



Isle of Wight
National
Landscape

ISLE OF WIGHT NATIONAL LANDSCAPE
HABITAT REGULATIONS SCREENING ASSESSMENT
OF THE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY
MANAGEMENT PLAN 2025- 2030
DRAFT APRIL 2024

1 Habitat Regulations

- 1.1.1 The European Court of Justice ruled in October 2005 that the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations (1994) failed to correctly implement the intention of the Habitats Directive in that it only required the application of Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) to projects, as opposed to plans and programmes.
- 1.1.2 Consequently, Habitat Regulations Assessments must be applied to all land use plans in England and Wales. The Habitat Regulations Assessment aims to assess the potential effects of a land use plan against the conservation objectives of any sites designated for their nature conservation importance as part of a system known collectively as the Natura 2000 network of European sites.
- 1.1.3 Natural England considers that whilst it is not clear that Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans set the framework for development they are plans which may well have significant effects on sites covered by the Habitats Regulations - Natura 2000 sites. Thus they need to be assessed before the plans can be adopted to ensure that they have no significant adverse environmental effect on Natura 2000 Sites.

2 Report Introduction

- 2.1.1 This document, the Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report, compliments and supports the AONB Management Plan 2025 – 2030 and Delivery Plan. The aim of the document is to assess the policies and actions proposed in the Draft Management and Delivery Plans for their potential negative impacts on protected European sites on the Isle of Wight AONB and surrounding area.
- 2.1.2 The Management Plan ensures continuity and consistency of management of the AONB over time, to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape for the use and enjoyment of future generations. The review and delivery of the AONB Management Plan is a legal requirement but is also an opportunity to draw together all interested parties to generate long-term visions for the area, set an agenda for change and manage such change effectively. It is also a useful educational tool, helping to change attitudes and behaviours.
- 2.1.3 The AONB Delivery Plan sets out projects and actions to further the policies and vision of the AONB Management Plan.
- 2.1.4 Note: In November 2023 the national AONB family rebranded to 'National Landscapes' but the name of the designation did not change. For the purposes of this document the designation will continue to be referred to as the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

2.2 Sites of Importance – European Sites

- 2.2.1 The European Sites network provides ecological infrastructure for the protection of sites which are of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species within the European Community.
- 2.2.2 These sites are referred to as European Sites and consist of:
 - **Special Protection Areas (SPAs):** Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are strictly protected sites classified in accordance with Article 4 of the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC), known as the Birds Directive, which came into force in April 1979. They are classified for rare and vulnerable birds, listed in Annex I to the Birds Directive, and for regularly occurring migratory species.
 - **Special Areas of Conservation (SACs):** Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are strictly protected sites designated under the EC Habitats Directive. Article 3 of the Habitats Directive requires the establishment of a European network of important high-quality conservation sites that will make a significant contribution to conserving the 189 habitat types and 788 species identified in Annexes I and II of the Directive (as amended). The listed habitat types and species are those considered to be most in need of conservation at a European level (excluding birds).

Government policy (PPS92 and Circular 06/053) recommends that Ramsar sites are treated as if they are fully designated European sites for the purposes of considering development proposals that may affect them.

- **Ramsar sites:** Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention, signed in the town of Ramsar in Iran in 1971.

