



Local Development Framework

Sustainable Design and Construction

Supplementary Planning Document

Habitats Regulation Assessment

May 2007



## CONTENTS

	Page
Executive Summary	4
1. Introduction	5
2. Description of the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD	8
3. Description of the Relevant Plans and Strategies to be considered 'In Combination'	10
4. Screening Methodology Setting out the Approach Used and Specific Tasks Undertaken	12
5. Natura 2000 and Ramsar Sites Potentially Affected by the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD	14
6. Conclusions of the Screening Assessment	15
7. Consultations	16
<b>Appendices:</b>	
Appendix 1: Summary of other relevant plans and strategies	17
Appendix 2: Information on Natura 2000 and Ramsar Sites	20
Appendix 3: Maps	40
Appendix 4: Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Matrix	52

## Executive Summary

This document is a Habitats Regulation Screening Assessment of the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD, which has been carried out by Cambridge City Council as the relevant competent authority. It has been carried out in order to meet the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

Habitats Regulation Assessment is an assessment of the potential effects of a proposed plan or project, both alone and in combination with other plans and projects, on one or more Natura 2000 or Ramsar sites. This report represents stage 1 of this process and provides:

- Details of the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD and its objectives;
- Details of other relevant plans and projects;
- Details of the Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites that could potentially be affected by the SPD (including their specific characteristics and conservation objectives); and
- A screening assessment of the SPD, both alone and in combination with other identified plans and projects, in order to identify any likely significant effects on those sites.

The conclusion drawn as a result of this screening assessment is that the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD is not likely to have any significant effects on the Natura 2000 or Ramsar sites identified. The City Council therefore feels that there is not necessary to proceed to further stages of appropriate assessment.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document is a Habitats Regulation Screening Assessment of the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document, which has been carried out in order to meet the requirement of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). It has been prepared by Cambridge City Council, as the relevant competent authority.

## 1.2 The Habitats Directive

1.2.1 Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna and Flora (the 'Habitats Directive') provides the legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Habitats Regulation Assessment and states:

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

Article 6(4) goes on to discuss alternative solutions, the test of 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest' (IROPI) and compensatory measures:

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

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

1.2.2 The sites covered by Habitats Regulation Assessment form what are known as Natura 2000 sites. These are a Europe-wide network of sites of international importance for nature conservation established under the Habitats Directive, which has been transposed into UK law as the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &C) Regulations 1994.

1.2.3 Natura 2000 sites include Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). Planning Policy Statement 9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (PPS9) advises that proposed sites awaiting approval – potential SPAs (pSPAs) and candidate SACs (cSACs) – should be treated in the same way as those already classified and approved. Ramsar sites are also considered by Habitats Regulation Assessments in accordance with paragraph 6 of PPS9. These sites support internationally important wetland habitats and are listed under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention, 1971).

### 1.3 What is Habitats Regulations Assessment?

1.3.1 Habitats Regulation Assessment is an assessment of the potential effects of a proposed plan in combination with other plans and projects on one or more European sites. The Habitats Directive promotes a hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation and compensatory measures. First, the plan should aim to **avoid** any negative impacts of European sites by identifying potential impacts early on in the plan-making process and writing these impacts out of the plan. Where adverse impacts remain **mitigation measures** should be applied to the point that no adverse impacts remain. If the plan is still likely to result in adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated it should not be taken forward in its current form. In this situation the plan may have to undergo an assessment of alternative solutions. Where adverse impacts remain **compensatory measures** may be required but these will only be permitted if (a) no alternative solutions exist and (b) the plan is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (the 'IROPI' test).

1.3.2 There are 4 stages to Habitats Regulations Assessment process as outlined below:

- **Stage 1 (Screening)** – the process which identifies the likely impacts upon a Natura 2000 or Ramsar site(s), either alone or in combination with other projects or plans and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant;
- **Stage 2 (Appropriate Assessment)** – The consideration of the impact on the integrity of the site(s), either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are adverse impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts should be provided;
- **Stage 3 (Assessment of alternative solutions)** – The process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 and Ramsar site(s); and
- **Stage 4 (Compensatory measures)** – An assessment of the compensatory measures where, in light of an assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest, it is deemed that the plan should proceed.

- 1.3.2 If the screening stage concludes that there are likely to be no significant impacts on European sites then this will not need to process to the stage of Appropriate Assessment.
- 1.3.3 Judgement of the significance of effects on European sites should be undertaken in relation to the designated interest features and conservation objective of the site in question using sound judgement and with a scientific basis where available. If insufficient information is available to make a clear judgement, it should be assumed that a significant effect is possible in line with the precautionary principle.

#### *The Precautionary Principle*

*Prudent action that avoids the possibility of irreversible environmental damage in situations where the scientific evidence is inconclusive but the potential damage could be significant.*

#### **1.4 Structure of the Habitats Regulation Assessment**

1.4.1 The structure of this Habitats Regulation Assessment will be as follows:

- Description of the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD
- Description of the relevant plans and projects considered 'in combination'
- Screening Methodology
- Identification and description of European Sites
- Conclusions on the Screening Assessment of the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD
- Consultations

- 2 Description of the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document**
- 2.1 The Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is intended to provide guidance on the policies in the 2006 Cambridge Local Plan that relate to sustainability. The aim of the document is to clarify what the requirements are in terms of planning applications for major developments and how compliance should be demonstrated.
- 2.2 The sustainability criteria considered by the SPD are:
- Urban Design
  - Transport, Movement and Accessibility
  - Sustainable Drainage
  - Energy
  - Recycling and Waste Facilities
  - Biodiversity
  - Pollution
  - Climate Change Adaptation
  - Water
  - Materials & Construction Waste
  - Historic Environment
- 2.3 The above criteria are split into essential design considerations and recommended considerations, and applicants for major developments are required to submit a sustainability checklist and sustainability statement to show how these requirements have been met. The essential considerations relate to specific policies contained within the 2006 Cambridge Local Plan, while the recommended considerations are those that the Council would like to see in major developments to make them as sustainable as possible.
- 2.4 The document is set against the context of the 2006 Local Plan, which sets the need for 12,500 new homes to be built in Cambridge by 2016. This is a significant amount of growth and the SPD will be important in ensuring that this growth is implemented in as sustainable a way as possible. The SPD applies to all major developments within the City, whether new build or refurbishment and includes changes to the historic environment.
- 2.5 The Sustainable Design and Construction SPD forms part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) for Cambridge, which will set out policies and proposals for the development and use of land in the City. The LDF is comprised of a number of development plan documents (DPDs) and supplementary planning documents (SPDs) as shown in table 1 below.

**Table 1: Cambridge Local Development Framework**

<b>Document Name</b>	<b>Progress to date</b>
Core Strategy (DPD)	Issues & Options
Cambridge East Area Action Plan (DPD)	Submitted to the Secretary of State January 2006
North West Cambridge Area Action Plan (DPD)	Preferred Options being prepared
Site Specific Allocations (DPD)	Work to commence autumn 2007
Generic Development Control Policies (DPD)	Work to commence autumn 2007
Affordable Housing (SPD)	Draft document being prepared
Sustainable Design & Construction (SPD)	Draft document being revised
Planning Obligations (SPD)	Draft document being prepared
Public Art (SPD)	Pre production background studies and information gathering
Historic Environment (SPD)	Pre production background studies and information gathering

- 3 Description of the Relevant Plans and Strategies to be Considered 'In Combination'**
- 3.1 The 2006 Cambridge Local Plan, to which the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD is linked, plans for development proposed in Regional Planning Guidance (RPG6) and subsequently the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003.
- 3.2 The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the East of England, which will replace RPG6, is currently at an advanced stage of preparation, having reached the recommendations of the Secretary of State stage. It carries forward the requirements of RPG6 for the Cambridge sub-region for the period to 2016. This plan has been subject to a Habitats Regulation Assessment, which concludes that the plan will not have any significant effect on any Natura 2000 or Ramsar sites and that a full appropriate assessment is not required for any of the policies of the RSS. The reasons for this are stated to be:
- That the policies will not result in any development;
  - The policies make provision for development, but the exact location is to be selected following the consideration of options in lower tier plans;
  - The policy concentrates the development in urban areas away from Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites;
  - That the policies specifically state that development should avoid any adverse effects on the integrity of Natura 2000 or Ramsar sites; and
  - Policy ENV3 states that local planning authorities should 'ensure that ... development does not have adverse effects on the integrity of sites of European or International importance'.
  - Generic provisions have been made within the policies in the RSS (e.g. Policy ENV3) supported by more specific provisions to ensure that the integrity of Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites are not adversely affected by development (Policies SS9, E7, C2 and WAT2).
- 3.3 The Sustainable Design and Construction SPD will not itself result in any development. In terms of determining the location of development in Cambridge, these have already been identified in the Structure Plan (2003) and the 2006 Cambridge Local Plan.
- 3.4 This screening stage focuses on the 'in-combination' effects of the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD in combination with other plans, including those of other nearby authorities and minerals and waste plans produced by County Councils. These plans are listed below with a brief summary of each plan set out in Appendix 1.
- Cambridge Local Plan 2006
  - Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan, 2003
  - Cambridgeshire Waste Local Plan 2003
  - Cambridgeshire Aggregates (minerals) Local Plan 1991

- Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste DPD Preferred Options Nov 2006
- Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy DPD
- South Cambridgeshire Site Specific Policies DPD Submission Draft
- South Cambridgeshire Generic Development Control Policies DPD Submission Draft
- Cambridge East Area Action Plan DPD Submission Draft
- Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan DPD Submission Draft
- North West Cambridge Area Action Plan DPD Issues & Options Report
- Northstowe Area Action Plan DPD Submission Draft
- Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995
- East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2000 & Core Strategy Preferred Options 2006
- Fenland Local Plan 1993 & Core Strategy DPD Preferred Options 2006
- North Herts Local Plan 1996 & Core Strategy Options 2005
- Mid Bedfordshire Local Plan 2005 & Core Strategy DPD Issues & Options
- Forest Heath Local Plan 1995 & Core Strategy & Development Policies DPD Preferred Options Report October 2006
- King's Lynn & West Norfolk Local Plan 1998, Core Strategy DPD Submission & Development Control Policies Preferred Options
- Bedfordshire & Luton Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2005
- Bedfordshire & Luton Minerals Core Strategy and Site Allocations Plan Issues & Options, Jan 2006
- Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan 1998 (and review)
- Hertfordshire Minerals and Waste DPDs Issues & Options
- Suffolk Minerals Local Plan 1999 & Minerals Core Strategy Issues and Options January 2007
- Suffolk Waste Local Plan 2006
- St Edmundsbury Local Plan 2006

- 4 Screening Methodology Setting out the Approach Used and Specific Tasks Undertaken**
- 4.1 The Habitats Regulation Assessment of the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD has been undertaken in accordance with the European Commission's guidance on the 'Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites', and seeks to meet the requirements of the Habitats Directive. The tasks undertaken in this process are outlined below.
- 4.2 Task 1: Identification of Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites that may be affected by the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD and the factors contributing to and defining the integrity of these sites.**
- 4.2.1 There are no Natura 2000 or Ramsar sites contained within the area covered by Cambridge City Council, so initial investigations were undertaken to identify sites in surrounding districts. This work had already been undertaken by South Cambridgeshire District Council for the Habitats Directive Assessment of their Core Strategy Development Plan Document and this involved the use of GIS data as well as consultation with the Natural England Four Counties team. South Cambridgeshire District Council is the neighbouring authority for Cambridge City Council and as such it was felt appropriate to apply Habitats Regulation Assessment to the same sites. The precautionary principle was applied to this selection and as such sites beyond the boundary of South Cambridgeshire District Council have been included. The sites identified are listed in section 5 of this document and the attributes that contribute to and define the integrity of these sites are listed in appendix 2. It is felt that the information identified is appropriate to inform this screening decision.
- 4.3 Task 2: Completion of the Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening Matrix for the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD, including an Assessment of Significance of Effects.**
- 4.3.1 The screening matrix used to assess the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD is the same as that used by South Cambridgeshire District Council for the Habitats Directive Assessment of their Core Strategy and as such has been approved for use by Natural England's Four Counties team. In accordance with government guidance, the precautionary principle has been applied to the assessment of whether or not the potential effects of the SPD are considered to be 'significant'. The screening matrix has been used to assess the significance of effects on the conservation objectives of each of the European sites identified and considers both the potential effects of the SPD alone and in combination with other relevant plans and projects as identified in section 3 of this document. The impacts examined by the screening matrix are in relation to land take by development, impact on protected species which travel outside the designated sites, increased

disturbance from recreational use, impacts on water quantity and quality and changes in levels of pollution.

- 5 Natura 2000 and Ramsar Sites Potentially Affected by the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.**
- 5.1 There are no Natura 2000 or Ramsar sites within Cambridge City. However there are a number of sites outside the boundaries of the City that have been considered as part of this assessment because of their proximity to the district and/or the nature of their conservation interest. These sites are:
- Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC;
  - Ouse Washes SAC, SPA and Ramsar site;
  - Fenland SAC and Ramsar site;
  - Portholme SAC
  - Devil's Dyke SAC
- There are no candidate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs) in the area.
- 5.2 As mentioned previously, the sites chosen were identified by South Cambridgeshire District Council for the Habitats Directive Assessment of their Core Strategy DPD. Natural England confirmed that these sites were appropriate in a letter to South Cambridgeshire District Council dated the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2006. Details of each of these sites along with their relevant conservation objectives are contained within Appendix 2. The locations of these sites is shown on the maps in Appendix 3.
- 5.3 The conservation objectives for each SAC or SPA are designed to ensure that the qualifying interest of each site is maintained in the long term. Whilst these are specific to each site, there are some general principles including:
- To maintain the population of the habitat/species as a viable component of the site;
  - To maintain the distribution of the habitat/species within the site;
  - To maintain the distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species;
  - To maintain the structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species; and
  - To ensure that there is no significant disturbance of the species.
- 5.3 The main aim of Ramsar sites is to promote the conservation of the site in order to avoid deterioration of wetland habitats of Ramsar interest and significant disturbance of associated species.
- 5.4 The main aim of this screening assessment is to ensure that the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans as identified in section 3, will not have an impact on the conservation objectives of these sites.

## 6 Conclusions of the Screening Assessment

- 6.1 Appendix 4 of this document contains the full screening assessment of the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD on the identified Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites. This considers the potential impacts of the document both alone and in combination with other relevant plans as outlined in section 3 above.
- 6.2 The overall conclusions of this screening assessment is that the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD is unlikely to have any significant impacts on the conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites identified. As such it is felt that it is not necessary to proceed to the next stage of the Habitats Regulations Assessment process i.e. Stage 2 and the requirement for an appropriate assessment.

## 7 Consultations

- 7.1 Natural England is the statutory nature conservation body for appropriate assessment. Their Four Counties team has been consulted on this Habitats Regulations Assessment and they responded as follows:

“It is noted that the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD does not allocate land for development so by itself will not lead to an increase in recreational pressure, disturbance, pollution and other impacts. However as this SPD is intended to provide guidance on policies that relate to sustainability contained within other Plans it has an important role to play in minimising these impacts and maximising overall biodiversity gain. With respect to available guidance we consider the screening matrix and accompanying documentation has been well prepared and I can confirm that Natural England considers Cambridgeshire City Council has undertaken the screening process in accordance with the current requirements of the Habitats Regulations.

