

Blaby Local Plan Delivery Development Plan Document – Proposed
Submission Version (Delivery DPD)

Habitat Regulations Appraisal (HRA) - Screening Report

November 2017



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1. Introduction

The EC Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (the Directive) “On the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora” requires Local Authorities¹ to carry out a ‘Habitats Regulations Appraisal’ (HRA) as part of the development of an emerging Local Plan. The Directive requires that:

“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 summary, HRA is required in order to assess whether a plan has any impact on European sites² (sometimes referred to as Natura 2000 sites). This requirement has been transposed into domestic legislation in England through the ‘Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, as amended’ (the Habitat Regulations).

The emerging ‘Blaby Local Plan - Delivery Development Plan Document – Proposed Submission version (Delivery DPD)’ constitutes a ‘plan’ that could have effects on European sites and is therefore subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) refers to the whole process, including ‘Appropriate Assessment’. There are several stages in the HRA process, these include:

Screening - Description of the plan and identifying any elements (policies or proposals) that are likely to have potential impacts on European sites and to determine whether any adverse impacts would result;

Appropriate Assessment³ - An evaluation of the effects on European sites where impacts are identified following screening. This stage involves identifying alternatives where adverse impacts are identified;

Assessment where no alternatives exist and adverse impacts remain taking into account mitigation - If no alternatives exist, this stage identifies “imperative reasons of overriding public interest” (IROPI) as to why an allocation / policy should be pursued. In addition, it identifies potential compensatory measures;

Compensatory measures - This stage is only reached where there are no alternative sites and the affected European site(s) is the best possible solution to be developed in the public interest.

¹ Or other ‘Competent Bodies’.

² European sites include: Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Sites of Community Importance (SCIs), and proposed and candidate SPAs & SACs. As a matter of Government policy, potential SPAs and RAMSAR sites are also treated as European sites.

³ Appropriate Assessment is only required if potential adverse impacts are identified or are uncertain.

A full 'Appropriate Assessment' will only be required if the plan is likely to have a significant effect (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on a European site.

The Council has previously produced a 'Local Plan – Core Strategy' which constitutes 'part one' of the Local Plan, with the Delivery DPD which is the subject of this report forming part 2. A formal assessment of the implications for designated interest features of European Sites was undertaken as part of the preparation of the Core Strategy. The assessment at that time concluded that a full Appropriate Assessment was not required. The HRA screening report for the Core Strategy concluded that:

“The Core Strategy alone, or in combination with other plans, is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on any of the Natura 2000 sites within approximately 25km of the boundary of Blaby District. The main reasons for this are:

- There are no Natura 2000 sites within the District of Blaby.*
- The mitigation already in place is adequate to mitigate against any increase in visitors to Rutland Water arising from the amount of new housing and other development allocated to the District.*
- In terms of renewable energy, there is little potential for a wide variety of renewable energy generation facilities within the District. There is more scope to exploit building integrated renewable or low carbon energy facilities. Whilst wind farm developments might lead to an impact on Rutland Water SPA, such impacts can and should be considered at a later stage in the planning process.*
- It is unlikely that any flooding incident would impact on any of the Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Area. The river network in Blaby District is not directly connected to any of the Natura 2000 sites considered as part of this Scoping Report.*
- The Core Strategy will help to improve air quality by promoting sustainable transport, walking, cycling and reducing car use”.*

Natural England concurred with these findings and confirmed this in writing in a letter dated 20th April 2012 (see Appendix 2).

2. At what stage in plan production is HRA required?

The Habitat Regulations do not specify when the HRA should be undertaken. Best practice guidance was initially set out by DCLG in 2007; however, this is no longer extant. Guidance produced by David Tyldesley Associates for Natural England supported production of HRA early in the plan making process (similar to SA / SEA). However, this is only best practice and not legislation.

The Council produced an updated screening report in August 2016 in relation to a 'preferred options' version of the Delivery DPD. This was sent to Natural England who responded, at that time, that they:

".....concur with the report's conclusion that the emerging Blaby District Local Plan Delivery DPD is unlikely to have any significant effects on any European sites either alone, or in combination with other plans."

3. Purpose of this report

The previous HRA Screening Assessment in relation to the Local Plan Delivery DPD 'Preferred Options'⁴ considered a wide range of different options for housing, employment & other site allocations and planning policy options. This HRA report relates to the 'Proposed Submission version' of the Local Plan Delivery DPD.