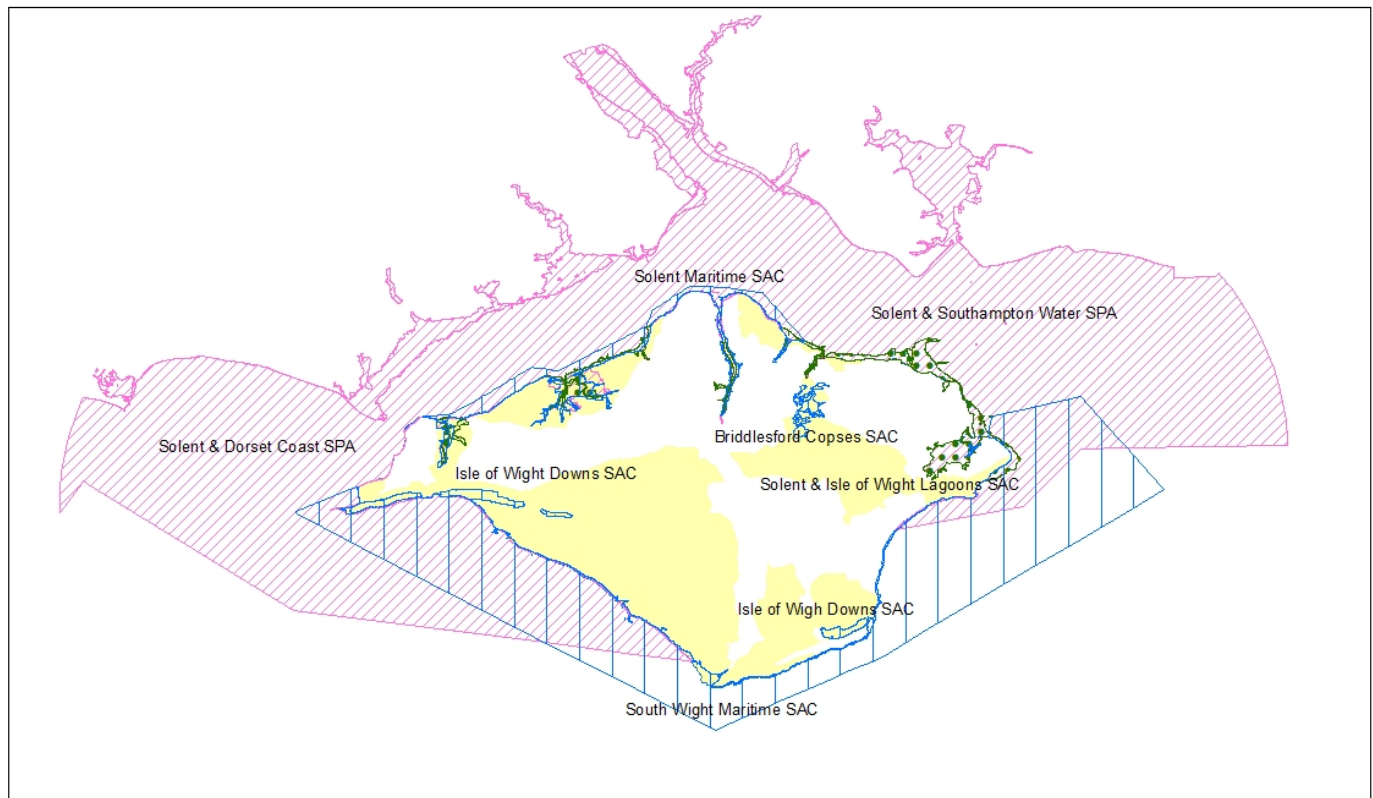
3 Screening Methodology

3.1 Overall approach

- 3.1.1 The European Commission (EC) has developed guidance in relation to Articles 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive (*Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, EC 2002). This recommends the adoption of a four stage approach to addressing the requirements of Articles 6(3) and (4) (referred to in this report as the HRA) as set out below:
- 3.1.2 **Screening:** This stage identifies the likely impacts upon a European Site of a project or plan, either alone or in-combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant. The screening process is marked out in four stages:
- Identify all international sites in and around the AONB.
 - Acquire, examine and understand conservation objectives of each interest feature of each international site potentially affected.
 - Consider the policies and proposals in the AONB Management Plan and the changes that they may cause that may be relevant to the European sites. This is likely to involve estimating likely magnitude, duration, location and extent of effects of the changes as far as they may reasonably be predicted at this stage.
 - Acknowledging the Plan is not necessary for site management, would any elements of the Plan be likely to have a significant effect on any interest feature, alone or in combination with other projects and plans, directly or indirectly?
- 3.1.3 **Appropriate assessment:** Where there are likely significant impacts, this stage considers the impacts of the plan or project on the integrity of the relevant European Sites, either alone or in-combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the Sites' structure and function and their conservation objectives. Where there are significant impacts, it also includes an assessment of the potential mitigation for those impacts.
- 3.1.4 **Assessment of alternative solutions:** Where adverse impacts are predicted, this stage examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of European Sites.
- 3.1.5 **Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain:** This stage identifies measures that can be implemented to compensate for remaining adverse impacts where it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI). This section of the report sets out the proposed methodology for undertaking Stage 1 of the HRA.