Natural England would expect that development in the District is fully supported by provision of sufficient green infrastructure in accordance with the publication ‘A Green Infrastructure Strategy for the Cambridge Sub Region’ (The Landscape Partnership, 2006). On this basis **Natural England support the conclusion that policies in the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document are unlikely to have significant impacts upon the European Sites located within and in the vicinity of the District, and that an Appropriate Assessment is therefore not required for this Supplementary Planning Document.”**

## Appendix 1: Summary of other relevant plans and strategies.

OTHER RELEVANT PLANS & STRATEGIES	SUMMARY
Cambridge Local Plan 2006	This document provides the policies to guide development in Cambridge to 2016. It also designates proposal sites for certain types of development, including a number of Areas of Major Change, which are mainly concentrated around the fringe of the City.
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan, 2003	Sets out the detailed development strategy for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough based on Regional Planning Guidance for the East of England (RPG6)
Cambridgeshire Waste Local Plan 2003	Aims to provide a sustainable strategy and policy framework for waste management in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Includes site specific proposals for waste management facilities.
Cambridgeshire Aggregates (Minerals) Local Plan 1991	Sets policies for working minerals and safeguarding mineral deposits.
Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste DPD Preferred Options Nov 2006	<p>Comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i – A draft Core Strategy DPD to guide the spatial strategy vision for the future of mineral extraction and the delivery of high quality sustainable waste management facilities</li> <li>ii – A draft Site Allocations DPD with proposed allocations for waste management facilities and minerals workings</li> </ul> <p>The documents have been subject to initial Habitats Regulations Assessment, which found there were likely to be no significant effects that could not be overcome by mitigation measures through policies in the plan.</p>
Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011	Sets out how Government capital funding allocated for transport will be spent and how this will be used to meet local and national targets.
South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004	Provides guidance for the plan period 1991-2006 and aims to guide provision of homes, jobs and shops together with facilities for leisure and transportation
South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy DPD	Sets the vision for future development in South Cambridgeshire to 2016, setting out that most new development will take place on the edge of Cambridge and in a new town near to Longstanton and Oakington (Northstowe)
South Cambridgeshire Site Specific Policies DPD Submission Draft	This document contains allocations for housing and employment development as well as safeguarding land for transport infrastructure in South Cambridgeshire.
South Cambridgeshire Generic Development Control Policies DPD Submission Draft	This document will guide decisions on planning applications covering a wide range of topics including housing, jobs, travel, the natural environment and the Green Belt.
Cambridge East Area Action Plan DPD Submission Draft	This document provides the detailed policy guidance for the development of Cambridge East, a new major urban quarter of Cambridge comprising between 10,000 to 12,000 dwellings.
Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan DPD	This document provides the detailed policy guidance for the development of the Southern Fringe (Trumpington Meadows

Submission Draft	site).
North West Cambridge Area Action Plan DPD Issues & Options Report	This document will provide the detailed policy guidance for the development of land between Madingley Road and Huntingdon Road on the fringes of Cambridge, which has been allocated to provide for the long-term needs of the University of Cambridge.
Northstowe Area Action Plan DPD Submission Draft	This document provides the detailed policy guidance for the proposed new town of Northstowe, which will consist of up to 10,000 new homes, 4,800 of which are to be provided by 2016.
Huntingdon Local Plan 1995	Provided for development up to 2006 and focused development onto larger settlements.
East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 1993 & Core Strategy Preferred Options 2006	The Local Plan concentrates growth in housing, employment and service provision in Ely, Soham and Littleport, including the re-use of previously developed land. Elsewhere in the district, growth will be limited and is likely to take the form of meeting existing commitments and allocations and, where appropriate redevelopment of sites within the built framework. The Core Strategy aims to provide for growth in a sustainable manner, planning for 8,600 dwellings in 2001 to 2021.
Fenland Local Plan 1993 and Core Strategy Preferred Options 2006	The Local Plan concentrates growth in existing housing, employment and service provision within existing centres, an aim that is continued in the Core Strategy, when planning for the additional 4,120 dwellings needed to meet the requirements of the Regional Spatial Strategy.
North Herts Local Plan 1996 and Core Strategy Options 2005	The Local Plan seeks to restrain development pressures, maintain the existing pattern of settlements and countryside, and enhance the character of existing land uses in urban and rural areas.
Mid Bedfordshire Local Plan 2005 & Core Strategy DPD Issues & Options	The Local Plan directs housing and economic development to within and adjoining the main urban areas and in the strategic transport corridors South West of Bedford and in East Bedfordshire. The Core Strategy Issues & Options explores how housing and jobs required in the area should be accommodated.
Forest Heath Local Plan 1005 and Core Strategy & Development Policies Preferred Options Report October 2006	The Local Plan and LDF documents focus development on existing towns.
King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan 1998 and Core Strategy Submission DPD and Development Control Policies Preferred Options	The Borough has to accommodate the provision of 12,000 homes to be built in the period to 2021. The preferred options document aims to accommodate this growth sustainably.
Bedfordshire & Luton Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2005	Sets policies regarding proposals for minerals extraction and waste sites and also allocated sites for these purposes.
Bedfordshire & Luton Minerals Core Strategy and Site Allocations Plan – Issues &	Sets policies regarding proposals for minerals extraction and also allocates sites for this purpose.

Options, 2006	
Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan 1998	Sets policies regarding proposals for minerals extraction and also allocates sites.
Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan 1998	Sets policies regarding proposals for waste sites and allocates sites.
Hertfordshire Minerals & Waste DPDs Issues & Options	Sets policies regarding proposals for minerals extraction and waste sites and also allocated sites for these purposes.
Suffolk Minerals Local Plan 1999 and Minerals Core Strategy Issues & Options 2007	Sets policies regarding proposals for minerals extraction and also allocates sites.
Suffolk Waste Local Plan 2006	Sets policies regarding proposals for waste sites and allocates sites.
St Edmundsbury Local Plan 2006	Concentrates growth in housing, employment and service provision within existing urban areas.

## Appendix 2: Information on Natura 2000 and Ramsar Sites

### NAME: EVERS DEN AND WIMPOLE WOODS

#### **Designation and Code**

Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – UK0030331  
SSSI boundary is the same as the SAC

#### **Location**

The site is located in South Cambridgeshire District. The site is located close to Wimpole Park.

**Grid ref:** TL 340526 **Area:** 66.48 ha.

#### **Primary reason for selection of the site**

Presence of colony of Barbastelle bats *Barbastella barbastellus* for which it is considered to be one of the best areas in UK.

#### **Conservation objective**

To maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats for the population of Barbastelle bats.

#### **General Site characteristics**

Broadleaved deciduous woodland (100%)  
Soil and geology – Basic, Clay  
Geomorphology and Landscape – Lowland

#### **Species**

*Barbastella barbastellus* bats. This is one of the UK's rarest mammals. The species is protected on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

#### **Site Description**

The site comprises a mixture of ancient coppice woodland (Eversden Wood) and high forest woods likely to be of more recent origin (Wimpole Wood). A colony of Barbastelle bats is associated with the trees in Wimpole Woods. These trees are used as a summer maternity roost where the female bats gather to give birth and rear their young. Most of the roost sites are within tree crevices. The bats also use the site as a foraging area. Some of the woodland is also used as a flight path when bats forage outside the area.

Eversden Wood is species-rich example of ancient ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) field maple (*Acer campestre*) – dog's mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*) woodland and one of the largest remaining sites of this type on the Cambridgeshire chalky boulder-clay.

The woodland is predominantly relict coppice of ash and field maple over an understorey of hazel (*Corylus avellana*) with aspen (*Populus tremula*), birch (*Betula* sp) and small-leaved elm (*Ulmus minor*) also locally dominant.

The ground flora is characterised by dog's mercury and bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), and the damp soil conditions are reflected in the local abundance of associated plants such as meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and tufted hair-grass (*Deschampsia*

*cespitosa*). Many herbs typical of old woodlands are present including yellow archangel (*Galeobdolon luteum*), wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) and the nationally scarce oxlip (*Primula elatior*) a species largely confined to damp chalky boulder-clay woods of eastern England. Other locally uncommon plants represented include herb-Paris (*Paris quadrifolia*), and, particularly on the drier wood banks, pignut (*Conopodium majus*) and hairy wood-rush (*Luzula pilosa*).

The woodland rides provide additional habitat diversity and support herbs such as ragged-Robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*) and false fox-sedge (*Carex otrubae*).

### **Management and ownership**

The primary management principles used for this site are those that maintain a regime of minimum management with little disturbance in order to protect the roosting sites in the woodland for the Barbastelle bats.

Wimpole Woods is owned and managed by the National Trust and their management is aimed at maintaining and where possible, enhancing the Barbastelle population.

Eversden Wood is privately owned and the current management is considered compatible with the use of this wood as a foraging area / flight path by Barbastelles.

### **Access**

There is public access to the woods. Public rights of way go through both areas of woodland.

Wimpole Wood is near to Wimpole Park where the National Trust provide car parking for visitors to their estate. This is around 1km as the crow flies from the start of the woodland. There is also a minor road that runs between Wimpole and Eversden Woods and this provides very limited on road parking available closer to Eversden Wood but still some 500m away. This is not signposted as available for parking.

### **Current condition**

Natural England produced a conditions report on Eversden and Wimpole Woods SSSI in December 2006 and found that the site is meeting 100% its PSA targets.<sup>1</sup> The area is in 100% favourable condition<sup>2</sup>.

Barbastelle bats require minimal disturbance within 2Km of their roost. They can forage up to 20km from their roosts but more typically venture around 6-8km. Barbastelle bats' foraging routes radiate out from their roosting sites using a limited number of main routes, which split into major limbs and then into smaller branches<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> PSA target – the Government's Public Service agreement (PSA) target to have 95% of the SSSI area in favourable or recovering condition by 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Favourable condition means that the SSSI land is being adequately conserved and is meeting its conservation objectives.

<sup>3</sup> Greenaway F (2004) Advice for the management of flightlines and foraging habitats of the Barbastelle Bat *Barbastella barbastellus*, English Nature Research Report 657.

The Biodiversity Strategy published by South Cambridgeshire District Council mapped out the main area of importance to Barbastelle bats, and this is shown on the map below. It reflects the landscape and habitat of known value to bats, and also where survey effort has been deployed to date.

### **Vulnerability**

The current use of the woods, including public access, is considered compatible with the Barbastelle interest and should not affect the Barbastelle population or their roosts.



## NAME: DEVIL'S DYKE

### **Designation and Code**

Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – UK0030037

### **Location**

The site is located in East Cambridgeshire district and also extends into Forest Heath district in Suffolk.

**Grid ref:** TL 611622 **Area:** 8.02 ha.

### **Primary reason for selection of the site**

Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (*Festuco- Brometalia*) (important orchid site).

### **Conservation Objective**

To maintain in favourable condition unimproved calcareous grassland with particular reference to semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (CG3 and CG5 grassland) and *Himantoglossum hircinum* lizard orchid.

### **General site characteristics**

Dry grassland. Steppes (100%)  
Soil and geology – Basic, Limestone  
Geomorphology and landscape - Lowland

### **Species**

CG3 *Bromus erectus*  
CG5 *Bromus erectus* – *Brachypodium pinnatum* calcareous grasslands  
*Himantoglossum hircinum* – lizard orchid  
*Pulsatilla vulgaris* - Pasque flower

### **Site Description**

This section is the most species rich of the Devil's Dyke which as a whole stretches from the Fen Edge at Reach ending at Ditton Green. The section that is identified as a SAC is adjacent to Newmarket Heath. Devil's Dyke consists of a mosaic of CG3 *Bromus erectus* and CG5 *Bromus erectus* – *Brachypodium pinnatum* calcareous grasslands.

It is the only known UK semi-natural dry grassland site for lizard orchid *Himantoglossum hircinum*. Lizard orchid is nationally rare (i.e. occurring in 15 or fewer 10x10 km squares) and is vulnerable in Great Britain. It is restricted to calcareous grasslands and dunes in southern England.

### **Management and ownership**

The dyke is in private ownership. There is a Devil's Dyke Restoration Project set up which is a partnership scheme involving Natural England, English Heritage, Cambridgeshire Wildlife Trust and the Cambridgeshire County Council working with landowners and managers and local people. The aim of this project is to restore the dyke and there are now clear management aims. The species rich calcareous grassland requires active

management without which it rapidly becomes dominated by rank grasses which leads to the encroachment of scrub over time. Traditional management is by grazing.

The Pasque flower is a speciality of the dyke and a Local Species Action Plan has been produced for this plant.

### **Access**

There is a public right of way running along the dyke. There is parking available at the July Race course, Newmarket.

### **Current condition**

As grazing declined in the early part of the twentieth century scrub has encroached onto many areas of the dyke. In the SAC area there had been some scrub encroachment on the southern part of the site and some clearance work has been undertaken. A survey carried out by Natural England in May 2002 assessed this section of the dyke as being in favourable condition. The site is meeting 100% of its PSA targets.

### **Vulnerability**

Although clearance work has been undertaken there will need to be control over any regrowth of scrub and any weediness of this section.

## NAME: FENLAND

### **Designation and Code**

Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – UK 0014782

There are three fens that together form the Fenland SAC

- 1 Wicken Fen
- 2 Chippenham Fen
- 3 Woodwalton Fen

Each site is also a Ramsar site.

### **Location**

Wicken Fen and Chippenham Fen are in East Cambridgeshire District; Woodwalton Fen is in Huntingdonshire District.

**Grid ref:** Wicken Fen TL 555700; Chippenham Fen TL 648697;  
Woodwalton Fen TL 230840

**Area:** 618.64 ha.

### **Primary reason for selection of site for SAC**

*Molinia* meadows on calcareous peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*) – considered to be one of the best areas in UK.

Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae* – considered to be rare as its total extent in the UK is estimated to be less than 1,000 ha; considered to be one of the best areas in UK.

### **Conservation objective**

To maintain in favourable condition:

- *Molinia* meadows on chalk and clay (Eu- *Molinion* community)
- Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* (great fen sedge) and species of the *Caricion davallianae* vegetation community.

To maintain in favourable condition the habitats for the population of spined loach and great crested newts.

### **General site characteristics**

Bog Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens (70%)  
Broadleaved deciduous woodland (20%)  
Inland water body (standing water, running water) (5%)

Soil and geology – basic, peat  
Geomorphology – floodplain, lowland

### **Species**

*Molinion caeruleae*  
*Cladium mariscus*

*Caricion davallianae*  
*Cobitis taenia* (Spined loach)  
*Triturus cristatus* (Great crested newt)

### **Current conditions**

The fenland grasslands are dependent upon traditional management practices of cutting and grazing by livestock. In recent decades scrub and woodland have spread at the expense of fen vegetation. Appropriate water management is vital to the maintenance of the special features. The three constituent sites are all National Nature Reserves and the site management plans include actions to address this problem.

## **DESCRIPTION OF EACH SITE THAT TOGETHER FORMS THE FENLAND SAC**

### **1. WICKEN FEN**

#### **Location**

This site is in East Cambridgeshire District.