The Proposed Submission Delivery DPD differs from the previous Core Strategy and 'Preferred Options' assessments. It sets out specific site allocations and policies that the Council considers are the best approach to meeting the outstanding development needs of the District of Blaby in the context of the Council's adopted Core Strategy. An updated HRA report is therefore required. The previous 'Preferred Options' HRA was conducted in August 2016. The current 'Proposed Submission Version' assessment allows for any material change in circumstance since this time to be considered.

This report therefore seeks to identify if the emerging Local Plan (including its allocations, policies and designations) would result in significant negative effects on designated European sites that would require a full Appropriate Assessment to be conducted.

4. Background to the Blaby Local Plan Delivery Development Plan Document

Development of the Blaby Local Plan Delivery DPD commenced in Spring 2013. Early stages consultation⁵, sought to identify the issues that the plan should address. A later 'preferred options' version of the plan was developed which identified a range of housing and employment site options that could potentially be allocated in the emerging plan. In addition, the 'Preferred Options' document proposed a suite of planning policy options that would be considered in the determination of planning applications.

The current 'Proposed Submission' version of the Delivery DPD has been informed by these previous rounds of consultation and an extensive evidence base. It seeks to:

⁴ September 2016.

⁵ Under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

- Identify additional sites for housing in and adjacent to the Leicester PUA in order to address shortfalls in delivery from the previously agreed plan. In particular, it proposes:
 - A large development of approximately 750 houses and primary school (with some 500 completions anticipated up to 2029) at land north of the A47 Leicester Forest East / Kirby Muxloe,
 - Four smaller housing allocations at: Gynsills Lane, Glenfield; Grange Farm and Webb Close, Leicester Forest East; and Ratby Lane, Kirby Muxloe, and
 - A c.30 hectare employment sites at Leicester Lane, Enderby.
- Provide a suite of development management policies that will be used to set a framework for the determination of planning applications;
- Set out an Infrastructure Delivery Plan that identifies the supporting infrastructure required to support development; and
- A monitoring framework that sets out a mechanism for assessing the effectiveness of the plan over time.

The overall quantity of development to be delivered during the plan period will remain largely unaltered and consistent with the spatial distribution agreed in the Core Strategy. The new allocations are primarily to address shortfalls in delivery in and around the edge of Leicester (an area referred to as the Principal Urban Area).

The potential impacts of the proposed allocations and policies are considered independently in section 6 below.

The Publication version of the Delivery DPD is also accompanied by a Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal.

5. European sites relevant to the District of Blaby Local Plan

This HRA Screening Report will adopt a consistent methodology to that used when assessing the District of Blaby Core Strategy and by neighbouring authorities (Leicester City Council and Oadby & Wigston Borough Council) in developing their plans.

The HRA Directive and Regulations do not set a distance threshold for screening purposes and encourage local authorities to create a long list of all sites on which the plan may or may not have an impact. This assessment considers sites within 25 miles (40km) of the boundary of the District of Blaby⁶.

⁶ This is consistent with the range used in the adopted Blaby Core Strategy and by Leicester City Council and Oadby & Wigston Borough Council in assessing their plans.

Three Natura 2000 sites fall within approximately 25 miles (40km) (as the crow flies) of the administrative boundary of the District of Blaby. These are:

- Rutland Water Special Protection Area (Rutland);
- River Mease Special Area of Conservation (Leicestershire and Derbyshire);
- and
- Ensor's Pool Special Area of Conservation (Nuneaton, Warwickshire).

Rutland Water is also protected under the RAMSAR convention, which is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable utilisation of wetlands.

The locations of the relevant sites in relation to Blaby District are shown in Figure 1.

