

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Screening matrix for

Green space, trees and development Supplementary Planning Document

**Sefton Council
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Foreword

This document sets out Sefton Council’s screening of the draft Green space, trees and development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in accordance with the Habitats Regulations¹ and the EU Habitats Directive². It is the Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening document for this draft SPD.

Our approach is based on the EU document ‘*Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*’ (Oxford Brookes University, for European Commission Environment DG. European Commission Environment DG, 2001), in particular the Annex 2 assessment forms.

Habitats Regulations Assessment is an assessment of the potential effects of a proposed project or plan – either a development plan document (DPD) or a supplementary planning document (SPD) – on one of more sites of international nature conservation importance. Projects and plans can only be permitted where the ‘competent authority’ (in this case Sefton Council) is satisfied that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the relevant nature sites.

These sites of international nature conservation importance are the network of Natura 2000 sites. The **Natura 2000** sites are of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species within the European Community. Natura 2000 sites include **Special Protection Areas (SPAs)** designated under the EU ‘Wild Birds’ Directive, **Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)** designated under the EU ‘Habitats Directive’ and Offshore Marine Site (OMS).

The government’s Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9) ‘Biodiversity and Geological Conservation’ states that **Ramsar sites** should be taken to be part of the Natura 2000 network and treated accordingly (para 6, PPS9, ODPM, 2005). Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance, designated under the International Wetlands Convention, which took place at Ramsar in Iran. PPS9 also states that proposed sites should be treated in the same way as designated sites for all practical purposes, including for Habitats Regulations Assessment. We have followed this government guidance, and in this document have used the term ‘Natura 2000 sites’ to refer to all of these designations and proposed designations.

Stage 1 of the Habitats Regulations Assessment process is the screening of proposed plans or projects for significant effects. If there are none, then no further steps need to be taken. Where significant effects seem likely, a more detailed Appropriate Assessment of the proposed plan or project is necessary. This process will often establish mitigation measures or alternatives, which can offset all significant adverse effects and enable the plan or project to go forward. Where this is not the case, other more stringent measures need to be considered.

After carrying out Habitats Regulations Assessment screening process as set out in this document, we conclude that the Green space, trees and development SPD:

- a) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site,**
- b) is not likely to have a significant effect on each of the following sites:**

- **Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar site**
- **Ribble and Alt Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA)**
- **Sefton Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC)**
- **Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore proposed Ramsar site**
- **Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential Special Protection Area (pSPA).**

either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

And accordingly, no “appropriate assessment” is required to be made under Regulations 48,49 and 54 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations before the Council decides to

undertake, or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for these plans. Natural England concurs with this view (email dated 4 February 2008).

¹ *The Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994*

² *The European Communities (1992) Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. (See Appendix 1)*

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Habitats Regulations - Appropriate Assessment

Screening matrix for Green space, trees and development Supplementary Planning Document

Brief description of the project or plan:

The planning document is the Green space, trees and development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). It forms part of Sefton's Local Development Scheme (March 2007), where it is titled the 'open Space and Development SPD'. In this document we will usually refer to this planning document as 'this SPD' or 'the SPD'.

A draft of the 'Green Space Strategy SPD' referred to in the Local Development Scheme is still to be produced but will be a corporate strategy rather than an SPD. Accordingly, it is unlikely to be subject to Habitat Regulations Assessment. Public consultation on a draft Green Space Issues Report took place in October and November 2007, and much of the preparatory work is common to both documents.

The objectives of the draft Green space, trees and development SPD were revised before the final SPD was produced, and sections of the SPD relating to draft standards for provision of green space in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility, focussing especially on parks and gardens and amenity green space have been omitted. In part this was due to comments received from Government Office for the North West and in part due to increasing recognition that such standards are best set out in the context of future preparation of the Core Strategy.

The objective of the Green space, trees and Development SPD is **to set out detailed guidance for developers to provide or enhance green spaces and plant trees in association with their development proposals.**

Our requirements for developers to provide green spaces and trees in association with development may require either new provision or enhancements to existing publicly accessible green spaces, or street tree planting. This is in line our planning policies DQ3 'Trees and development' and DQ4 'Public greenspace and development', and also policy NC3 'Habitat Protection, creation and management', in the adopted Unitary Development Plan 2006. The SPD will not require on-site provision of new green space unless the site holds 50 or more homes or is for major commercial, industrial or leisure development. Between April 2000 and March 2007 there were 17 such housing developments.

So, although the Green space, trees and development SPD applies across the whole of Sefton in practice its spatial extent is much more limited. It deals only with larger developments sites and enhancements to existing, publicly available, green space. Plan 1 shows this SPD boundary and the boundaries of the Natura 2000 sites in Sefton. Plan 2 shows existing key green spaces in Sefton. [Plans are shown in a separate document].

In both the Green space, trees and development SPD and the Green space strategy we have based our definition of public green space on the definition of public 'green infrastructure' used in the Regional Spatial Strategy. That is, green space includes publicly accessible amenity spaces, open space, waterways, trees - notably street trees, green verges, woods, coastal habitats, public parks and gardens, children's playspaces, teenager facilities, allotments, private gardens and natural and semi-natural spaces. Plan 2 indicates key aspects of this green space, notably:

- the existing urban greenspaces in Sefton as designated in the adopted Unitary Development Plan 2006, including Town Lane/Newlands Country Park and Crosby Marine Park;
- parks and gardens and urban greenspace sites owned or managed by the Council's Leisure department or Parish Councils.

These sites are likely to form the main focus for enhancement of existing green space provision under the terms of the SPD.

Plan 2 also shows the strategic routes for countryside recreation (also designated in the adopted Unitary Development Plan 2006), and indicates key visitor sites and areas - coast and countryside recreation areas - outside the urban area. (It does not show Green Belt land owned or managed by private sports clubs, other organisations or Parish Councils).

Brief description of the Natura 2000 site:

Natura 2000 sites in Sefton

There are a number of Natura 2000 sites which need to be screened for any effects from this SPD. Plan 2 gives an overview of these Natura 2000 sites in Sefton, and their location in relation to the SPD. The Natura 2000 sites within Sefton ('the Sefton Natura 2000 sites') are as follows:

- Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar site (see also Plan 3);
- Ribble and Alt Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA) (see also Plan 4);
- Sefton Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (see also Plan 5);
- Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore proposed Ramsar site (see also Plan 3);
- Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential Special Protection Area (pSPA) (see also Plan 4).

[Plans are shown in a separate document].

These are all coastal sites. The Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar site and SPA and the Sefton Coast SAC cover a very similar area of Sefton's open coast while the Mersey Narrows and North Mersey Foreshore proposed Ramsar and potential SPA sites have the same boundary in Sefton – the man-made lagoon within the Seaforth Container Terminal part of the Mersey Docks. The main habitat interests in the sites are sandflats, mudflats, sand dunes and dune slacks, lagoons and saltmarsh. Birds are the main species of note, although other rare species include petalwort, great crested newts and the natterjack toad.

Brief descriptions of each of the sites within Sefton, plus their conservation objectives, are set out in figure 1 below.

Other Natura 2000 sites

There are other Natura 2000 sites in neighbouring local authority areas, which have links especially in terms of bird movements with the sites in Sefton. These include the Dee Estuary Ramsar site and (to a lesser extent) Mersey Estuary Ramsar site, and Martin Mere in West Lancashire is also designated primarily for its birdlife. Most of Sefton's drinking water comes from the River Dee, which rises in Lake Bala, North Wales. The exception to this is the Formby area, which receives a mix of River Dee and local West Lancashire borehole water, blended at the Gorsehill Service Reservoir in Ormskirk.

The closest Natura 2000 sites to Sefton include:

- Martin Mere SPA
- Martin Mere Ramsar site
- Mersey Estuary SPA
- Mersey Estuary Ramsar site
- Dee Estuary SPA
- Dee Estuary Ramsar and proposed Ramsar site
- Dee Estuary candidate SAC

- River Dee and Lake Bala SAC
- Liverpool Bay potential SPA.

Advice is that Habitats Regulations Assessment should be 'appropriate' and fit for purpose. We judge it inappropriate to screen this SPD against these sites *if* the screening of the Natura 2000 sites within Sefton shows no significant effect i.e. that no full Appropriate Assessment is required for them.

