Pegwell Bay, the Wantsum Channel, the adjacent marshes and the sea; 4) On the Central Chalk Plateau, a number of sites are identified for various development purposes. Where development is permitted by other policies in this plan, particular care should be taken to avoid skyline intrusion and the loss or interruption of long views of the coast and the sea, and proposals should demonstrate how the development will take advantage of and engage with these views; 5) At Quex Park, new development proposals should respect the historic character of the parkland and gardens; and 6) At the Urban Coast, development that does not respect the traditional seafront architecture of the area, maintain existing open spaces and long sweeping views of the coastline will not be permitted. <p>Development proposals that conflict with the above principles will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that they are essential for the economic or social well-being of the area or for reasons where the need for the development outweighs the detriment to the landscape. The developer may be required to submit a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment with any development proposals likely to have a significant landscape impact.</p>	<p>Protective policy; no significant effects</p>

Strategic Policy	Draft text	Review and recommendations
SP23 Green Infrastructure	<p>Thanet's green infrastructure network is an integral part of the design of all major development. Opportunities to improve Thanet's green infrastructure network by protecting and enhancing existing green infrastructure assets and the connections between them, should be included early in the design process for major developments.</p> <p>Development should make a positive contribution to Thanet's green infrastructure network by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Creating new wildlife and biodiversity habitats · Providing and managing new accessible open space · Mitigating against the loss of any farmland bird habitats · Providing private gardens and play space; and/or · Contributing towards the enhancement of Thanet's Biodiversity Opportunity Areas or the enhancement of the Green Wedges <p>Investment and developer contributions should be directed to improve and expand green infrastructure and provide connecting links where opportunities exist.</p>	<p>Enhancement policy; no significant effects; will operate with SP25 and SP27 to reduce impacts on SPA</p>
SP24 Biodiversity Enhancements	<p>Biodiversity Opportunity Areas and the Green Wedges are protected from inappropriate development, and proposals which would provide enhancements and contribute to a high quality biodiverse environment will be supported.</p>	<p>Protective policy; no significant effects</p>
SP25 Protection of the European Sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserve	<p>Development that would have a detrimental impact on the European Sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest or National Nature Reserve will not be permitted.</p> <p>Planning permission may only be granted when it can be demonstrated that any harm to internationally and nationally designated sites resulting from that development will be suitably mitigated.</p> <p>Proposals for residential development must include an assessment of significant effects and measures to mitigate against the effects of potential increased recreational pressure on protected sites.</p> <p>Proposals for major residential developments must include provision of open space suitable for dog walking and general recreation, in accordance with policy SP23.</p> <p>In developing these measures, regard must be had to the SPA Mitigation Strategy which requires a financial contribution towards wardening, and applicants must demonstrate clearly how they are meeting the strategy and how they will ensure that development will mitigate against any increase in recreational pressure on designated sites.</p>	<p>Protective policy; no significant effects. Note this is the key protective policy to which all developmental policies refer and therefore it is important that the safeguards currently required by it are not diluted or reduced.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The policy refers to SP23 but should refer to the requirements of SP27 also. - The second paragraph could be modified to emphasise the importance of the quantum of development in affecting the sites, for example: "Planning permission will only be granted when it can be demonstrated that any potential harm to internationally and nationally designated sites resulting from that development on its own, or cumulatively with other developments, will be avoided or suitably mitigated."

Strategic Policy	Draft text	Review and recommendations
SP26 Protection of Open Space	<p>Built development or change of use will not be permitted on areas of open space identified as part of Thanet's green infrastructure network (including Public Rights of Way) unless:</p> <p>1) It is for an open recreation or tourism uses and is of appropriate scale and design for its setting. Any related built development should be kept to the minimum necessary to support the open use, and be sensitively located.</p> <p>2) There is an overriding need for development that outweighs the need to protect open space and cannot be located elsewhere, in which case provision of alternative open space of an equivalent size must be made elsewhere.</p> <p>New development that is permitted by virtue of this policy should make a positive contribution to the area in terms of siting, design, scale and use of materials.</p> <p>Built development in any areas designated as Local Green Spaces will only be permitted if the proposal meets the exception criteria set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.</p>	Protective policy; no significant effects
SP27 Provision of Accessible Natural and Semi Natural Green Space, Parks, Gardens and Recreation Grounds	<p>The Council will require suitably and conveniently located areas of usable amenity space, adequate to accommodate the demands for passive recreation generated by residential development.</p> <p>Sites of 50 dwellings or more will be required to provide natural and semi natural green space and local parks, formal gardens, allotments and recreation grounds to meet the standards set out in Table 7.</p> <p>The Council will expect appropriate arrangements for maintenance and management, responsibility for which will be vested in a particular individual, or, subject to commuted payment to meet such costs, in the district, town or parish council. Such arrangements will be secured by entering into a planning agreement.</p> <p>Any areas of accessible natural and semi natural green space, parks, gardens and recreation grounds created by virtue of this policy will be protected from development by policy SP26 – Protection of Open Spaces.</p>	<p>Protective policy; no significant effects.</p> <p>The policy could usefully be strengthened to encourage the integration of new greenspace with existing networks to maximise its value.</p> <p>Recommendations: "...to accommodate the demands for passive recreation generated by residential development. <i>New greenspace provision must be linked to existing greenspace, green wedges and / or the wider countryside and PrOW network away from the coast to maximise its value.</i>"</p>
SP28 Quality Development	<p>New development will be of a high quality inclusive design. Developers will be required to seek an independent Design Review for development proposals on sites with a prominent visual impact, or which are of national significance.</p>	Design criteria; no significant effects

Strategic Policy	Draft text	Review and recommendations
SP29 Conservation and Enhancement of Thanet's Historic Environment	<p>The Council will support, value and have regard to the significance of Heritage Assets by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) protecting the historic environment from inappropriate development, 2) encouraging new uses where they bring listed buildings back into use, encouraging their survival and maintenance without compromising the conservation of the building, 3) seeking the provision of appropriate research for all applications relating to the historic environment on key sites as identified through the Heritage Strategy, 4) facilitating the review of Conservation Areas and the opportunities for new designations, 5) recognising other local assets through Local Lists, 6) offering help, advice and information about the historic environment by providing guidance to stakeholders, producing new guidance leaflets, reviewing existing guidance leaflets and promoting events which make the historic environment accessible to all, 7) agreeing Article 4 Directions which will be introduced and reviewed as appropriate, 8) supporting development that is of high quality design and supports sustainable development. <p>All reviews and designations will be carried out in consultation with the public in order to bring a shared understanding of why asset and areas are being designated.</p>	Protective policy; no significant effects
SP30 Climate Change	<p>New development must take account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adapting to climate change by minimising vulnerability, providing resilience to the impacts of climate change and complying with the Government's Zero Carbon Policy - Mitigating against climate change by reducing emissions 	Protective policy; no significant effects
SP31 Healthy and Inclusive Communities	<p>The Council will work with relevant organisations, communities and developers to promote, protect and improve the health of Thanet's residents, and reduce health inequalities. Proposals will be supported that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) bring forward accessible community services and facilities, including new health facilities, 2) safeguard existing community services and facilities, 3) safeguard or provide open space, sport and recreation and enable access to nature, 4) promote healthier options for transport including cycling and walking, 5) improve or increase access to a healthy food supply such as allotments, markets and farm shops, 6) create social interaction and safe environments through mixed uses and the design and layout of development, 7) create a healthy environment that regulates local climate 	General statement of policy; no effects
SP32 Community Infrastructure	<p>Development will only be permitted when provision is made to ensure delivery of relevant and sufficient community and utility infrastructure. Where appropriate, development will be expected to contribute to the provision of new, improved, upgraded or replacement infrastructure and facilities.</p>	General statement of policy; no effects
SP33 Expansion of Primary and Secondary Schools	<p>The Council will support the expansion of existing and development of new primary and secondary schools in Thanet to meet identified needs and will work with Kent County Council in identifying, allocating and safeguarding land as appropriate.</p>	General statement of policy; no effects
SP34 Safe and Sustainable Travel	<p>The Council will work with developers, transport service providers, and the local community to manage travel demand, by promoting and facilitating walking, cycling and use of public transport as safe and convenient means of transport. Development applications will be expected to take account of the need to promote safe and sustainable travel. New developments must provide safe and attractive cycling and walking opportunities to reduce the need to travel by car.</p>	General statement of policy; no effects