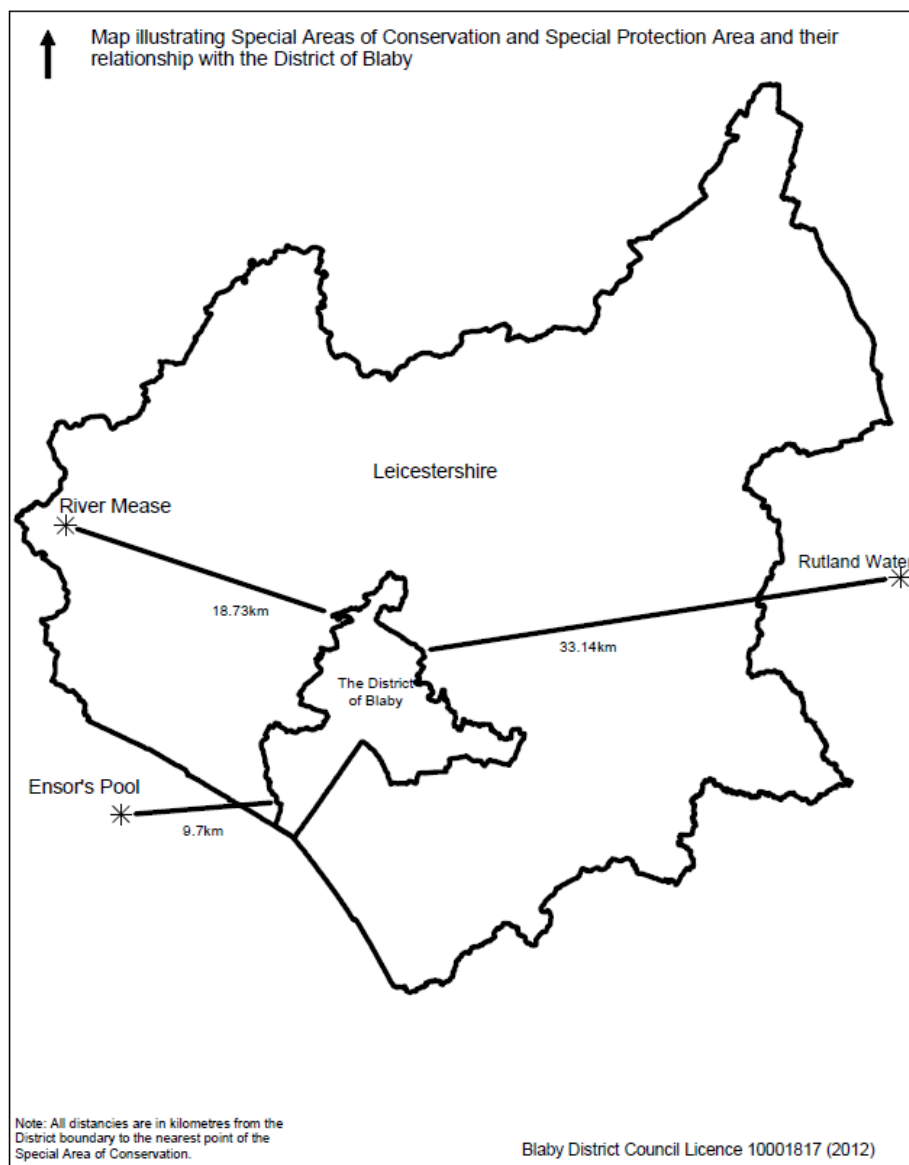


Figure 1: European sites within 25 miles of the boundary of Blaby District

Appendix 1 provides details of the European Sites within the area of influence, their main characteristics / reason for designation, conservation objectives, key factors affecting site integrity and existing trends and pressures.

6. Assessment of Policies and Allocations

This HRA screening report will consider a wide range of potential impacts that could have significant effects upon the integrity of the European sites. Given that there are no European Sites within the District of Blaby, the report will focus on where proposed allocations and policies have off-site impacts.

A number of off-site effects can occur including impacts on:

- Water quality as a result of run-off / pollution and downstream effects as a result of hydrological connectivity⁷;
- Ecological links (such as migratory birds or mobile species);
- Air pollution (caused by increased traffic movements or provision of polluting employment or other uses);
- Increased Recreational activity at European sites, such as physical damage by trampling, noise & visual presence, by walking, driving, fishing etc. For example, does the plan result in any increase in visitor numbers to Rutland Water; or
- Renewable Energy developments can disturb migration patterns and potentially harm protected birds.

This is not an exhaustive list, these impacts have been identified as the most likely to result through the plan policies and proposals. The potential effects of each of the emerging policies and allocations, that have the potential to affect European sites, are considered in table 1 (Allocations & Designations) and table 2 (policies) below:

Table 1: Impacts of allocations and designations on European sites

Policy / Allocation	Potential impacts
Updated policy - sport and recreation provision.	<p>This policy amends policy CS15 of the adopted Core Strategy and sets out the requirements for provision of a wide range of open spaces and built leisure facilities to meet the needs of local residents.</p> <p>By ensuring provision of open space and facilities for leisure and recreation is adequate to meet the needs of the District's residents, there will be a reduced need to travel outside of the District to seek these opportunities. This potentially reduces the impacts on European sites, most notably</p>

⁷ The previous HRA indicated that there was no 'downstream' connectivity to any of the proposed areas of growth.