Figure 1: brief description of the Natura 2000 sites in whole or in part in Sefton

| Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar Site | | |
|---|---|--|
| Brief Description | Conservation Objectives | Vulnerability |
| <p>The Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar Site site comprises two estuaries, of which the Ribble Estuary is by far the larger, together with an extensive area of sandy foreshore along the Sefton Coast. The site forms part of the chain of west coast sites which fringe the Irish Sea.</p> <p>The site is formed by extensive sand and mudflats backed, in the north, by the saltmarsh of the Ribble Estuary (with areas of coastal grazing marsh located behind the sea embankments) and, to the south, the sand dunes of the Sefton Coast. The tidal flats and saltmarsh support internationally important populations of waterfowl in winter and the sand dunes support vegetation communities and amphibian populations of international importance.</p> <p>The Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar site is a wetland of international importance because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It supports up to 40% of the GB population of natterjack toads (<i>Bufo calamita</i>): which is a vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered species or threatened ecological community (Criterion 2); • It regularly supports 20,000 or more waterbirds – 324,000 in the non-breeding season and 29,000 in the breeding season (Criterion 5); • It regularly supports 1% of the populations of the following waterbird species or sub-species (criterion 6): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lesser Black-backed gull (<i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>); | <p>The Conservation Objectives are to maintain in favourable condition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the habitats for the populations of natterjack toads, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ dune slacks. • the habitats for internationally important (Criterion 5) waterbirds, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Intertidal sand and mudflats ○ Saltmarsh ○ Marshy grassland. • the habitats for internationally important (Criterion 6) waterbirds, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Intertidal sand and mudflat ○ Saltmarsh ○ Marshy grassland. <p>Maintenance implies restoration if the feature is not currently in favourable condition.</p> <p>(Source: based on pp18-19, English Nature's 'Draft Regulation 33 advice for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European Marine Site', May 2001).</p> | <p>The only factor adversely affecting the site's ecological character which has been identified is coastal erosion at Formby Point. There is an estimated loss of 4 metres per year.</p> <p>This is a concern because pine woodland on the sand dunes is causing coastal squeeze and therefore preventing sand dune habitats from rolling back; as such dune slack habitats for natterjack toads are declining/being lost.</p> <p>While this is identified as a Category 2 adverse factor (i.e. a factor that is not currently being managed, or where the regulatory regime appears to have been ineffective so far), mitigation is in place. At Ainsdale Sand Dunes National Nature Reserve English Nature have made efforts to restore dune habitat; an Environmental Impact Assessment was carried out with a view to submitting a tree-felling application in February 2005.</p> <p>The Ramsar site is not subject to adverse ecological change.</p> <p>(Source: Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS), JNCC, 05/05/2006, via JNCC web-site).</p> |

Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar Site

| Brief Description | Conservation Objectives | Vulnerability |
|--|-------------------------|---------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ringed plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>); ○ sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>); ○ redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>); ○ Bewick's swan (<i>Cygnus columbianus</i>); ○ Whooper swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>); ○ Pink-footed goose (<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>); ○ shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>); ○ wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>); ○ teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>); ○ pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>); ○ oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>); ○ grey plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>); ○ knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>); ○ sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>); ○ dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>); ○ black-tailed godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>); ○ bar-tailed godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>); and ○ redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>) <p>The site also supports nationally important non-breeding populations of cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>), Scaup (<i>Aythya marila</i>), Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>), Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>), Whimbrel (<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>) and Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>). It also supports nationally important breeding populations of Ruff (<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>), Black-headed Gull (<i>Larus ridibundus</i>) and Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>).</p> <p>The nationally rare plant Petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>) is found in the dune slack areas, and the nationally rare Natterjack toad (<i>Bufo calamita</i>) is also found in the dune areas.</p> <p>(Source: English Nature's 'Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar site classification citation', November 2002; and the JNCC's 'Information Sheet on Ramsar</p> | | |

Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar Site

| Brief Description | Conservation Objectives | Vulnerability |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Wetlands', May 2006). | | |

Ribble and Alt Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA)

| Brief Description | Conservation Objectives | Vulnerability |
|--|--|---|
| <p>The Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA regularly supports internationally important populations of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rare or vulnerable bird species (Annex I species) such as wintering populations of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ golden plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>); ○ Bewick's swan (<i>Cygnus, columbianus</i>); ○ whooper swan (<i>Cygnus Cygnus</i>); and ○ bar-tailed godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>). • migratory bird species such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pink-footed goose (<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>); ○ shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>); ○ wigeon (<i>Anas Penelope</i>); ○ teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>); ○ pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>); ○ oystercatcher (<i>Haemotopus ostralegus</i>); ○ grey plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>); ○ knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>); ○ sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>); ○ dunlin (<i>Calidris alpine</i>); ○ redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>); and ○ black-tailed godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>). <p>Also the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA is an internationally important site for waterfowl, especially in winter (and the UK's second most important site after the Wash), regularly supporting over 20,000 birds. Nationally important populations include lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>), and curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>).</p> <p>(Source: English Nature's 'Draft Regulation 33 advice for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European Marine Site', May 2001).</p> | <p>The Conservation Objectives are to maintain in favourable condition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the habitats for the populations of regularly occurring [Wild Birds Directive] Annex I species of European importance, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Intertidal sand and mudflats ○ Saltmarsh. • the habitats for the populations of regularly occurring migratory bird species of European importance, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Intertidal sand and mudflat ○ Saltmarsh. • the habitats for the populations of waterfowl that contribute to the wintering waterfowl assemblage of European importance, with particular reference to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Intertidal sand and mudflat ○ saltmarsh ○ marshy grassland. <p>Maintenance implies restoration if the feature is not currently in favourable condition.</p> <p>(Source: pp18-19, English Nature's 'Draft Regulation 33 advice for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European Marine Site', May 2001).</p> | <p>The dunes, intertidal flats and saltmarsh of the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA enjoy a relatively robust status and a favourable condition although in places the site is subject to pressure from recreation, built development (including coastal defence), wildfowling and industry (including sand-winning).</p> <p>Of these vulnerabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wildfowling has an insignificant impact on direct land-take and disturbance due to effective managed through the provision of refuge areas and strict regulation on shooting activities. • Military activities only take place at Altcar Rifle Range, i.e. adjacent to the Alt Estuary. • Recreation is informal and of relatively low intensity along most of the Sefton Coast and in the Ribble Estuary. • Beach activities are managed by the Beach Management Plan. Sand-winning has now ceased. • Much of the SPA attracts beneficial land management via the implementation of agreed plans for three NNRs, two LNRs and other initiatives developed by the Sefton Coast Partnership. |

Ribble and Alt Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA)

| Brief Description | Conservation Objectives | Vulnerability |
|-------------------|-------------------------|---|
| | | <p>Although there is little evidence of sea-level rise so far, the extent and distribution of habitats remains vulnerable to changes in the physical environment, either natural or man-induced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formby Point and Ainsdale are suffering intense coastal erosion, being investigated through the Sefton Shoreline Management Plan. Beach management practices have led to creation of considerable areas of embryo dunes on the upper shore elsewhere. • The Ribble Estuary is evolving as sediment patterns are change. Saltmarsh continues to accrete following past land-claim and the closure of Preston Docks. • The intertidal habitats are vulnerable to accidental pollution from the nearby Mersey Estuary and the Irish Sea oil and gas fields. Oil spill contingency plans are being updated to deal with such events. <p>(Source: JNCC 'Natura 2000 Standard Data form for Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA' 5/5/06 via JNCC web-site).</p> |

Sefton Coast Special Area Of Conservation (SAC)

| Brief Description | Conservation Objectives | Vulnerability |
|--|--|--|
| <p>The Sefton Coast has a number of internationally important habitat types and species which have merited its designation as an SAC. It is one of the best and most important areas in the UK for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embryonic shifting dunes; • Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Marram (<i>Ammophila arenaria</i>) (“White dunes”); • Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation, which are a priority feature (“Grey dunes”); • Dunes with creeping willow (<i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>)) • Humid dune slacks; and • Petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>). <p>The embryonic shifting dunes, dunes with creeping willow and the Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (<i>Calluno-Ulicetea</i>) – which is a priority feature and has a significant presence - are nationally rare.</p> <p>The site also supports a significant presence of Great Crested newts (<i>Triturus cristatus</i>).</p> <p>(Source: www.jncc.web-site -Sefton Coast SAC site details – Natura 2000 data form for this site).</p> | <p>The Conservation Objectives are, subject to natural change, to maintain in favourable condition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following habitats in recognition of their intrinsic value; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ embryonic shifting dunes ○ shifting dunes along the shoreline with Marram (<i>Ammophila arenaria</i>); ○ fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation; ○ dunes with creeping willow (<i>Salix arenaria</i>); ○ humid dune slacks; and ○ Eu-Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes <i>Calluno-Ulicetea</i>). • The habitats which support the Great Crested Newt (<i>Triturus cristatus</i>), especially ground habitats and ponds; • The habitats which support Petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>), especially sand dune slacks. <p>Maintenance implies restoration if the feature is not currently in favourable condition.</p> <p>(Source: English Nature’s ‘SAC: Component SSSI: Sefton Coast: Conservation objectives for the European Interest on the SSSI’ dated 19/7/02).</p> | <p>The Sefton Coast is primarily owned and managed by Sefton Council, with other major landowners including English Nature (Ainsdale Sand Dunes and Cabin Hill NNRs), the National Trust, Ministry of Defence, and a number of international standard golf clubs.</p> <p>Co-ordinated management of the coast is achieved through the long-standing Sefton Coast Management Scheme (now the Sefton Coast Partnership), in which all key landowners play a part.</p> <p>The extensive sand dunes and intertidal areas attract large numbers of summer tourists. This impact is addressed in Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council’s Beach Management Plan.</p> <p>Golf course management achieves a positive balance between play areas and important habitats.</p> <p>Concerns have been raised regarding water abstraction on the coast. This is being addressed through detailed modelling of the dune aquifer by the Environment Agency.</p> <p>The coniferous plantations need a careful balance between restoration of dune habitats and public enjoyment of the woodlands, and work on this is being carried out at Ainsdale Sand Dunes National Nature Reserve, the main woodland area.</p> <p>(Source: JNCC Standard Data Form for Sefton Coast SAC’</p> |