**Area:** 254 ha.

#### **Reason for Ramsar allocation**

- Criterion 1 – One of the most outstanding remnants of East Anglian peat fens. The area is one of the few which has not been drained. Traditional management has created a mosaic of habitats from open water to sedge and litter fields.
- Criterion 2 - The site supports one species of British Red Data Book plant fen violet *Viola persicifolia* which survives at only two other sites in Britain. It contains eight nationally scarce plants and 121 British Red Data invertebrates.

#### **Site description**

This site is a marginal remnant of the original peat fenland of the East Anglian basin. It has been preserved as a flood catchment area, and its water level is controlled by sluice gates.

The original peat fen lies to the north of Wicken Lodge. The site here supports fen communities of carr and sedge. The carr scrub is largely of alder buckthorn *Frangula alnus*, buckthorn *Rhamnus catharticus* and willow over a sparse vegetation of fen plants and including marsh fen *Thelypteris palustris*. The more open areas of sedge fen are typically of tall grasses, saw sedge *Cladium mariscus*, purple moor grass *Molina caerulea*, sedges *Carex* spp and rushes *Juncus* spp.

Nationally important higher plants include *Viola persicifolia*, *Lathyrus palustris*, *Myriophyllum verticillatum*, *Oenanthe fluvatilis* and milk parsley *Peucedanum palustre*.

To the south of the Wicken Lode, the area is of rough pasture land, reedbed and pools which are attractive to breeding wetland birds and to wintering wildfowl, the area being subjected to winter flooding.

The dykes, abandoned claypits and other watercourses carry a great wealth of aquatic plants. Many, such as greater spearwort *Ranunculus flammula* and lesser water-plaintain *Baldellia ranunculoides* are now uncommon elsewhere.

### **Management and ownership**

The site is owned by the National Trust and managed by a local management committee, which reports to the East Anglian Regional Office of the National Trust.

The continuation of the historic systems of management and the effective monitoring and maintenance of water levels underlies the Fen's ecology and are crucial for the success of all other management practices. The Fen is artificially protected from drying out by a water-retaining membrane.

### **Access**

There is a visitor centre and shop, nature trails, three hides and 16km of walking routes. Entry is by permit only to help control visitor numbers. Visitors are also managed by 'zoning' parts of the Fen near the entrance, leaving the more remote parts of the site relatively undisturbed. The Fen is open throughout the year from dawn to dusk.

### **Current conditions**

Natural England has produced a report about the condition of the SSSI (December 2006). Only 36.10% of the site is meeting PSA targets. 52.92% is unfavourably declining.

### **Vulnerability**

The reason for the adverse conditions is related to inappropriate water levels in the fen, marsh and swamp areas.

Work carried out in the nearby river system to prevent flooding in the 1960s means that the site no longer receives the amount of winter water as it did in the past. This has brought about a lowering of the water table over the past 40 years (Ramsar Report 5.5.06).

## **2. CHIPPENHAM FEN**

### **Location**

This site is in East Cambridgeshire District Council.

**Area:** 112 ha.

### **Reason for Ramsar allocation**

- Criterion 1 – A spring-fed calcareous basin mire with a long history of management that is partly reflected in the diversity of the present-day vegetation;
- Criterion 2 - The invertebrate fauna is very rich, partly due to its transitional position between Fenland and Breckland. The species list is very long, including many rare and scarce invertebrates characteristic of ancient fenland sites in the UK.

- Criterion 3 – The site supports diverse vegetation types, rare and scarce plants. The site is the stronghold of Cambridge milk parsley *Selinum carvifolia*.

### Site description

The site comprises areas of tall and often rich fen, fen grassland and basic flush that have developed over shallow peat soils. The site also contains calcareous grassland, neutral grassland, woodland, mixed scrub and open water.

The site is in a shallow peat-filled depression underlain by a thick layer of marl which rises to the surface in places. The fen is fed by rainfall and springs from the chalk aquifer. There are several ponds on the site and a system of dykes take water from the springs, in the south of the reserve, to the Chippenham River, near its northern boundary.

The areas of tall fen are dominated by a mosaic of saw sedge *Cladium mariscus* and reed *Phragmites australis* are present with abundant purple moor grass *Molinia caerulea*. A rich fen has developed in mown areas supporting the nationally rare *Selinum carvifolia*. In one area this merges into a species rich basic flush where black bog rush *Schoenus nigricans* becomes abundant. Dense and scattered scrub has developed. There are areas of chalk grassland that grade into the fen grassland. The damp neutral grassland meadows are developing a fen meadow flora. The ditches support a rich aquatic flora.

The water level is controlled within a series of ditches.

Because the fen contains such a wide range of habitats it supports a wide variety of breeding bird species, including hobby, short eared owl, nightingale and several species of warbler. It also forms the winter roosting for hen harriers.

### Management and ownership

Both the site and surrounding areas are privately owned. Part of the site is under unspecified tenure. The site is mainly used for nature conservation

The site is actively managed by Natural England through regular cutting and grazing with cattle. Encroaching scrub is being removed to restore fen where appropriate. A water compensation scheme has been instituted to ameliorate the effects of water abstraction. The Environment Agency monitors groundwater changes in the aquifer.

### Access

There are rights of way across the site. Access away from the paths is by permit only. The nearest car parking is in the villages of Fordham or Chippenham.

There is a low level of usage by local inhabitants using the rights of way through the middle of the site according to the Ramsar information sheet. Few people apply for permits for recreational purposes, they are mainly requested by naturalists.

### Current conditions

For reporting purposes the SSSI is divided into 17 units. 85.41% of the area is meeting the PSA target.

Chippenham Fen NNR has suffered from a changed hydrological regime due to abstraction from the underlying chalk aquifer. This problem is being addressed through supply of supplementary water together with a programme of vegetation and invertebrate population monitoring. This project is being taken forward by English Nature, the Environment Agency and Anglian Water Services plc.

### **Vulnerability**

There is considerable pressure in the region from the water abstraction that may affect the local springs and aquifer. Persistent drought is a potential threat as seven of nine years in the recent past have received well below average rainfall for the regions (Report dated 2002).

The habitats within the site are highly sensitive to inorganic fertilisers and pesticides, applications of which should be avoided both within the site itself and in adjacent surrounding areas.

## **3. WOODWALTON FEN**

### **Location**

This fen is in Huntingdonshire District.

**Area:** 229.7 ha.

### **Reason for Ramsar allocation**

- Criterion 1 – The site is within an area of one of the remaining parts of East Anglia which has not been drained;
- Criterion 2 – The site supports two species from the British Red Data Book for plants, fen violet and fen wood rush.

### **Site description**

This fen holds a range of wetland plant communities once characteristic of large areas of the East Anglian fens. The site was once a raised bog associated with the former Whittlesey Mere and was dug for peat in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when most of the acidic peat was removed, exposing the underlying fen peat. The vegetation of the area today largely reflects this historical use of the site. The open fen and swamp communities represented are of several types. A relict of the acid peat holds stands of purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea* with ling *Calluna vulgaris*, bog myrtle *Myrica gale*, tormentil *Potentilla erecta* and the saw sedge *Cladium mariscus*. A further swamp community is dominated by purple small-reed *Calamagrostis epigejos*. Mixed fen covers a significant part of the site. This vegetation community is floristically rich and contains species such as meadow rue *Thalictrum flavum*, yellow iris *Iris pseudacorus*, swamp meadow-grass *Poa palustris* and great water dock *Rumex hydrolapathum*. Rare fen plants such as the fen wood-rush *Luzula pallescens* and fen violet *Viola persicifolia* occur.

Of particular note is the network of ditches on the site and these hold many water plants which are now relatively uncommon in Britain including bladderwort *Utricularia vulgaris* and water violet *Hottonia palustris*. In addition, two meres have been dug in order to increase the area of standing water on the site and these have proved valuable for aquatic

plant and animal communities. Further habitats of significance on the site include marshy grassland, birch and alder woodland and fen carr. The carr is varied in composition and contains willow *Salix* spp., blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, birch *betula* spp and guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*.

The whole site is a patchwork of wetland communities, providing a habitat for many uncommon plant and insect species-a number of which are confined to East Anglia.

### **Management and ownership**

The site was purchased by Hon Charles Rothschild in 1910 and donated to the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves (now the Royal Society for Nature Conservation) in 1919. Since the 1950s the pro-active management of the site has sought to reverse the drying out process and therefore conserve this crucial fenland habitat. The site is leased from the Wildlife Trust to Natural England.

The effective monitoring and maintenance of water levels underlies the Fen ecology and is crucial for the success of all other management practises. A Water Level Management Plan has been implemented and the site is flooded in winter in time of high water flows thus protecting low-lying farmland. However as a consequence nutrient levels in the water can be high due to agricultural runoff. Water inflows and outflows are strictly controlled. In the 1980s clay sealed banks were constructed around the perimeter of the reserve, this isolated water levels on the fen from that of the surrounding area.

The Great Fen project aims to link this nature reserve with Holme Fen.

### **Access**

Parking is limited at this site – some being available alongside the Great Raveley Drain. There are three marked trails around the fen following the rides. Woodwalton Fen has not been a permit only site since around 2003. Although members of the public no longer require Natural England's permission to access the site there remains in force restricted access to some areas and a no dog policy is maintained.

### **Current condition**

Woodwalton Fen takes water in the summer months from the surrounding drains. In the winter months the fen is designed to be used as a flood storage area, although this occurs infrequently. In both these circumstances the water entering the Fen is high in nutrients from agricultural run-off. It is intended to undertake research to investigate what effects the flooding may be having on the site's interests.

Considerable work has been undertaken to help progress the reed beds towards favourable conditions including annual cutting and installation of windpump to control water levels. Further scrub removal is programmed to be carried out. Major scrub clearance and coppice management work is to be completed by 2008.

### **Vulnerability**

The area is meeting 100% of the PSA target. The quality of the water from the agricultural run-off needs to be monitored.

## NAME: OUSE WASHES

### **Designation and Code**

Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar Site – UK0013011.

The boundaries of the Ramsar site as extended are coincident with those of the Ouse Washes SSSI.

### **Location**

This site is located in East Cambridgeshire, Fenland and West Norfolk Districts.

**Grid reference:** TL 49885

**Area:** 2,403 ha. (Ramsar site and SSI site): 311.35 ha. (SAC site).

### **Primary reason for selection of this site as SAC**

Spined loach *Cobitis taenia* – This site is only one of four known outstanding localities in the UK.

### **Conservation objective:**

To maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats for the populations of Annex 1 species (Bewicks swan, whooper swan, hen harrier, spotted crake, and ruff) migratory species of European importance (widgeon, gadwall, pintail, shoveler, pochard and black-tailed Godwit) and wintering waterfowl assemblage of European importance, with particular reference to grassland / marshy grassland with ditches and open water.

Also to maintain in favourable condition the habitat for spined loach.

### **General site characteristics**

Inland water bodies (standing water, running water) (50%)

Bogs Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens (20%)

Improved grassland (30%)

### **Site Description**

The Ouse Washes represent spined loach populations within the River Ouse catchment. The Counter Drain with its clear water and abundant macrophytes is particularly important and a healthy population of spined loach is known to occur.

The site is an area of seasonally flooded washlands habitat managed in a traditional agricultural manner. The washlands support nationally and internationally important numbers of wintering waterfowl and nationally important numbers of breeding waterfowl. The site is also of note for the large area of unimproved neutral grassland communities, which it holds, and for the richness of the aquatic flora within the associated watercourses.

### **Reasons for identification as a Ramsar Site**

The Ouse Washes Ramsar site and its proposed extension is a wetland of major international importance comprising seasonally flooded washlands, which are

agriculturally managed in a traditional manner. It provides breeding and winter habitats for important assemblages of wetland bird species, particularly wildfowl and waders.

- Ramsar Criterion 1a - The site qualifies by being a particularly good representative example of a natural or near-natural wetland characteristic of its biogeographical region. It is one of the most extensive areas of seasonally flooding washland of its type in Britain, and the wetland has high conservation value for many plant and animal groups.
- Ramsar Criterion 2a - The site qualifies by supporting a number of rare species of plants and animals. The site holds several nationally scarce plants, including the whorled water-milfoil *Myriophyllum verticillatum*, greater water parsnip *Sium latifolium*, river water-dropwort *Oenanthe fluviatilis*, fringed water-lily *Nymphoides peltata*, long stalked pondweed *Potamogeton praelongus*, hair-like pondweed *Potamogeton trichoides*, grass-wrack pondweed *Potamogeton compressus*, tasteless water-pepper *Polygonum mite*, small water-pepper *Polygonum minus* and marsh dock *Rumex palustris*. Invertebrate records indicate that the site holds a good relict fenland fauna for several groups, reflecting the diversity of wetland habitats. Two rare Red Data Book insects have been recorded, the large darter dragonfly *Libellula fulva* and the riffle beetle *Oulimnius major*.
- Ramsar Criterion 2a - The Ouse Washes also qualifies by supporting a diverse assemblage of rare breeding waterfowl associated with seasonally flooding wet grassland. This includes breeding migratory waders of lowland wet grassland: oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*, redshank *Tringa totanus*, snipe *Gallinago gallinago*, ruff *Phdomachus pugnax*, lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*, and black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa* and a diverse assemblage of breeding wildfowl with mute swan *Cygnus olor*, shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*, gadwall *Anas strepera*, teal *A. crecca*, mallard *A. platyrhynchos*, pintail *A. acuta*, garganey *A. querquedula*, shoveler *A. clypeata*, pochard *Aythya ferina*, tufted duck *Aythya fuligula*, moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* and coot *Fulica atra* occurring regularly. Many of these species are rare and much restricted in Britain and the European Community owing to habitat loss and degradation. The site thus has an important role in maintaining the ranges of several of these species, which have been affected by changes in habitat elsewhere in Britain. Breeding gadwall, mallard, garganey, shoveler and bar-tailed godwit are all present in nationally important numbers.
- Ramsar Criterion 5 - The Ouse Washes qualifies as a wetland of international importance by virtue of regularly supporting over 20,000 waterfowl, with an average peak count of 60,950 birds recorded in the five winter periods 1986/7 to 1990/91.
- Ramsar Criterion 6 - The Ouse Washes also qualifies by supporting, in winter, internationally important populations of the following species (figures given are average peak counts for the five winter period 1986/87 - 1990/91): 4,980 Bewick's swan *Cygnus columbarius bewicki* (29% of the north-west European wintering population); 590 whooper swans *Cygnus cygnus* (3% of the international population); 38,000 wigeon *Anas penelope* (5% of the north-west European population); 4,100 teal *A. crecca* (1% of NW European); 1,450 pintail

*Anas acuta* (2% NW European); and 750 shoveler *Anas clypeata* (2% of NW European). Also notable are the following nationally important wintering populations: 270 cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* (2% of the British wintering population); 490 mute swan *Cygnus olor* (3% of British); 320 gadwall *Anas strepera* (5% of British); 2,100 pochard *Aythya ferina* (4% of British); 860 tufted duck *Aythya fuligula* (1 % of British); and 2,320 coot *Fulica atra*.

During severe winter weather elsewhere, the Ouse Washes can assume even greater national and international importance as wildfowl and waders from many other areas arrive, attracted by the relatively mild climate, compared with continental European areas, and the abundant food resources available.

The continued international importance of this site is dependant on the maintenance of a winter flooding regime and a high, but controlled summer water table.