4 Identified European Sites in and around AONB

- 4.1.1 The following European sites are either in or within 15 km of the Isle of Wight AONB designation (including the two Heritage Coasts) and have therefore been included in this Habitat Regulation Assessment Report.
- 4.1.2 There are seven European Sites within or near the Isle of Wight AONB; these have been included in the screening:
- Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC;
 - Briddlesford Copses SAC;
 - South Wight Maritime SAC;
 - Isle of Wight Downs SAC;
 - Solent Maritime SAC;
 - Solent and Southampton Water SPA;
 - Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar Site;
 - Solent and Dorset Coast SPA;

Figure 1. Map of European Sites on and surrounding the Isle of Wight.

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Isle of Wight National Landscape
Habitat Regulations Assessment Map

KEY

- SAC
- RAMSAR
- SPA
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

4.1.3 In addition, there are seven European Sites outside the AONB but within 15km of the Isle of Wight:

- The New Forest SAC;
- New Forest SPA;
- New Forest Ramsar Site;
- Portsmouth Harbour SPA;
- Chichester & Langstone Harbours SPA;
- Portsmouth Harbour Ramsar Site;
- Chichester and Langstone Harbours Ramsar Site;
- Dorset Heaths SAC;
- Dorset Heathlands SPA

4.1.4 Following initial consideration, it has been decided not to include these latter European Sites within this screening document. In the AONB Unit's opinion, taking in to account the separation of these areas from the Isle of Wight AONB and the role and nature of the Draft Management Plan 2019 – 2024, it is highly unlikely the proposed Actions or Policies from the Draft Management Plan 2019 – 2024 and Delivery Plan will adversely affect these European Sites.

5 Acquire, examine and understand conservation objectives of each interest feature of each international site potentially affected.

5.1.1 Baseline information for the seven identified European sites within the Isle of Wight AONB has been collated and is shown in the following table. The conservation objectives where available, have been obtained from Natural England. Where conservation objectives are not available, the designated features of interest have been listed.

5.2 These sites are within, or adjacent to, the Isle of Wight AONB.

Information taken from Site Improvement Plans published for each Natura 2000 site in England as part of the Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 Sites (IPENS), Natura 2000 data forms, SE RSS, site citations and Pers Com information from Natural England Officers.

European Site	Conservation Objectives and Qualifying Features	Vulnerabilities
Solent & Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC	<p>Site Code: UK0017073</p> <p>Subject to natural change; Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats • The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and • The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely <p>Qualifying Features:</p> <p>H1150. Coastal lagoons*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased water abstraction associated with new developments ▪ Waste water treatment discharges causing increased nutrient concentrations ▪ Water level management/slucice maintenance ▪ Reduced water quality due to industrial waste disposal/landfill/discharges and diffuse pollution occurring off the site ▪ Increased recreational pressure ▪ Coastal squeeze from development resulting in loss of habitat ▪ At risk from flooding from sea level rise ▪ Incidental pollution from shipping associated with increase movement as a result of investment in ports ▪ Increased development may exacerbate flood risk and should be considered in the context of rising sea levels and climate change ▪ Hydrological changes ▪ Inappropriate weed control ▪ Coastal squeeze ▪ Invasive species ▪ Air pollution: risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition
Bridlesford Copses SAC	<p>Site code: UK0030328</p> <p>Subject to natural change; Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of the habitats of qualifying species • The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species • The supporting processes on which the habitats of qualifying species rely • The populations of qualifying species, and, • The distribution of qualifying species within the site. <p>Qualifying Features:</p> <p>S1323. <i>Myotis bechsteinii</i>; Bechstein's bat</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Disturbance of bats due to large areas of the SAC being open to the public for recreation ▪ Forestry operations, although these are undertaken with guidance from NE ▪ At risk from flooding ▪ Bechstein's bat rely on areas up to 3.5km from their roosts as foraging areas which may leave them vulnerable to habitat loss and disturbance outside the SAC ▪ Offsite habitat availability/management ▪ Forestry and woodland management ▪ Change in land management ▪ Air pollution: risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition
South Wight Maritime SAC	<p>Site Code: UK0030061</p> <p>Subject to natural change; Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased recreational pressure ▪ Existing and proposed coast protection works ▪ Coastal squeeze of cliff habitats due to erosion, development or intensive agriculture in the hinterland ▪ Sewage disposal ▪ Accidental pollution from shipping activity