Strategic Policy		Draft text	Review and recommendations
SP35	Accessible location	Development generating a significant number of trips will be expected to be located where a range of services are or will be conveniently accessible on foot, by cycle or public transport. The Council will seek to approve proposals to cluster or co-locate services at centres accessible to local communities by public transport and on foot.	General statement of policy; no effects
SP36	Transport Infrastructure	Development proposals will be assessed in terms of the type and level of travel demand likely to be generated. Development will be permitted only at such time as proper provision is made to ensure delivery of relevant transport infrastructure. Where appropriate, development will be expected to contribute to the provision, extension or improvement, of walking and cycling routes and facilities and to highway improvements. Subject to individual assessments, schemes may be required to provide or contribute to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Capacity improvements/connections to the cycle network · Provision of pedestrian links with public transport routes/interchanges · Improvements to passenger waiting facilities · Facilities for display of approach time information at bus stops along identified quality bus corridors · Improvement and expansion of public transport services · Improvements to the road network in line with schemes identified through the Transport Strategy. 	General statement of policy; no effects
SP37	Connectivity	The Council will continue to lobby for investments to secure further improvements to rail journey times for CTRL including domestic services between Ashford and Ramsgate.	General statement of policy; no effects
SP38	Strategic Road Network	In conjunction with neighbouring districts, the Council will prepare a joint assessment of planned development and the expected volume and direction of road traffic movement it would generate, to understand its potential impact on these junctions and how this may, if appropriate, be mitigated.	General statement of policy; no effects
SP39	New Rail Station	Planning permission will be granted for a new railway station at a suitable location on land west of Ramsgate alongside the existing railway line. Land west of Cliffsend (shown on Map 15) is safeguarded for this purpose. Proposals will be required to specifically demonstrate all of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Satisfactory vehicular access arrangements from East Kent Access 2) Suitable level of car parking 3) Integration with wider public transport services 4) Mitigation of any noise impacts on sensitive receptors 5) Compatibility with the landscape character of its location 6) Located to minimise the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land 	The precise location of the Parkway Station is not stated, but it is likely to be within 1km of the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA. The interest features of this site are unlikely to be particularly vulnerable to direct disturbance (etc) as a result of this development but the policy should ideally include reference to the need for scheme-level HRA (or cross-reference other relevant protective policies regarding HRA). However, there is nothing to suggest that this development could not be accommodated without significant effects on the SPA.



Table C3 Summary of Preferred Options Non-strategic Policies Review

Development Policy		Review and recommendations
E01	Retention of existing employment sites	Policy lists sites to be retained for employment purposes
E02	Home Working	General statement of policy / criteria; no effects
E03	Digital Infrastructure	General statement of policy / no effects
E04	Primary and Secondary Frontages	General statement of policy / criteria; no effects
E05	Sequential and Impact Test	General statement of policy / criteria; no effects
E06	District and Local Centres	General statement of policy / criteria; no effects
E07	Serviced Tourist Accommodation	General statement of policy / criteria; includes provision to protect European sites from recreational pressure
E08	Self Catering Tourist Accommodation	General statement of policy / criteria; no effects
E09	Protection of Existing Tourist Accommodation	General statement of policy / criteria; no effects
E10	Major Holiday Beaches	Criteria policy; includes safeguards relating to the protection of the European sites
E11	Intermediate Beaches	Criteria policy; includes safeguards relating to the protection of the European sites
E12	Undeveloped Beaches	Criteria policy; includes safeguards relating to the protection of the European sites
E13	Language Schools	General statement of policy / criteria; no effects
E14	Quex Park	General statement of policy / criteria; no effects
E15	New build development for economic development purposes in the rural area	General statement of policy / criteria; no effects
E16	Conversion of rural buildings for economic development purposes	General statement of policy / criteria; no effects
E17	Farm Diversification	General statement of policy / criteria; no effects
E18	Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land	General statement of policy / criteria; no effects
E19	Agricultural Related Development	General statement of policy / criteria; no effects
H01	Housing Development	General statement of policy / criteria; includes provision to protect European sites from recreational pressure

Development Policy		Review and recommendations
H02A	Land on west side of Old Haine Road, Ramsgate (comprising site references S535 & S549)	General statement of policy / criteria; includes provision to protect European sites from recreational pressure
H02B	Land fronting Nash Road and Manston Road (site reference S540)	General statement of policy / criteria; includes provision to protect European sites from recreational pressure
H02C	Land fronting Park Lane, Birchington. (site reference ST3)	General statement of policy / criteria; should include reference to Policy SP25 to protect European sites from recreational pressure
H02D	Land south of Brooke Avenue Garlinge (site reference S505)	General statement of policy / criteria; includes provision to protect European sites from recreational pressure
H02E	land at Haine Road and Spratling Street, Ramsgate (site reference SR60)	General statement of policy / criteria; includes provision to protect European sites from recreational pressure
H02F	Land south of Canterbury Road East, Ramsgate (site reference S415)	General statement of policy / criteria; includes provision to protect European sites from recreational pressure
H02G	Land at Melbourne Avenue, Ramsgate (site reference SS22)	General statement of policy / criteria; should include reference to Policy SP25 to protect European sites from recreational pressure
H03	Cliftonville West and Margate central	General statement of policy / criteria; no effects
H04	Housing at Rural Settlements	General statement of policy / criteria; references H01 which includes requirement to meet Policy SP25, therefore no significant effects will occur.
H04A	Land at Tothill Street, Minster	Subsidiary to H04 and so safeguards provided by H04, H01 and SP25
H04B	Land at Manor Road, St Nicholas at Wade	Subsidiary to H04 and so safeguards provided by H04, H01 and SP26
H04C	Land at 71-75 Monkton Street, Monkton	Subsidiary to H04 and so safeguards provided by H04, H01 and SP27
H04D	Land at Walter's Hall Farm, Monkton	Subsidiary to H04 and so safeguards provided by H04, H01 and SP28
H04E	Land south side of A253, Cliffsend	Subsidiary to H04 and so safeguards provided by H04, H01 and SP29
H04F	Land north of Cottington Rd, Cliffsend	Subsidiary to H04 and so safeguards provided by H04, H01 and SP30
H04G	Land south side of Cottington Rd, Cliffsend	Subsidiary to H04 and so safeguards provided by H04, H01 and SP31
H05	Rural Housing Need	Criteria based policy associated with exceptions for affordable housing in rural areas; no significant effects
H06	New agricultural dwellings	Criteria based policy associated with exceptions for agricultural housing; no significant effects
H07	Care and Supported Housing	Support for care homes and supported housing; no significant effect
H08	Accessible Homes	Requirements for accessible homes in developments; no effects

Development Policy		Review and recommendations
H09	Non self-contained residential accommodation	Criteria for non-self contained residential accommodation; no effects
H10	Accommodation for Gypsy and Travelling Communities	General statement of policy / criteria; no effects
H11	Residential use of empty property	Criteria for making residential use of vacant homes; no effects
H12	Retention of existing housing stock	General statement of policy re. retention of existing housing; no effects
GI01	Locally Designated Wildlife Sites	Protective policy; no significant effects
GI02	Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS)	Protective policy; no significant effects
GI03	Protected Species and other significant species	Protective policy; no significant effects
GI04	Amenity Green Space and Equipped Play Areas	Policy re. provision of green space within new developments; will work with other mitigating policies to help reduce effects of development on European sites.
GI05	Protection of Playing Fields and Outdoor Sports Facilities	Policy re. provision of green space within new developments; will work with other mitigating policies to help reduce effects of development on European sites.
GI06	Landscaping and Green Infrastructure	Criteria for landscaping on developments; no significant effects
GI07	Jackey Bakers	Proposals for Jackey Bakers sports ground; no significant effects
QD01	General design principles	General design criteria / principles; no significant effects
QD02	Living Conditions	General design criteria / principles; no significant effects
QD03	Advertisements	General design criteria / principles; no significant effects
QD04	Telecommunications	General design criteria / principles; contains protective clauses; no significant effects
HE01	Archaeology	General statement of policy re. archaeology requirements for developments; no effects
HE02	Development in Conservation Areas	General statement of policy re. developments in conservation areas; no effects
HE03	Local Heritage Assets	General statement of policy; no effects
HE04	Historic Parks and Gardens	Protective policy; no effects
HE05	Works to a heritage asset to address climate change	Policy supporting works to heritage assets to improve performance re. climate change; no effects.
CC01	Fluvial and Tidal Flooding	Re-iterates NPPF sequential and exception tests re. fluvial or coastal flooding; requires flood risk assessments; no effects.
CC02	Surface Water Management	Requirement for SuDS in new developments; mitigating policy; no significant effects; policy could be strengthened by requiring that new developments on greenfield sites maintain greenfield levels of run-off etc with SuDS.

Development Policy		Review and recommendations
CC03	Coastal Development	Policy sets criteria for development near the coast; this should be strengthened to include potential effects on European sites as a specific criteria requiring consideration, for example: "3) will not adversely affect the interest features of any designated nature conservation sites, particularly by exacerbating coastal squeeze or otherwise restricting the capacity of the coastline to adjust to sea-level rise and climate change.
CC04	Sustainable Design	General design criteria / principles; no significant effects
CC05	Renewable energy installations	Criteria for renewable energy installations on existing buildings; no significant effect.
CC06	District Heating	General statement of policy re. district heating; no effects.
CC07	Solar Parks	Criteria for solar farms; includes protective elements; no significant effect.
CC08	Richborough	Support for renewable energy at Richborough; includes protective clauses; no significant effects.
SE01	Potentially Polluting Development	Criteria for permitting potentially polluting development; provides protective clauses and safeguards; any development associated with this policy will be subject to other consenting regimes; no significant effect.
SE02	Landfill Sites and Unstable Land	Policy relating to development near landfills and risk of gas etc.; general statement of policy; no significant effects.
SE03	Contaminated Land	Policy relating to development of potentially contaminated sites; no significant effects.
SE04	Groundwater Protection	Policy protecting groundwater; no significant effects
SE05	Air Quality	Policy safeguarding air quality; requires consideration of cumulative effects; no significant effects.
SE06	Noise Pollution	Policy protecting against noise pollution; no significant effects.
SE07	Noise Action Plan Important Areas	Requirement for noise action plan; no effect
SE08	Aircraft Noise	Policy relating to residential development in areas potentially affected by aircraft noise; no significant effects
SE09	Aircraft Noise and Residential Development	Policy relating to residential development in areas potentially affected by aircraft noise; no significant effects
SE10	Light Pollution	Policy providing safeguards against light pollution from new development; no significant effects.
CM01	Provision of New Community Facilities	General design criteria / principles; no significant effects
CM02	Protection of Existing Community Facilities	General design criteria / principles; no significant effects
CM03	Expansion of Margate Cemetery	Allocation for expansion of cemetery; no effects
CM04	Expansion of Minster Cemetery	Allocation for expansion of cemetery; no effects
TP01	Transport assessments and Travel Plans	Requirements for Travel Plans; no significant effects

