



Habitats Regulations Screening Report

To accompany the Development Management
Policies Preferred Options Consultation
September 2009



Draft Habitats Regulations Screening Report

September 2009

Stephen Archer
Strategic Director (Regeneration and Environment)
Town Hall
High Street
Lowestoft
Suffolk
NR32 1HS

Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Background information - environmental features of Natura 2000 sites in and around Waveney	6
3. Waveney Development Management Policies	26
4. Other key plans and strategies	28
5. Assessment of likely effect of Waveney Core Strategy policies on Natura 2000 sites	31
6. Summary and conclusions	40
List of abbreviations	42

1. Introduction

This report presents the results of a screening process to determine whether the preferred policies identified through the Waveney Development Management Policies development plan document (DPD) are likely to have a significant effect on any site in the Natura 2000 network, and therefore whether full Appropriate Assessment will be required.

The Natura 2000 network provides protection for sites that are of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species within the European Union. The network consists of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). SACs are sites of European importance for nature conservation designated under the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna Directive (92/43/EEC). SPAs are sites of European importance for nature conservation designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (70/409/EEC). Both types can also be referred to as European Sites. In accordance with Planning Policy Statement 9 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation, Ramsar sites, or internationally important wetland habitats, have also been included in this Appropriate Assessment screening report.

The requirement to carry out Appropriate Assessment of land use plans is outlined in the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), and was transposed into English law in an amendment to the Habitats Regulations (SI No. 2716) in 2006.

There are three stages to the Appropriate Assessment process.

- Task 1: Determining whether a plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site. This needs to take account of the likely impacts in combination with other relevant plans and projects. This assessment should be made using the precautionary principle.
- Task 2: Carrying out Appropriate Assessment and ascertaining the effect on site integrity. The effects of the plan on the conservation objectives of sites should be assessed, to ascertain whether the plan has an adverse effect on the integrity of a European site.
- Task 3: Identifying mitigation measures and alternative solutions. The aim of this task is to find ways of avoiding or significantly reducing adverse impacts, so that site integrity is no longer at risk. If there are still likely to be negative impacts, the option should be dropped, unless exceptionally it can be justified by imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

This screening report contains the results of task 1 in relation to preferred options for the Waveney Development Management Policies DPD. Tasks 2 and 3 are only required if the screening stage (task 1) concludes that there is likely to be a significant impact on a European site.

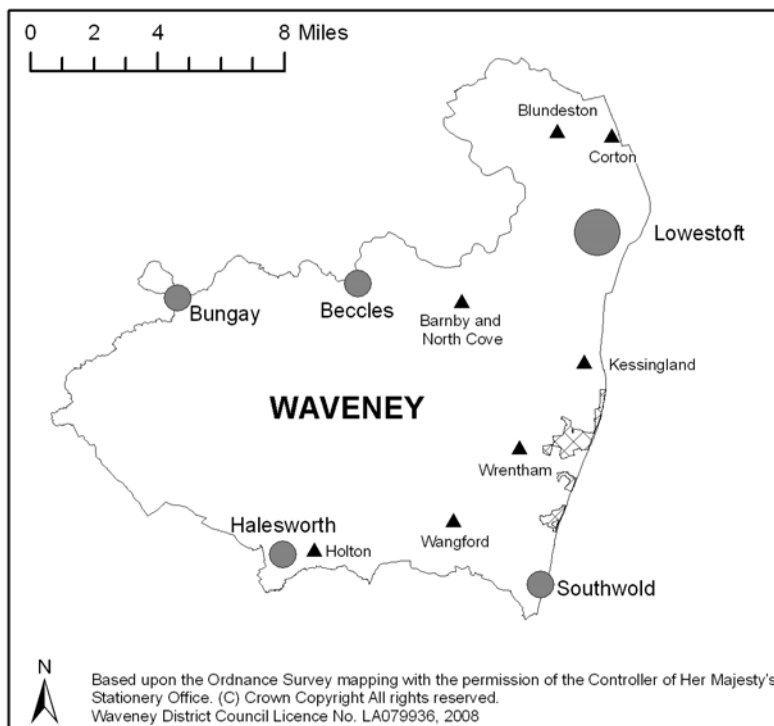
Sites included in this assessment are listed in table 1. This includes sites wholly or partly within the District and selected sites close to its boundaries. The River Waveney flows through Waveney District and into the estuary at Breydon Water, so it is possible that any impact on water quality and flow rates could affect this site. Other sites outside the District have been included as they may be vulnerable to possible changes to groundwater, for example, or impacts on the water cycle in general.