Sefton Coast Special Area Of Conservation (SAC)

| Brief Description | Conservation Objectives | Vulnerability |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | | 17/506 via JNCC web-site). |

Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore draft Ramsar site

| Brief Description | Conservation Objectives | Vulnerability |
|---|---|--|
| <p>The draft Ramsar is an internationally important feeding and roosting habitat for wintering wading birds. The site comprises intertidal habitats at Egremont foreshore, man-made lagoons at Seaforth and the extensive intertidal flats at North Wirral Foreshore. The Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore site has clear links in terms of bird movements with the nearby Dee Estuary Ramsar site, Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar site, and (to a lesser extent) Mersey Estuary Ramsar site. The most notable feature of the site is the exceptionally high density of wintering turnstones (<i>Arenaria inter pres</i>).</p> <p>The Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore Ramsar site is a wetland of international importance because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It regularly supports 20,000 or more waterbirds – 28,841 in the non-breeding season (Criterion 5); • It regularly supports 1% of the populations of the following waterbird species or sub-species in any season (Criterion 6): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>); ○ redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>); and ○ turnstone (<i>Arenaria inter pres</i>). <p>The site also supports nationally important winter numbers of cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>), oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>), grey plover (<i>Pluvalis squatarola</i>), sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>), dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) and bar-tailed godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>). It also supports a nationally important breeding colony of common terns (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>).</p> <p>(Source: English Nature's 'Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore pP Ramsar site citation', July 2001).</p> | <p>The Conservation Objectives are to maintain in favourable condition, subject to natural change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the habitats for internationally important (Criterion 5) waterbirds, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Saline lagoon; ○ Intertidal sediment communities (littoral sediment); ○ Saltmarsh; • The habitats for the internationally important (Criterion 6) species of knot, redshank and turnstone, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Saline lagoon; ○ Intertidal sediment communities (littoral sediment); ○ Saltmarsh. <p>(Source: based on English Nature's 'Draft Conservation Objectives for Mersey Narrows', March 2006).</p> | <p>The Seaforth part of the site lies within the Seaforth Docks area. It comprises two lagoons: a shallow water, salt-water lagoon which functions as a settlement lagoon for water pumped from the River Mersey into the Seaforth Docks and a freshwater lagoon separated from the saltwater lagoon by a wide bund. A strip of saltmarsh flanks the western edge of the saltwater lagoon. Effectively there is no public access to the site.</p> <p>(Source: English Nature SSSI Citation, undated, via web-site).</p> <p>The site is dependent on pumping operations (which for example limit inundation) and could be vulnerable to future management and pumping regime changes within the dock complex.</p> <p>The Wirral Foreshore part of the site comprises mostly intertidal flats with some rocky outcrops and shingle banks, and contains a number of man-made structures including groynes, jetties and breakwaters.</p> <p>(Source: English Nature SSSI Citation, undated, via web-site).</p> <p>Possible sources of vulnerability could include coastal processes and man-made attempts to control them, and low-level recreation pressures.</p> |

Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential Special Protection Area

| Brief Description | Conservation Objectives | Vulnerability |
|---|--|--|
| <p>The potential site comprises intertidal habitats at Egremont foreshore, man-made lagoons at Seaforth and the extensive intertidal flats at North Wirral Foreshore. The Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore has clear links in terms of bird movements with the nearby Dee Estuary SPA, Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA, and (to a lesser extent) Mersey Estuary SPA.</p> <p>The Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential SPA regularly supports internationally important populations of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rare or vulnerable bird species (Annex I species) such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ common tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) ○ bar-tailed godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>). • migratory bird species such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>); ○ redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>); and ○ turnstone (<i>Arenaria inter pres</i>). <p>The site is also supports regularly over 20,000 waterbirds (as defined by the Ramsar Convention), including – outside the breeding season:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>); ○ oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>); ○ grey plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>); ○ sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>); ○ knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>); ○ dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>); ○ bar-tailed godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>); ○ redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>); and ○ turnstone (<i>Arenaria inter pres</i>). <p>Other species of interest include smew (<i>Mergellus albellus</i>) and</p> | <p>The Conservation Objectives are to maintain in favourable condition, subject to natural change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the habitats for the nationally important populations of regularly occurring [Wild Birds Directive] Annex I species of European importance, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Saline lagoon; ○ Intertidal sediment communities (littoral sediment); ○ Saltmarsh; • the habitats for the internationally important populations of regularly occurring migratory bird species of European importance, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Saline lagoon; ○ Intertidal sediment communities (littoral sediment); ○ Saltmarsh. • the habitats for the internationally important assemblage [under the Wild Birds Directive] of waterbirds, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Saline lagoon; ○ Intertidal sediment communities (littoral sediment); ○ Saltmarsh. <p>Maintenance implies restoration if the feature is not currently in favourable condition.</p> | <p>The Seaforth part of the site lies within the Seaforth Docks area. It comprises two lagoons: a shallow water, salt-water lagoon which functions as a settlement lagoon for water pumped from the River Mersey into the Seaforth Docks and a freshwater lagoon separated from the saltwater lagoon by a wide bund. A strip of saltmarsh flanks the western edge of the saltwater lagoon. Effectively there is no public access to the site.</p> <p>(Source: English Nature SSSI Citation, undated, via web-site).</p> <p>The site is dependent on pumping operations (which for example limit inundation) and could be vulnerable to future management and pumping regime changes within the dock complex.</p> <p>The Wirral Foreshore part of the site comprises mostly intertidal flats with some rocky outcrops and shingle banks, and contains a number of man-made structures including groynes, jetties and breakwaters.</p> <p>(Source: English Nature SSSI Citation, undated, via web-site).</p> <p>Possible sources of vulnerability could include coastal processes and man-made attempts to control them, and low-level recreation pressures.</p> |

Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential Special Protection Area

| Brief Description | Conservation Objectives | Vulnerability |
|---|---|----------------------|
| <p>golden plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) especially in winter, and ruff (<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>).</p> <p>(Source: English Nature's 'Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore pSPA citation', July 2001).</p> | <p>(Source: English Nature's 'Draft Conservation Objectives for Mersey Narrows', March 2006).</p> | |

Assessment criteria

1. Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site.

Green space, trees and development SPD

Work on the Green space, trees and development SPD, and on the corporate Green space strategy, began in April 2007. Formal public consultation on the draft SPD took place in January to March 2008, and the SPD is due to be adopted in July 2008. Consultation on the draft Green space strategy Issues Report took place in October and November 2007. Consultation on a draft Green space strategy is likely to take place in June and July 2008, following approval of the consultation draft Green space strategy in June 2008..

The key objective of the final Green space, trees and development SPD is to ensure that that new development results in the provision of publicly accessible green space – either through new provision within larger development sites or through enhancement of existing, publicly accessible, green spaces and street tree planting. The purpose of this is to ensure that public green space is accessible to new homes and other developments which generate a need for public green space.

The priorities for green space enhancement and tree planting outside development sites will be set out in the Green Space Strategy and other specific strategies linked to this which are prepared by the Council or its partners. These linked strategies cover or will cover specific issues; for example the Parks and Green Spaces Asset Management Strategy, and strategy documents produced for the Sefton Coast. The priorities in all of these strategies will be informed by deficiencies in relation to the standards set out in the Green space, trees and development SPD and by the views of Area Committees and Planning Committee.

The Parks and Green Spaces Asset Management Strategy, produced by Sefton's Leisure department, focuses mostly on improvements to existing urban parks, and these sites together with existing urban greenspaces in Sefton are likely to form the main focus for enhancement of existing green space provision under the terms of the SPD. Urban greenspaces are sites designated in the adopted Unitary Development Plan 2006; greenspaces of at least 0.05ha in size, within the urban area and including Town Lane/Newlands Country Park and Crosby Marine Park. (See Plan 2).

We consider that these mechanisms will help to manage recreation pressure from new users and direct it away from other sites such as the Natura 2000 sites (unless this fulfils part of linked strategies, such as many of the strategies for the Sefton Coast which are already in place).

Accordingly, we consider that there are no individual elements of the Green space, trees and development SPD which are likely to give rise to impacts on the Sefton Natura 2000 sites.

'In combination effects' of other plans and projects

Habitats Regulations Assessment requires us to look at the plans under direct consideration 'either individually or in combination with other plans and projects' (Article 6(3)) which could have an effect on the Natura 2000 sites. Advice is that Habitats Regulations Assessment should be 'appropriate' and fit for purpose, and that the 'plans' focus should be on development plans.

Each of the other 4 other Merseyside authorities – Liverpool, Wirral, St Helens and Knowsley - have an adopted Unitary Development Plan; and are at the preliminary stages of work on the preparation of their Core Strategies and other Local Development Framework documents set out in their Local Development Schemes, including Habitats Regulations Assessment. Also, Liverpool City Council have adopted a 'New

Housing Development' SPD (2005) which includes more up to date housing information. West Lancashire District Council – our neighbouring Lancashire local authority – adopted their Replacement Local Plan in 2006, and the Lancashire, Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool Joint Lancashire Structure Plan for 2001-2016 was adopted in 2005.