### **Reasons for identification as a Special Protection Area**

The Ouse Washes Ramsar site and the Special Protection Area is a wetland of major international importance comprising seasonally flooded wash lands, which are agriculturally managed in a traditional manner. It provides breeding and winter habitats for important assemblages of wetland bird species, particularly wildfowl and waders.

The boundaries of the Special Protection Area are coincident with those of the Ouse Washes SSSI, apart from the exclusion of a section of the Old Bedford River in the north of the SSSI.

The Ouse Washes qualifies under Article 4.1 of the EC Birds Directive by supporting, in summer, a nationally important breeding population of ruff *Philomachus pugnax*, an Annex 1 species. In recent years an average of 57 individuals have been recorded, a significant proportion of the British population.

The site also qualifies under Article 4.1 by regularly supporting internationally or nationally important wintering populations of three Annex 1 species. During the five year period 1986/87 to 1990/91, the following average peak counts were recorded: 4,980 Bewick's swan *Cygnus columbarius bewickii* (29% of the north-west European wintering population, 70% of the British wintering population), and 590 whooper swans *Cygnus cygnus* (3% of the international population, 10% of British). In addition, between 1982-87 an average of 12 wintering hen harrier *Circus cyaneus* was recorded, representing 2% of the British wintering population.

The Ouse Washes qualifies under Article 4.2 by supporting, in summer, in recent years, nationally important breeding populations of five migratory species: 111 pairs of gadwall *Anas strepera* (20% of the British breeding population); 850 pairs of mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* (2% of British); 14 pairs of garganey *Anas querquedula* (20% of British), 155 pairs of shoveler *A. clypeata* (12% of British), and 26 pairs of black-tailed godwits *Limosa limosa* (44% of British).

The site further qualifies under Article 42 as a wetland of international importance by virtue of regularly supporting over 20,000 waterfowl, with an average peak count of 60,950 birds recorded in the five winter period 1986/1 to 1990/91. This total included-internationally or nationally important wintering populations of the following migratory

waterfowl (figures given are average peak counts for the five winter period 1986/87 - 1990/91): 270 cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* (296 of the British wintering population); 490 mute swan *Cygnus olor* (3% of British); 38,000 wigeon *Anas penelope* (596 of the north-west European population, 1596 of British); 320 gadwall *Anas strepera* (5% of British); 4,100 teal *A. crecca* (1% of NW European, 4% of British); 1,450 pintail *Anas acuta* (2% NW European, 6% of British); 750 shoveler *Anas clypeata* (2% of NW European, 8% of British); 2,100 pochard *Aythya ferina* (4% of British); 860 tufted duck *Aythya fuligula* (1% of British); and 2,320 coot *Fulica atra* (1 % of British).

The site also qualifies under Article 4.2 by virtue of regularly supporting, in summer, a diverse assemblage of the breeding migratory waders of lowland wet grassland including: oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*, redshank *Tringa totanus*, snipe *Gallinago gallinago*, Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*, lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*, and black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa*; and a diverse assemblage of breeding wildfowl with mute swan *Cygnus olor*, shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*, gadwall *Anas strepera*, teal *A. crecca*, mallard *A. platyrhynchos*, pintail *A. acuta*, garganey *A. querquedula*, shoveler *A. clypeata*, pochard *Aythya ferina*, tufted duck *Aythya fuligula*, moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* and coot *Fulica atra* occurring regularly. Many of these species are rare and much restricted in Britain and the European Community owing to habitat loss and degradation. The site thus has an important role in maintaining the ranges of several of these species, which have been affected by changes in habitat elsewhere in Britain.

During severe winter weather elsewhere, the Ouse Washes can assume even greater national and international importance as wildfowl and waders from many other areas arrive, attracted by the relatively mild climate, compared with continental European areas, and the abundant food resources available.

The continued international importance of this site is dependant on the maintenance of a winter flooding regime and a high, but controlled summer water table.

### **Management and ownership**

Given the extent of the Ouse Washes there are a number of management techniques that need to be carried out in the washes. Wetland grassland requires active management if it is to retain its conservation interest this has traditionally been done by grazing. Partial winter flooding is required to maintain suitable habitat conditions for wintering birds. A mosaic of winter flooded grassland and permanently un-flooded grassland is desirable. Ditches are artificial habitats created by land drainage – if left unmanaged silt accumulates in the bottom of the ditches leading to the loss the range of aquatic plants and animals colonising the ditches. There needs to be a rotation undertaken on ditch management. Also the level of water in the ditches and its quality needs to be regulated to maintain the optimum level for the plant and animal community. All the habitats are highly sensitive to inorganic fertilisers and pesticides.

### **Access**

There is a network of public rights of way in the Washes. The RSPB manage a nature reserve at Welches Dam where there is a visitor centre and a number of bird hides. The WWT manage a nature reserve at Welney, Norfolk also with a centre and hides.

### **Current condition**

Assessment work was carried out in 2003 and at this time many of the units that comprise the Washes were in an unfavourable state. Only 12.93% of the site meets the PSA target. The water quality regularly fails to meet total Phosphorus target of 0.1 mg/l. Until this can be remedied the site will continue to remain unfavourable.

### **Vulnerability**

Two independent and parallel rivers comprise the SAC. The Counter Drain / Old Bedford (known also as the outer river) drains adjacent farmland. The Old Bedford / Delph (known also as the inner river) is sourced by the River Great Ouse. During the winter and increasingly during the spring and summer months as well, the inner river takes flood-water from the Great Ouse, and therefore has an important flood defence function. Issues of concern relate to water quantity, water quality, salinity, turbidity and sediment.

The need to ensure there is sufficient water for the rivers is addressed through the Water Level Management Plan agreed by the Environment Agency and partner organisations. The outer river is also a source of water for nearby arable land forming spray irrigation, but this abstraction is unmetered for the most part. Abstraction of water from the Great Ouse system to Essex via the Ely-Ouse Transfer Scheme is monitored through the Denver License Variation. Other proposals for water abstraction, e.g. to Rutland Water by Anglia Water, have been the subject of assessment, but there are no current proposals.

Water quality is a major issue of concern. Increases in two plant nutrients - nitrogen and particularly phosphorus (thought to be derived from sewage treatment works) - are leading to changes in the macrophyte communities, shown by a decline in species diversity and the loss of species together with an increase in species tolerant of eutrophic conditions. This is particularly apparent in the inner river. There is evidence that agricultural inputs are a minor component. In addition, blanket-weed (aquatic algae) poses problems to navigation and angling, leading to issues of timing and frequency of aquatic weed-cutting. Water quality issues are currently the subject of debate between the Environment Agency and English Nature. Three sewage treatment works in the Great Ouse will be covered by the Urban Waste Water Directive, but there remain more than 90 smaller works. These will be subject to the Review of Consents to be undertaken by the Environment Agency within the next four years. A case could be prepared and submitted to OFWAT and the Water Industries AMP 4 Programme commencing 2005, in order to strip phosphates from all relevant sewage treatment works in the system.

In addition, flood water draining off the adjacent Ouse Washes into the inner river can be of a very poor quality (particularly in warm weather) leading to problems of deoxygenation with resultant fish-kills. The frequency of increased spring and summer flooding on the Ouse Washes is currently being studied to ascertain ways of ameliorating its effects.

Saline intrusion through the northernmost tidal lock gate may be contributing to an increase in salinity levels of the outer river.

Conditions must be applied to planning permissions for gravel extraction from quarries near to the SAC, to ensure that drainage water from de-watering and washings does not affect the turbidity and sediment levels in the outer river.

## NAME: PORTHOLME

### **Designation and Code**

Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – UK0030054.

### **Location**

This site is within Huntingdonshire District.

**Grid reference:** TL 237708 **Area:** 91.93 ha.

### **Primary reason for selection of this site**

Lowland hay meadows *Alopecurus pratensis* *Sanguisorba officinalis* – considered to be one of the best areas in UK.

### **Conservation objectives**

To maintain in favourable condition the lowland hay meadow.

### **General site characteristics**

Humid grassland (100%)

Soil and geology – Alluvial, Neutral

Geomorphology and landscape – Floodplain, Lowland.

### **Species**

*Alopecurus pratensis*

*Sanguisorba officinalis*

*Fritillaria meleagris*

*Libellula fulva*

### **Site Description**

It is the largest surviving traditionally managed meadow in the UK with an area of 104 ha. of alluvial flood meadow (7% of the total UK resource). It is almost completely surrounded by water. There has been a long history of favourable management on traditional lines as a 'lammas' meadow and very little of the site has suffered from agricultural improvement, and so it demonstrates good conservation of structure and function. It supports a small population of fritillary (*Fritillaria meleagris*). Watercourses on the periphery of the site have populations of some uncommon invertebrates including one dragonfly, which is of a nationally restricted distribution.

The grassland communities are characterised by the presence of such grasses as Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, yellow oat-grass *Trisetum flavescens*, meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis*, and meadow fescue *Festuca pratensis*. The range of herbs present, typical of such meadows, includes lady's bedstraw *Galium verum*, pepper-saxifrage *Silaum silaus* and great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis*. A number of locally rare and one nationally rare plant are also present.

Channels of the River Ouse surround the meadow, and the Alconbury Brook is close by. These water bodies are important for dragonflies (*Odonata*) in particular the restricted dragonfly *Libellula fulva*.

Large flocks of waders use this site in winter.

### **Management and ownership**

The London Anglers Association owns the site and is advised on the management of the site by Natural England.

Neutral grassland requires active management if it is to retain its conservation interest. In order to maintain a species rich sward, each year's growth of vegetation must be removed; otherwise the sward becomes progressively dominated by tall and vigorous grasses. These, together with an associated build up of dead plant matter, suppress less vigorous species and reduce the botanical diversity of the site.

The traditional management of this site, which still continues, is by cutting for hay followed by grazing of the aftermath in later summer until the autumn. In winter and early spring Portholme is inundated by floodwaters. This provides natural fertilising of the soil and it is this seasonal flooding coupled with the traditional management that maintains the diversity of the natural plant communities.

Part of the site is subject to a Countryside Stewardship agreement aimed at maintaining the alluvial flood meadow. The Environment Agency has produced a Water Level Management plan, which aims to maintain the current water level management regime in the long term and recommends improvements in data collection on water levels and flooding frequency. The recommendation will be incorporated in the relevant Local Environment Agency Plan (due to go to consultation in 1999).

In the past MAFF had sponsored dipwell monitoring of the meadows. Water table levels are vital to the management of this site. Currently no monitoring is being carried out. Anglian Water Services (AWS) is required to produce a statutory water company drought plan under the requirements of the new s39B of the Water Industry Act 1991 as introduced by the Water Act 2003. For each site, potential changes arising from the drought actions have been identified and the existence and adequacy of current monitoring programmes has been provisionally assessed. For the most part, existing monitoring are adequate for monitoring the effects of the drought actions. In relation to Portholme it recommends in the 2006 Drought Plan the following:

'One site (Portholme Meadow) has been monitored in the past and this work is probably sufficient to determine a baseline. However, no monitoring is currently being undertaken. Previous modelling studies suggest that reductions in river water levels are likely to be very small and are therefore unlikely to have any effect on riparian water table levels in adjacent meadows or water levels in adjacent gravel pits.'

### **Access**

There are three main entrances to the meadow and visitors can walk around the site on the extensive footpaths, which lead off the main entrances. The footpaths form a triangle across the meadow and each footpath is approximately 1.6km in length.

### **Current condition**

The units of the site were assessed in June 2005 and 2006 and it was found to have

inappropriate cutting / mowing regimes and inappropriate weed control. The site was not meeting the PSA target at all. 90.92% of the area was seen to be in unfavourable decline. Overall the sward composition and structure were well within the criteria recommended for MG4 grassland however the unit failed on the frequency of *Rumex crispus*.

### **Vulnerability**

Without a controlled management plan the site will not retain its conservation interest.

### **Appendix 3: Maps**

**Map 1:** Eversden and Wimpole Woods (SAC)

**Map 2:** Devil's Dyke (SAC)

**Map 3:** Fenland (SAC) and Wicken Fen (RAMSAR)

**Map 4:** Fenland (SAC) and Chippenham Fen (RAMSAR)

**Map 5:** Fenland (SAC) and Woodwalton Fen (RAMSAR)

**Map 6:** Ouse Washes (RAMSAR, SAC and SPA)

**Map 7:** Ouse Washes (RAMSAR, SAC and SPA)

**Map 8:** Portholme (SAC)

**Map 9:** Special Areas of Conservation

**Map 10:** Special Protection Areas

**Map 11:** RAMSAR Sites

Map 1

Map 2

Map 3

Map 4

Map 5

Map 6

Map 7

Map 8

Map 9

Map 10

Map 11

## Appendix 4: Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Matrix

### Screening Matrix for Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC

<p>Name, location and summary of conservation objectives for the Site</p>	<p><b>Eversden &amp; Wimpole Woods SAC</b>  <b>Grid Ref:</b> TL 340526</p> <p><b>Reason for designation:</b>  This site has been designated as a SAC due to the presence of a colony of Barbastelle bats. The woods comprise a mixture of ancient coppice woodland in the Eversden woods and high forest woods likely to be of more recent origin in the Wimpole Woods.</p> <p>A colony of Barbastelle bats is present at Wimpole Woods, where the trees are used as a summer maternity roost. Most of the roost sites are within tree crevices. The bats also use the site as a foraging area and some of the woodland is used as a flight path when bats forage outside the site. The Barbastelle bat is one of the UK's rarest mammals.</p> <p>The site is located outside of the Cambridge City boundary, within South Cambridgeshire District Council's area.</p>
<p>Are there any other projects or plans that together with the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD could affect the Eversden and Wimpole Woods?</p>	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not itself result in any development. There are other plans for Cambridge City that could, theoretically indirectly affect the site, namely the 2006 Cambridge Local Plan and the North West Cambridge Area Action Plan. These plans include allocations of land for development and the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD is intended to provide guidance on policies that relate to sustainability in the Local Plan.</p> <p>Other relevant plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Waste Local Plan, 2003;</li> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste DPD Preferred Options, Dec 2006;</li> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan, 2006-2011;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2004;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy DPD, 2006;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Site Specific Policies Submission DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ Northstowe Area Action Plan Submission DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan Submission DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ North West Cambridge Area Action Plan Issues &amp; Options Report DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ Bedfordshire &amp; Luton Minerals and Waste Local Plan, 2005;</li> <li>▪ Bedfordshire &amp; Luton Minerals Core Strategy and Site Allocation Plan, Issues &amp; Options, 2006</li> <li>▪ Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan, 1998;</li> <li>▪ Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan, 1998;</li> <li>▪ Hertfordshire Minerals and Waste DPDs Issues &amp; Options;</li> <li>▪ Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 &amp; Core Strategy Draft, 2006;</li> <li>▪ North Hertfordshire Local Plan 1996 and Core Strategy &amp; Development Control Policies Preferred Options, 2007; and</li> <li>▪ Mid Bedfordshire Local Plan 2005 &amp; Core Strategy DPD Issues &amp; Options</li> </ul>
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<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
Land take by development	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not propose any development that will take land from the Eversden and Wimpole Woods and will not result in the fragmentation of habitats.</p> <p>None of the other plans listed above propose development that would take land from these woods.</p>	There are no policies in the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD or any other plans that have a direct impact on these woods.
Impact on protected species outside the protected sites	Eversden and Wimpole Woods are home to the Barbastelle bat ( <i>Barbastella barbastellus</i> ), which can forage up to 20km from their roost sites, although this distance is more typically around 6-8km. Barbastelle bats require minimal disturbance within 2km of their roost. The main area of importance for these bats has been identified in the South Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Strategy as shown on Map 1 in Appendix 2.	The woods are relatively isolated and are not located near to any of the locations for major development (as identified in the Southern Fringe and North West Cambridge Area Action Plans). Development at Cambourne will take place within the existing planned footprint, which is outside the area of importance for the

THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:		
Nature of Potential Impact	How the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site	Why these effects are not considered to be significant
	<p>As the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD does not allocate any land for development, it will not have an impact on this area of importance.</p> <p>The draft Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste LDF Preferred Options proposes an extension to the Barrington Quarry, which lies within the area of importance. The initial Habitats Regulations Assessment of that plan suggests that all potential adverse impacts could be mitigated against through policies of that plan.</p> <p>Although outside the area of importance, the closest area of new development is at Cambourne, which is within South Cambridgeshire District Council's area. This is a previously planned new settlement of 3,300 dwellings situated 6km away from the woods that was granted outline planning permission in 1993. The South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy proposed that the village is built out at current minimum density of 30dph, which would generate an additional 700 dwellings within the existing planned footprint. The Habitats Regulations Assessment for this document suggests that as this development will take place within the existing planned footprint, which is outside the area of importance there will be no additional impact on the Eversden and Wimpole Woods as a result of this document.</p> <p>The South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy also contains rural settlement policies that allow for small-scale windfall development to take place. The woods are some distance away from any villages</p>	<p>Barbastelle bats and there are no villages within the vicinity of the site that may fall under the South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy's policies for small-scale windfall development within existing village frameworks. Any potential impacts of the proposed extension to the Barrington Quarry will be mitigated through policies contained within the Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste LDF. It is therefore considered that there will be no significant impact on the Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC as a result of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD alone or in combination with other plans.</p>

THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:		
Nature of Potential Impact	How the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site	Why these effects are not considered to be significant
	<p>that fall within these policies and it is likely that any such development will take place within existing village frameworks and will not involve the use of Greenfield land in the countryside. The Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Core Strategy therefore suggests that such development will not have a significant affect on these woods.</p> <p>The closest major developments to these woods are on the fringes of Cambridge (the Southern Fringe and North West of Cambridge). An Area Action Plan has been submitted for the Southern Fringe (by South Cambridgeshire District Council) and an Area Action Plan Issues and Options Report has been produced for the North West Cambridge site. Both of these sites are over 8km from the woods and are outside the area of importance.</p>	
Recreational pressure and disturbance	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not allocate land for development so by itself will not lead to an increase in recreational pressure and disturbance on these woods.</p> <p>Within Cambridge City, proposals to increase the dwelling stock by 12,500 could increase demand for countryside recreation, and likewise in South Cambridgeshire where there are proposals to increase the dwelling stock by 20,000. However, no major proposals contained within the Cambridge Local Plan, South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy or any other plans are within 5km of these woods.</p>	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not allocate land for development and will therefore not result in increased recreational pressure and disturbance on the Eversden and Wimpole Woods.</p> <p>With regards to other plans, the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England states that in drawing up local development plans, consideration should be given to the risks of</p>

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
	<p>The Eversden and Wimpole woods do not attract large numbers of visitors partly due to their remoteness relative to major population centres (both existing and proposed). The closest major development on the fringes of Cambridge is over 8km away from the sites and the closest development, at Cambourne, is over 6km away.</p> <p>The woods form part of a Country Walk and forms part of the wider countryside footpath network. Their form and character, along with their relative distance from car parking and public transport limits their attractiveness for informal recreation and leisure. Many of the visitors to this area tend to focus their attention on the National Trust property at Wimpole Hall.</p> <p>Many of the new developments proposed by the Cambridge Local Plan, North West Cambridge Area Action Plan and in the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework will include improvements to countryside access opportunities and the provision of new strategic open space (also demonstrated by the Cambridgeshire Horizons Green Infrastructure Strategy). These proposals will be aimed at the provision of recreation opportunities for use by existing and new communities in more accessible locations than sites such as the Eversden and Wimpole Woods.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that there will be no significant impact from increased recreational pressure and disturbance on the Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC as a result of the Sustainable</p>	<p>recreational disturbance where housing proposals fall within a 5km radius of Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites. Using this test, it is unlikely that any proposals contained within the documents identified will have a significant effect on the woods as they are all outside the 5km radius proposed.</p> <p>The Natura 2000 data for these woods indicates that the current use of the woods is considered to be compatible with the barbastelle bats' interests and should not affect their population or roosts. As the bats roost in the trees and forage at sunset/night they are not affected by day visitors.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that there will be no significant impact from increased recreational pressure and disturbance on the Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC as a result of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD alone or in combination with other plans.</p>

THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:		
Nature of Potential Impact	How the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site	Why these effects are not considered to be significant
	Design & Construction SPD alone or in combination with other plans.	
Water quantity and quality	This is not relevant for the conservation objectives of this site	Not relevant
Changes in pollution levels	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD contains guidance for applicants of major developments in Cambridge City on a number of sustainability criteria, many of which will contribute to reducing pollution from transport by promoting more sustainable modes of transport, as well as pollution from noise, light and odours in the wider area. The urban extensions to Cambridge set out in the Local Plan should help to reduce the level of commuting into Cambridge and its associated pollution by redressing the balance of homes to jobs and allow people to use more sustainable forms of transport. However, the scale of development proposed may lead to an increase in local pollution, but this will be kept to a minimum through the existence of this SPD. The Sustainability Appraisal for the SPD highlights that the existence of the SPD will be critical in achieving the City Council's sustainability objectives for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the reduction of pollution. As the development sites within Cambridge City are some distance away from the Eversden &amp; Wimpole Woods, it is considered that the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD in combination with plans for development in Cambridge City will not have an impact on these woods.</p> <p>While the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not have an impact on the other plans identified which are outside Cambridge City, many of these plans contain policies to minimise the amount</p>	As the Eversden and Wimpole Woods are not in close proximity to proposed major development sites and major transport routes it is not considered that there is likely to be any significant impact on the woods as a result of changes in pollution levels. The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD aims to minimise levels of pollution that may arise from new developments, and general policy requirements contained within other relevant plans also have the same aim.

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
	<p>of pollution generated as a result of new developments. Again there are no new developments or major transport routes in close proximity to the woods. Policies are also included that protect sites of biodiversity importance (including European sites) from adverse impacts from development.</p> <p>The draft Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste LDF Preferred Options proposes an extension to Barrington Quarry, which is 4km from the woods. The initial Habitats Regulations Assessment of that plan suggests that all potential adverse impacts could be mitigated through policies in that plan. The mitigation of any potential pollution will be assisted by the quarry being sited downwind of the woods, with the prevailing wind direction being from the southwest. Policy MW40 of the document states that new minerals and waste developments will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that there will be no likely significant adverse impacts on sites of nature conservation importance.</p>	

Agencies consulted	Natural England
Response to consultation	Natural England support the conclusion that the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD is unlikely to have significant effects on the European Sites located within and in the vicinity of the District.

<b>Overall Conclusions:</b>
With regards to the Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC, it is considered that the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD will have no likely significant impact on the conservation objectives of this site.

## Screening Matrix for the Devil's Dyke SAC

<p>Name, location and summary of conservation objectives for the Site</p>	<p><b>Devil's Dyke SAC</b>  <b>Grid Ref:</b> TL 611622</p> <p><b>Reason for designation:</b>  This site has been designated as a SAC due to the presence of semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco – Brometalia</i>).</p> <p>Devil's Dyke consists of a mosaic of calcareous grasslands (CG3 <i>Bromus erectus</i> and CG5 <i>Bromus erectus – Brachypodium pinnatum</i>). It is the only known UK semi-natural dry grassland site for lizard orchid (<i>Himantoglossum hircinum</i>).</p> <p>The site is located outside of the Cambridge City boundary, within East Cambridgeshire District Council's area.</p>
<p>Are there any other projects or plans that together with the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD could affect Devil's Dyke?</p>	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not itself result in any development. There are other plans for Cambridge City that could, theoretically indirectly affect the site, namely the 2006 Cambridge Local Plan and the Cambridge East Area Action Plan (prepared jointly with South Cambridgeshire District Council). These plans include allocations of land for development and the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD is intended to provide guidance on policies that relate to sustainability contained within the Local Plan.</p> <p>Other relevant plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Waste Local Plan, 2003;</li> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste DPD Preferred Options, Dec 2006;</li> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan, 2006-2011;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2004;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Site Specific Policies Submission DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ Cambridge East Area Action Plan Submission DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ Suffolk Minerals Local Plan 1999 &amp; Minerals Core Strategy Issues and Options, Jan 2007;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Suffolk Waste Local Plan, 2006</li> <li>▪ East Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2000 and Core Strategy Preferred Options, June 2006;</li> <li>▪ Forest Heath Local Plan, 1995 and Core Strategy &amp; Development Policies Preferred Options, Oct 2006;</li> <li>▪ St. Edmundsbury Local Plan, 2006</li> </ul>
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<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
Land take by development	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not propose any development that will take land from Devil's Dyke and will not result in the fragmentation of habitats.</p> <p>None of the other plans listed above propose development that would take land from this site.</p>	There are no policies in the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD or any other plans that have a direct impact on this site.
Impact on protected species outside the protected sites	The conservation objectives for this site relate to plant species within the grassland itself as opposed to animal species. Therefore there are no species listed as important to the integrity of the site that travel to forage outside the boundaries of the site.	Due to the distance of the site from the city and the fact that there are no species listed as important to the integrity of the site that travel to forage outside the boundaries of the site there is not likely to be any significant effect from the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD alone or in combination with other plans.
Recreational pressure and disturbance	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not allocate land for development so by itself will not lead to an increase in recreational pressure and disturbance on Devil's Dyke.</p> <p>Within Cambridge City, proposals to increase the dwelling stock by 12,500 could increase demand for countryside recreation, and likewise in South Cambridgeshire where there are proposals to increase the dwelling stock by 20,000. However, no major proposals contained within the Cambridge Local Plan, South</p>	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not allocate land for development and will therefore not result in increased recreational pressure and disturbance on Devil's Dyke.</p> <p>With regards to other plans, the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England states that in drawing up local development plans,</p>

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
	<p>Cambridgeshire Core Strategy or any other plans are within 5km of this site. The closest major development site to Devil's Dyke is at Cambridge East, which is over 10km from the site. It is not considered that the level of public use at Devil's Dyke will increase greatly as a result of proposals contained within these documents.</p> <p>Many of the new developments proposed by the Cambridge Local Plan, Cambridge East Area Action Plan and in the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework will include improvements to countryside access opportunities and the provision of new strategic open space (also demonstrated by the Cambridgeshire Horizons Green Infrastructure Strategy).</p> <p>It is therefore considered that there will be no significant impact from increased recreational pressure and disturbance on Devil's Dyke as a result of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD alone or in combination with other plans.</p>	<p>consideration should be given to the risks of recreational disturbance where housing proposals fall within a 5km radius of Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites. Using this test, it is unlikely that any proposals contained within the documents identified will have a significant effect on Devil's Dyke as they are all outside the 5km radius proposed.</p> <p>The impact of public access is not listed in the vulnerabilities relating to this site contained within the site data.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that there is not likely to be a significant impact on Devil's Dyke as a result of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD alone or in combination with other plans.</p>
Water quantity and quality	This is not relevant for the conservation objectives of this site	Not relevant
Changes in pollution levels	The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD contains guidance for applicants of major developments in Cambridge City on a number of sustainability criteria, many of which will contribute to reducing pollution from transport by promoting more sustainable modes of transport, as well as pollution from noise, light and odours in the wider area. The urban extensions to Cambridge set out in the Local Plan should help to reduce the level of commuting into Cambridge and its associated pollution by redressing the balance of homes to	As Devil's Dyke is not in close proximity to proposed major development sites it is not considered that there is likely to be any significant impact on the site as a result of changes in pollution levels. The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD aims to minimise levels of pollution that may arise from new developments and general policy requirements

THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:		
Nature of Potential Impact	How the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site	Why these effects are not considered to be significant
	<p>jobs and allow people to use more sustainable forms of transport. However, the scale of development proposed may lead to an increase in local pollution, but this will be kept to a minimum through the existence of this SPD. The Sustainability Appraisal for the SPD highlights that the existence of the SPD will be critical in achieving the City Council's sustainability objectives for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the reduction of pollution. As the development sites within Cambridge City are some distance away from Devil's Dyke, it is considered that the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD in combination with plans for development in Cambridge City will not have an impact on this site.</p> <p>While the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not have an impact on the other plans identified which are outside Cambridge City, many of these plans contain policies to minimise the amount of pollution generated as a result of new developments. Again there are no new developments in close proximity to Devil's Dyke. Policies are also included that protect sites of biodiversity importance (including European sites) from adverse impacts from development.</p> <p>The site is adjacent to the A14 but this is roughly at right angles to the road and as a result only a limited part of the Dyke is actually adjacent to the A14. Policies contained within the South Cambridgeshire LDF and Cambridge Local Plan and other documents have the objective of reducing commuting into Cambridge by focussing development in and on the edge of</p>	<p>contained within other relevant plans also have the same aim.</p> <p>There are unlikely to be any significant impacts from traffic using the A14 as a result of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD both alone and in combination with other plans.</p>

THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:		
Nature of Potential Impact	How the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site	Why these effects are not considered to be significant
	Cambridge and in the new town of Northstowe to the north west of Cambridge. It is therefore considered that there are unlikely to be any significant increases in the amount of traffic using this part of the A14.	

Agencies consulted	Natural England
Response to consultation	Natural England support the conclusion that the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD is unlikely to have significant effects on the European Sites located within and in the vicinity of the District.

Overall Conclusions:
The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD, both alone and in combination with other relevant plans, is considered to have no likely significant impacts on the conservation objectives of Devil's Dyke SAC.