	<p>restoring;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely <p>Qualifying Features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> H1170. Reefs H1230. Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts H8330. Submerged or partially submerged sea caves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development in the intertidal/subtidal Commercial and recreational activities such as dredging and dredged spoil disposal, fishing and boating Introduction of non-native species, e.g. from shipping activity Marine aggregate extraction (off-site) Invasive species Inappropriate coastal management Public access/disturbance Physical modification Fisheries: commercial marine and estuarine
Isle of Wight Downs SAC	<p>Site Code: UK0016254</p> <p>Subject to natural change; Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely The populations of qualifying species, and The distribution of qualifying species within the site. <p>The Qualifying Features are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> H6210 semi-natural dry grasslands and scrub facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>). Dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or limestone H1230 Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> S1654 <i>Gentianella anglica</i>. H4030 European dry heaths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased air pollution - Air pollution: risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition (Site Improvement Plan) Public access/disturbance Increased recreational pressure resulting in trampling Inappropriate grazing regime leading to scrub encroachment (N2K data form) Inappropriate coastal management
Solent Maritime SAC	<p>Site Code: UK0030059</p> <p>Subject to natural change; Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water abstraction associated with developments Waste water treatment discharges causing increased nutrient concentrations Considered to be at risk of air pollution as it is crossed by the A27 Increased recreational pressure Incidental pollution from shipping associated with increased movement as a result of investment in ports At risk from flooding Existing and proposed flood defence and coast protection works Coastal squeeze of intertidal habitats due to

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely The populations of qualifying species, and The distribution of qualifying species within the site. <p>Qualifying Features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> H1110. Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time H1130. Estuaries H1140. Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; Intertidal mudflats and sandflats H1150. Coastal lagoons H1210. Annual vegetation of drift lines H1220. Perennial vegetation of stony banks; Coastal shingle vegetation outside the reach of waves H1310. <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand; <i>Glasswort</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand H1320. <i>Spartina</i> swards (<i>Spartinion maritimae</i>); Cord-grass swards H1330. Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) H2120. Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ("white dunes"); Shifting dunes with marram S1016. <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>; Desmoulin's whorl snail 	<p>coastal erosion/ sea level rise and sea-walls/ development in the hinterland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of non-native species e.g. from shipping activity Developments pressures including ports, marinas, jetties etc. Proposals often involve capital/ maintenance dredging to provide/ improve deep water access, and land-claim of coastal habitats Public access/disturbance Coastal squeeze Fisheries: commercial marine and estuarine Water pollution Changes in species distributions Climate change Invasive species Inappropriate coastal management Public access/disturbance Physical modification Fisheries: commercial marine and estuarine
Solent & Southampton Water SPA	<p>Site Code: UK9011061</p> <p>Subject to natural change; Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site. <p>Qualifying Features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A046a <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i>; Dark-bellied brent goose (Non-breeding) A052 <i>Anas crecca</i>; Eurasian teal (Non-breeding) A137 <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>; Ringed plover (Non-breeding) A156 <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>; Black-tailed godwit (Non-breeding) A176 <i>Larus melanocephalus</i>; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water abstraction associated with developments Waste water treatment discharges causing increased nutrient concentrations Considered to be at risk of air pollution as it is crossed by the A27 Increased recreational pressure Coastal squeeze from development and sea level rise resulting in loss of habitat Knock- on effect from dredging the River Itchen Estuary resulting in changes in the extent and distribution of intertidal habitats Disturbance from low flying aircraft from increased traffic from Southampton Airport Incidental pollution from shipping associated with increased movement as a result of investment in ports At risk from flooding Increased development, particularly housing, will result in higher levels of disturbance being experienced by birds Development may impact on SPA bird populations using arable areas adjacent to the Medina Estuary Increased development may exacerbate flood risk and should be considered in the context of rising sea levels and climate change Development may impact on high water wader roosts