Development Policy		Review and recommendations
TP02	Walking	Policy requiring provision for pedestrians; no significant effects
TP03	Cycling	Policy requiring provision for cyclists; no significant effects
TP04	Public Transport	Policy requiring provision for public transport; no significant effects
TP05	Coach Parking	Allocation of coach parking; no significant effects
TP06	Car Parking	Car parking requirements for new developments; no significant effects
TP07	Town Centre Public Car Parks	Retention of existing car parking and criteria; no significant effects
TP08	Freight and service delivery	Requirement for off-street servicing for new development; no significant effects.
TP09	Car parking provision at Westwood	Criteria for car parking provision at Westwood; no significant effects.
TP10	Traffic Management	General statement of policy re. traffic management; no effects

Table C3 Review of 2016 amendments

Policy	Draft Text	Review and Recommendations
<p>SP05 Manston Airport Site</p>	<p>Land is allocated for a mixed use settlement at the site of the former Manston Airport as defined on the policies map. The site has the capacity to deliver at least 2500 new dwellings, and up to 85,000sqm employment and leisure floorspace.</p> <p>The overarching principle of development of this settlement is the creation of a single sustainable settlement that can be easily served by public transport and with good, easily walkable access to central community services and other facilities.</p> <p>Contributions will be required to meet the following provisions and proposals will be judged and permitted only in accordance with a development brief and comprehensive masterplan for the whole site detailing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ How the requirements of the Transport Strategy will be met including the upgrade of Manston Court Road and improvements to Spitfire junction. ▶ The relationship to the Parkway Station and Ramsgate Port including a southern bypass of Manston village and a direct link from the site to the A299 roundabout linking with the southbound dual carriageway. ▶ A travel plan to include a public transport strategy linking the site to existing services, demonstration of how the site links with and relates to neighbouring settlements; ▶ Key routes for traffic-calming measures ▶ Coherent phasing and evidence of deliverability ▶ A business plan to demonstrate how the employment will be delivered, and how it will relate and link to Manston Business Park ▶ The provision of a District Centre to meet the retail need of the development, fit within the retail hierarchy and serve the appropriate catchment, as well as provision of complementary uses such as community business space and leisure uses/recreational facilities. ▶ Provision of community facilities as outlined in the Infrastructure delivery plan (IDP) including a primary school facility at 4 forms of entry, and a Doctors Surgery ▶ A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment to address <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ the visual sensitivity of the site focussing on retention of open space and protecting wide open landscape and strategic views; ▶ how new built development will be designed to minimise visual impact on the open landscape of the central island. Particular attention must be given to roofscape for the purposes of minimising the mass of the buildings at the skyline when viewed from the south. ▶ Design and Heritage statements to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ An appropriate landscaping scheme, to be designed and implemented as an integral part of the development. 	<p>The allocation of the former Manston Airport site for mixed use development has the potential to affect local European sites through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Increased recreational pressure / in combination 'quantum of development' effects on (principally) the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA / Ramsar. ▶ Effects on non-designated functional land associated used by golden plover. <p>The effects of the former will be mitigated by the proposed Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Plan (SAMM) for the Thanet Coast. With regard to functional land, there is no evidence to suggest that the airport site is used by potentially significant aggregations of golden plover (based on the Environmental Statement supporting the Stone Hill planning application ref. OL/TH/16/0550, which recorded no plover using in the site in the winter of 2015/16) and the available data on 'core' non-SPA areas indicates that the Manston site is substantially over 400m from the nearest recognised non-SPA core functional habitats (around Pegwell Bay). Therefore, it is unlikely that the allocation will affect any European sites (assuming the proposed policy controls, including the SAMM, are delivered within the adopted Local Plan). The inclusion of a requirement re. assessments of functional land within 400m provides additional surety in this regard.</p>

Policy	Draft Text	Review and Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provision of 31.77 Ha open space in accordance with Table 7 as required by Policy GI04, and integrated green infrastructure to include walking, cycling and equestrian routes and facilities ▶ A buffer between the development and Manston Village. Settlement separation between the villages of Manston, Minster, Cliffsend and Acol and Thanet Urban Area ▶ Pre design archaeological assessment ▶ Links to the sites heritage to support tourism in Thanet, including consideration of proposals that would permit a limited element of aviation use[1] ▶ Detail as to how the runway will be incorporated into the development scheme and what functions it will serve. ▶ Provision of surface water management/sustainable drainage schemes that will not contaminate groundwater sources, and any proposed initiatives that will improve the condition of the groundwater ▶ Development proposals must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide an appropriate mix of dwellings to meet the requirements of Policy SP18 ▶ Provide affordable housing to meet the requirements of Policy SP19 (**NB SP19 is being amended to request affordable housing for more than 10 units) ▶ Provide one electric car charging point for every 10 parking spaces provided ▶ Consider accommodating any self-build requirements included in the self-build register ▶ Contribute towards the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring scheme to meet the requirements of SP25 ▶ Include an assessment of the sites functionality as a roosting or feeding resource for the interest features of the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA Protection Area, including areas within 400m of the development sites boundary, and provide mitigation where necessary ▶ Retain existing boundary features where possible ▶ Provide a connection to the sewerage system at the nearest point of adequate capacity, in collaboration with the service provider ▶ Allow future access to the existing water supply infrastructure for maintenance and upsizing purposes ▶ Provide for the installation of digital infrastructure ▶ Provide a Statement of Social Impacts addressing any needs for community facilities identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan 	