## Screening Matrix for the Fenland SAC and Ramsar Sites

<p>Name, location and summary of conservation objectives for the Site</p>	<p><b>Fenland SAC comprised of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wicken Fen;</li> <li>• Chippenham Fen; and</li> <li>• Woodwalton Fen</li> </ul> <p><b>Reason for designation:</b></p> <p>This site has been designated as a SAC due to the presence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Molinia</i> meadow on calcareous, peaty or clayey silt laden soils (<i>Molinia caerulea</i>);</li> <li>• Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of <i>Caricion davallianae</i>;</li> <li>• Significant presence of Spined Loach (<i>Cobitis taenia</i>); and</li> <li>• Presence of Great Crested Newts (<i>Triturus cristatus</i>)</li> </ul> <p>The Fenland SAC contains one of the most extensive examples of the tall herb-rich East Anglian type of fen-meadow (<i>Molinia caerulea</i> – <i>Cirsium dissectum</i>), particularly at Chippenham Fen. It is important for the conservation of the geographical and ecological range of the habitat type, as this type of fen-meadow is now rare and ecologically distinctive to East Anglia.</p> <p>The individual sites that make up the Fenland SAC hold large areas of calcareous fens with a long and well documented history of regular management. There is a full range of habitat types ranging from species-poor <i>Cladium</i> dominated fen to species-rich fen with a lower proportion of <i>Cladium</i> and containing such species as black bog-rush (<i>Schoenus nigricans</i>), tormentil (<i>Potentilla erecta</i>) and meadow thistle (<i>Cirsium dissectum</i>). There are good transitions to purple moor-grass (<i>Molinia caerulea</i>) and rush pastures, all set within a mosaic of reed beds and wet pastures. The Fens also support a significant population of spined loach (<i>Cobitis taenia</i>) and great crested newts (<i>Triturus cristatus</i>).</p> <p>The three sites that make up the Fenland SAC are located outside of the Cambridge City boundary. Each of the sites is also designated as a Ramsar site and a summary of the conservation objectives for each site is given below.</p>
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- Wicken Fen SAC and Ramsar Site

<p>Name, location and summary of conservation objectives of the Ramsar site</p>	<p><b>Wicken Fen SAC and Ramsar site</b></p> <p><b>Grid Reference:</b> TL 555700</p> <p><b>Reason for designation as a Ramsar site:</b>  Wicken Fen is considered to be one of the most outstanding remnants of the East Anglian peat fens. It supports one species from the British Red Data Book of plants, the fen violet (<i>Viola persicifolia</i>), which survives at only two other sites in the UK. It also contains eight nationally scarce plants and 121 British Red Data book invertebrates.</p> <p>The site is located outside of the Cambridge City boundary, in East Cambridgeshire District Council's area.</p>
<p>Are there any other plans that together with the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD could affect Wicken Fen?</p>	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not itself result in any development. There are other plans for Cambridge City that could, theoretically indirectly affect the site, namely the 2006 Cambridge Local Plan and the Cambridge East Area Action Plan (prepared jointly with South Cambridgeshire District Council). These plans include allocations of land for development and the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD is intended to provide guidance on policies that relate to sustainability contained within the Local Plan.</p> <p>Other relevant plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Waste Local Plan, 2003;</li> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste DPD Preferred Options, Dec 2006;</li> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan, 2006-2011;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2004;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Site Specific Policies Submission DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ Cambridge East Area Action Plan Submission DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ Suffolk Minerals Local Plan 1999 &amp; Minerals Core Strategy Issues and Options, Jan 2007;</li> <li>▪ Suffolk Waste Local Plan, 2006</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ East Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2000 and Core Strategy Preferred Options, June 2006;</li> <li>▪ Forest Heath Local Plan, 1995 and Core Strategy &amp; Development Policies Preferred Options, Oct 2006;</li> <li>▪ St. Edmundsbury Local Plan, 2006</li> </ul>
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<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
Land take by development	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not propose any development that will take land from Wicken Fen and will not result in the fragmentation of habitats.</p> <p>None of the other plans listed above propose development that would take land from this site.</p>	There are no policies in the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD or any other plans that have a direct impact on this site.
Impact on protected species outside the protected sites	The conservation objectives relate to species of plant within the fen and species of invertebrates. The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD does not propose any development and locations identified in other relevant plans are not considered likely to have a significant impact on species listed as important to the integrity of the site.	Due to the distance of the site from the city it is not considered that there is likely to be a significant effect from the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD both alone and in combination with other plans on the integrity of this site.
Recreational pressure and disturbance	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not allocate land for development so by itself will not lead to an increase in recreational pressure and disturbance on Wicken Fen.</p> <p>Within Cambridge City, proposals to increase the dwelling stock by 12,500 could increase demand for countryside recreation, and likewise in South Cambridgeshire where there are proposals to increase the dwelling stock by 20,000. However, no major proposals contained within the Cambridge Local Plan, South</p>	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not allocate land for development and will therefore not result in increased recreational pressure and disturbance on Wicken Fen.</p> <p>With regards to other plans, the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England states that in drawing up local development plans,</p>

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
	<p>Cambridgeshire Core Strategy or any other plans are within 5km of this site. Access to the site is limited to public rights of way, with any access beyond these being by permit only and can therefore be controlled.</p> <p>Many of the new developments proposed by the Cambridge Local Plan, Cambridge East Area Action Plan and in the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework will include improvements to countryside access opportunities and the provision of new strategic open space (also demonstrated by the Cambridgeshire Horizons Green Infrastructure Strategy) in more accessible locations than Wicken Fen.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that there will be no likely significant impact from increased recreational pressure and disturbance on Wicken Fen as a result of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD alone or in combination with other plans.</p>	<p>consideration should be given to the risks of recreational disturbance where housing proposals fall within a 5km radius of Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites. Using this test, it is unlikely that any proposals contained within the documents identified will have a significant effect on Wicken Fen as they are all outside the 5km radius proposed.</p> <p>The impact of public access is not listed in the vulnerabilities relating to this site contained within the site data. The Natural Trust manages access to the site and zoning ensures that the more remote parts of the site are left undisturbed.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that there will be no significant impact from increased recreational pressure and disturbance on Wicken Fen as a result of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD alone or in combination with other plans.</p>
Water quantity and quality	The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD contains measures to both manage and minimise flood risk and minimise water use, which should in combination help to alleviate any risk of developments having an impact on the water quantity and quality at Wicken Fen. While it is recognised that while there would be an increase in water consumption and in theory on water quality through increased run off as a result of the new developments	The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD, in combination with other plans, contains policies that should help to alleviate the potential impacts of new developments on water quantity and quality at Wicken Fen. As such it is felt that the document, both alone and in combination with other plans, will not result in significant impacts

THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:		
Nature of Potential Impact	How the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site	Why these effects are not considered to be significant
	<p>proposed in Cambridge City and on the fringes of the City (as allocated in the Local Plan and Cambridge East AAP) the potential impact will be kept to a minimum through the existence of this SPD and other policies. The Sustainability Appraisal of the SPD highlights that the existence of the SPD will be critical in order to achieve the City Council's Sustainability Objectives for managing and minimising flood risk and minimising water consumption. As the development sites within Cambridge City are some distance away from Wicken Fen, it is considered that the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD in combination with plans for development in Cambridge City will have no likely significant impact on this site.</p> <p>While the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not have an impact on the other plans identified which are outside Cambridge City, many of these plans contain policies to minimise the impacts on water quantity and quality from new developments. The principle for new developments not exceeding undeveloped rates for site run off is central to PPS25 Development and Flood Risk. Again there are no new developments in close proximity to Wicken Fen. Many of the other relevant plans contain policies promoting the use of sustainable drainage systems and requirements to restrict surface water run off to no greater than if the site were undeveloped.</p> <p>With regards to the impact of increased water consumption as a result of new development, many of the plans identified which are outside Cambridge City contain requirements for water conservation strategies to be provided as part of new development proposals. Water companies have planned for new resources and</p>	<p>on the nature conservation objectives of the site.</p> <p>The Environment Agency plays an important role in regulating proposals for wastewater treatment and drainage, being governed by the Habitats Directive and the Urban Wastewater Directive. They also regulate the quality of water released from wastewater treatment works and are a statutory consultee for all flood risk assessments carried out for development proposals. It is therefore felt that the impact of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD and other plans will have no significant impact on Wicken Fen.</p>

THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:		
Nature of Potential Impact	How the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site	Why these effects are not considered to be significant
	<p>infrastructure in their water resources plans that were submitted in 2004, which cover the period up to 2030. These take into account the growth as outlined in the Sustainable Communities Plan and the majority of supply is anticipated to come from existing licenses (Source: Maintaining Water Supply, Environment Agency, July 2004). Any additional water abstraction from Wicken Fen can only take place if it is shown that it does not adversely affect the sites ecological integrity (Source: The Cam and Ely Ouse Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy Consultation Document, Environment Agency October 2006).</p>	
Changes in pollution levels	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD contains guidance for applicants of major developments in Cambridge City on a number of sustainability criteria, many of which will contribute to reducing pollution from transport by promoting more sustainable modes of transport, as well as pollution from noise, light and odours in the wider area. The urban extensions to Cambridge set out in the Local Plan should help to reduce the level of commuting into Cambridge and its associated pollution by redressing the balance of homes to jobs and allow people to use more sustainable forms of transport. However, the scale of development proposed may lead to an increase in local pollution, but this will be kept to a minimum through the existence of this SPD. The Sustainability Appraisal for the SPD highlights that the existence of the SPD will be critical in achieving the City Council's sustainability objectives for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the reduction of pollution. As the development sites within Cambridge City are some distance away from Wicken Fen, it is considered that the</p>	<p>As Wicken Fen is not in close proximity to proposed major development sites it is not considered that there is likely to be any significant impact on the site as a result of changes in pollution levels. The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD aims to minimise levels of pollution that may arise from new developments and general policy requirements contained within other relevant plans also have the same aim.</p>

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
	<p>Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD in combination with plans for development in Cambridge City will have no likely significant impact on this site.</p> <p>While the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not have an impact on the other plans identified which are outside Cambridge City, many of these plans contain policies to minimise the amount of pollution generated as a result of new developments. Again there are no new developments in close proximity to Wicken Fen. Policies are also included that protect sites of biodiversity importance (including European sites) from adverse impacts from development.</p>	
Agencies consulted	Natural England	
Response to consultation	Natural England support the conclusion that the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD is unlikely to have significant effects on the European Sites located within and in the vicinity of the District.	

<b>Overall Conclusions:</b>
The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD, both alone and in combination with other relevant plans, is considered to have no likely significant effects on the conservation objectives for Wicken Fen.

- Chippenham Fen SAC and Ramsar Site

<p>Name, location and summary of conservation objectives of the Ramsar site</p>	<p><b>Chippenham Fen SAC and Ramsar Site</b></p> <p><b>Grid Reference:</b> TL 648697</p> <p><b>Reason for designation as a Ramsar site:</b>          Chippenham Fen is a spring-fed calcareous basin mire with a long history of management, which is partly reflected in the diversity of its present day vegetation. The invertebrate fauna is very rich, partly due to its transitional position between Fenland and Breckland. The species list contains many rare and scarce invertebrates, characteristic of ancient British fenland sites. The site supports diverse flora, with rare and scarce species. The site is the stronghold of Cambridge milk parsley <i>Selinum carvifolia</i>.</p> <p>The site is located outside of the Cambridge City boundary in East Cambridgeshire District Council's area.</p>
<p>Are there any other plans that together with the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD could affect Chippenham Fen?</p>	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not itself result in any development. There are other plans for Cambridge City that could, theoretically indirectly affect the site, namely the 2006 Cambridge Local Plan and the Cambridge East Area Action Plan (prepared jointly with South Cambridgeshire District Council). These plans include allocations of land for development and the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD is intended to provide guidance on policies that relate to sustainability contained within the Local Plan.</p> <p>Other relevant plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Waste Local Plan, 2003;</li> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste DPD Preferred Options, Dec 2006;</li> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan, 2006-2011;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2004;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Site Specific Policies Submission DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ Cambridge East Area Action Plan Submission DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ Suffolk Minerals Local Plan 1999 &amp; Minerals Core Strategy Issues and Options, Jan 2007;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Suffolk Waste Local Plan, 2006</li> <li>▪ East Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2000 and Core Strategy Preferred Options, June 2006;</li> <li>▪ Forest Heath Local Plan, 1995 and Core Strategy &amp; Development Policies Preferred Options, Oct 2006;</li> <li>▪ St. Edmundsbury Local Plan, 2006</li> </ul>
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<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
Land take by development	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not propose any development that will take land from Chippenham Fen and will not result in the fragmentation of habitats.</p> <p>None of the other plans listed above propose development that would take land from this site.</p>	There are no policies in the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD or any other plans that have a direct impact on this site.
Impact on protected species outside the protected sites	The conservation objectives relate to species of plant within the fen and species of invertebrates. The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD does not propose any development and locations identified in other relevant plans will not have a significant impact on species listed as important to the integrity of the site.	Due to the distance of the site from the city it is not considered that there is likely to be a significant effect from the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD both alone and in combination with other plans on the integrity of this site.
Recreational pressure and disturbance	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not allocate land for development so by itself will not lead to an increase in recreational pressure and disturbance on Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>Within Cambridge City, proposals to increase the dwelling stock by 12,500 could increase demand for countryside recreation, and likewise in South Cambridgeshire where there are proposals to increase the dwelling stock by 20,000. However, no major proposals contained within the Cambridge Local Plan, South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy or any other plans are within 5km of</p>	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not allocate land for development and will therefore not result in increased recreational pressure and disturbance on Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>With regards to other plans, the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England states that in drawing up local development plans, consideration should be given to the risks of</p>

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
	<p>this site (Cambridge East is over 15km from the site).</p> <p>Both the site and the surrounding area are privately owned. While there are rights of way running across the site, access beyond these paths is by permit only. The Ramsar data sheets indicate a low level of usage by local villagers with few people applying for permits for recreational purposes.</p> <p>Many of the new developments proposed by the Cambridge Local Plan, Cambridge East Area Action Plan and in the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework will include improvements to countryside access opportunities and the provision of new strategic open space (also demonstrated by the Cambridgeshire Horizons Green Infrastructure Strategy) in more accessible locations than Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that there will be no likely significant impact from increased recreational pressure and disturbance on Chippenham Fen as a result of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD alone or in combination with other plans.</p>	<p>recreational disturbance where housing proposals fall within a 5km radius of Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites. Using this test, it is unlikely that any proposals contained within the documents identified will have a significant effect on Chippenham Fen as they are all outside the 5km radius proposed.</p> <p>It is considered unlikely that the level of public use of Chippenham Fen will increase greatly as a result of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD alone or in combination with other plans.</p>
Water quantity and quality	The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD contains measures to both manage and minimise flood risk and minimise water use, which should in combination help to alleviate any risk of developments having an impact on the water quantity and quality at Chippenham Fen. While it is recognised that while there would be an increase in water consumption and in theory on water quality	The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD, in combination with other plans, contains policies that should help to alleviate the potential impacts of new developments on water quantity and quality at Chippenham Fen. As such it is felt that the document, both alone and in combination

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
	<p>through increased run off as a result of the new developments proposed in Cambridge City and on the fringes of the City (as allocated in the Local Plan and Cambridge East AAP) the potential impact will be kept to a minimum through the existence of this SPD and other policies. The Sustainability Appraisal of the SPD highlights that the existence of the SPD will be critical in order to achieve the City Council's Sustainability Objectives for managing and minimising flood risk and minimising water consumption. As the development sites within Cambridge City are some distance away from Chippenham Fen, it is considered that the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD in combination with plans for development in Cambridge City will not have an impact on this site.</p> <p>While the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not have an impact on the other plans identified which are outside Cambridge City, many of these plans contain policies to minimise the impacts on water quantity and quality from new developments. The principle for new developments not exceeding undeveloped rates for site run off is central to PPS25 Development and Flood Risk. Again there are no new developments in close proximity to Chippenham Fen. Many of the other relevant plans contain policies promoting the use of sustainable drainage systems and requirements to restrict surface water run off to no greater than if the site were undeveloped.</p> <p>With regards to the impact of increased water consumption as a result of new development, many of the plans identified that are outside Cambridge City contain requirements for water conservation</p>	<p>with other plans, will be unlikely to have a significant impact on Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>The Environment Agency plays an important role in regulating proposals for wastewater treatment and drainage, being governed by the Habitats Directive and the Urban Wastewater Directive. They also regulate the quality of water released from wastewater treatment works and are a statutory consultee for all flood risk assessments carried out for development proposals. It is therefore felt that the impact of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD and other plans will not have a significant impact on Chippenham Fen.</p>

THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:		
Nature of Potential Impact	How the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site	Why these effects are not considered to be significant
	<p>strategies to be provided as part of new development proposals. Water companies have planned for new resources and infrastructure in their water resources plans that were submitted in 2004, which cover the period up to 2030. These take into account the growth as outlined in the Sustainable Communities Plan and the majority of supply is anticipated to come from existing licenses (Source: Maintaining Water Supply, Environment Agency, July 2004). (For general information, it is possible that some existing abstraction licences could be causing effects on sensitive wetland SSSI's. This matter is being addressed through the Asset Management Plan Process (AMP) and Restoring Sustainable Abstraction (RSA) initiative of the Environment Agency).</p>	
Changes in pollution levels	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD contains guidance for applicants of major developments in Cambridge City on a number of sustainability criteria, many of which will contribute to reducing pollution from transport by promoting more sustainable modes of transport, as well as pollution from noise, light and odours in the wider area. The urban extensions to Cambridge set out in the Local Plan should help to reduce the level of commuting into Cambridge and its associated pollution by redressing the balance of homes to jobs and allow people to use more sustainable forms of transport. However, the scale of development proposed may lead to an increase in local pollution, but this will be kept to a minimum through the existence of this SPD. The Sustainability Appraisal for the SPD highlights that the existence of the SPD will be critical in achieving the City Council's sustainability objectives for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the reduction of</p>	<p>As Chippenham Fen is not in close proximity to proposed major development sites it is not considered that there is likely to be any significant impact on the site as a result of changes in pollution levels. The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD aims to minimise levels of pollution that may arise from new developments and general policy requirements contained within other relevant plans also have the same aim.</p>

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
	<p>pollution. As the development sites within Cambridge City are some distance away from Chippenham Fen, it is considered that the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD in combination with plans for development in Cambridge City will not have a likely significant impact on this site.</p> <p>While the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not have an impact on the other plans identified which are outside Cambridge City, many of these plans contain policies to minimise the amount of pollution generated as a result of new developments. Again there are no new developments in close proximity to Chippenham Fen. Policies are also included that protect sites of biodiversity importance (including European sites) from adverse impacts from development.</p>	

Agencies consulted	Natural England
Response to consultation	Natural England support the conclusion that the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD is unlikely to have significant effects on the European Sites located within and in the vicinity of the District.

<b>Overall Conclusions:</b>
The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD, both alone and in combination with other relevant plans, is considered to have no likely significant effects on the conservation objectives for Chippenham Fen.

- **Woodwalton Fen SAC and Ramsar Site**

<p>Name, location and summary of conservation objectives of the Ramsar site</p>	<p><b>Woodwalton Fen SAC and Ramsar Site</b></p> <p><b>Grid Reference:</b> TL 230840</p> <p><b>Reason for designation as a Ramsar site:</b>  Woodwalton Fen lies within an area of one of the remaining parts of East Anglia that has not been drained. The site supports two species of flora listed in the British Red Data Book for plants, fen violet <i>Viola persicifloia</i> and fen wood rush <i>Luzula pallescens</i>.</p> <p>The site is located outside of the Cambridge City boundary, in Huntingdonshire District Council's area.</p>
<p>Are there any other plans that together with the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD could affect Woodwalton Fen?</p>	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not itself result in any development. There are other plans for Cambridge City that could, theoretically indirectly affect the site, namely the 2006 Cambridge Local Plan and the North West Cambridge Area Action Plan (prepared jointly with South Cambridgeshire District Council). These plans include allocations of land for development and the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD is intended to provide guidance on policies that relate to sustainability contained within the Local Plan.</p> <p>Other relevant plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Waste Local Plan, 2003;</li> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste DPD Preferred Options, Dec 2006;</li> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan, 2006-2011;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2004;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Site Specific Policies Submission DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ Northstowe Area Action Plan Submission DPD, 2006</li> <li>▪ Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 &amp; Core Strategy Draft 2006;</li> <li>▪ Fenland local Plan 1993 &amp; Core Strategy</li> </ul>

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
Land take by development	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not propose any development that will take land from Woodwalton Fen and will not result in the fragmentation of habitats.</p> <p>None of the other plans listed above propose development that would take land from this site.</p>	There are no policies in the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD or any other plans that have a direct impact on this site.
Impact on protected species outside the protected sites	The conservation objectives relate to species of plant within the fen. The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD does not propose any development and locations identified in other relevant plans will not have a significant impact on species listed as important to the integrity of the site.	Due to the distance of the site from the city it is not considered that there is likely to be a significant effect from the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD both alone and in combination with other plans on the integrity of this site.
Recreational pressure and disturbance	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not allocate land for development so by itself will not lead to an increase in recreational pressure and disturbance on Woodwalton Fen.</p> <p>Within Cambridge City, proposals to increase the dwelling stock by 12,500 could increase demand for countryside recreation, and likewise in South Cambridgeshire where there are proposals to increase the dwelling stock by 20,000. However, no major proposals contained within the Cambridge Local Plan, South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy or any other plans are within 5km of this site (Northstowe is over 20km away from the site).</p> <p>Parking is limited at the site and there are no public rights of way crossing the fen. Woodwalton Fen has not been a permit only site since around 2003. Although members of the public no longer require Natural England's permission to access the site there</p>	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not allocate land for development and will therefore not result in increased recreational pressure and disturbance on Woodwalton Fen.</p> <p>With regards to other plans, the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England states that in drawing up local development plans, consideration should be given to the risks of recreational disturbance where housing proposals fall within a 5km radius of Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites. Using this test, it is unlikely that any proposals contained within the documents identified will have a significant effect on Woodwalton Fen as they are all outside the</p>

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
	<p>remains in force restricted access to some areas and a no dog policy is maintained. There are other countryside access opportunities available in more accessible locations and so it is considered unlikely that the proposed plans will lead to a great increase in visitor numbers.</p> <p>Many of the new developments proposed by the Cambridge Local Plan, Cambridge East Area Action Plan and in the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework will include improvements to countryside access opportunities and the provision of new strategic open space (also demonstrated by the Cambridgeshire Horizons Green Infrastructure Strategy) in more accessible locations than Woodwalton Fen.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that there will be no likely significant impact from increased recreational pressure and disturbance on Woodwalton Fen as a result of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD alone or in combination with other plans.</p>	<p>5km radius proposed.</p> <p>The impact of public access is not listed in the vulnerabilities relating to this site contained within the site data. Public access to some areas of the site is restricted and a no dog policy is maintained.</p> <p>It is considered unlikely that the level of public use of Woodwalton Fen will increase greatly as a result of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD alone or in combination with other plans.</p>
Water quantity and quality	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD contains measures to both manage and minimise flood risk and minimise water use, which should in combination help to alleviate any risk of developments having an impact on the water quantity and quality at Woodwalton Fen. While it is recognised that while there would be an increase in water consumption and in theory on water quality through increased run off as a result of the new developments proposed in Cambridge City and on the fringes of the City the potential impact will be kept to a minimum through the existence of this SPD and other policies. The Sustainability Appraisal of the SPD</p>	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD, in combination with other plans, contains policies that should help to alleviate the potential impacts of new developments on water quantity and quality at Woodwalton Fen. As such it is felt that the document, both alone and in combination with other plans, will not result in significant impacts on the nature conservation objectives of the site.</p>

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
	<p>highlights that the existence of the SPD will be critical in order to achieve the City Council's Sustainability Objectives for managing and minimising flood risk and minimising water consumption. As the development sites within Cambridge City are some distance away from Woodwalton Fen, it is considered that the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD in combination with plans for development in Cambridge City will not have an impact on this site.</p> <p>While the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not have an impact on the other plans identified which are outside Cambridge City, many of these plans contain policies to minimise the impacts on water quantity and quality from new developments. The principle for new developments not exceeding undeveloped rates for site run off is central to PPS25 Development and Flood Risk. Again there are no new developments in close proximity to Woodwalton Fen. Many of the other relevant plans contain policies promoting the use of sustainable drainage systems and requirements to restrict surface water run off to no greater than if the site were undeveloped.</p> <p>With regards to the impact of increased water consumption as a result of new development, many of the plans identified that are outside Cambridge City contain requirements for water conservation strategies to be provided as part of new development proposals. Water companies have planned for new resources and infrastructure in their water resources plans that were submitted in 2004, which cover the period up to 2030. These take into account the growth as outlined in the Sustainable Communities Plan and the</p>	<p>The Environment Agency plays an important role in regulating proposals for wastewater treatment and drainage, being governed by the Habitats Directive and the Urban Wastewater Directive. They also regulate the quality of water released from wastewater treatment works and are a statutory consultee for all flood risk assessments carried out for development proposals. It is therefore felt that the impact of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD and other plans will not have a significant impact on Woodwalton Fen.</p>

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
	majority of supply is anticipated to come from existing licenses (Source: Maintaining Water Supply, Environment Agency, July 2004).	
Changes in pollution levels	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD contains guidance for applicants of major developments in Cambridge City on a number of sustainability criteria, many of which will contribute to reducing pollution from transport by promoting more sustainable modes of transport, as well as pollution from noise, light and odours in the wider area. The urban extensions to Cambridge set out in the Local Plan should help to reduce the level of commuting into Cambridge and its associated pollution by redressing the balance of homes to jobs and allow people to use more sustainable forms of transport. However, the scale of development proposed may lead to an increase in local pollution, but this will be kept to a minimum through the existence of this SPD. The Sustainability Appraisal for the SPD highlights that the existence of the SPD will be critical in achieving the City Council's sustainability objectives for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the reduction of pollution. As the development sites within Cambridge City are some distance away from Woodwalton Fen, it is considered that the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD in combination with plans for development in Cambridge City will not have a likely significant impact on Woodwalton Fen.</p> <p>While the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not have an impact on the other plans identified which are outside Cambridge City, many of these plans contain policies to minimise the amount</p>	As Woodwalton Fen is not in close proximity to proposed major development sites it is not considered that there is likely to be any significant impact on the site as a result of changes in pollution levels. The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD aims to minimise levels of pollution that may arise from new developments and general policy requirements contained within other relevant plans also have the same aim.

THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:		
Nature of Potential Impact	How the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site	Why these effects are not considered to be significant
	of pollution generated as a result of new developments. Again there are no new developments in close proximity to Woodwalton Fen. Policies are also included that protect sites of biodiversity importance (including European sites) from adverse impacts from development.	

Agencies consulted	Natural England
Response to consultation	Natural England support the conclusion that the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD is unlikely to have significant effects on the European Sites located within and in the vicinity of the District.

Overall Conclusions:
The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD, both alone and in combination with other relevant plans, is considered to have no likely significant effects on the conservation objectives for Woodwalton Fen.

## Screening Matrix for the Ouse Washes SAC, SPA and Ramsar Site

<p>Name, location and summary of conservation objectives of the site</p>	<p><b>The Ouse Washes</b></p> <p><b>Grid Reference:</b> TL 498895</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is a wetland of major international importance comprising seasonally flooded washlands, which are managed through the use of traditional agricultural techniques. It provides breeding and winter habitats for important assemblages of wild bird species, particularly wildfowl and waders.</p> <p><b>Reason for designation as a SAC:</b> The Ouse Washes contain a significant population of spined loach (<i>Cobitis taenia</i>). The Counter Drain, with its clear water and abundant macrophytes, is particularly important and has a significant population of spined loach.</p> <p><b>Reason for designation as an SPA</b> The Ouse Washes is a wetland of major international importance comprising seasonally flooded washlands, which are managed through the use of traditional agricultural techniques. It provides breeding and winter habitats for important assemblages of wild bird species, particularly wildfowl and waders.</p> <p><b>Reason for designation as a Ramsar site</b> The Ouse Washes have been designated as a Ramsar site for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Particularly good example of a natural or near-natural wetland, characteristic of its biogeographical region;</li> <li>• The site supports a number of rare species of flora and fauna;</li> <li>• The site supports a diverse collection of rare breeding waterfowl associated with seasonally flooding wet grassland;</li> <li>• The Washes are of international importance by virtue of regularly supporting over 20,000 waterfowl;</li> <li>• The Washes are important internationally for supporting certain species during the winter</li> </ul> <p>The boundaries of the SPA and Ramsar site vary slightly from those of the Ouse Washes SAC, which are</p>
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<p>Are there any other plans that together with the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD could affect the Ouse Washes?</p>	<p>primarily located in East Cambridgeshire District and King's Lynn and West Norfolk District.</p> <p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not itself result in any development. There are other plans for Cambridge City that could, theoretically indirectly affect the site. These plans include allocations of land for development and the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD is intended to provide guidance on policies that relate to sustainability.</p> <p>Other relevant plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Waste Local Plan, 2003;</li> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste DPD Preferred Options, Dec 2006;</li> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan, 2006-2011;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2004;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Site Specific Policies Submission DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Generic Development Control Policies Submission DPD, 2006</li> <li>▪ Northstowe Area Action Plan Submission DPD, 2006</li> <li>▪ Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan Submission DPD, 2006</li> <li>▪ Cambridge East Area Action Plan Submission DPD, 2006</li> <li>▪ North West Cambridge Area Action Plan Issues &amp; Options Report, 2006</li> <li>▪ Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 &amp; Core Strategy Draft 2006;</li> <li>▪ Fenland local Plan 1993 &amp; Core Strategy;</li> <li>▪ King's Lynn &amp; West Norfolk Local Plan 1998 &amp; Core Strategy Submission, Development Control Preferred Options 2007</li> </ul>
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THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:		
Nature of Potential Impact	How the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site	Why these effects are not considered to be significant
Land take by development	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not propose any development that will take land from the Ouse Washes and will not result in the fragmentation of habitats.</p> <p>None of the other plans listed above propose development that</p>	There are no policies in the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD or any other plans that have a direct impact on this site.

THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:		
Nature of Potential Impact	How the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site	Why these effects are not considered to be significant
	would take land from this site.	
Impact on protected species outside the protected sites	The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD does not propose any development and locations identified in other relevant plans will not have a likely significant impact on species listed as important to the integrity of the site.	Due to the distance of the site from the city it is not considered that there is likely to be a significant effect from the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD both alone and in combination with other plans on the integrity of this site.
Recreational pressure and disturbance	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not allocate land for development so by itself will not lead to an increase in recreational pressure and disturbance on the Ouse Washes.</p> <p>Within Cambridge City, proposals to increase the dwelling stock by 12,500 could increase demand for countryside recreation, and likewise in South Cambridgeshire where there are proposals to increase the dwelling stock by 20,000. However, no major proposals contained within the Cambridge Local Plan, South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy or any other plans are within 5km of this site (Northstowe is 7km away from the nearest point on the Washes).</p> <p>There is a network of public rights of way through the Washes. The RSPB manages a nature reserve at Welches Dam, while the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust manage a reserve at Welney in Norfolk.</p> <p>Many of the new developments proposed by the Cambridge Local Plan, Cambridge East Area Action Plan and in the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework will include improvements to countryside access opportunities and the provision</p>	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not allocate land for development and will therefore not result in increased recreational pressure and disturbance on the Ouse Washes.</p> <p>With regards to other plans, the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England states that in drawing up local development plans, consideration should be given to the risks of recreational disturbance where housing proposals fall within a 5km radius of Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites. Using this test, it is unlikely that any proposals contained within the documents identified will have a significant effect on the Ouse Washes as they are all outside the 5km radius proposed.</p> <p>The impact of public access is not listed in the vulnerabilities relating to this site contained within the site data. Therefore it is considered unlikely that the level of public use at the Ouse</p>

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
	<p>of new strategic open space (also demonstrated by the Cambridgeshire Horizons Green Infrastructure Strategy) in more accessible locations than the Ouse Washes.</p> <p>The draft Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste LDF Preferred Options (Nov 2006) proposes an Earith/Mepal Area Action Plan, Wimblington Sand and Gravel Extraction, Needingworth Minerals Safeguarding Area, and a Cottenham Minerals Safeguard Area, which could potentially have an impact on the Washes through noise of traffic and operation of plant. However the initial Habitats Regulations Assessment of that plan suggests that all potential adverse impacts could be mitigated against through policies of that plan.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that there will be no likely significant impact from increased recreational pressure and disturbance on the Ouse Washes as a result of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD alone or in combination with other plans.</p>	<p>Washes will increase greatly as a result of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD alone or in combination with other plans.</p>
Water quantity and quality	<p>All of the Cambridge City area drains into the Ouse Washes via the River Cam. Exceptional rainfall events cause the River Cam to Flood at Fen Road, Midsummer and Stourbridge Commons and along Riverside. Several of its tributaries flood as well, and development must not increase flood risk to these locations or elsewhere from both urban run off and additional wastewater from Cambridge Sewage Treatment Works.</p> <p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD contains measures to both manage and minimise flood risk and minimise water use, which should in combination help to alleviate any risk of</p>	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD, in combination with other plans, contains policies that should help to alleviate the potential impacts of new developments on water quantity and quality at the Ouse Washes. As such it is felt that the document, both alone and in combination with other plans, will not result in likely significant impacts on the nature conservation objectives of the site.</p> <p>The Environment Agency plays an important role</p>

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
	<p>developments having an impact on the water quantity and quality at the Ouse Washes. While it is recognised that while there would be an increase in water consumption and in theory on water quality through increased run off as a result of the new developments proposed in Cambridge City and on the fringes of the City the potential impact will be kept to a minimum through the existence of this SPD and other policies. It is also recognised that seasonal flooding plays an important role in maintaining the integrity of the Ouse Washes, and again the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD contains guidance to address the issue of run off and wastewater flood risk to ensure that there are no unacceptable impacts. The Sustainability Appraisal of the SPD highlights that the existence of the SPD will be critical in order to achieve the City Council's Sustainability Objectives for managing and minimising flood risk and minimising water consumption. As the development sites within Cambridge City are some distance away from the Ouse Washes, it is considered that the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD in combination with plans for development in Cambridge City will not have an impact on this site.</p> <p>While the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not have an impact on the other plans identified which are outside Cambridge City, many of these plans contain policies to minimise the impacts on water quantity and quality from new developments. The principle for new developments not exceeding undeveloped rates for site run off is central to PPS25 Development and Flood Risk. Again there are no new developments in close proximity to the Ouse Washes. Many of the other relevant plans contain policies</p>	<p>in regulating proposals for wastewater treatment and drainage, being governed by the Habitats Directive and the Urban Wastewater Directive. They also regulate the quality of water released from wastewater treatment works and are a statutory consultee for all flood risk assessments carried out for development proposals. Any larger sewage treatment works discharging into sensitive areas must meet the Wastewater Directives standards for the removal of nutrients unless it can be demonstrated that the removal will have no effect on the degree of eutrophication (the Ouse Washes have been identified as a Eutrophic Sensitive Area). A review of the capacity of sewage treatment works in the East of England (Halcrow, 2006) indicates that any new development draining into the Uttons Drove Sewage Treatment Works may result in an increased flood risk in the Swavesey Internal Drainage Board Area, as opposed to the great Ouse itself. The report recommended that further investigation should be carried out with regards to the effect of increased effluent discharge on the receiving watercourses, and all the relevant plans and policies take this into account.</p> <p>It is therefore felt that the impact of the</p>

THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:		
Nature of Potential Impact	How the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site	Why these effects are not considered to be significant
	<p>promoting the use of sustainable drainage systems and requirements to restrict surface water run off to no greater than if the site were undeveloped.</p> <p>With regards to the impact of increased water consumption as a result of new development, many of the plans identified that are outside Cambridge City contain requirements for water conservation strategies to be provided as part of new development proposals. Water companies have planned for new resources and infrastructure in their water resources plans that were submitted in 2004, which cover the period up to 2030. These take into account the growth as outlined in the Sustainable Communities Plan and the majority of supply is anticipated to come from existing licenses (Source: Maintaining Water Supply, Environment Agency, July 2004).</p> <p>The Habitats Directive aims to ensure biodiversity through the conservation, maintenance and restoration of natural habitats, flora and fauna at designated Natura 2000 sites. Abstraction can only take place or continue if it is shown that it will not adversely affect the sites ecological integrity (Source: The Cam and Ely Ouse Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy Consultation Document – Environment Agency, 2006).</p> <p>The draft Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste LDF Preferred Options (Nov 2006) proposes an Earith/Mepal Area Action Plan, Wimblington Sand and Gravel Extraction, Needingworth Minerals Safeguarding Area, and a Cottenham Minerals Safeguard Area,</p>	<p>Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD and other plans will not have a likely significant impact on the Ouse Washes.</p>

THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:		
Nature of Potential Impact	How the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site	Why these effects are not considered to be significant
	which could potentially have an impact on the hydrology and water resources at the Washes. However the initial Habitats Regulations Assessment of that plan suggests that all potential adverse impacts could be mitigated against through policies of that plan.	
Changes in pollution levels	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD contains guidance for applicants of major developments in Cambridge City on a number of sustainability criteria, many of which will contribute to reducing pollution from transport by promoting more sustainable modes of transport, as well as pollution from noise, light and odours in the wider area. The urban extensions to Cambridge set out in the Local Plan should help to reduce the level of commuting into Cambridge and its associated pollution by redressing the balance of homes to jobs and allow people to use more sustainable forms of transport. However, the scale of development proposed may lead to an increase in local pollution, but this will be kept to a minimum through the existence of this SPD. The Sustainability Appraisal for the SPD highlights that the existence of the SPD will be critical in achieving the City Council's sustainability objectives for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the reduction of pollution. As the development sites within Cambridge City are some distance away from the Ouse Washes, it is considered that the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD in combination with plans for development in Cambridge City will not have a likely significant impact on this site.</p> <p>While the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not have an</p>	As the Ouse Washes is not in close proximity to proposed major development sites it is not considered that there is likely to be any significant impact on the site as a result of changes in pollution levels. The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD aims to minimise levels of pollution that may arise from new developments and general policy requirements contained within other relevant plans also have the same aim.

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
	<p>impact on the other plans identified which are outside Cambridge City, many of these plans contain policies to minimise the amount of pollution generated as a result of new developments. Again there are no new developments in close proximity to the Ouse Washes. Policies are also included that protect sites of biodiversity importance (including European sites) from adverse impacts from development.</p> <p>The draft Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste LDF Preferred Options (Nov 2006) proposes an Earith/Mepal Area Action Plan, Wimblington Sand and Gravel Extraction, Needingworth Minerals Safeguarding Area, and a Cottenham Minerals Safeguard Area, which could potentially have an impact on the Washes through increased emissions. However the initial Habitats Regulations Assessment of that plan suggests that all potential adverse impacts could be mitigated against through policies of that plan.</p>	

Agencies consulted	Natural England
Response to consultation	Natural England support the conclusion that the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD is unlikely to have significant effects on the European Sites located within and in the vicinity of the District.

<b>Overall Conclusions:</b>
The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD, both alone and in combination with other relevant plans, is considered to have no likely significant effects on the conservation objectives for the Ouse Washes.

## Screening Matrix for the Portholme SAC

<p>Name, location and summary of conservation objectives of the site</p>	<p><b>Portholme SAC</b></p> <p><b>Grid Reference:</b> TL 237708</p> <p>This site has been designated as a SAC due it being the best example of lowland hay meadow (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) in the East of England. The site is over 90ha in size and is the largest surviving alluvial flood meadow, traditionally managed, in the UK. There has been a long history of favourable management at the site, with little of the site being subjected to agricultural improvement. As a result it demonstrates good conservation of both its structure and function. The site supports a small population of fritillary (<i>Fritillaria meleagris</i>).</p> <p>The site is located outside of Cambridge City, within Huntingdonshire District Council's area.</p>
<p>Are there any other plans that together with the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD could affect the Ouse Washes?</p>	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not itself result in any development. There are other plans for Cambridge City that could, theoretically indirectly affect the site. These plans include allocations of land for development and the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD is intended to provide guidance on policies that relate to sustainability.</p> <p>Other relevant plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Waste Local Plan, 2003;</li> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste DPD Preferred Options, Dec 2006;</li> <li>▪ Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan, 2006-2011;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2004;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Site Specific Policies Submission DPD, 2006;</li> <li>▪ South Cambridgeshire Generic Development Control Policies Submission DPD, 2006</li> <li>▪ Northstowe Area Action Plan Submission DPD, 2006</li> <li>▪ Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 &amp; Core Strategy Draft 2006</li> </ul>

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
Land take by development	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not propose any development that will take land from Portholme SAC and will not result in the fragmentation of habitats.</p> <p>None of the other plans listed above propose development that would take land from this site.</p>	There are no policies in the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD or any other plans that have a direct impact on this site.
Impact on protected species outside the protected sites	The conservation objectives for the Portholme SAC relate to species of flora located within the site. The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD does not allocate land for development and as such will not have an effect on any of these species. Locations allocated for development in other plans are not within close proximity of this site and as such will not have a likely significant impact on the species listed as being important to the integrity of this site.	Due to the distance of the site from the city it is not considered that there is likely to be a significant effect from the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD both alone and in combination with other plans on the integrity of this site.
Recreational pressure and disturbance	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not allocate land for development so by itself will not lead to an increase in recreational pressure and disturbance on Portholme SAC.</p> <p>Within Cambridge City, proposals to increase the dwelling stock by 12,500 could increase demand for countryside recreation, and likewise in South Cambridgeshire where there are proposals to increase the dwelling stock by 20,000. However, no major proposals contained within the Cambridge Local Plan, South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy or any other plans are within 5km of this site.</p> <p>Many of the new developments proposed by the Cambridge Local</p>	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD does not allocate land for development and will therefore not result in increased recreational pressure and disturbance on Portholme SAC.</p> <p>With regards to other plans, the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England states that in drawing up local development plans, consideration should be given to the risks of recreational disturbance where housing proposals fall within a 5km radius of Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites. Using this test, it is</p>

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
	<p>Plan, and in the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework will include improvements to countryside access opportunities and the provision of new strategic open space (also demonstrated by the Cambridgeshire Horizons Green Infrastructure Strategy) in more accessible locations than the Portholme SAC.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that there will be no likely significant impact from increased recreational pressure and disturbance on Portholme SAC as a result of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD alone or in combination with other plans.</p>	<p>unlikely that any proposals contained within the documents identified will have a significant effect on Portholme as they are all outside the 5km radius proposed.</p> <p>The impact of public access is not listed in the vulnerabilities relating to this site contained within the site data. Therefore it is considered unlikely that the level of public use at Portholme SAC will increase greatly as a result of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD alone or in combination with other plans.</p>
Water quantity and quality	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD contains measures to both manage and minimise flood risk and minimise water use, which should in combination help to alleviate any risk of developments having an impact on the water quantity and quality at Portholme. While it is recognised that while there would be an increase in water consumption and in theory on water quality through increased run off as a result of the new developments proposed in Cambridge City and on the fringes of the City the potential impact will be kept to a minimum through the existence of this SPD and other policies. The Sustainability Appraisal of the SPD highlights that the existence of the SPD will be critical in order to achieve the City Council's Sustainability Objectives for managing and minimising flood risk and minimising water consumption. As the development sites within Cambridge City are some distance away from Portholme it is considered that the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD in combination with plans for development in</p>	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD, in combination with other plans, contains policies that should help to alleviate the potential impacts of new developments on water quantity and quality at Portholme SAC. As such it is felt that the document, both alone and in combination with other plans, will not result in likely significant impacts on the nature conservation objectives of the site.</p>

<b>THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:</b>		
<b>Nature of Potential Impact</b>	<b>How the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site</b>	<b>Why these effects are not considered to be significant</b>
	<p>Cambridge City will not have a likely significant impact on this site.</p> <p>While the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not have an impact on the other plans identified which are outside Cambridge City, many of these plans contain policies to minimise the impacts on water quantity and quality from new developments. The principle for new developments not exceeding undeveloped rates for site run off is central to PPS25 Development and Flood Risk. Again there are no new developments in close proximity to Portholme SAC. Many of the other relevant plans contain policies promoting the use of sustainable drainage systems and requirements to restrict surface water run off to no greater than if the site were undeveloped.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that there will be no significant impacts on the Portholme SAC as a result of the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD both alone and in combination with other plans.</p>	
Changes in pollution levels	<p>The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD contains guidance for applicants of major developments in Cambridge City on a number of sustainability criteria, many of which will contribute to reducing pollution from transport by promoting more sustainable modes of transport, as well as pollution from noise, light and odours in the wider area. The urban extensions to Cambridge set out in the Local Plan should help to reduce the level of commuting into Cambridge and its associated pollution by redressing the balance of homes to jobs and allow people to use more sustainable forms of transport. However, the scale of development proposed may lead to an increase in local pollution, but this will be kept to a minimum</p>	<p>As Portholme SAC is not in close proximity to proposed major development sites it is not considered that there is likely to be any significant impact on the site as a result of changes in pollution levels. The Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD aims to minimise levels of pollution that may arise from new developments and general policy requirements contained within other relevant plans also have the same aim.</p>

THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS:		
Nature of Potential Impact	How the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD (alone or in combination with other plans) is likely to affect the site	Why these effects are not considered to be significant
	<p>through the existence of this SPD. The Sustainability Appraisal for the SPD highlights that the existence of the SPD will be critical in achieving the City Council's sustainability objectives for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the reduction of pollution. As the development sites within Cambridge City are some distance away from Portholme SAC, it is considered that the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD in combination with plans for development in Cambridge City will not have an impact on this site.</p> <p>While the Sustainable Design &amp; Construction SPD will not have an impact on the other plans identified which are outside Cambridge City, many of these plans contain policies to minimise the amount of pollution generated as a result of new development, which is hoped should lead to a reduction in levels of pollution in the immediate environs. Again there are no new developments in close proximity to Portholme SAC. Policies are also included that protect sites of biodiversity importance (including European sites) from adverse impacts from development.</p> <p>The site is located close to the A14, however improvements are planned which will lead to the rerouting of the A14 south of Huntingdon, to be implemented by 2015. This will lead to the removal of a significant amount of traffic away from the site and should lead to a reduction in levels of pollution.</p>	

Agencies consulted	Natural England
Response to consultation	Natural England support the conclusion that the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD is unlikely to have significant effects on the European Sites located within and in the vicinity of the District.

<b>Overall Conclusions:</b>
The Sustainable Design & Construction SPD, both alone and in combination with other relevant plans, is considered to have no likely significant effects on the conservation objectives for Portholme SAC.