	<p>Mediterranean gull (Breeding)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A191 <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>; Sandwich tern (Breeding) • A192 <i>Sterna dougallii</i>; Roseate tern (Breeding) • A193 <i>Sterna hirundo</i>; Common tern (Breeding) • A195 <i>Sterna albifrons</i>; Little tern (Breeding) • Waterbird assemblage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public access/disturbance ▪ Coastal squeeze ▪ Fisheries: commercial marine and estuarine ▪ Water pollution ▪ Changes in species distributions ▪ Climate change ▪ Change to site conditions ▪ Invasive species ▪ Direct land take from development ▪ Biological resource use ▪ Change in land management ▪ Inappropriate pest control ▪ Air pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition ▪ Hydrological changes ▪ Direct impact from 3rd party ▪ Consider boundary change to include habitats outside of existing boundaries
<p>Solent & Southampton Water Ramsar</p>	<p>Subject to natural change, maintain the internationally important wetland characteristic of the Atlantic biogeographical region (Criteria 1) in favourable condition, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ estuaries, ▪ saline lagoons, ▪ saltmarsh, ▪ intertidal reefs, ▪ damp woodland. <p>Subject to natural change, maintain the wetland hosting an assemblage of rare, vulnerable or endangered species (Criteria 2) in favourable condition, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ grazing marsh, ▪ coastal and inundation grassland, ▪ reedbeds, ▪ intertidal mudflats and sandflats, ▪ shingle, ▪ saline lagoons, ▪ saltmarsh, ▪ cordgrass swards (Spartinion). <p>Subject to natural change, maintain the wetland regularly supporting 20,000 waterfowl species in favourable condition and the wetland regularly supporting 1% or more of the individuals in a population of waterfowl species (Criteria 5 and 6) in favourable condition, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ grazing marsh, ▪ coastal and inundation grassland, ▪ reedbeds, ▪ standing water, ▪ saltmarsh, ▪ intertidal mudflats and sandflats, ▪ boulder and cobble shores, ▪ mixed sediment shores, ▪ saline lagoons. ▪ Dark-bellied brent goose; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Water abstraction associated with developments ▪ Waste water treatment discharges causing increased nutrient concentrations ▪ Considered to be at risk of air pollution as it is crossed by the A27 ▪ Increased recreational pressure and erosion (SE RSS and Ramsar summary sheet) ▪ Increased development may exacerbate flood risk and should be considered in the context of rising sea levels and climate change (NE Core Strategy Issues and Options) ▪ Public access/disturbance ▪ Coastal squeeze ▪ Fisheries: commercial marine and estuarine ▪ Water pollution ▪ Changes in species distributions ▪ Climate change ▪ Change to site conditions ▪ Invasive species ▪ Direct land take from development ▪ Biological resource use ▪ Change in land management ▪ Inappropriate pest control ▪ Air pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition ▪ Hydrological changes ▪ Direct impact from 3rd party ▪ Consider boundary change to include habitats outside of existing boundaries

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eurasian teal; ▪ Ringed plover; ▪ Black-tailed godwit; ▪ Mediterranean gull; ▪ Sandwich tern; ▪ Roseate tern; ▪ Common tern; ▪ Little tern; ▪ Waterfowl assemblage 	
Solent and Dorset Coast SPA	<p>Subject to natural change; Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely • The population of each of the qualifying features, and, • The distribution of the qualifying features within the site. <p>Qualifying Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A191 <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>; Sandwich tern (Breeding) • A193 <i>Sterna hirundo</i>; Common tern (Breeding) • A195 <i>Sternula albifrons</i>; Little tern (Breeding) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In terms of vulnerabilities of this designation Natural England have previously stated that they “believe that most of the activities which happen in the Medina and around the Isle of Wight coast will have little impact on foraging terns and can therefore either be screened out entirely or would require only minor consideration. As a general guide we think that terns are vulnerable to projects which might result in: A loss of habitat: e.g. areas of coastal waters which terns might hunt for fish in such as land reclamation

6 Screening Matrix Analysis – Policies and Actions

6.1.1 This section considers the policies and Actions within the AONB Management Plan that may be relevant to the seven European sites within the AONB.