Policy	Draft Text	Review and Recommendations																																																						
SP11	<p>Housing Provision</p> <p>Provision is made for a total of 17,140 additional homes in the period to 2031, with notional delivery across the period as indicated below.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Period</th> <th>2011-16</th> <th>2016-21</th> <th>2021-26</th> <th>2026-31</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Additional homes</td> <td>4,285</td> <td>4,285</td> <td>4,285</td> <td>4,285</td> <td>17,140</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>A number of allocated sites are of strategic importance for delivering the quantity and type and variety of homes required to deliver the strategy. These are identified as Strategic Sites. The distribution of allocated housing land is illustrated in Table 2.</p> <p>Within total housing provision shown below the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment suggests capacity to deliver some 3017 dwellings exists by way of sites which have already received planning permission. In addition some 1555 dwellings have already been delivered since the start of the plan period.</p> <p>Table 2 - Total Housing Provision</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Period</th> <th>2011-2031</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Strategic Sites</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Westwood</td> <td>1450</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Birchington on Sea</td> <td>1000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Westgate on Sea</td> <td>1000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Manston Green</td> <td>700</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Land at Manston Court/Haine Road</td> <td>700</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Former Airport Site</td> <td>2500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Westwood (has planning permission)</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Eurokent (200 additional units to current allocation but has planning permission)</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Land at Manston Road/Shottendane Road</td> <td>250</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Margate & Cliftonville</td> <td>816</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ramsgate</td> <td>793</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Broadstairs & St Peters</td> <td>304</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Birchington on Sea</td> <td>101</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Westgate on Sea</td> <td>36</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rural Settlements</td> <td>375</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Windfall Sites (based on 225 units per year, discounted for years 1-3 to avoid double counting)</td> <td>2700</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Completed since 2011</td> <td>1555</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Extant planning permissions</td> <td>3017</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Empty Properties</td> <td>540</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Period	2011-16	2016-21	2021-26	2026-31	Total	Additional homes	4,285	4,285	4,285	4,285	17,140	Period	2011-2031	Strategic Sites		Westwood	1450	Birchington on Sea	1000	Westgate on Sea	1000	Manston Green	700	Land at Manston Court/Haine Road	700	Former Airport Site	2500	Westwood (has planning permission)	0	Eurokent (200 additional units to current allocation but has planning permission)	0	Land at Manston Road/Shottendane Road	250	Margate & Cliftonville	816	Ramsgate	793	Broadstairs & St Peters	304	Birchington on Sea	101	Westgate on Sea	36	Rural Settlements	375	Windfall Sites (based on 225 units per year, discounted for years 1-3 to avoid double counting)	2700	Completed since 2011	1555	Extant planning permissions	3017	Empty Properties	540	<p>The additional housing provision, over that made in the original options, has been reviewed and the potential impacts on European sites considered (see particularly Section 6.2). In summary, the appropriateness of the incorporated strategic mitigation (the SAMM) location (17140 by 2031) has been evaluated, and it is considered that the measures proposed can be scaled up to address the higher housing figures; this is consistent with NE's position on other strategic mitigation schemes (for example, in relation to the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, or the SPAs associated with the Solent and nearby harbours). On this basis, the increase in housing provision would not be expected to result in adverse effects.</p> <p>With regard to the specific strategic and non-strategic sites, the geography of Thanet and proximity of all sites to the coast ensures that the precise location of the allocations is less relevant to likely impacts than in some other instances. Having said that, larger allocation sites that are further from the coast and which have opportunities to include large-scale mitigation measures within their footprint (e.g. alternative greenspace) will have some benefits (although benefits are not necessarily relevant in HRA).</p>
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	Additional sites have been identified as proposed housing allocations in order meet the new Objectively Assessed Need. Some of these sites are adjacent to existing allocations proposed in the Preferred Options draft local plan and should form a comprehensive scheme with those sites. This will ensure the delivery of associated highways and infrastructure requirements which will be set out in policies in the pre-submission draft local plan. The following sites have been identified as additional housing allocations:																															
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Policy	Draft Text	Review and Recommendations
	<p>Dane Valley Filling Station, Millmead Road, Margate 7 SR34</p> <p>6 Surrey Road 5 S348</p> <p>Land adjoining Seafield Road, Ramsgate 9 SR22</p> <p>Former Manston Allotments 61 S452</p> <p>R/O 18-36 St Peters Road 5 SO42</p> <p>Total 282</p>	
NEW	<p>Land at Manston Court Road/Haine Road</p> <p>Strategic Policy - Land at Manston Court Road/Haine Road</p> <p>Land is allocated for up to 700 new dwellings at a maximum density of 30 dwellings per hectare net. This allocation adjoins other sites allocated for residential development (strategic sites S141, S511, S553 & S447 and non-strategic sites S535 & S549). Proposals will be judged and permitted only in accordance with a development brief and masterplan for the whole site integrating with development at the adjoining sites. The Masterplan shall incorporate:</p> <p>1) Contributions to highway improvements identified in the Transport Strategy</p> <p>2) a minimum of 9 ha of open space in accordance with the standards set out in Table 7</p> <p>Phasing of development will be in accordance with Appendix B.</p> <p>Masterplanning shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide an appropriate mix of dwellings to meet the requirements of Policy SP18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide affordable housing to meet the requirements of Policy SP19 (**NB SP19 is being amended to request affordable housing for more than 10 units) ▶ Provide one electric car charging point for every 10 parking spaces provided ▶ Consider accommodating any self-build requirements included in the self-build register ▶ Contribute towards the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring scheme to meet the requirements of SP25 ▶ Include an assessment of the sites functionality as a roosting or feeding resource for the interest features of the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Special Protection Area, including areas within 400m off the development sites boundary, and provide mitigation where necessary ▶ Retain existing boundary features where possible ▶ Provide a connection to the sewerage system at the nearest point of adequate capacity, in collaboration with the service provider ▶ Allow future access to the existing water supply infrastructure for maintenance and upsizing purposes ▶ Provide for the installation of digital infrastructure ▶ Provide a Statement of Social Impacts addressing any needs for community facilities identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan 	<p>The allocation of this site for housing has the potential to affect local European sites through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Increased recreational pressure / in combination 'quantum of development' effects on (principally) the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA / Ramsar. ▶ Effects on non-designated functional land associated used by golden plover. <p>The effects of the former will be mitigated by the proposed Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Plan (SAMM) for the Thanet Coast. With regard to functional land potentially used by golden plover, there is no evidence to suggest that this site is used by potentially significant aggregations of golden plover (based on the 2016 bird surveys, Appendix F) and the available data on 'core' non-SPA areas indicates that the site is substantially over 400m from the nearest recognised non-SPA core functional habitats (around Pegwell Bay). Therefore, it is unlikely that the allocation will affect any European sites (assuming the proposed policy controls, including the SAMM, are delivered within the adopted Local Plan). The inclusion of a requirement re. assessments of functional land within 400m provides additional surety in this regard for golden plover.</p>

Policy	Draft Text	Review and Recommendations
Para 4.48 Local Green Space	<p>The Council is inviting Town and Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Forums and community organisations to submit areas for consideration as Local Green Space (LGS), during this public consultation. Paragraph 76 of the NNPF states, that local communities should be able to identify for special protection, green areas of particular importance to them. However, paragraph 77 states further that the local green space designation would not be appropriate for most green areas. For an area to be considered for the Local Green Space the NNPF identifies three instances when the designation should be made.</p> <p>The green space should be in reasonable proximity to the community it serves;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The green space is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example, because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and 2. Where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. <p>Other issues to consider when proposing an area for inclusion in this designation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The area does not have to be in public ownership, although contact with the landowner is advisable as they will have an opportunity to make representations in respect of the proposals affecting their land; b. How the land will be managed in the future c. Local Green Space designation cannot be applied to sites which have an existing planning permission or local plan allocation d. All proposals must be accompanied by an ordnance survey map with the site clearly identified 	General statement of policy – no significant effects
SP39 and Map 15 Thanet Parkway	<p>The proposed location of the Parkway Station site has been revised, the wording for Policy SP39 remains unchanged.</p>	As per previous assessment - no significant effects.
NEW New Strategic Routes Policy	<p>Strategic Policy - Strategic Routes</p> <p>The following areas, as shown on the Policies Map, are safeguarded for the provision of key road schemes and junction improvements, to support the implementation of the Thanet Transport Strategy, including land at:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Birchington strategic housing site 2. B2050 Manston Road, Birchington 3. Shottendane Road (from Birchington to Margate) 4. Shottendane Road-Manston Road housing site 5. Nash Road-Manston Road housing site 6. Nash Road, Margate 7. Nash Road-Westwood strategic housing site 8. Manston Court Road/Star Lane (from Haine Road, Westwood to B2050 Manston Road) 9. B2050 Manston Road (from Manston Manston Court Road to Spitfire Junction) 10. B2190 Spitfire Way (from Spitfire Junction to Columbus Avenue junction) 11. From Columbus Way to Manston Road, Birchington 	<p>Kent County Council and Thanet District Council have been preparing a new Transport Strategy for the district, which includes proposals for new and improved roads and junctions; enhancements to bus and train services and an expansion of the cycling/walking network.</p> <p>The key element of the emerging Strategy is the development of a proposed "Inner Circuit" to serve new development and reduce pressure on the existing network (see map). This incorporates a new bypass for Birchington; a relief road for Westgate; connections to Westwood from the north-west and south; and improved connections to Manston Business Park, and should bring benefits to the wider road network. It is intended that the Inner Circuit schemes will incorporate provision for buses and cycling.</p>

Policy	Draft Text	Review and Recommendations
	<p>12.Land between A254 Margate Road and A256 Westwood Road (including Millennium Way, Broadstairs 13.Victoria Traffic Lights 14.Coffin House Corner Traffic Lights The Council expects all new development to make a proportionate and appropriate contribution to the provision of this key infrastructure.</p>	<p>The policy is unlikely to have significant effects since:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strictly, the policy itself does not drive, promote or advocate development – it is simply safeguarding land for the potential future implementation of the Thanet Transport Strategy; and 2. The plan is therefore reflecting the requirements of an external plan, which must itself be subject to HRA. <p>Having said that, the proposals for new or widened roads on the ‘inner circuit’ are unlikely to have significant effects on any European site due to their location, with the possible exception of impacts on functional land for golden plover (although there is limited evidence of regular, notable aggregations in the areas likely to be affected by the road scheme).</p>
<p>NEW New Implementation Policy</p>	<p>Strategic Policy - Implementation All new development will be expected to fully meet its infrastructure requirements, whether directly on site or by contribution to that provision elsewhere, and to comply with the provisions of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, in terms of provision of physical and social infrastructure. This provision should be made within the phasing programme set out in the draft Local Plan and draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Any such requirements will be secured by means of conditions, legal agreements, Community Infrastructure Levy or other appropriate mechanisms. The Council will also, with partner organisations as appropriate, seek to obtain additional funding from other sources to support infrastructure provision, and to influence the strategic provision of services, facilities and other infrastructure by other organisations. If necessary, the Council will give consideration to the full range of other available mechanisms (such as compulsory purchase*, Article 4 Directions and so on) to ensure the effective implementation of the overall planning strategy for the district.</p>	<p>General statement of policy – no significant effects.</p>
<p>NEW Land at Manston Road/Shottendane Road, Margate</p>	<p>HO2 Additional Site - Land at Manston Road/Shottendane Road, Margate Land is allocated for up to 250 dwellings at a maximum density of 35 dwellings per hectare net at Manston Road/Shottendane Road. Phasing of development will be in accordance with Appendix B. Proposals will be judged and permitted only in accordance with a development brief and masterplan for the whole site. The masterplan should be informed by a transport assessment and travel plan including an assessment of impact on the local road network and demonstrating measures to</p>	<p>The allocation of this site for housing has the potential to affect local European sites through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Increased recreational pressure / in combination ‘quantum of development’ effects on (principally) the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA / Ramsar. ▶ Effects on non-designated functional land associated used by golden plover.