Table 1. Natura 2000 sites covered by this screening report

	SAC name	SPA name	Ramsar name	Area (ha)	Location
1	Benacre to Easton Barents Lagoons			366.93	Wholly within Waveney, on the coast.
2		Benacre to Easton Barents		516.83	Wholly within Waveney, on the coast.
3	The Broads			5865.6	Partially within Waveney. Mostly in Norfolk, but extending into northern parts of the District.
4		Broadland		5462.4	Partially within Waveney. Mostly in Norfolk, but extending into northern parts of the District.
5			Broadland	5488.61	Partially within Waveney. Mostly in Norfolk, but extending into northern parts of the District.
6	Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths and Marshes			1265.52	Partially within Waveney. Mostly in Suffolk Coastal, but extending into southern, coastal parts of the District.
7		Minsmere to Walberswick		2018.92	Partially within Waveney. Mostly in Suffolk Coastal, but extending into southern, coastal parts of the District.
8			Minsmere to Walberswick	2018.92	Partially within Waveney. Mostly in Suffolk Coastal, but extending into southern, coastal parts of the District.
9	Dew's Ponds			6.74	Outside Waveney, in Suffolk Coastal District.
10	Waveney and Little Ouse Valley Fens			193.18	Outside Waveney, in Norfolk and Suffolk.
11			Redgrave and South Lopham Fens	127.09	Outside Waveney, in Norfolk and Suffolk.
12	Norfolk Valley Fens			616.21	Outside Waveney, in Norfolk.
13		Breydon Water		1202.94	Outside Waveney, in Norfolk.
14			Breydon Water	1202.94	Outside Waveney, in Norfolk.

2. Background information - environmental features of Natura 2000 sites in and around Waveney

2.1. Benacre to Easton Bavents Lagoons SAC



Qualifying features (habitats/species)

- Coastal lagoons – one of the best areas in the UK.

Priority features

- Coastal lagoons
- Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*)

Key environmental features that support site integrity

A series of percolation lagoons with a wide range of salinities, separated from the sea by shingle barriers. The site supports a number of specialist lagoonal species.