However, as we consider that there are no individual elements of the Green space, trees and development SPD which are likely to give rise to impacts on the Sefton Natura 2000 sites, we do not consider it appropriate to look at any 'in combination effects' of these documents produced by the other Merseyside authorities or Lancashire authorities.

The Sefton Unitary Development Plan is the key land-use planning document for Sefton, and includes the policies which this SPD provides more detailed guidance about (as set out in Appendix 2). Likewise, we consider that the adopted Sefton Unitary Development Plan (2006) does not need to be assessed for 'in combination' effects.

Accordingly, for this SPD we consider that it is appropriate to look at 'in combination effects' only for the following projects which relate to the Sefton area:

- **The retention of the Antony Gormley 'Another Place' art work on Crosby Beach;**
- **The proposed extension to the River Mersey dock facilities in Bootle.**

Retention of 'Another Place' artwork

The planning application for the 'Another Place' artwork (application ref: S/2007/0031) was granted planning permission on 7 March 2007. (See <http://www.sefton.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=6216>). The report to Planning Committee on 7 March 2007 set out the key issues, including those relating to the Appropriate Assessment carried out for the project, which looked at the potential impacts of the proposal on:

- coastal processes;
- bird feeding behaviour and functional use of feeding grounds;
- increased visitor numbers and activity on the shore on bird feeding; and
- embryo dune formation and protection through increased trampling from increased visitor numbers and activity.

Natural England was consulted on the Appropriate Assessment and the planning application.

It is reported that the Appropriate Assessment concluded that "the results of the initial mitigation measures and the proposed additional mitigation measures when considered together are considered to avoid (no statues in principal bird feeding areas) or reduce to no significant effects (potential visitor disturbance) the impact of the proposal on the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA/Ramsar site. These mitigation measures should be secured through appropriate legal agreement and condition of planning consent".

The proposal was granted planning permission, subject to conditions dealing with outstanding mitigation measures.

Accordingly, we consider that there are no significant adverse 'in combination' effects arising from the retention of the 'Another Place' artwork.

Extension to dock facilities in Bootle

The Mersey Docks and Harbour Company applied for a Harbour Revision Order on 19 August 2005 for the construction and maintenance of works for:

- a new quay wall some 854 metres long from the south west corner of the Royal Seaforth Dock to the river wall at the Gladstone River Entrance and the formation of a berthing pocket on the seaward side of the wall;

- an extension to the existing Bootle Northern Outfall Sewer from the existing river wall at Gladstone Dock for a distance of some 200 metres to an outfall to be constructed in the proposed new quay wall;
- the dredging of the Outer Channel of the River;
- the extinguishment of public rights to parade and walk and the creation of a new public footpath
- related works.

This Harbour Revisions Order was confirmed and authorized by the Secretary of State (Department of Transport) on 20 March 2007. In doing so, the Secretary of State accepted Natural England's views that the scheme would have no adverse effect on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites, provided the Mitigation and Monitoring Plan is implemented and full, and this is due to happen (para 4.1, SoS letter, 20 March 2007). The documents indicate that the main effects needing mitigation would be on the Liverpool Bay potential Special Protection Area, rather than the Natura 2000 sites in Sefton, and that sediment and erosion are likely to be the main issues. The Inspector's Report (DfT, 2007) concluded (para cross-references omitted here):

"7.40 ...I also conclude that there are no other plans or projects that could, in combination with the draft Order works, have an adverse effect on any of the European or International sites".

"7.45 I have considered the Environmental Statement and Supplementary Information and I conclude that the assessment is fair and reasonable. I have also considered the impact that the scheme would have on the environment.

7.46 With the proposed Mitigation and Monitoring Plan in place, there would not be an adverse effect on the designated and proposed European and International conservation sites, including the coastal waters off the North Wales and North West Coast which have now been proposed as a Special Protection Area, the Liverpool Bay pSPA.

7.47 There would be negligible change to the wave conditions; the moderately adverse impact of deposition would be offset by subsequent natural redistribution and the effect on the estuary would be negligible. The effect of the construction of the terminal on water and sediment quality would be minor, and there would be negligible impact due to contaminants.

7.48 Dredging and deposition operations would have negligible impact on marine or bird life. Noise impact on fish and marine mammals during construction would be minimised by mitigation measures, with these in place, the effect would be minor and the impact of bird life would be negligible. In operation, the impact on marine life would be negligible".

Accordingly, we consider that there are no significant adverse 'in combination' effects arising from the extension to dock facilities project.

Thus, we consider that there are no likely effects arising from this SPD in combination with other plans and projects.

2. Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of:

- size and scale;
- land-take;
- distance from the Natura 2000 site or key features of the site;
- resource requirements (water abstraction etc.);
- emissions (disposal to land, water or air);
- excavation requirements;

- **transportation requirements;**
- **duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc.;**
- **other.**

This section will assess any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the SPD (including 'in combination effects') on the Natura 2000 sites in Sefton. We consider that the SPD is unlikely to have any significant effects over and above the effect of the existing development plan framework and usual development control processes operating in the area.

Size, scale and land-take of the SPD

As the SPD will focus mostly on larger development sites and existing green space sites – mostly those urban parks or urban greenspaces as designated in the adopted Unitary Development Plan 2006 - we consider that it will have no significant size, scale or land-take impacts. Plan 2 indicates key green spaces.

Distance from the Natura 2000 sites

The SPD applies across the whole of Sefton, although in practice its spatial extent is more limited. It deals with a number of sites or areas only – either through new provision within larger development sites or through enhancement of existing, publicly accessible, green spaces and street tree planting. Plan 2 shows the location of many of these green spaces in relation to the Natura 2000 sites.

Resource requirements resulting from the SPD

No significant resource requirements are likely to result from the SPD.

Emissions resulting from the SPD

No significant emissions are likely to result from the SPD.

Excavation requirements resulting from the SPD

There are no significant excavation requirements which are likely to result from the SPD.

Transportation requirements resulting from the SPD

No significant transportation requirements are likely to result from the SPD.

Duration of the SPD, e.g. construction activities

While the SPD will be in force for a number of years, no significant demolition, construction or other similar activities are likely to result from it.

Other relevant impacts

We consider that the SPD have no other relevant impacts on the Natura 2000 sites.

We consider that the Green space, trees and development SPD is unlikely to give rise to impacts on the Sefton Natura 2000 sites.

3. Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of:

- **reduction of habitat area;**
- **disturbance to key species;**
- **habitat or species fragmentation;**
- **reduction in species density;**
- **changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.);**
- **climate change.**

Within the expected lifetime of this SPD we consider that there are no likely changes to the Natura 2000 sites in Sefton in terms of the following:

- reduction of habitat area - **no reduction in habitat area is likely;**
- disturbance to key species – **no disturbance to key species is likely;**
- habitat or species fragmentation – **no habitat or species fragmentation is likely;**
- reduction in species density – **no reduction in species density is likely;**
- changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.) – **no changes in key indicators of conservation value are likely;**
- climate change – **no likely significant impact.** A report to Sefton’s Cabinet Member (Environmental) on 9 May 2007 about ‘Climate change and the Sefton Coast’ sought to set out an interim consensus to inform management decisions. The report says that:
“The scale of change being discussed when sea-level rise is allowed for is a loss of up to 264 hectares of sand dunes from Formby Point by 2105. Even without sea-level rise and a continuation of current trends there would be a loss of 98 hectares. Given this it will be

important to continue to work in partnership with other organisations on the coast to mitigate the effects of this change”.

At the meeting the Cabinet Member (Environmental) resolved that:

“(1) the report on climate change and Sefton Coast be noted; and

(2) the continuation of the approach detailed in the report be supported”.

It is considered that this partnership working will mitigate effectively, and that overall there will be no likely significant impact on the Natura 2000 sites.

We consider that there are no likely changes arising to the Natura 2000 sites.

4. Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in terms of:

- interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site;
- interference with key relationships that define the function of the site.

We do not think that there are any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 sites in Sefton (taking each site as a whole) in terms of interference with the key relationships that define the structure or function of the sites.

5. Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:

- loss;
- fragmentation;
- disruption;
- disturbance;
- change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc.).

We do not think that any indicators of significance are relevant here.

6. Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known.

We think that there are unlikely to be any significant or unknown impacts. The tables in Appendix 3 provide more information.

Habitats Regulations - Appropriate Assessment

Finding of no significant effects report matrix

Name of project or plan

The planning document is the Green space, trees and development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Name and location of Natura 2000 site

The Natura 2000 sites within Sefton ('the Sefton Natura 2000 sites') are as follows:

- Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar site
- Ribble and Alt Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Sefton Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore proposed Ramsar site
- Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential Special Protection Area (pSPA).

The closest Natura 2000 sites outside Sefton include:

- Martin Mere SPA
- Martin Mere Ramsar site
- Mersey Estuary SPA
- Mersey Estuary Ramsar site
- Dee Estuary SPA
- Dee Estuary Ramsar and proposed Ramsar site
- Dee Estuary candidate SAC
- River Dee and Lake Bala SAC
- Liverpool Bay potential SPA.