Policy	Draft Text	Review and Recommendations
	<p>promote multi-modal access. Development will incorporate and provide for highways improvements identified in the Thanet Transport Strategy.</p> <p>Master planning will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide an appropriate mix of dwellings to meet the requirements of Policy SP18 ▶ Provide affordable housing to meet the requirements of Policy SP19 (**NB SP19 is being amended to request affordable housing for more than 10 units) ▶ Provide one electric car charging point for every 10 parking spaces provided ▶ Consider accommodating any self-build requirements included in the self-build register ▶ Contribute towards the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring scheme to meet the requirements of SP25 ▶ Include an assessment of the sites functionality as a roosting or feeding resource for the interest features of the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Special Protection Area, including areas within 400m of the development sites boundary, and provide mitigation where necessary ▶ Retain existing boundary features where possible ▶ Provide a connection to the sewerage system at the nearest point of adequate capacity, in collaboration with the service provider ▶ Allow future access to the existing water supply infrastructure for maintenance and upsizing purposes ▶ Provide for the installation of digital infrastructure ▶ Provide a Statement of Social Impacts addressing any needs identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. <p>Disposition of development and landscaping will be expected to enable a soft edge between the site and the open countryside</p>	<p>The effects of the former will be mitigated by the proposed Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Plan (SAMM) for the Thanet Coast. With regard to functional land potentially used by golden plover, there is no evidence to suggest that this site is used by potentially significant aggregations of golden plover (based on the 2016 bird surveys, Appendix F) and the available data on 'core' non-SPA areas indicates that the site is substantially over 400m from the nearest recognised non-SPA core functional habitats (around Pegwell Bay or Reculver). Therefore, it is unlikely that the allocation will affect any European sites (assuming the proposed policy controls, including the SAMM, are delivered within the adopted Local Plan). The inclusion of a requirement re. assessments of functional land within 400m provides additional surety in this regard for golden plover.</p>
<p>- National Standards</p>	<p>TDC intends to include policies in the final plan that meet national standards for water management and internal space.</p>	<p>General statement of policy – no significant effects.</p>



Appendix D

In Combination Plans



Table D1 Review of other plans for potential 'in combination' effects

Plan	Summary	Likely net effect of plan on European sites (based on plan HRAs)	LSE with TDC Plan?	Notes
Local Transport Plan for Kent 2011-16 (Kent County Council, 2011)	The objectives within this plan reflect the character of Kent and the needs of a diverse County, much of it rural. The strategy approach for LTP3 has been to develop five Themes, based on the previous Government's five National Transport Goals as set out in the LTP3 Guidance, but made relevant to Kent. The principal schemes associated with Thanet relate to the proposed Parkway station.	No significant effect	No	TDC plan reflects the transport plan; landscape or strategy-level effects will not occur; effects of individual projects will be prevented by policy controls within both documents.
Local Transport Plan 4: Delivering Growth without Gridlock 2016-2031 (emerging)	Includes Thanet Parkway as a strategic transport priority; potential future schemes, which the Thanet plan reflects, include Thanet Loop Road Improvements and an inner circuit road associated with Westwood.	Plan emerging therefore conclusions re. HRA to be confirmed, but no significant effect likely	No	TDC plan reflects the emerging transport plan; landscape or strategy-level effects will not occur; effects of individual projects will be prevented by policy controls within both documents.
Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2013-30)	The adopted plan includes provisions for HRAs in relation to specific developments (e.g., in the supporting text for Policy DM12) and consideration of cumulative impacts. Any minerals or waste developments that are likely to result in an increase of more than 200 Heavy Duty Vehicles (HDVs)/day on any road that lies within 200m of a designated European Site will need to be subject to HRA screening to evaluate air quality impacts. It will be necessary for the applicant to demonstrate that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • either the increased traffic will not lead to an increase in nitrogen deposition within any European Sites that lies within 200m whereby the increase constitutes more than 1% of the critical load for the most sensitive habitat within the relevant site; • or If the increase in deposition will be greater than 1% of the critical load it will nonetheless be sufficiently small that no adverse effect on the interest features and integrity of the European Site will result. 	No significant effect	No	The plans will be complementary and the policies within both plans do not create a scenario where specific developments cannot be delivered due to the risk of significant effects.

Plan	Summary	Likely net effect of plan on European sites (based on plan HRAs)	LSE with TDC Plan?	Notes
Isle of Grain to South Foreland Shoreline Management Plan Review (2010)	The Shoreline Management Plan provides a large-scale assessment of the risks associated with coastal processes and presents a policy framework to address these risks to people and the developed, historic and natural environment in a sustainable manner. With regard to Thanet, the principal proposals are for a 'hold the line' approach although some re-alignment is likely to occur just outside the TDC area around Reculver.	No adverse effect on sites also exposed to effects of TDC plan (some sites outside TDC area are potentially adversely affected, but these will not be affected by the TDC plan therefore no in combination effects)	No	None of the sites exposed to potentially significant effects as a result of the TDC plan will be significantly affected by the SMP so in combination risks are limited.
South East River Basin District Management Plan (RBMP) 2015	A RBMP is a strategic plan which gives everyone concerned with the river basin district a measure of certainty about the future of water management in that district. It will include objectives for each water body and a summary of the programme of measures necessary to reach those objectives. The RBMP is a high-level plan that identifies potential measures for river basin management but does not identify precisely where and how the programme of measures will be implemented.	No significant effect	No	The plans will be complementary and the policies within both plans do not create a scenario where there is insufficient flexibility at the project stage to allow significant effects to be avoided.
Stour Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP)(Environment Agency, 2009)	This plan sets out the flood risk in the Stour Catchment and the EA's preferred plan for sustainable flood risk management over the next 50 years. The main proposals relating to the Thanet area are for the Lower Stour, where CFMP Policy Option 6 applies (areas of low to moderate flood risk where the EA will take action with others to store water or manage run-off in locations that provide overall flood risk reduction or environmental benefits).	No adverse effect on sites also exposed to effects of the TDC plan (some sites outside the TDC area potentially adversely affected)	No	None of the sites exposed to potentially significant effects as a result of the TDC plan will be significantly affected by the CFMP so in combination risks will not occur.

Plan	Summary	Likely net effect of plan on European sites (based on plan HRAs)	LSE with TDC Plan?	Notes
Canterbury District Housing Strategy 2012-2016	<p>The strategy sets out the following priorities with respect to the District's housing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensuring that the new Local Plan allocates enough land for the right number and type of homes in the right places. ● Increasing the number of new homes that families on the average local wage can afford to buy or rent. ● Encouraging the building of more family-sized homes. ● Improving the choice of homes to tempt "empty nesters" to downsize from family-sized homes. ● Reducing the number of excess winter deaths by improving the quality and condition of existing private homes. ● Managing the impact on the housing market of high numbers of young people studying and living in the district. 	No significant effect (with incorporated mitigation including SAMM)	No	Thanet District Council and Canterbury City Council will be undertaking a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of their mitigation plans. Canterbury City Council is also working with its neighbouring local authorities to the east of its boundary on the development and implementation of the Thames, Medway and Swale Estuaries Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy.
Dover District Council Adopted Core Strategy (2010)	<p>The Adopted Core Strategy contains the Council's overall ambitions and priorities for the District and will be used to decide what the District should be like in 2026. The overall aim of the strategy is to transform Dover into a leading town in the region and to regenerate the district so that economically and socially it equals or out-performs the region. The Core Strategy contains a number of strategic allocations at Dover Waterfront, Connaught Barracks, Mid Town and the managed expansion of Whitfield which are crucial to the implementation of the Strategy.</p>	No significant effect (with incorporated mitigation including SAMM)	No	DDC implementing its "Thanet Coast SPA Mitigation Strategy", which the TDC SAMM will complement.

Plan	Summary	Likely net effect of plan on European sites (based on plan HRAs)	LSE with TDC Plan?	Notes
Emerging Canterbury City Council Local Plan	The plan sets out the spatial strategy for the District. It aims to promote sustainability in developments to achieve the objectives. It includes policies relating to the protection of European sites and the delivery of a SAMM. Canterbury City Council is also working with its neighbouring local authorities to the east of its boundary on the development and implementation of the Thames, Medway and Swale Estuaries Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy.	Plan is emerging therefore HRA not completed – but no significant effects likely (with incorporated mitigation including SAMM)	No	Thanet District Council and Canterbury City Council will be undertaking a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of their mitigation plans. Canterbury City Council is also working with its neighbouring local authorities to the east of its boundary on the development and implementation of the Thames, Medway and Swale Estuaries Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy.
South East Water Resources Management Plan (2010-2035)	Water companies in England and Wales are required to produce a Water Resources Management Plan that sets out how they aim to maintain water supplies over a 25-year period. The current Water Resources Management Plan was published in 2010 in agreement with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), following a public inquiry. The South East region is classed as an area of serious water stress by the Environment Agency. The South East Water WRMP demonstrates how, in the medium to long term, it is intended to develop new resources, tackle leakage and use water sensibly through metering and water efficiency campaigns. The long term strategy is to increase the robustness of the water resources network to climate change. The plan is required to be updated every five years. South East Water are currently engaging with customers and stakeholders as they prepare to update their plan for 2019 to 2040.	No significant effect.	No	Southern Water's WRMP for the next 25 years explicitly accounts for any reductions in abstraction that are required to safeguard European sites (see Section 3) and for the growth predicted by TDC and other LPAs in its forecasting. Therefore, the future water resource requirements of Thanet are factored into the abstraction regime, such that they will not affect European sites (i.e. the growth provided for by the Thanet plan is in line with SW predictions and will not increase water resources pressure on any European sites, alone or in combination).