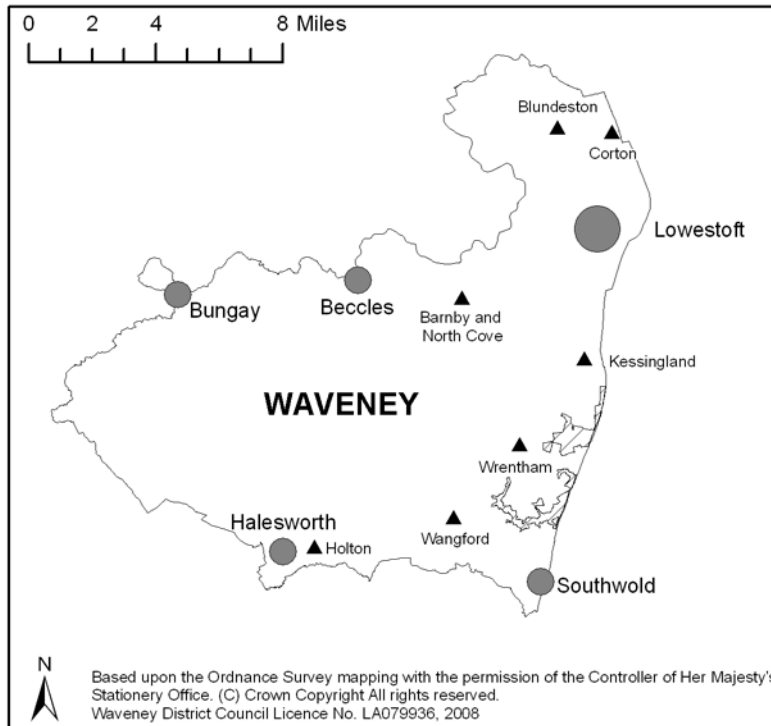
Vulnerability of site

The lagoons at the Denes were created through shingle extraction. Salinity is maintained through percolation and overtopping of the shingle barrier. No management input is required to maintain these lagoons. The lagoons at Benacre, Covehithe and Easton are natural and result from ponded streams behind shingle barriers. Seawater enters the lagoons through overtopping of the barriers during high tides. Natural sea level rise will lead to more frequent saltwater inundation – beneficial for some habitats but causing loss of others. Saline lagoons will migrate landward as the coastline erodes, so their existence should not be compromised in short to medium term. Management actions to reduce the rate of erosion are being addressed through the Shoreline Management Plan, and new lagoons have been created further from the coastline.

Conservation Objectives

- Subject to natural change, to maintain, in favourable condition, the lagoons.

2.2. Benacre to Easton Bavents SPA



Qualifying features (habitats/species)

- During the breeding season:
 - Bittern, *Botaurus stellaris* (5% of GB breeding population)
 - Marsh harrier, *Circus aeruginosus* (5.1% of GB breeding population)
 - Little tern, *Sterna albifrons* (0.9% of GB breeding population)

Key environmental features that support site integrity

Shingle barriers provide nesting habitat for Little tern; reed beds and grazing marsh provide breeding habitat for Bittern and Marsh harrier.

