**Annex A: Norfolk Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) Record**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Application details** | |
| Local Planning Authority: |  |
| Case officer |  |
| Application reference: |  |
| Application description: |  |
| Application address: |  |
| Status of Application: |  |
| Grid Ref: |  |
| **HRA Stage 1: screening assessment** | |
| **Test 1 – the significance test:** Based on the development type and proximity to European designated sites, a judgement should be made as to whether the development constitutes a ‘likely significant effect’ (LSE) to a European site in terms of increased recreational disturbance | |
| ***Is the development within THE Zone of Influence (ZoI) for the Norfolk Rams with respect to the below sites***   * *26km Brecks Sites; Breckland SPA, SAC* * *25km Broads Sites; The Broads SAC and Broadland SPA* * *30km East Coast Sites; Breydon Water SPA, Winterton-Horsey Dunes SAC and Great Yarmouth and North Denes SPA* * *42km North Coast Sites; North Norfolk Coast SAC, SPA, Ramsar and the Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC* * *12km Roydon and Dersingham Bog SAC and Ramsar* * *15km of Norfolk Valley Fens SAC* * *61km of The Wash; The Wash SPA, Ramsar and The wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC*   **YES**  **NO**  ***Does the planning application fall within the following development types?***   * New dwellings of 1+ units included in current site allocations and windfall (excludes replacement dwellings and extensions) * Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) * Student Accommodation * Residential care homes and residential institutions (excludes nursing homes) * Residential caravan sites (excludes holiday caravans and campsites) * Gypsies, travellers and travelling show people plots   Conclude no LSE to the above designated sites in terms of recreational disturbance:   * An Appropriate Assessment (AA) is not required where recreational disturbance to these sites is the only issue or recreational disturbance to these sites can be scoped out of any HRA covering other issues. * Check IRZs to see whether recreational disturbance is an issue for non-coastal European sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). If so, this will also need assessing outside of this HRA form.   **NO**  **YES**  Conclude LSE. This proposal is within scope of the Norfolk Coast RAMS as it falls within the ‘zone of influence’ for likely impacts and is a relevant residential development type as listed above. It is anticipated that such development in this area is ‘likely to have a significant effect’ upon the interest features of the aforementioned designated site(s) through increased recreational pressure, when considered either alone or in combination. Therefore:   * Proceed to HRA Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment to assess recreational disturbance impacts on the above designated sites * Check IRZs to see whether recreational disturbance is an issue for non-coastal European sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). If so, this will also need assessing outside of this HRA form.   The proposal is outside the scope of the Norfolk RAMS. However, applications involving unplanned development or tourist accommodation (including holiday caravans and campsites) could still potentially have recreational disturbance impacts (and other impacts) on designated sites, including those listed above. In cases such as this, consult Natural England for bespoke advice before concluding no LSE. | |
| **HRA Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment** | |
| **Test 2 – the integrity test:** The applicant must provide sufficient evidence to allow the Appropriate Assessment to be made, which is the stage at which avoidance and/or mitigation measures can be considered | |
| ***Is the proposal for 50 houses + (or equivalent)?***  **NO**  **YES**    **Annex I** includes Natural England’s suggested scope of mitigation requirements for development of this scale. Where it has not already been provided, seek the necessary information from the developer in line with that advice. If needed, Natural England are able to offer advice to developers and/or their consultants on the detail of this at this through their charged Discretionary Advice Service (DAS), further information on which is available [here](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/developers-get-environmental-advice-on-your-planning-proposals).  Record the recreational disturbance mitigation package in the ‘Summary’ section below.  **Consult Natural England on this Appropriate Assessment for advice on the proposed/ required mitigation before reaching a decision on adverse effects on the integrity of European sites.**  ***Is the proposal within or directly adjacent to one of the above European designated sites?***  **YES**  **NO**  A proportionate financial contribution should be secured in line with the Norfolk RAMS requirements (see **Annex II**). Record evidence that this mitigation measure has been secured in the ‘Summary’ section below.  **Provided this mitigation is secured, it can be concluded that this planning application will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the above European sites from recreational disturbance, when considered ‘in combination’ with other development. Natural England does not need to be consulted on this Appropriate Assessment.**  A proportionate financial contribution should be secured in line with the Norfolk RAMS requirements (see **Annex II**). Record evidence that this mitigation measure has been secured in the ‘Summary’ section below.  Consideration of further bespoke recreational disturbance mitigation measures may also be required in this case.  **Consult Natural England on this Appropriate Assessment for advice on the proposed/ required mitigation before reaching a decision on adverse effects on the integrity of European sites.** | |
| **Summary of the Appropriate Assessment :** To be carried out by the Competent Authority (the local planning authority) in liaison with Natural England (where necessary) | |
| **Summary of recreational disturbance mitigation package**  [INSERT]  **Conclusion**  *Having considered the proposed avoidance and mitigation measures above,* *[INSERT LPA]* *conclude that with mitigation the project will not have an Adverse Effect on the Integrity of the European sites included within the Norfolk RAMS.*  *Having made this appropriate assessment of the implications of the plan or project for the site(s) in view of that (those) site(s)’s conservation objectives, and having consulted Natural England and fully considered any representation received (where necessary), the authority may now agree to the plan or project under regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.* | |
| **Local Planning Authority Case Officer comments, signed and dated:** | |
|  | |