However, we consider it inappropriate to screen this SPD against these sites outside Sefton *if* the screening of the Natura 2000 sites within Sefton shows no significant effect i.e. that no full Appropriate Assessment is required for them.

Description of the project or plan

The plan being considered here is the Green space, trees and development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The definition of green space is based on the definition of public 'green infrastructure' used in the Regional Spatial Strategy. That is, green space includes publicly accessible amenity spaces, open space, waterways, trees (notably street trees), green verges, woods, coastal habitats, public parks and gardens, children's playspaces, teenager facilities, allotments, private gardens and natural and semi-natural spaces. We recognise that the SPD has no control over private gardens.

The objective of the final Green space, trees and development SPD is **to set out in more detail our requirements for developers to provide green spaces and trees in association with development, in line with our planning policy, and how this will be achieved in practice.**

Another objective of the draft SPD - to set out standards for provision of green space in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility, focussing especially on parks and gardens and amenity green space – and sections of the document relating to it, have been omitted from the final version. In part this was due to comments received from Government Office for the North West and in part due to increasing recognition that such standards are best set out in the context of future preparation of the Core Strategy.

Our requirements for developers to provide green spaces and trees in association with development may require either new provision or enhancements to existing publicly accessible green spaces, or street tree planting. This is in line our planning policies DQ3' Trees and development' and DQ4 'Public greenspace and development, and also policy NC3 'Habitat Protection, creation and management', in the adopted Unitary Development Plan 2006.

The SPD will not require on-site provision of new green space unless the site holds 50 or more homes or is for major commercial, industrial or leisure development. Between April 2000 and March 2007 there were 17 such housing developments.

So, although the Green space, trees and development SPD applies across the whole of Sefton in practice its spatial extent is much more limited. It deals only with larger developments sites and enhancements to existing, publicly available, green space. Plan 1 shows this SPD boundary and the boundaries of the Natura 2000 sites in Sefton. Plan 2 shows existing key green spaces in Sefton.

The Green space, trees and development SPD applies across the whole of Sefton, although in practice its spatial extent is much more limited. The SPD deals only with developments sites or enhancement of existing, publicly accessible, green spaces and street tree planting. The priorities for green space enhancement and tree planting outside development sites will be set out in the Green Space Strategy and other specific strategies linked to this, prepared by the Council or its partners. Linked strategies cover or will cover specific green space or related areas; for example the Parks and Green Spaces Asset Management Strategy and strategy documents produced for the Sefton Coast. The priorities in the Green space strategy and linked strategies will be informed by deficiencies in relation to the standards set out in the Green space, trees and development SPD and by the views of Area Committees and Planning Committee.

The Parks and Green Spaces Asset Management Strategy, produced by Sefton's Leisure department, focuses mostly on improvements to existing urban parks, and these sites together with existing urban greenspaces in Sefton are likely to form the main focus for enhancement of existing green space provision under the terms of the SPD.

Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (provide details)?

No.

Are there other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)?

We consider that there are no significant adverse 'in combination effects' from the retention of the Antony Gormley 'Another Place' art work on Crosby Beach or the proposed extension to the River Mersey dock facilities in Bootle.

The assessment of significance of effects

Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site.

There are no likely significant effects on the Natura 2000 sites.

Explain why these effects are not considered significant.

N/A

List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or e-mail address.

Natural England

Janet Baguley: Janet.Baguley@naturalengland.org.uk
Government Team South (Cheshire to Lancashire), Natural England

Response received from Liam Fisher: Liam.Fisher@naturalengland.org.uk
Government Team South (Cheshire to Lancashire), Natural England

Response to consultation.

Natural England concur with the Council's conclusions.

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| Data collected to carry out the assessment |
| Who carried out the assessment? Andrea O'Connor (MRTPI), Senior Planner, Local Planning team, Sefton MBC |
| Sources of data Joint Nature Conservation Committee (web-site) Natural England Sefton MBC Department for Transport Department of Central and Local Government |
| Level of assessment completed Desktop study is sufficient to support the conclusions of this screening option. |
| Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed? Sefton Planning Department , Magdalen House, 30 Trinity Road, BOOTLE, L20 3NJ; 9am - 5pm Monday –Thursday, 9.a.m - 4pm Fridays. OR: On our web-site: About the Habitats Regulations Assessment process: http://www.sefton.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=7413 For this SPD: http://www.sefton.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=7446 |

Conclusion

On the basis of the above information, and noting the views of English Nature, Sefton Council is of the opinion and concludes that the proposed plan to which this screening opinion relates – the Green space, trees and development Supplementary Planning Document - :

- a) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site,
- b) is not likely to have a significant effect on each of the following sites:
- Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar site
 - Ribble and Alt Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA)
 - Sefton Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore proposed Ramsar site
 - Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential Special Protection Area (pSPA).
- either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

And accordingly, no “appropriate assessment” is required to be made under Regulations 48,49 and 54 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations before the Council decides to undertake, or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for this plan.

Adopted by Sefton Council on 31 July 2008

Documents referred to:

'Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC' Oxford Brookes University, for European Commission Environment DG, 2001

Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9) 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation', ODPM, 2005

'Sefton Local Development Scheme', Sefton MBC, April 2007 - <http://www.sefton.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=5865>

Adopted Sefton Unitary Development Plan, SMBC, 2006 - <http://www.sefton.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=5861>

Green Space Strategy Issues Report – draft for consultation, Sefton MBC, October 2007 - <http://www.sefton.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=7446> (also shows update of progress on Green space strategy and Green space, trees and development SPD).

Sefton Coast Partnership Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Plan - 2006-2011, Sefton Coast Partnership, 2006 - http://www.seftoncoast.org.uk/part_scmp.html

Report to Planning Committee 7 March 2007: S/2007/0031: Land Forming Part Of Shore Off Marine Terrace extending north approximately 3.5km to Hall Road West, Blundellsands', SMBC, 2007

Letter from Department of Transport (Head of Ports Division) 'The Mersey Docks and Harbour Company (Seaforth River Terminal) Harbour Revision Order', Department of Transport, 20 March 2007.

'Report to the Secretary of State for Transport: The Mersey Docks and Harbour Company (Seaforth River Terminal) Harbour Revision Order 200', Department of Transport, 2007 (see <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/shippingports/ports/ir/>).

Report to Cabinet Member (Environmental) on 9 May 2007 about 'Climate change and the Sefton Coast', and **Minutes (Minute 115)** of this meeting, SMBC, 2007

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Extracts from the European Communities (1992) Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.
- Appendix 2 Key relevant information - Sefton Unitary Development Plan, adopted 2006
- Appendix 3 Tables relating to the conservation objectives for Sefton's Natura 2000 sites

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Appendix 1

The European Communities (1992) Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.

Article 6 (3) says:

'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 and projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In 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 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) says:

'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 states shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that 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 priority species, the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, of beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.'

Appendix 2

Key relevant information - Sefton Unitary Development Plan, adopted 2006

The Sefton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in 2006. It is a 'saved' plan under the Local Development Scheme. This means that the policies in UDP plan will be 'saved' under the new system for a period of three years i.e. until June 2009. Along with Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) they will form a key part of the statutory development plan until then.

The adopted Unitary Development Plan – both Written Statement and Proposals Map – is available on-line at <http://www.sefton.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=5861> . Information about the Local Development Framework is available on-line at <http://www.sefton.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=5853> .

Three **core strategy** policies set out the overall strategy guiding development in Sefton. These are:

- **CS1 'Development and Regeneration'** which states that development should be consistent with the listed priorities for physical and economic regeneration in the period 2001-2016.
- **CS2 'Restraint on development and protection of environmental assets'** which states that:
 - “Development will not be permitted where it would cause significant harm to any of the following:
 - (d) the dune aquifer and associated coastal ecology
 - (e) the effectiveness of the open coast in forming a natural sea defence
 - (f) sites and species of nature conservation importance
 - (g) urban greenspaceUnavoidable losses must be compensated for by equivalent benefits, and in all cases development proposals and/or management regimes should seek to enhance the above assets”.
- **CS3 'Development Principles'** which sets out general principles to be applied when development proposals are considered.

Other key policies

Other policies set out the approach in more detail. The policies of most relevance to this screening statement are:

- **Policies for the provision of new trees and open space in conjunction with development proposals** - DQ3 'Trees and Development' and DQ4 'Public greenspace and development'.
- **Policies for nature conservation** - - Policy NC1 'Site Protection', NC2 'Protection of Species' and Policy NC3 'Habitat Protection, Creation and Management'.
- **Policies for countryside recreation** – G7 'Strategic paths for countryside recreation', G8 'Countryside recreation areas' and CPZ4 'Coastal Park'.

Policies for the provision of new trees and open space in conjunction with development proposals

Policy DQ3 'Trees and development' sets out the requirement for the provision of new trees in association with development. 3 new trees are required for each new home. In conversion schemes to housing (usually flats) the number of trees required is based on the net gain of homes. For any new build development other than housing (including extensions) the greater of 1 tree for each parking space or 1 tree per 50m² gross floorspace is required.