6.1.2 The Matrix can be found on the adjacent Excel Spread Sheet HRA Appendix 1.

6.2 Uncertain - cannot determine if No Likely Significant Effects or Likely Significant Effects

6.2.1 Roads and Transport Policies

6.2.1.1 P43 - Encourage sensitive approaches and seek opportunities to strengthen the contribution of the road network (including footways, street lighting, grass verges, drainage and street furniture) to the character and the local distinctiveness of Isle of Wight National Landscape.

P44 - Encourage and promote sustainable access to the Isle of Wight National Landscape through the use of public transport, walking and cycling to establish a sustainable transport network integrating roads and public rights of way.

6.2.1.2 There is the potential for increased access to designation and European Sites, which may lead to degradation of the sites if left unmanaged. The IW National Landscape will support programmes that seek to increase visitor monitoring of European sites to allow appropriate management of visitor pressures to ensure no adverse impact on the designation and also European Sites.

6.2.2 Rural Business Policies

- 6.2.2.1 P46 - Support sustainable rural enterprise (and associated infrastructure development such as broadband) where it respects the objectives of the Isle of Wight National Landscape
- 6.2.2.2 There is the potential for damage to occur to European Sites by undergrounding cables or siting new infrastructure. However, it is anticipated these works would require permissions from a competent authority before taking place and therefore would undergo due scrutiny.

6.2.3 Energy

- 6.2.3.1 P25 - Encourage sensitive approaches to the provision of infrastructure related to energy supply and landscape enhancement measures (such as undergrounding of overhead electrical cables).
- 6.2.3.2 There is the potential for damage to occur to European Sites by undergrounding cables or siting new infrastructure. However, it is anticipated these works would require permissions from a competent authority before taking place and therefore would undergo due scrutiny.

6.2.4 Tourism

- 6.2.4.1 P52 - Support sustainable tourism activities and development that respect the objectives of Isle of Wight AONB and also contribute to the viability of the tourism sector
- 6.2.4.2 There is the potential for damage to occur to European Sites by increased visitor pressure during events or increased access to European Sites. Isle of Wight AONB will work with partners and Natural England to monitor and promote enjoyment of European Sites.

6.2.5 Access and Recreation

- 6.2.5.1 P53 - Promote and celebrate the AONB as a venue for recreation where this does not conflict with the purposes of the designation
- 6.2.5.2 P54 - Encourage the responsible use of the existing public rights of way and open access areas across the Isle of Wight AONB which provide access to its diverse and beautiful landscape.
- 6.2.5.3 There is the potential for damage to occur to European Sites by increased visitor pressure during events or increased access to European Sites. Isle of Wight AONB will work with partners and Natural England to monitor and promote appropriate enjoyment of European Sites.

7 Results of the Matrix Analysis

- 7.1.1 The primary purpose of AONB designation is the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty (which includes wildlife and cultural heritage as well as scenery). The management plan is designed to fulfil this remit. As a result it is expected that the implementation of the management plan will have no significant adverse effect on the European Sites. It is expected that the Management Plan will help protect and maintain the favourable status of the AONB European Sites for the future.
- 7.1.2 While it is expected that there will be no significant adverse effect on European Sites as a result of the AONB Management Plan, there are some policies and actions that hold a certain level of uncertainty. This uncertainty is either a result of limited information available (e.g. climate change) or the National Landscape team is a consultee, but is not the Competent Authority (e.g. planning and transport).
- 7.1.3 The AONB Management Plan lays out policies that deliver mechanisms for researching, recording and monitoring changes to the AONB landscape. This information will be of importance to Natural England and also the Competent Authority; and help inform decisions, plans and policies for the future. It will also aid the National Landscape team to positively influence the Competent Authority to conserve and enhance the designation and European Sites.

8 Conclusion

- 8.1.1 This Habitat Regulation Assessment has considered a selection of Policies and Actions in detail to assess the potential to create an adverse impact. Overall it has been determined there is unlikely to be significant adverse impacts arising from the Draft AONB Management Plan 2025 – 2030.