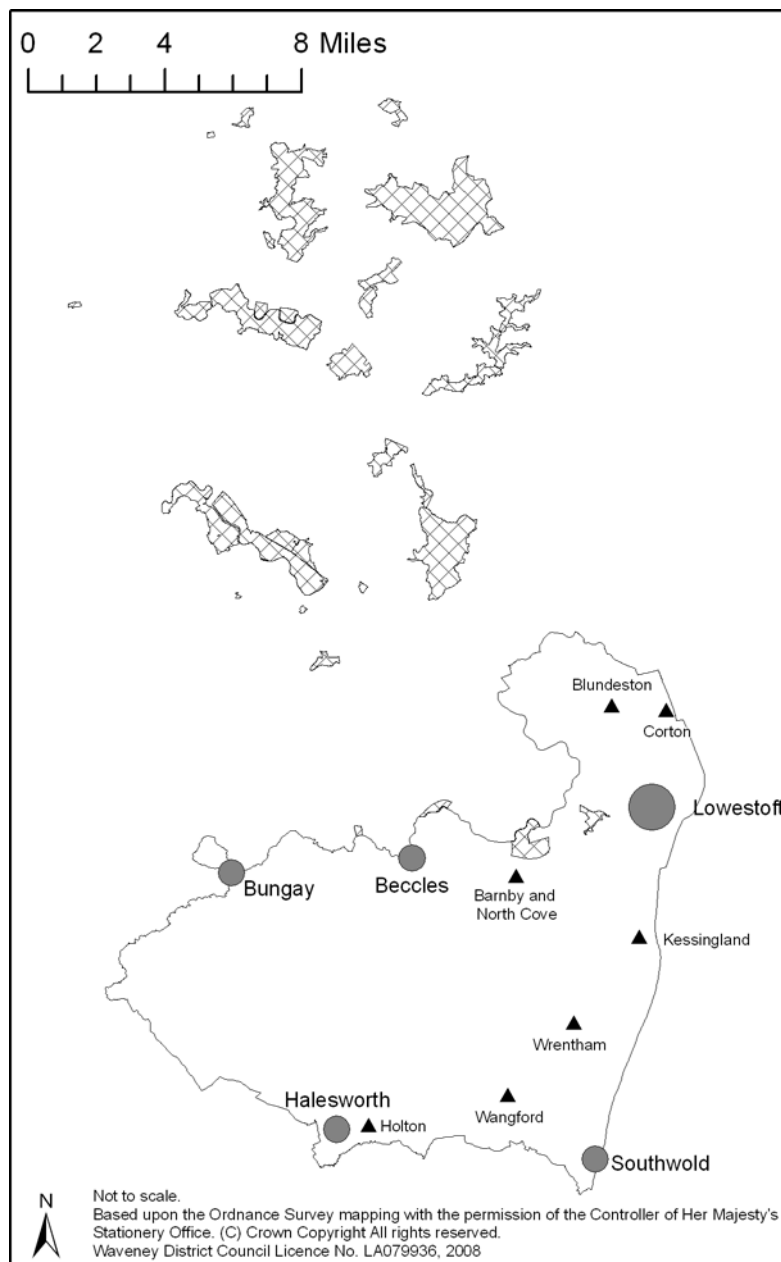
Vulnerability of site

As above.

Conservation Objectives

- Subject to natural change, to maintain, in favourable condition, the lagoons.
- To maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats for the populations of Annex 1 species (bittern, little tern and marsh harrier) of European importance, with particular reference to:
 - shingle;
 - shallow coastal waters;
 - standing water;
 - swamp; and
 - marginal and inundation communities.

2.3. The Broads SAC



Qualifying features (habitats/species)

- Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of *Chara* spp.
- Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrochariton-type vegetation
- Transition mires and quaking bogs
- Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae* (rare)
- Alkaline fens
- Alluvial forests with Alder, *Alnus glutinosa* and Ash, *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*)
- Desmoulin's whorl snail, *Vertigo moulinsiana*
 - one of the best places in the UK for all of the above

- Fen orchid, *Liparis loeselii*
 - one of only 3 outstanding localities in the UK.

Priority features

- Alluvial forests with Alder, *Alnus glutinosa* and Ash, *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*)
- Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae* (rare)

Key environmental features that support site integrity

A mosaic of important and rare habitats, including open water, reedbeds, fens, grazing marshes and carr woodlands. These support a wide range of rare and local species of flora and fauna. The Demoulin's whorl snail is associated with flowing and standing water and ditch systems, while the fen orchid is found on calcareous and alkaline fens.