Policy DQ4 'Public greenspace and development' sets out the requirement for the provision of publicly accessible green space in association with development. Where 5 or more homes are due to be provided publicly accessible green space should be provided to meet the standard of 55m² for each new home. This includes all homes in conversion schemes. For major new commercial, industrial or leisure developments, where a clear shortage of green space has been identified in the locality of the development within a Council-approved Greenspace Strategy publicly accessible green space is required.

Nature conservation policies

Policy NC1 'Site Protection' states that development which would harm the nature conservation objectives or integrity of the sites of international, national, or local importance (shown on the Proposals Map) will not be permitted. The international sites referred to are the Natura 2000 sites; that is, designated and proposed Ramsar Sites, designated and potential Special Protection Areas and designated and candidate Special Areas of Conservation. The policy goes on to state that "In the case of international sites, development will only be allowed where there are no alternative solutions and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest".

Policy NC2 'Protection of Species' states that development will not be permitted which may cause harm to protected or other rare or vulnerable species of animal or plant, or its habitat, unless it can be demonstrated that the impact can be successfully mitigated. The explanation to the policy makes clear that species subject to special protection in Sefton include all wild birds, all bat species, badgers, red squirrels, water voles, great crested newts, natterjack toads, sand lizards and petalwort.

Policy NC3 'Habitat Protection, Creation and Management' deals mainly with sites other than internationally and nationally important sites.

Policies for countryside recreation

Policy G7 'Strategic Paths for Countryside Recreation' defines the Strategic Paths including footpaths, cycle routes, greenways and the canal towpath) in Sefton, and requires development on or adjacent to a Strategic Path to enhance the existing route or to help implement the proposed route.

Policy G8 'Countryside recreation areas' designates 4 countryside recreation areas. It states that development which would significantly harm their informal recreation use, public access or tranquillity will not be allowed and that development which is allowed should enhance informal recreation use.

Policy CPZ4 'Coastal Park' applies the same criteria (as policy G8) to the area designated as Coastal Park.

Appendix 3: Assessment of impacts of the SPD on Sefton's Natura 2000 sites

| Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore proposed Ramsar Site | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|---|--|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Based on tables 2, 2a, 3a3b and 3c in English Nature's 'Draft Conservation Objectives for Mersey Narrows', March 2006 | | | | | | | |
| Feature | Sub-Feature | Attribute | Measures | Site-specific targets | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination' effects' | Conclusion |
| Internationally important populations of waterbirds | Saline Lagoon | The basin area is defined, based on aerial photos, as approx 5.6ha. | | No reduction in extent of saline lagoon area. Area (ha) measured once per reporting cycle. At least 60% of the water of the lagoon persisting at all times of year and states of tide | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Saline Lagoon | Isolating barrier (presence and nature) | Functioning of pumps and structure of the causeway | No change in measure from an established baseline | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Saline Lagoon | Salinity regime | Salinity (psu) | Average seasonal salinity, and seasonal maxima and minima, should not deviate significantly from an established baseline | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Saline Lagoon | Biotope composition of lagoon | Range of biotopes present | Maintain the variety of biotopes identified for the site, allowing for succession/ known cyclical change | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Saline | Extent of | Area (ha) | No change in extent of the | No likely | The SPD | Appropriate |

Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore proposed Ramsar Site

Based on tables 2, 2a, 3a3b and 3c in English Nature's 'Draft Conservation Objectives for Mersey Narrows', March 2006

| Feature | Sub-Feature | Attribute | Measures | Site-specific targets | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|----------------|---|---|---|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| | Lagoon | representative/notable biotopes | measured once per reporting cycle | biotope(s) identified for the site, allowing for succession /known cyclical change | impacts | will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Saline Lagoon | Distribution of biotopes | Biotope distribution | Maintain the distribution of biotopes, allowing for succession /known cyclical change | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Saline Lagoon | Species composition of representative or notable biotopes | Species composition/pr esence of notable (characterising) species | No decline in biotope quality due to changes in species composition or loss of notable species, allowing for natural succession/known cyclical change | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Saline Lagoon | Water depth | Average water depth (m) | Average water depth (m) within the lagoon basin at low tide (assessed at the same time of year) should not deviate significantly from an established baseline, subject to natural change | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Littoral Sediment (Intertidal sediment) | Based on aerial photos, area of intertidal sediment is | | No decrease in extent of littoral sediment, subject to natural change. Area (ha) measured once per reporting cycle. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be |

Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore proposed Ramsar Site

Based on tables 2, 2a, 3a3b and 3c in English Nature's 'Draft Conservation Objectives for Mersey Narrows', March 2006

| Feature | Sub-Feature | Attribute | Measures | Site-specific targets | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|----------------|---|---|--|---|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| | communities) | approx 6.65ha. | | | | effects. | screened out. |
| | Littoral Sediment (Intertidal sediment communities) | Biotope composition of littoral sediment | Biotope variety | Maintain the variety of biotopes identified for the site, allowing for natural succession / known cyclical change | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Littoral Sediment (Intertidal sediment communities) | Sediment character | Nature and distribution of sediment | No change in composition of sediment type across the feature, allowing for natural succession /known cyclical change | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Littoral Sediment (Intertidal sediment communities) | Distribution of biotopes | Biotope distribution | Maintain the distribution of biotopes, allowing for natural succession/known cyclical change | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Littoral Sediment (Intertidal sediment communities) | Presence and abundance of key invertebrate prey species | Presence (number of individuals per m ²) and biomass | Maintain the presence, abundance and biomass of key prey species, subject to natural change | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Saltmarsh | Based on aerial photos, saltmarsh extent is | | No decrease in extent from the established baseline, subject to natural change. Area (ha) measured once per reporting | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be |

Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore proposed Ramsar Site

Based on tables 2, 2a, 3a3b and 3c in English Nature's 'Draft Conservation Objectives for Mersey Narrows', March 2006

| Feature | Sub-Feature | Attribute | Measures | Site-specific targets | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|----------------|--------------------|---|---|---|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| | | approx 1.6ha | | cycle. | | effects. | screened out. |
| | Saltmarsh | Physical structure: creeks and pans | Pattern of creeks and presence of pans | No anthropogenic alteration of creek patterns or loss of pans compared to an established baseline | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Saltmarsh | Vegetation structure: zonation, sward structure | Presence of different zones of saltmarsh vegetation | Maintain the range of variation of zonation typical of the site | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Saltmarsh | Vegetation composition | Diversity of species and coverage | Maintain the frequency of characteristic species of saltmarsh zones | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |

Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential Special Protection Area

Based on tables 2, 2a, 3a3b and 3c in English Nature's 'Draft Conservation Objectives for Mersey Narrows', March 2006

| Feature | Sub-Feature | Attribute | Measures | Site-specific targets | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|---------------|-------------|---|--|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Saline Lagoon | | The basin area is defined, based on aerial photos, as approx 5.6ha. | | No reduction in extent of saline lagoon area. Area (ha) measured once per reporting cycle. At least 60% of the water of the lagoon persisting at all times of year and states of tide | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Saline Lagoon | | Isolating barrier (presence and nature) | Functioning of pumps and structure of the causeway | No change in measure from an established baseline | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Saline Lagoon | | Salinity regime | Salinity (psu) | Average seasonal salinity, and seasonal maxima and minima, should not deviate significantly from an established baseline | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Saline Lagoon | | Biotope composition of lagoon | Range of biotopes present | Maintain the variety of biotopes identified for the site, allowing for succession/known cyclical change | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Saline Lagoon | | *Extent of representative/not | Area (ha) measured once per | No change in extent of the biotope(s) identified for the | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have | Appropriate Assessment not |

Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential Special Protection Area

Based on tables 2, 2a, 3a3b and 3c in English Nature's 'Draft Conservation Objectives for Mersey Narrows', March 2006

| Feature | Sub-Feature | Attribute | Measures | Site-specific targets | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|---|-------------|---|--|--|-------------------------------|---|--|
| | | able biotopes | reporting cycle | site, allowing for succession/known cyclical change | | any 'in combination' effects. | required. This element can be screened out. |
| Saline Lagoon | | *Distribution of biotopes | Biotope distribution | Maintain the distribution of biotopes, allowing for succession/known cyclical change | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Saline Lagoon | | *Species composition of representative or notable biotopes | Species composition/presence of notable (characterising) species | No decline in biotope quality due to changes in species composition or loss of notable species, allowing for natural succession/known cyclical change | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Saline Lagoon | | *Water depth | Average water depth (m) | Average water depth (m) within the lagoon basin at low tide (assessed at the same time of year) should not deviate significantly from an established baseline, subject to natural change | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Littoral Sediment (Intertidal sediment) | | Based on aerial photos, area of intertidal sediment is approx 6.65ha. | | No decrease in extent of littoral sediment, subject to natural change. Area (ha) measured once per reporting | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be |

Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential Special Protection Area