**Annex I – Natural England’s recommendations for larger scale residential developments within the identified Norfolk RAMS zone of influence (50 units +, or equivalent, as a guide)**

Developments of this scale should include provision of well-designed open space/green infrastructure, proportionate to its scale. Such provisions can help minimise any predicted increase in recreational pressure to the European sites by containing the majority of recreation within and around the development site boundary away from European sites. We advise that the Suitable Accessible Natural Green Space (SANGS) guidance [here](http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0ahUKEwjx8--Jr8DXAhVIVhoKHQ2JBcsQFggtMAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.threerivers.gov.uk%2Fdownload%3Fid%3D23189&usg=AOvVaw0whWTqgOBjqNOCGxBNjHK-) can be helpful in designing this; it should be noted that this document is specific to the SANGS creation for the Thames Basin Heaths, although the broad principles are more widely applicable. As a minimum, we advise that such provisions should include:

* High-quality, informal, semi-natural areas
* Circular dog walking routes of 2.7 km[[1]](#footnote-1) within the site and/or with links to surrounding public rights of way (PRoW)
* Dedicated ‘dogs-off-lead’ areas
* Signage/information leaflets to householders to promote these areas for recreation
* Dog waste bins
* A commitment to the long term maintenance and management of these provisions

Natural England would be happy to advise developers and/or their consultants on the detail of this at the pre-application stage through our charged Discretionary Advice Service (DAS), further information on which is available [here](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/developers-get-environmental-advice-on-your-planning-proposals).

However, the unique draw of the above European sites means that, even when well-designed, ‘on-site’ provisions are unlikely to fully mitigate impacts when all residential development within reach of the coast is considered together ‘in combination’. We therefore advise that consideration of ‘off-site’ measures (i.e. in and around the relevant European designated site(s)) is also required as part of the mitigation package for predicted recreational disturbance impacts in these cases. Such measures are to be delivered strategically through the Norfolk RAMS to make the sites more resilient to increased recreational pressures. A proportionate financial contribution should therefore be secured from these developments in line with the Norfolk RAMS.

**Annex II – Natural England’s recommendations for smaller scale residential developments within the identified Norfolk RAMS zone of influence (0-49 units, or equivalent, as a guide) which are not within/directly adjacent to a European designated site**

Whilst the provision of well-designed open space/green infrastructure on site or contributions towards strategic green infrastructure in your district is to be welcomed for developments of this scale, we advise that consideration of ‘off-site’ measures (i.e. in and around the relevant European designated site(s)) is required as mitigation for predicted recreational disturbance impacts in these cases as a minimum. Such measures are to be delivered strategically through the Norfolk RAMS to make the sites more resilient to increased recreational pressures. A proportionate financial contribution should therefore be secured from these developments in line with the Norfolk RAMS.

1. Taken from *Jenkinson, S., (2013), Planning for dog ownership in new developments: reducing conflict – adding value. Access and greenspace design guidance for planners and developers* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)