	<p>Rutland Water. The policy would therefore not have a significant adverse impact on European sites in the context of increased recreation pressures.</p>
<p>Housing site allocations north of Hinckley Road (A47) Kirby Muxloe and four smaller sites adjacent to the Principal Urban Area of Leicester.</p>	<p>The potential new housing site allocations are located North of Leicester Road (Kirby Muxloe) with four smaller housing allocations at: Gynsills Lane, Glenfield; Grange Farm & Webb Close, Leicester Forest East; and Ratby Lane, Kirby Muxloe. The largest site (North of Hinckley Road (A47) could accommodate some 750 houses. The remaining sites could accommodate some 165 houses in total. The proposals do not increase the overall number of houses proposed in the Core Strategy around the Principal Urban Area of Leicester between 2011 and 2029 (5,750) and reflect the currently adopted strategy of urban concentration with lesser development in the larger central villages.</p> <p>The most significant potential impacts on European sites are likely to result from increased visitors to Rutland Water SPA (as a result of the increase in population). Notwithstanding this, the impacts are ameliorated because the District of Blaby already has a number of parks and gardens that are able to fulfil needs for activities such as fishing, birdwatching and cycling adjacent to a watercourse at a local level (including existing Country Parks, Jubilee Park and Fosse Meadows and the Grand Union Canal).</p> <p>In order to help mitigate the impacts of increased visitor numbers on Rutland Water, Anglian Water and Natural England have worked in partnership to create zoned areas for sporting activity which prevents disturbance to birds. Informal recreation space has been designed to ensure that all sensitive areas are screened from 'on foot' visitors. Natural England and Anglian Water also have a management plan in place which addresses the additional impact from increased tourism.</p> <p>It would be difficult to precisely quantify the extent to which the growth from the proposed allocations might impact upon Rutland Water, however, they do not result in any uplift in levels of housing growth promoted in the Core Strategy and it is considered that the management measures already in place are adequate to mitigate against any increase in visitors to Rutland Water arising from proposed levels of growth.</p> <p>With regard to Ensor's Pool, the impacts of increased visitor pressures are addressed through the site management effort undertaken by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council. The pool does not experience substantial numbers of visitors travelling long distances.</p>

Potential employment site allocations	<p>The potential Employment allocation is at Leicester Lane / St Johns Enderby. Given the distance separation from Natura 2000 sites, it is not envisaged that the proposed employment development would have an adverse impact on European sites. There is no downstream hydrological connectivity and no evidence of any other off-site implications.</p> <p>Any adverse impacts are likely to be minimal in that employment sites are an attractor (rather than a disperser) of activity. The potential uses associated with the employment sites will need to be closely monitored in order to ensure that potential industrial processes do not result in air pollution that could impact on the European sites. However, the allocation proposes that the site would only be used for storage and distribution employment uses. No 'pollutants' resulting from industrial processes are anticipated.</p>
Accommodating Gypsies and Travellers	The policy does not identify any residual requirement for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation over and above that already completed or committed. No significant adverse impacts have therefore been identified in relation to European sites.
Existing Employment Sites	The emerging policy seeks to protect 'key' employment sites from alternative 'non-employment' uses. The policy seeks to largely protect buildings and uses that are already in operation. No significant adverse impacts have therefore been identified in relation to European sites.
Policies map	The proposals map is a graphical illustration of the policies and proposals contained within the plan on an Ordnance Survey Base Map. No significant adverse impacts have been identified in relation to European sites as a result of producing a Policies Map.
Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)	The IDP sets out the infrastructure requirements arising from the proposed allocations and policies. The IDP identifies the type of infrastructure required, its cost and when it should be provided. No significant adverse impacts have been identified in relation to European sites as a result of the IDP.
Monitoring Framework	The monitoring framework sets a series of 'targets' and 'indicators' that seek to assess whether the Local Plan is achieving its objectives. No significant adverse impacts have been identified in relation to European sites as a result of developing the Monitoring Framework.