Appendix E

Review of Submission Draft Policies

Table E1 Review of submission draft policies

Policy	Policy Title	Adverse effects alone / in combination	Notes/Rationale
SP01	Implementation	No	General statement of policy
SP02	Employment Growth	No	General statement of aspirations
SP03	Land Allocated for Economic Development	No	Allocations unlikely to have significant effects on their own, although may operate in combination with residential developments to increase recreational pressure on European sites; this is avoided by Policy SP25 / SP26.
SP04	Manston Business Park	No	Allocation specific policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM.
AD05 / AD06	-	No	Policy SPO5 has been deleted, paragraphs 1.38 – 1.42 have been replaced with text relating to the potential future use of the site for aviation purposes, and TDC's decision to not to allocate the Airport site for any specific purpose in the draft Local Plan to ensure that the ongoing NSIP-DCO process is not prejudiced. The TDC plan is therefore effectively neutral in this regard and so cannot generate effects on European sites.
SP06	Thanet's Town Centres	No	General criteria policy / statement of expectations; no significant effects
SP07	Westwood	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM.
SP08	Margate	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM.
SP09	Ramsgate	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM.
SP10	Broadstairs	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM.
SP11	Housing Provision	No	General statement of policy; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM.
SP12	General Housing Policy	No	General statement of policy; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM.
SP13	Strategic Housing Sites – Manston Green	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.

Policy	Policy Title	Adverse effects alone / in combination	Notes/Rationale
SP14	Strategic Housing Site at Birchington	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
SP15	Strategic Housing Site at Westgate on Sea	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
SP16	Westwood Strategic Housing	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
SP17	Land fronting Nash and Haine Roads	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
SP18	Land at Manston Court Road/Haine Road	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
SP19	Type and Size of Dwellings	No	General statement of policy re. housing mix.
SP20	Affordable Housing	No	General statement of policy.
SP21	Development in the Countryside	No	General statement of policy.
SP22	Safeguarding the Identity of Thanet's Settlements	No	Protective policy; no significant effects
SP23	Landscape Character Areas	No	Protective policy; no significant effects
SP24	Green Infrastructure	No	Enhancement policy; no significant effects; will operate with SP25, SP26 and SP27 to reduce impacts on SPA.
SP25	Protection of the International and European Designated Sites	No	Protective policy. Effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
SP26	Strategic Access management and Monitoring Plan (SAMM) policy	No	Protective policy ensuring delivery of requirements regards the SAMM.
SP27	Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets	No	Protective policy.
SP28	Biodiversity Opportunity Areas	No	Protective policy.
SP29	Protection of Open Space	No	Protective policy.
SP30	Local Green Space	No	Protective policy.
SP31	Provision of Accessible Natural and Semi Natural Green Space, Parks, Gardens and Recreation Grounds	No	Protective policy.
SP32	Allotments	No	General statement of policy.

Policy	Policy Title	Adverse effects alone / in combination	Notes/Rationale
SP33	Quality Development	No	Design criteria.
SP34	Conservation and Enhancement of Thanet's Historic Environment	No	Protective policy.
SP35	Climate Change	No	Protective policy.
SP36	Healthy and Inclusive Communities	No	General statement of policy.
SP37	QEQM Hospital, Margate	No	General statement of policy.
SP38	New medical centre at Westwood	No	General statement of policy.
SP39	Community Infrastructure	No	General statement of policy.
SP40	Expansion of Primary and Secondary Schools	No	General statement of policy.
SP41	Safe and Sustainable Travel	No	General statement of policy.
SP42	Accessible locations	No	General statement of policy.
SP43	Transport Infrastructure	No	General statement of policy.
SP44	Connectivity	No	General statement of policy.
SP45	New Railway Station	No	General statement of policy.
SP46	Strategic Road Network	No	General statement of policy.
SP47	Strategic Routes	No	General statement of policy; reflects requirements of the Thanet Transport Strategy.
E01	Retention of existing employment sites	No	General statement of policy.
E02	Home Working	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
E03	Digital Infrastructure	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
E04	Primary and Secondary Frontages	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
E05	Sequential and Impact Test	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
E06	District and Local Centres	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
E07	Serviced Tourist Accommodation	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
E08	Self-Catering Tourist Accommodation	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
E09	Protection of Existing Tourist Accommodation	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.

Policy	Policy Title	Adverse effects alone / in combination	Notes/Rationale
E10	Major Holiday Beaches	No	Criteria policy; includes safeguards relating to the protection of the European sites.
E11	Intermediate Beaches	No	Criteria policy; includes safeguards relating to the protection of the European sites.
E12	Undeveloped Beaches	No	Criteria policy; includes safeguards relating to the protection of the European sites.
E13	Language Schools	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
E14	Quex Park	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
E15	New build development for economic development purposes in the rural area	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
E16	Conversion of rural buildings for economic development purposes	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
E17	Farm Diversification	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
E18	Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
E19	Agricultural Related Development	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
HO1	Housing Development	No	General statement of policy / criteria; includes provision to protect European sites from recreational pressure.
HO2	Land north and south of Shottendane Road	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
HO3	Land on west side of Old Haine Road, Ramsgate	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
HO4	Land fronting Nash Road and Manston Road	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
-	-	-	Policy HO5 has been deleted from this section as it is now incorporated in the wider strategic allocation for Birchington under SP14. AD18 in the Addendum. Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
HO6	Land south of Brooke Avenue Garlinge	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
HO7	Land at Haine Road and Spratling Street, Ramsgate	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.

Policy	Policy Title	Adverse effects alone / in combination	Notes/Rationale
HO8	Land south of Canterbury Road East, Ramsgate	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
HO9	Land at Melbourne Avenue, Ramsgate	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
HO10	Cliftonville West and Margate central	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
HO11	Housing at Rural Settlements	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
HO12	Land at Tothill Street, Minster	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
HO13	Land at Manor Road, St Nicholas at Wade	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
HO14	Land at Walter's Hall Farm, Monkton	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
HO15	Land south side of A253, Cliffsend	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
HO16	Land north of Cottington Rd, Cliffsend	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
HO17	Land south side of Cottington Rd, Cliffsend	No	Policy that may contribute to in combination visitor pressure; effects avoided / mitigated by policy requirements regards SAMM. Effects on functional land also avoided through policy.
HO18	Rural Housing Need	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
HO19	New agricultural dwellings	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
HO20	Care and Supported Housing	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
HO21	Non self-contained residential accommodation	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
HO22	Accommodation for Gypsy and Travelling Communities	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
HO23	Residential use of empty property	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
HO24	Retention of existing housing stock	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
HO25	Ancillary accommodation for a family member	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.

Policy	Policy Title	Adverse effects alone / in combination	Notes/Rationale
HO26	Fostering Homes	No	General statement of policy/ criteria.
GI01	Protection of Nationally Designated Sites (SSSI) and Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ)	No	Protective policy.
GI02	Locally Designated Wildlife Sites	No	Protective policy.
GI03	Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS)	No	Protective policy.
GI04	Amenity Green Space and Equipped Play Areas	No	Will work with other mitigating policies to help reduce effects of development on European sites
GI05	Protection of Playing Fields and Outdoor Sports Facilities	No	Will work with other mitigating policies to help reduce effects of development on European sites
GI06	Landscaping and Green Infrastructure	No	Will work with other mitigating policies to help reduce effects of development on European sites
GI07	Jackey Bakers	No	None.
QD01	Sustainable Design	No	General design criteria / principles.
QD02	General design principles	No	General design criteria / principles.
QD03	Living Conditions	No	General design criteria / principles.
QD04	Technical Standards	No	General design criteria / principles.
QD05	Accessible and Adaptable Accommodation	No	General design criteria / principles.
QD06	Advertisements	No	General design criteria / principles.
QD07	Telecommunications	No	General design criteria / principles.
HE01	Archaeology	No	General statement of policy re. archaeology requirements for developments; no effects
HE02	Development in Conservation Areas	No	General statement of policy re. developments in conservation areas; no effects
HE03	Local Heritage Assets	No	General statement of policy re. developments in conservation areas; no effects
HE04	Historic Parks and Gardens	No	General statement of policy; no effects
HE05	Works to a heritage asset to address climate change	No	Protective policy; no effects
CC01	Fluvial and Tidal Flooding	No	Policy supporting works to heritage assets to improve performance re. climate change; no effects.
CC02	Surface Water Management	No	Requirement for SuDS in new developments; mitigating policy.
CC03	Coastal Development	No	Criteria policy; includes safeguards relating to the protection of the European sites.