Based on tables 2, 2a, 3a3b and 3c in English Nature's 'Draft Conservation Objectives for Mersey Narrows', March 2006

| Feature | Sub-Feature | Attribute | Measures | Site-specific targets | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|---|-------------|--|--|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| communities) | | | | cycle. | | effects. | screened out. |
| Littoral Sediment (Intertidal sediment communities) | | Biotope composition of littoral sediment | Biotope variety | Maintain the variety of biotopes identified for the site, allowing for natural succession/known cyclical change | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Littoral Sediment (Intertidal sediment communities) | | Sediment character | Nature and distribution of sediment | No change in composition of sediment type across the feature, allowing for natural succession/known cyclical change | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Littoral Sediment (Intertidal sediment communities) | | Distribution of biotopes | Biotope distribution | Maintain the distribution of biotopes, allowing for natural succession/known cyclical change | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Littoral Sediment (Intertidal sediment communities) | | Presence and abundance of key invertebrate prey species | Presence (number of individuals per m ²) and biomass | Maintain the presence, abundance and biomass of key prey species, subject to natural change | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Saltmarsh | | Based on aerial photos, saltmarsh extent is approx 1.6ha | | No decrease in extent from the established baseline, subject to natural change. Area (ha) measured once per | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be |

Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential Special Protection Area

Based on tables 2, 2a, 3a3b and 3c in English Nature's 'Draft Conservation Objectives for Mersey Narrows', March 2006

| Feature | Sub-Feature | Attribute | Measures | Site-specific targets | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|-----------|---|---|---|--|-------------------------------|---|--|
| | | | | reporting cycle. | | effects. | screened out. |
| Saltmarsh | | Physical structure: creeks and pans | Pattern of creeks and presence of pans | No anthropogenic alteration of creek patterns or loss of pans compared to an established baseline | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Saltmarsh | | Vegetation structure: zonation, sward structure | Presence of different zones of saltmarsh vegetation | Maintain the range of variation of zonation typical of the site | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Saltmarsh | | Vegetation composition | Diversity of species and coverage | Maintain the frequency of characteristic species of saltmarsh zones | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Redshank | Littoral Sediment (Intertidal sediment communities) Saltmarsh | Population (mean peak count 1993/94 - 1997/98) = 1,830. | | No absolute loss of any more than 50% of the population. Landscape: Open terrain, relatively free of obstructions (anti-predator). Areas with unrestricted views [>200m] and an effective field size [>10ha] | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |

Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential Special Protection Area

Based on tables 2, 2a, 3a3b and 3c in English Nature's 'Draft Conservation Objectives for Mersey Narrows', March 2006

| Feature | Sub-Feature | Attribute | Measures | Site-specific targets | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|----------------|---|---|-----------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Turnstone | Littoral Sediment (Intertidal sediment communities) Saltmarsh | Population (mean peak count 1993/94 - 1997/98) = 1,523. | | No absolute loss of any more than 50% of the population. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Cormorant | Littoral Sediment (Intertidal sediment communities) Saltmarsh | Population (mean peak count 1993/94 - 1997/98) = 559. | | No absolute loss of any more than 50% of the population. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |

Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar Site

Based on English Nature's 'Draft Regulation 33 advice for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European Marine Site', May 2001- Table 2: Favourable Condition for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European marine site, pp 24-27; Herpetological Conservation Trust web-site; North Merseyside Bio-diversity Action Plan web-site: Species Plan: Natterjack Toad.

| Feature | Sub- Feature | Measure | Attribute | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|---|------------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Internationally important populations of waterbirds | All sub-features | Disturbance in feeding and roosting areas. | Reduction or displacement of wintering birds measured using 5 year peak mean information on populations. Measured periodically. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | | Absence of obstructions to view lines | Openness of terrain unrestricted by obstructions. Measured periodically. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Intertidal sand and mudflats | Extent and distribution of habitat | Area (ha), measured once per reporting cycle. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | | Food availability | Presence and abundance of surface and sub-surface invertebrates. Measured periodically. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |

Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar Site

Based on English Nature's 'Draft Regulation 33 advice for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European Marine Site', May 2001- Table 2: Favourable Condition for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European marine site, pp 24-27; Herpetological Conservation Trust web-site; North Merseyside Bio-diversity Action Plan web-site: Species Plan: Natterjack Toad.

| Feature | Sub- Feature | Measure | Attribute | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|------------------|------------------|---|--|-------------------------------|---|--|
| | Saltmarsh | Extent and distribution of habitat | Area (ha), measured once per reporting cycle. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | | Vegetation Characteristics | Open, short vegetation or bare ground predominating (roosting). Measured periodically. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | | Food availability | Presence and abundance of invertebrates. Measured periodically. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Natterjack toads | Sand dune slacks | Extent and distribution of habitat | Area (ha), measured once per reporting cycle. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | | Ponds and slacks from winter through to late summer | Visual assessment. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be |

Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar Site

Based on English Nature's 'Draft Regulation 33 advice for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European Marine Site', May 2001- Table 2: Favourable Condition for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European marine site, pp 24-27; Herpetological Conservation Trust web-site; North Merseyside Bio-diversity Action Plan web-site: Species Plan: Natterjack Toad.

| Feature | Sub- Feature | Measure | Attribute | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|---------|--------------|---|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| | | | | | effects. | screened out. |
| | | Short grassland and are sand for feeding areas. | Measured periodically. Visual assessment. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | | Open sand ridges for burrows | Measured periodically. Visual assessment. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Saltmarsh | Extent and distribution of habitat | Area (ha), measured once per reporting cycle. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |

Ribble and Alt Estuaries Special Protection Area

Source: English Nature's 'Draft Regulation 33 advice for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European Marine Site', May 2001- Table 2: Favourable Condition for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European marine site, pp 24-27

| Feature | Sub-Feature | Measure | Attribute | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|--|------------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Internationally important populations of regularly occurring Annex 1 bird species (eg golden plover, Bewick's swan, whooper swan, bar-tailed godwit) | All sub-features | Disturbance in feeding and roosting areas. | Reduction or displacement of wintering birds. Measured periodically. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | | Absence of obstructions to view lines | Openness of terrain unrestricted by obstructions. Measured periodically. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Intertidal sand and mudflats | Extent and distribution of habitat | Area (ha), measured once per reporting cycle. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | | Food availability | Presence and abundance of surface and sub-surface invertebrates. Measured periodically. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Internationally important | Saltmarsh | Extent and | Area (ha), measured once per | No likely | The SPD | Appropriate |

Ribble and Alt Estuaries Special Protection Area

Source: English Nature's 'Draft Regulation 33 advice for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European Marine Site', May 2001- Table 2: Favourable Condition for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European marine site, pp 24-27

| Feature | Sub-Feature | Measure | Attribute | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|--|------------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| populations of regularly occurring Annex 1 bird species (eg golden plover, Bewick's swan, whooper swan, bar-tailed godwit) | | distribution of habitat | reporting cycle. | impacts | will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | | Vegetation Characteristics | Open, short vegetation or bare ground predominating (roosting). Measured periodically. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Internationally important assemblage including internationally important populations of migratory species. | All sub-features | Disturbance in feeding and roosting areas. | Reduction or displacement of wintering birds measured using 5 year peak mean information on populations. Measured periodically. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | | Absence of obstructions to view lines | Openness of terrain unrestricted by obstructions. Measured periodically. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Intertidal sand and mudflats | Extent and distribution of habitat | Area (ha), measured once per reporting cycle. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in | Appropriate Assessment not required. This |

Ribble and Alt Estuaries Special Protection Area

Source: English Nature's 'Draft Regulation 33 advice for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European Marine Site', May 2001- Table 2: Favourable Condition for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European marine site, pp 24-27

| Feature | Sub-Feature | Measure | Attribute | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| | | | | | combination' effects. | element can be screened out. |
| Internationally important assemblage including internationally important populations of migratory species. | Intertidal sand and mudflats | Food availability | Presence and abundance of sub-surface invertebrates. Measured periodically. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | | Food availability | Presence and abundance of eelgrass and/or green algae. Measured periodically. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | Saltmarsh | Extent and distribution of habitat | Area (ha), measured once per reporting cycle. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | | Food availability | Presence and abundance of invertebrates. Measured periodically. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Internationally important | Saltmarsh | Food availability | Presence and abundance of | No likely | The SPD | Appropriate |

Ribble and Alt Estuaries Special Protection Area

Source: English Nature's 'Draft Regulation 33 advice for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European Marine Site', May 2001- Table 2: Favourable Condition for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European marine site, pp 24-27

| Feature | Sub-Feature | Measure | Attribute | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|--|-------------|----------------------------|--|-------------------------------|---|--|
| assemblage including internationally important populations of migratory species. | | | soft leaved and seed bearing plants. Measured periodically. | impacts | will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | | Vegetation Characteristics | Open, short vegetation or bare ground predominating (roosting). Measured periodically. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |

Sefton Coast Special Area of Conservation

Based on English Nature's 'SAC: Component SSSI: Sefton Coast: Conservation objectives for the European Interest on the SSSI' dated 19/7/02).

| Feature | Sub- Feature | Measure | Attribute | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|-----------|--|--|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Sand dune | Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation | Extent | Area (ha) of fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation measured once per reporting cycle, by analysis of aerial photographs | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation | Substrate | Presence of sand with naturally derived organic matter in surface layers. Assess once per reporting cycle by visual assessment. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation | Range and zonation of vegetation communities | Presence of vegetation communities and patterns of distribution characteristic of fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation. Sample at least once during reporting cycle with the assessment being carried out at the optimal time in the growing season (May-August). Measure by NVC survey or visual assessment. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation | Vegetation structure | Relative proportions of short to tall vegetation. Visual assessment or sampling of height measurements, measured periodically (frequency to be determined). | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Fixed dunes with herbaceous | Vegetation-negative indicators | Extent of species not typical of fixed dunes, including scrub/tree cover. Area (ha) assessed from air photographs measured | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in | Appropriate Assessment not required. This |