Table 2: Impacts of policies on European sites

Policy / Allocation	Potential impacts
Development within settlement boundaries	The policy seeks to define boundaries to settlements and manage development within those defined limits. The policy does not itself promote growth in addition to proposed

	allocations and no significant adverse impacts have therefore been identified in relation to European sites.
Development in the Countryside	Development in the Countryside policy seeks to protect Countryside from inappropriate development. It sets out the types of uses that are appropriate and those that are not. The policy does not itself promote growth in addition to proposed allocations and no significant adverse impacts have therefore been identified in relation to European sites.
Employment Development on Unallocated Sites	The policy seeks to encourage employment development on existing sites and allow for new employment development on non-allocated sites where no harm would result. The policy does not itself promote growth in additional development and no significant adverse impacts have been identified in relation to European sites.
Connection to Digital Infrastructure	The policy seeks to encourage provision of fast and reliable broadband as part of new developments. The policy does not itself promote growth in additional development and no significant adverse impacts have been identified in relation to European sites.
Blaby Town Centre - Primary and Secondary Frontages	The policy seeks to identify areas within Blaby town centre where retail uses will be managed in order to protect the vitality and viability of the town centre. In particular, the policy seeks to encourage a predominance of shops (A1 retail uses) in primary frontages with greater flexibility (A2 to A5) in secondary frontages. No significant adverse impacts in relation to European sites have been identified as a result of the policy.
Neighbourhood Parades	The policy seeks to identify the Neighbourhood parades (small scale centres containing shops or other services) that serve a local need and identify the type of uses that are appropriate within them. The policy does not itself promote additional development and no significant adverse impacts have been identified in relation to European sites.
Road Related Facilities for HGVs	The policy seeks to secure provision of road related facilities for HGVs in major development proposals containing B8 uses. No specific allocations are proposed and no significant adverse impacts have been identified in relation to European sites.
Local Parking and Highway Design Standards	The policy seeks to secure adequate parking provision from new developments in accordance with the 6Cs ⁸ Highways and Transportation Design Guide. No significant adverse impacts have been identified in relation to European sites.
A47 High Load Road Route	The policy seeks to prevent development that would impede the passage of 'high loads' along the A47 through the District of Blaby. The A47 continues towards Nuneaton but terminates short of Ensor's Pool, it continues eastwards and runs some 3 miles south of Rutland water. The policy itself

⁸ Leicester City, Nottingham City, Derby City, Leicestershire County, Nottinghamshire County and Derbyshire County Councils.

	seeks to protect an existing transport management tool and is not anticipated to result in increased vehicle flows / emissions along the route. No significant adverse impacts have therefore been identified in relation to European sites.
Self and Custom build housing	The policy seeks to encourage an element of self build and custom build housing on large sites. The policy does not increase the overall quantum of housing and does not promote additional housing sites. No significant adverse impacts have therefore been identified in relation to European sites.
Accessible and Adaptable Homes and Wheelchair Homes	The policy seeks to deliver a percentage of new houses that have been designed to accommodate 'accessible, adaptable and wheelchair homes' within the District. No 'off-site' environmental impacts are anticipated and therefore no significant adverse impacts in relation to European sites.
Designated and Undesignated Heritage Assets	The policy seeks to ensure that the impacts of new development on heritage assets are fully considered. The policy is specific to existing historic assets in the District and no off-site implications are likely to result. No significant adverse impacts are anticipated in relation to European sites.
Land Contamination and Pollution	The policy seeks to ensure that any forms of pollution can be satisfactorily mitigated. Types of pollution include: water, air, noise, light and soils. The policy is seeking to reduce pollution with commensurate benefits to the impacts on European Sites. In addition, the policy seeks to protect Best and Most Versatile Land for agriculture where no alternatives exist. No significant adverse impacts have been identified as a result of the emerging policy in relation to European sites.
Hazardous Sites and Installations	The policy seeks to protect houses and other sensitive development from hazardous installations. The policy relates primarily to hazardous installations that already exist and, as such, no additional impacts are anticipated (over and above those considered above in relation to additional housing and employment site options). No significant adverse impacts have therefore been identified in relation to European sites.
Minerals Safeguarding Areas	The policy seeks to protect mineral reserves from being sterilised by inappropriate development. No developments are proposed that are located on mineral reserves and no significant adverse impacts have been identified in relation to European sites.
Advertisements and signs	The policy seeks to ensure that new advertisements and signs are of high quality and do not have an adverse impact in terms of amenity or highways safety. The policy relates to detailed design matters and no adverse impacts on European level sites are anticipated.