Policy	Policy Title	Adverse effects alone / in combination	Notes/Rationale
CC04	Renewable energy	No	General design criteria / principles.
CC05	District Heating	No	General statement of policy.
CC06	Solar Parks	No	Criteria for solar farms; includes protective elements.
CC07	Richborough	No	Support for renewable energy at Richborough; includes protective clauses.
SE01	Potentially Polluting Development	No	Criteria for permitting potentially polluting development; provides protective clauses and safeguards; any development associated with this policy will be subject to other consenting regimes.
SE02	Landfill Sites and Unstable Land	No	Policy relating to development near landfills and risk of gas etc.; general statement of policy; no significant effects.
SE03	Contaminated Land	No	Policy relating to development of potentially contaminated sites; no significant effects.
SE04	Groundwater Protection	No	Policy protecting groundwater; no significant effects
SE05	Air Quality	No	Policy safeguarding air quality; requires consideration of cumulative effects; no significant effects.
SE06	Noise Pollution	No	Policy protecting against noise pollution; no significant effects.
SE07	Noise Action Plan Important Areas	No	Requirement for noise action plan; no effect
SE08	Light Pollution	No	Policy providing safeguards against light pollution from new development; no significant effects.
CM01	Provision of New Community Facilities	No	General design criteria / principles; no significant effects
CM02	Protection of Existing Community Facilities	No	General design criteria / principles; no significant effects
CM03	Expansion of Margate Cemetery	No	Allocation for expansion of cemetery; no effects
CM04	Expansion of Minster Cemetery	No	Allocation for expansion of cemetery; no effects
TP01	Transport Assessments and Travel Plans	No	Requirements for Travel Plans; no significant effects
TP02	Walking	No	Policy requiring provision for pedestrians; no significant effects
TP03	Cycling	No	Policy requiring provision for cyclists; no significant effects
TP04	Public Transport	No	Policy requiring provision for public transport; no significant effects
TP05	Coach Parking	No	Allocation of coach parking; no significant effects
TP06	Car Parking	No	Car parking requirements for new developments; no significant effects

Policy	Policy Title	Adverse effects alone / in combination	Notes/Rationale
TP07	Town Centre Public Car Parks	No	Retention of existing car parking and criteria; no significant effects
TP08	Freight and service delivery	No	Requirement for off-street servicing for new development; no significant effects.
TP09	Car parking provision at Westwood	No	Criteria for car parking provision at Westwood; no significant effects.
TP10	Traffic Management	No	General statement of policy re. traffic management; no effects



Appendix F

Golden Plover Report



Thanet Golden Plover and Lapwing findings, February 2016

As in January, numbers of golden plover and lapwing remained very low in Pegwell and numbers on Thanet were small. This is largely considered to be due to the continuing mild weather conditions.

However, golden plover were found in two additional areas to those identified in January. Locations in February included:

- west of Haine Road between Manston Court Road and Coldswood Lane (nocturnal only)
- St.Peter's Road near Sackett's Hill Farm (diurnal only).
- fields north, west and east of the junction with Woodchurch Road and Shottendane Road, Garlinge (nocturnal only).
- Brooksend Farm west of Birchington (diurnal only).

Summary maps at the end of this section show numbers and locations so far of golden plover and lapwing.

New moon period

Diurnal on February 10th

At 0900 in Pegwell Bay three **Golden Plover** and 320 **Lapwing** were roosting on the intertidal mud in front of the country park.

On Thanet **Golden Plover** were found in two areas. No **Lapwing** were found in the survey area but one flock was noted close by.

Golden Plover

84 roosting on fresh plough (in area of brassicas) south side of St.Peter's Road west of Sacketts Hill Farm.

140 roosting on plough south of Minnis Bay between the railway and Brooksend Farm public footpath.

Lapwing

200 on plough at Thanet Earth, ca.500m west of Seamark Road and outside the survey area.

Nocturnal survey on February 11th-12th

Survey at Pegwell Bay to record dusk dispersal from 1640. Just two **Golden Plover** present and 265 **Lapwing** on Sportsman pool and in saltmarsh. Sunset at 1701, birds heading off from 1645-1655 all heading west over St.Augustines GC clubhouse.

On Thanet **Golden Plover** were found at one location and Lapwing at three locations between Manston Road and Little Cliffsend Farm.

Golden Plover

Two birds in cut brassicas just west of Haine Road and just north of the ambulance station.

Lapwing

Five on plough just south of Manston Road.

Three in bean fields either side of Canterbury Road West at Cliffs End.

56 in rape crop between Chalk Hill and Little Cliffsend Farm buildings.

Full moon period

Diurnal survey on February 19th

Counted 270 **Lapwing** in Pegwell Bay at 0900 but no Golden Plover present.

On Thanet no **Golden Plover** were found and **Lapwing** in one area:

Lapwing

Three roosting in plough (in area of brassicas) just north of Coldswood Lane west of Haine Road.

Nocturnal survey on February 21st-22nd

Dusk dispersal survey at Pegwell Bay from 1616. 220 **Golden Plover** and 450+ **Lapwing** on intertidal mud in front of country park. Sunset at 1719, all birds headed off west towards Minster.

Golden Plover

70 birds found feeding in fields south of Garlinge. These involved 60 in winter cereal just south-east of the Woodchurch Road junction with Shottendane Road, three in winter cereal just south-west of that junction and seven in fallow just north of Shottendane Road and east of Minster Road.

Lapwing

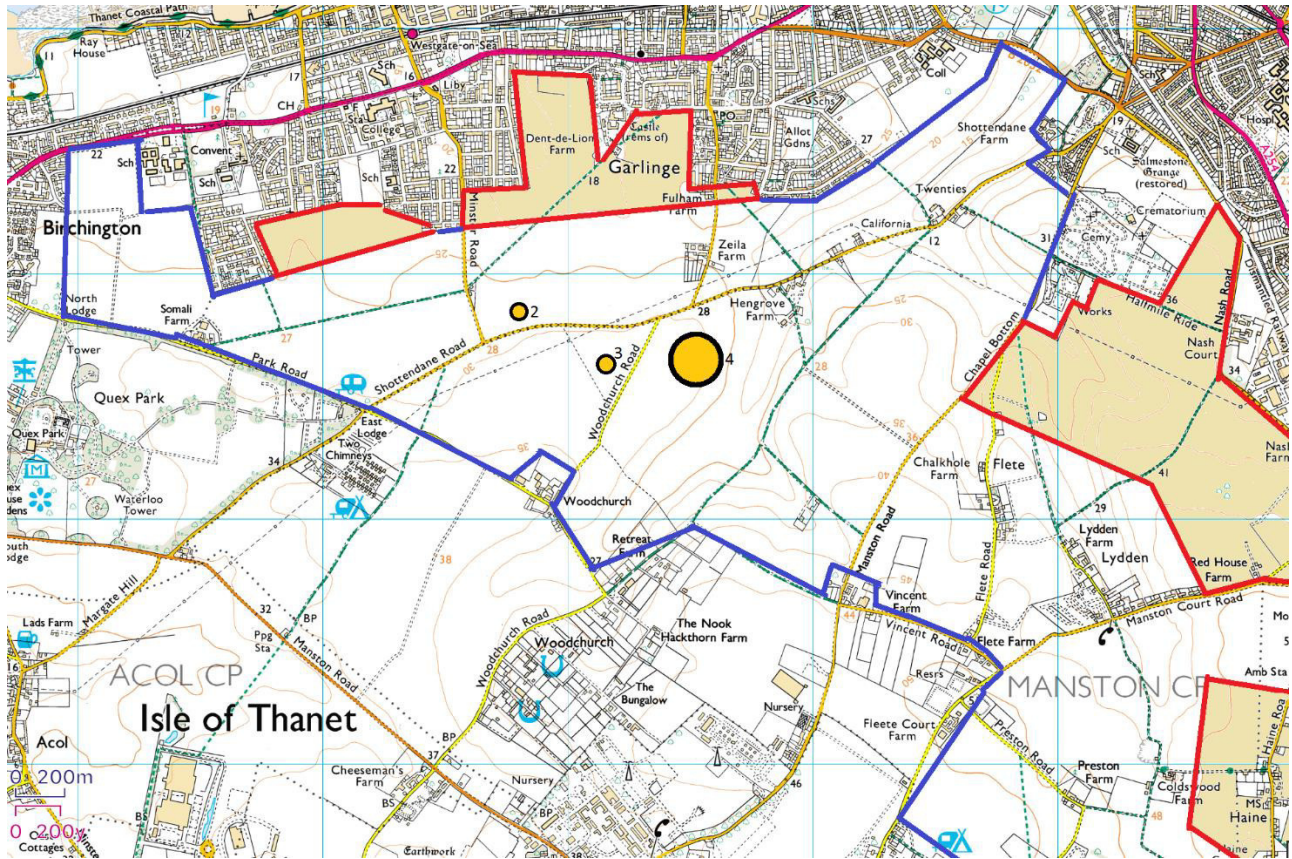
25+ in rape crop between Chalk Hill and Little Cliffsend Farm buildings.

12 in bean field between railway and Canterbury Road West at Cliffs End.