Sefton Coast Special Area of Conservation

Based on English Nature's 'SAC: Component SSSI: Sefton Coast: Conservation objectives for the European Interest on the SSSI' dated 19/7/02).

| Feature | Sub- Feature | Measure | Attribute | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| | vegetation | | once per reporting cycle. | | combination' effects. | element can be screened out. |
| Sand Dunes | Eu-Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes | Extent | Area (ha) of decalcified fixed dunes measured once per reporting cycle. Assess from aerial photography. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand Dunes | Eu-Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes | Substrate | Presence of sand with very low lime content in surface layers, (and hence a low pH, i.e. less than 6.5), with low levels of plant nutrients. Assess once per reporting cycle. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand Dunes | Eu-Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes | Vegetation composition and zonation | Presence of vegetation communities and patterns of distribution characteristic of Eu-Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes measured by visual assessment once during reporting cycle with the assessment being carried out at the optimal time in the growing season (May-August). | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand Dunes | Eu-Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes | Vegetation structure | Relative proportion (estimated % over extent of habitat) of dwarf-shrub heath in different growth phases (pioneer; building; mature; senescent) that have been previously recorded on the site. Assess at ten yearly intervals. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Dunes with <i>Salix arenaria</i> | Extent | Area (ha) of dunes with <i>Salix arenaria</i> measured once per reporting cycle. Assess | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have | Appropriate Assessment not |

Sefton Coast Special Area of Conservation

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| Feature | Sub- Feature | Measure | Attribute | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|-----------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| | | | from aerial photography with ground truthing exercise. | | any 'in combination' effects. | required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Dunes with <i>Salix arenaria</i> | Vegetation composition and zonation | Presence of vegetation communities and patterns of distribution characteristic of dunes with <i>Salix arenaria</i> sampled at least once during reporting cycle with the assessment being carried out at the optimal time in the growing season (May-August). | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Dunes with <i>Salix arenaria</i> | Vegetation structure | Density and height of <i>Salix arenaria</i> stands. Visual assessment of % cover and height once per reporting cycle. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Dunes with <i>Salix arenaria</i> | Vegetation negative indicators | Presence of negative indicator species including non-native species, invasive species indicative of changes in nutrient status and species not characteristic of typical communities. Measured by visual assessment once per reporting cycle. Sea buckthorn <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i> , white poplar <i>Populus alba</i> , balsam poplar <i>Populus candicans</i> and pines – various species but mainly <i>Pinus nigra laricio</i> | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand | Humid dune | Extent | Area (ha) of dune slacks measured once per | No likely | The SPD | Appropriate |

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|-----------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|---|--|
| dune | slacks | | reporting cycle. Can be assessed from area of slack vegetation in growing season (NVC surveys) or area of standing water at the end of a wet winter (February/March) using aerial photography. Due to the large number of slacks in the site, a sample should be assessed each reporting cycle. | impacts | will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| | | Substrate | Presence of sand and naturally-derived organic matter at depths that allow the water table to influence the surface layers. Measured once per reporting cycle by visual assessment of a sample of sites across the site. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Humid dune slacks | Hydrological regime | Proportion of dune slack area with standing water in summer months (July/August). A sample of slacks should be monitored once per reporting cycle using existing dipwell system and aerial photography. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Humid dune slacks | Vegetation composition and zonation | Presence of vegetation communities and patterns of distribution characteristic of humid dune slacks sampled at least once during reporting cycle with the assessment being carried out at the optimal time in the growing season (May-August). Measured by visual assessment and NVC sample surveys. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand | Humid dune | Vegetation negative | Presence of negative indicator species | No likely | The SPD | Appropriate |

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|-----------|--------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| dune | slacks | indicators | including non-native species, invasive species indicative of changes in nutrient status and species not characteristic of typical communities. | impacts | will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Embryonic shifting dunes | Extent | Length (m) or area (ha) of embryonic shifting dunes, measured once per reporting cycle in July/August, and percentage of area supporting at least sparse embryonic dune vegetation. Measured by visual assessment supplemented by aerial photography. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Embryonic shifting dunes | Substrate | Presence of exposed beach plain at low tide drying to supply blown sand on to sufficient area for deposition of sand, often associated with drift line organic debris. Assessed at least once per reporting cycle. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Embryonic shifting dunes | Mobility | Percentage of linear extent and area of substrate suitable for colonisation by embryonic shifting dunes not immediately constrained by introduced structures, landforms or management measured once per reporting cycle. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Embryonic shifting dunes | Characteristic species of embryonic shifting dunes | Presence and cover of characterising species, particularly <i>Elytrigia juncea</i> , and/or <i>Leymus arenarius</i> , with other species such as <i>Honkenya peploides</i> , <i>Cakile maritima</i> during the summer months of June, July or August. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |

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| Feature | Sub- Feature | Measure | Attribute | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|-----------|---|---------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Sand dune | Embryonic shifting dunes | Lack of disturbance | Proportion of the embryonic shifting dune areas where vegetation/colonisation is prevented by persistent human disturbance. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white Dunes) | Extent | Area (ha) of shifting dunes along the shoreline with, <i>Ammophila</i> measured once per reporting cycle during the summer months of June, July or August. Measured by aerial photography. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white Dunes) | Substrate | Presence of blown sand within stands of <i>Ammophila</i> . Measured by visual assessment once per reporting cycle. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white Dunes) | Mobility | Percentage of linear extent of substrate suitable for colonisation by shifting dunes not immediately constrained by introduced structures, landforms, or operations measured once per reporting cycle by visual assessment. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Shifting dunes along the | Range of vegetation communities | Presence of active healthy marram grass (<i>Ammophila arenaria</i>) and/or other species at | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have | Appropriate Assessment not |

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| Feature | Sub- Feature | Measure | Attribute | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|---------------------|---|------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| | shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white Dunes) | | frequencies which characterise this habitat including <i>Carex arenaria</i> ; <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ; <i>Elymus farctus</i> ; <i>Leymus arenarius</i> ; other drought tolerant annuals and bryophytes. Measured once per reporting cycle by visual assessment. | | any 'in combination' effects. | required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white Dunes) | Characteristic Species | Presence of one or more of the characteristic special species which may include: <i>Eryngium maritimum</i> ; <i>Euphorbia portlandica</i> ; <i>Euphorbia paralias</i> ; <i>Calystegia soldanella</i> . Surveys to establish presence will be required in June to August once per reporting cycle. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune | Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white Dunes) | Lack of disturbance | Proportion of the shifting dune areas where vegetation colonisation/re colonisation is prevented by persistent human disturbance | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Great crested newts | Terrestrial habitat | Extent | 1) Area of habitat around suitable waterbodies. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Great crested | Terrestrial habitat | Structure and Quality | 2) Habitat structure and quality | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have | Appropriate Assessment not |

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|---------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|---|--|
| newts | | | | | any 'in combination' effects. | required. This element can be screened out. |
| Great crested newts | Ponds | Presence of ponds | Ponds (permanent & temporary) | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Great crested newts | Ponds | Pollution | Absence of pollution | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Great crested newts | Ponds | Presence of ponds | Ponds (permanent & temporary) | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Great crested newts | Ponds | Extent (depth and persistence) | Ponds should be of sufficient size and depth to avoid desiccation over the course of the breeding/tadpole development season (Feb to mid-Aug) for at least 1 in every 3 years. | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |

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| Feature | Sub- Feature | Measure | Attribute | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|---------------------|--|--|--|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Great crested newts | Ponds | Shading | Extent of shading by trees | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Great crested newts | Ponds | Fish | Absence of fish in majority of ponds | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune (slacks) | Petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>) | Quantity NB: If one attribute fails, the site is not in favourable condition for petalwort. | Visual assessment between October and April (avoid dry weather or when slacks flooded) | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune (slacks) | Petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>) | Sward height NB: If one attribute fails, the site is not in favourable condition for petalwort. | Visual assessment between October and April (avoid dry weather or when slacks flooded) | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune (slacks) | Petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>) | Shade NB: If one attribute fails, the site is not in favourable condition for petalwort. | Visual assessment between October and April (avoid dry weather or when slacks flooded) | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |

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| Feature | Sub- Feature | Measure | Attribute | Possible impacts from the SPD | Possible 'in combination effects' | Conclusion |
|--------------------|--|---|--|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Sand dune (slacks) | Petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>) | Vegetation NB: If one attribute fails, the site is not in favourable condition for petalwort. | Visual assessment between October and April (avoid dry weather or when slacks flooded) | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |
| Sand dune (slacks) | Petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>) | Water table NB: If one attribute fails, the site is not in favourable condition for petalwort. | Visual assessment during winter months | No likely impacts | The SPD will not have any 'in combination' effects. | Appropriate Assessment not required. This element can be screened out. |