Tables 1 and 2 above specifically consider the potential effects on European sites resulting from the allocations and policies contained within the Blaby District Local Plan Delivery DPD – Proposed Submission Version. In addition, regard should also

be had to the cumulative effects of other plans and strategies. In terms of the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area, there are a number of adopted Local Plans including the Blaby Core Strategy, all of which have been subject to Habitat Regulation Assessment.

Adopted Local Plans in neighbouring authorities including Leicester City, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough, Charnwood Borough, North West Leicestershire District, Harborough District, Rugby Borough and Oadby & Wigston Borough. These plans were assessed against the requirements of the Habitat Regulations but concluded that individual and cumulative impacts on European sites did not merit Appropriate Assessment. The majority of adopted Local Plans in Leicestershire were also prepared in the context of the East Midlands Regional Plan⁹ which was subject to HRA.

The Local Plan – Proposed Submission version is not promoting an increase in the quantum of development in the Principal Urban Area (adjacent to Leicester) above that proposed in the Core Strategy. No additional cumulative impacts are therefore anticipated as a result of the plan.

The Council is aware that other Local Planning Authorities are seeking to update their Local Plans and that a ‘Strategic Growth Plan’ is being prepared for Leicester and Leicestershire which may result in increased levels of development. Blaby District Council will be mindful of any changes to development requirements within the Housing Market Area and adjacent HMAs or other Regions. It is likely that any increase in growth will necessitate a review of the Blaby Local Plan that will require a separate Habitat Regulation Appraisal.

The nearest adjoining region to Blaby District is the West Midlands which is relevant in the context of the River Mease (Staffordshire sections) and Ensor’s Pool (Nuneaton, Warwickshire). However, the River Mease is separate to any water courses in Blaby District with no downstream hydrological connectivity. Ensor’s Pool is considered to have a self contained Eco-system. Therefore, development within Blaby District will not have any adverse impacts on these sites.

7. Conclusion

This report has shown that the emerging ‘Blaby District Local Plan – delivery DPD’ alone, or in combination with other plans, is unlikely to have a significant detrimental impact on any European sites within approximately 25 miles (40km) of the boundary of the District of Blaby. The main reasons for this are:

- There are no European sites within the District of Blaby administrative boundary;

⁹ Prior to its abolition in 2013.

- There are management measures already in place to adequately mitigate against any potential impacts resulting from an increase in visitors to Rutland Water / Ensor's Pool arising from the amount of new housing and other development proposed in the District;
- The river network in Blaby District is not directly connected downstream to the River Mease SAC drainage basin and no other hydrological connectivity is likely to result in adverse impacts; and
- The Local Plan Delivery DPD policies seek to prevent pollution arising from new developments or other adverse impacts on air quality.

Therefore, it is concluded that a full Appropriate Assessment is not required.

Appendix 1: Detailed assessments of each of the identified European sites

Name and location	Rutland Water SPA (SK928070) 1,556.9 ha Lying between Oakham and Stamford (approximately 1.4km west and 5.8km east respectively).
Reasons for designation	<p>Wintering populations of the following species:</p> <p>Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i> Teal <i>Anas crecca</i> Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i> Gadwall <i>Anas strepera</i> Tufted Duck <i>Aythya fuligula</i> Goldeneye <i>Bucephla clangula</i> Mute Swan <i>Cygnus olor</i> Coot <i>Fulica atra</i> Goosander <i>Mergus merganser</i> Great Crested Grebe <i>Podiceps cristatus</i></p> <p>A wintering bird assemblage regularly supporting 25,037 waterfowl, including Great Crested Grebe, Wigeon, Gadwall, Teal, Shoveler, Tufted Duck, Goldeneye, Goosander and Coot.</p>
Conservation Objectives	To maintain the designated interest features in favourable condition
Key factors affecting site integrity	<p>Maintenance of the current extent, connectivity and quality of feeding habitats with areas of open water of varying sizes and depths, suitable levels of benthic, aquatic and surface invertebrates, a fish presence which does not impact on the dominant macrophyte assemblages, and open habitats incorporating suitable feeding pastures within 50m of the water.</p> <p>Maintenance of characteristic water quality and quantity is important with seasonal changes in levels occurring slowly.</p> <p>Maintenance and extent of roosting habitat including mature trees and areas of scrub.</p> <p>Levels of disturbance should be maintained within necessary noise levels.</p>