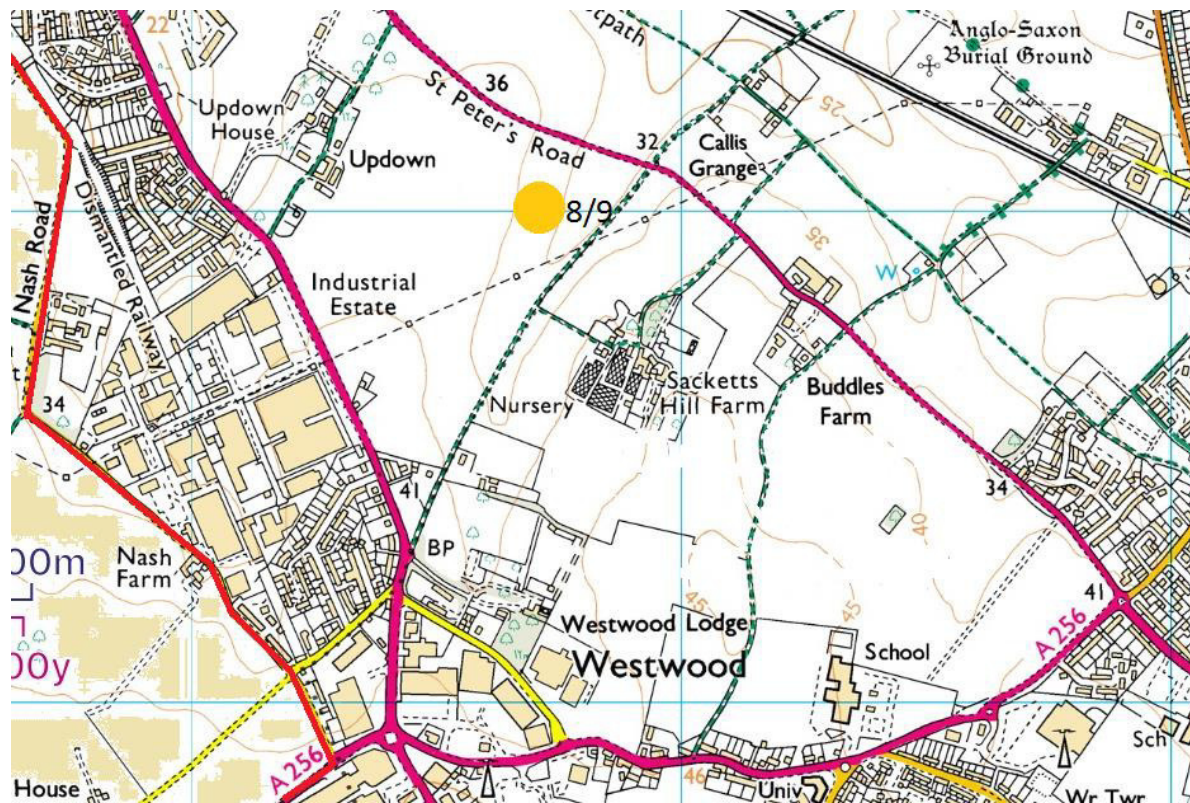
Explanation of maps

The following maps show the locations of all Golden Plover and Lapwing records in the survey area during the current survey.

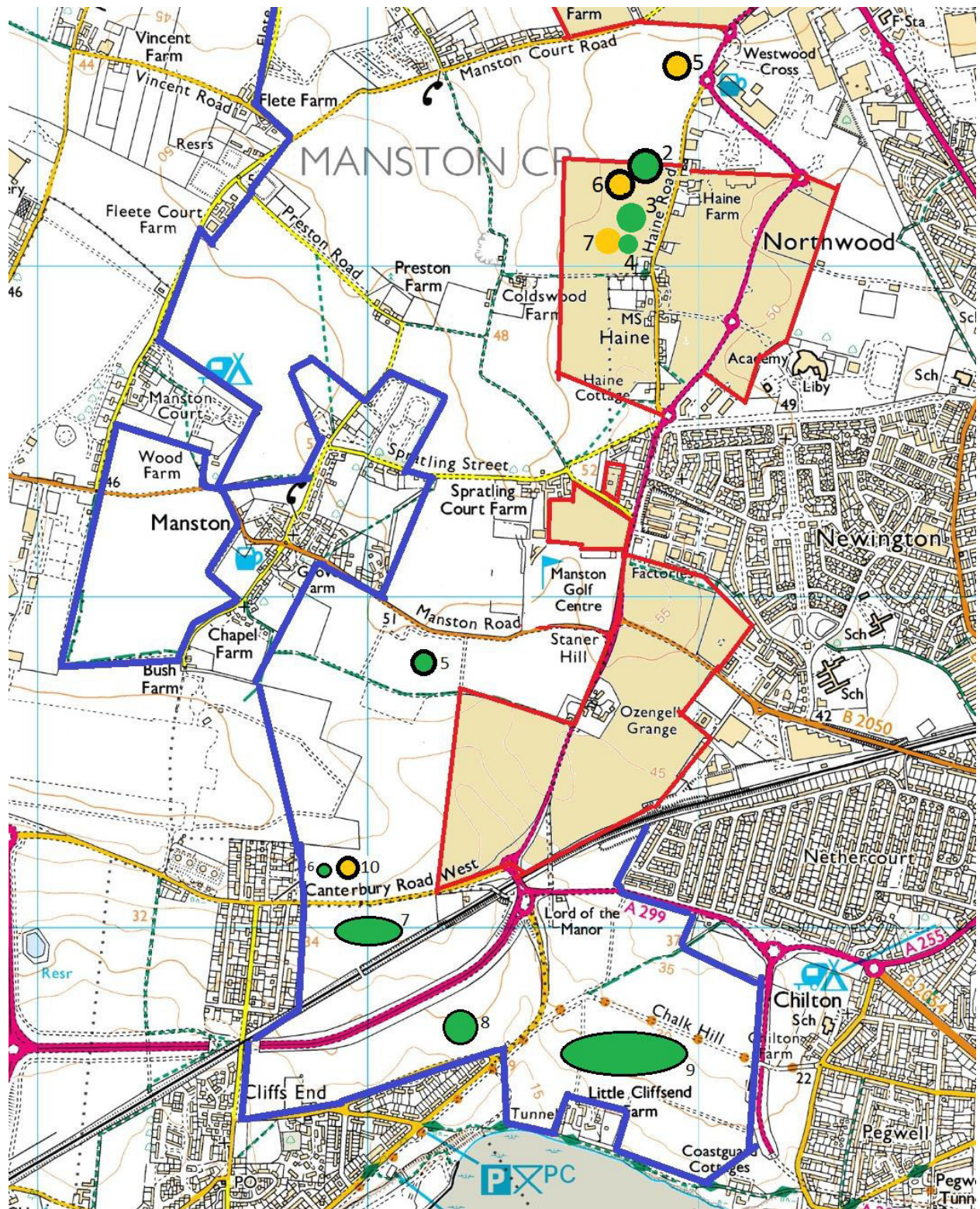
Golden Plover is in yellow, Lapwing in green. A black outline indicates nocturnal survey record. No outline indicates diurnal survey record.



Map 2: Garlinge to Lydden. Golden Plover and Lapwing – January and February 2016.



Map 3: Westwood to Dane Valley. Golden Plover and Lapwing – January and February 2016.



Map 4: Lydden to Cliffs End. Golden Plover and Lapwing – January and February 2016.

Golden Plover

1. February 10th (diurnal) 140 roosting on plough south of Minnis Bay between the railway and Brooksend Farm public footpath.
2. February 21st-22nd (nocturnal) Seven in fallow just north of Shottendane Road and east of Minster Road.
3. February 21st-22nd (nocturnal) Three in winter cereal just south-west of Woodchurch Road junction with Shottendane Road.
4. February 21st-22nd (nocturnal) 60 in winter cereal just south-east of the Woodchurch Road junction with Shottendane Road.
5. February 11th-12th (nocturnal) Two birds in cut brassicas just west of Haine Road and just north of the ambulance station.
6. January 27th-28th (nocturnal) Two with Lapwings in brassicas north of Coldswood Lane west of Haine Road.
7. January 25th (diurnal) Two on fresh plough (in area of brassicas) just north of Coldswood Lane west of Haine Road.
8. January 25th (diurnal) 29 roosting on fresh plough (in area of brassicas) south side of St.Peter's Road west of Sacketts Hill Farm.
9. February 10th (diurnal) 84 roosting on fresh plough (in area of brassicas) south side of St.Peter's Road west of Sacketts Hill Farm.
10. January 11th-12th (nocturnal) 15 in bean crop east of Windsor Road and north of Canterbury Road West at Cliffsend.

Lapwing

1. February 10th (diurnal) 200 on plough at Thanet Earth, ca.500m west of Seamark Road and outside the survey area.
2. January 27th-28th (nocturnal) 80+ in harvested brassicas between Coldswood Lane and Manston Court Road west of Haine Road.
3. January 25th (diurnal) 74 roosting on fresh plough (in area of brassicas) just north of Coldswood Lane west of Haine Road.
4. February 19th (diurnal) Three roosting in plough (in area of brassicas) just north of Coldswood Lane west of Haine Road.
5. February 11th-12th (nocturnal) Five on plough just south of Manston Road.
6. February 11th-12th (nocturnal) Three in bean field north side of Canterbury Road West at Cliffs End.
7. Regularly recorded in field (bean crop) between railway and Canterbury Road West at Cliffs End on nocturnal surveys with 25 there January 11th-12th, 10 January 27th-28th, three on February 11th-12th and 12 on Feb 21st-22nd.
8. January 11th-12th (nocturnal) 15 in grass/winter cereal on north side of Cliffs End road at Cliffs End.
9. Regularly recorded in fields (oilseed rape crop) between Chalk Hill and Little Cliffsend Farm buildings on nocturnal surveys with 15 there January 11th-12th, 85+ January 27th-28th, 56 on February 11th-12th and 25+ on Feb 21st-22nd.

Martin Sutherland, 10th March 2016

wood.