Existing trends and pressures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree regeneration ability has been reduced through deer browsing although this is now being managed through appropriate fencing • Inappropriate weed control • High phosphate levels • Overgrazing • Low levels of water abstraction
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Name and location	<p>River Mease SAC (SK260114)</p> <p>21.86 ha Crossed by the A42 and aligned beside the A513 to the west. The closest significant settlement is Ashby - de - la - Zouch. The river feeds into the Tame and ultimately the Trent.</p>
Reasons for designation	<p>Inland water body with important aquatic plant communities (<i>Ranunculon fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation). The area is also considered to support a significant presence of important animal species including Spined Loach (<i>Cobitis taenia</i>) Bullhead (<i>Cottus gobio</i>) Eurasian Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) European Crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>). The area is considered to support a significant presence.</p>
Conservation Objectives	<p>To maintain the designated interest features in favourable condition.</p>
Key factors affecting site integrity	<p>General requirements: maintenance of water quality and availability requires management to minimise pollution inputs and inappropriate water abstraction. The river's natural structure and form should be maintained to support a natural flow regime, including the avoidance of constriction of the river or blockage of its floodplain.</p> <p>Watercourse (<i>Ranunculus</i>) habitat: a natural flow regime is required for maintenance of natural erosion and sedimentation processes and hence the channel morphology. Riparian areas and the wider catchment need to be managed to avoid excessive run-off of soil particles and nutrients into the river.</p>

	<p>The structure and composition of bankside and aquatic vegetation should be maintained.</p> <p>All species: maintenance of suitable habitat and appropriate management helps to ensure the provision of habitat suitable for spawning and shelter, including gravel-dominated substrate with areas of sand and silt, patchy vegetation cover provided by submerged and marginal macrophyte assemblages, slack water resting pools for fish, a presence of submerged woody debris, and presence of artificial barriers. Any exploitation of fish population or other native animals or plants should be at a sustainable level, without manipulation of the river's natural capacity to support them or augmentation by excessive stocking. The absence of introduced/ alien species is important. Otter; maintenance of terrestrial habitat with cover and holt sites provided by dense scrub mature tress along river banks. Maintenance of suitably low levels of disturbance.</p>
Vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water quality and quantity are vital to the European interests, whilst competition for water resources is high. • Diffuse pollution and excessive sedimentation are catchment-wide issues which have the potential to affect the site.

Name and location	<p>Ensor's Pool SAC (SP348903) 3.8 ha West Nuneaton.</p>
Reasons for designation	<p>Annex II species: Crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i></p>
Conservation Objectives	<p>Protection of habitat for native crayfish.</p>
Key factors affecting site integrity	<p>The crayfish population has developed in a flooded brick-pit that has been abandoned for fifty years. The area was</p>

	<p>unmanaged and was used as de facto public open space. The crayfish would be vulnerable to pollution and introduction of non-native crayfish, through uncontrolled access. To address this, since 1995 the area has been leased by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council and is managed as a Local Nature Reserve. Increased visitor pressure may increase the management effort undertaken by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council.</p>
Vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pollution • Introduction of non-native crayfish

(Source: Leicester City Council's Core Strategy Habitats Regulations Appropriate Assessment Screening Report)

Appendix 2 – Letter from Natural England concerning Core Strategy Habitat Regulation Assessment

Date: 20th April 2012
Our ref: 48266
Your ref: None supplied



[REDACTED]
Blaby Council

Natural England
Consultation Service
Hornbeam House
Electra Way
Crewe Business Park
CREWE
CW1 6GJ

T: 0300 060 3900

By email only, no hard copy to follow

Dear [REDACTED]

Blaby District Council, Core Strategy development plan document - Appropriate Assessment scoping report (April 2012).

Thank you for your consultation on the above. I can confirm that Natural England concurs with the conclusion of the above document, namely that the Core Strategy will result in no likely significant effect on any European site.

For any correspondence or queries relating to this consultation only, please contact [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] For all other correspondence, please email consultations@naturalengland.org.uk, or if it is not possible to consult by email, please send to the above address.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
Lead Adviser, Winchester Land Use Operations Team, Natural England.