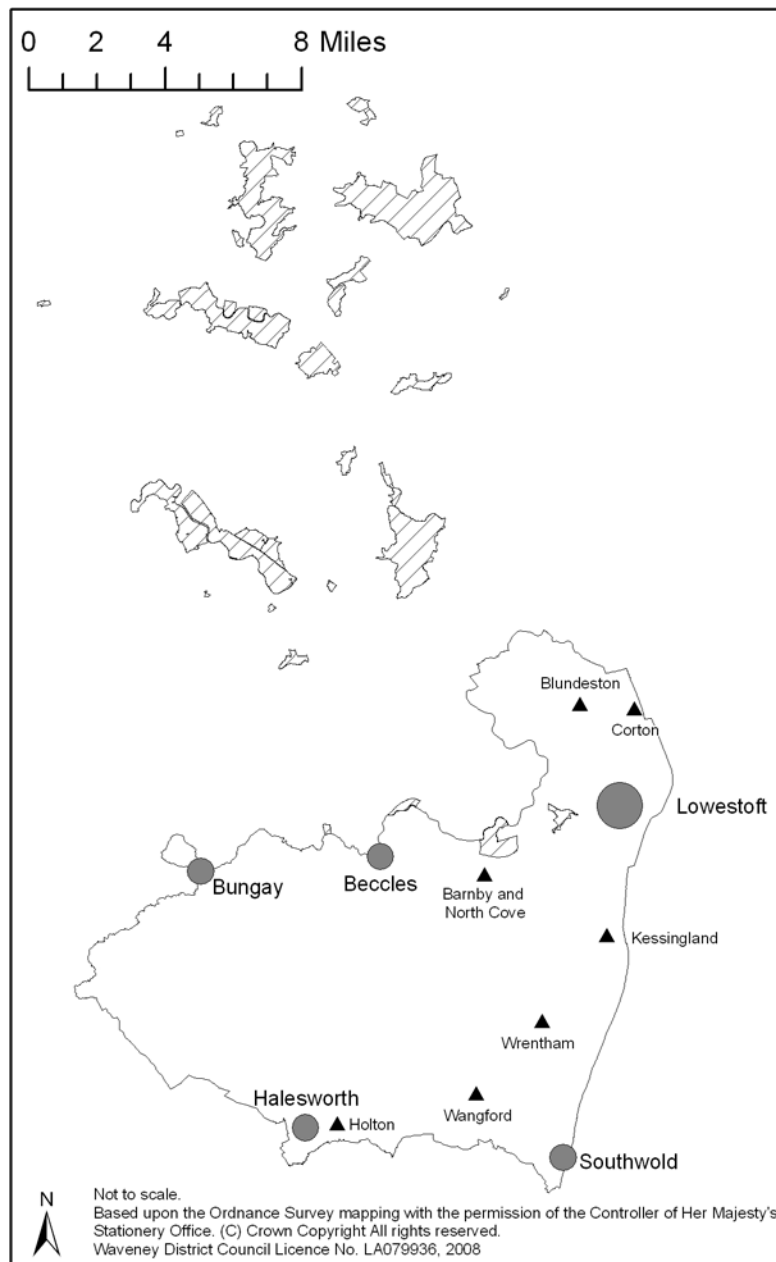
Vulnerability of site

The adverse effects of management neglect and natural succession during the 20th century are slowly being reversed through conservation and other management works undertaken by a number of bodies. Sea-level rise and reduced summer flows in the northern rivers (e.g. Bure) brought about by abstraction are resulting in increasing saline intrusion into the site and generally drier summer conditions. The site also suffers from eutrophication, primarily from sewage outfalls and to a lesser degree, agriculture. Some of the sewage works in the northern rivers are now phosphorus stripping and there is a program of mud-pumping to remove enriched material from lakes, followed by biomanipulation. Pressure from tourism and recreation is now being considered by the Broads Authority. Water Level Management Plans and the Environmentally Sensitive Area scheme are starting to raise water levels, revert arable areas back to grass and encourage sensitive management particularly of the ditches, to address problems brought about by drainage in the past. Appropriate standards of flood defence are necessary for the wetland, and works are currently proceeding under the Environment Agency Broads Strategy.

Conservation Objectives

- To maintain, in favourable condition, the:
 - natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition-type vegetation;
 - alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior*;
 - calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Carex davallianae* (Davall's sedge);
 - Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*);
 - hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of *Chara spp.*;
 - transition mires and quaking bogs; and
 - alkaline fens.
- To maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats for the population of:
 - Desmoulin's whorl snail;
 - otter; and
 - *Liparis loeselii* (Fen orchid).

2.4. Broadland SPA



Qualifying features (habitats/species)

- During the breeding season:
 - Bittern, *Botaurus stellaris* (at least 10% of GB breeding population)
 - Marsh harrier, *Circus aeruginosus* (10.2% of GB breeding population)
- Over winter:
 - Hen harrier, *Circus cyaneus* (2.9% of GB population)
 - Tundra (or Bewick's) swan, *Cygnus columbianus bewickii* (at least 8.2% of GB population)
 - Whooper swan, *Cygnus cygnus* (1.8% of GB population)
 - Gadwall, *Anas strepera* (0.8% of population)

Key environmental features that support site integrity

A mosaic of important and rare habitats, including open water, reedbeds, fens, grazing marshes and carr woodlands. These support a wide range of rare and local species of flora and fauna, and support breeding and over-wintering populations of a number of protected bird species.

Vulnerability of site

As above.

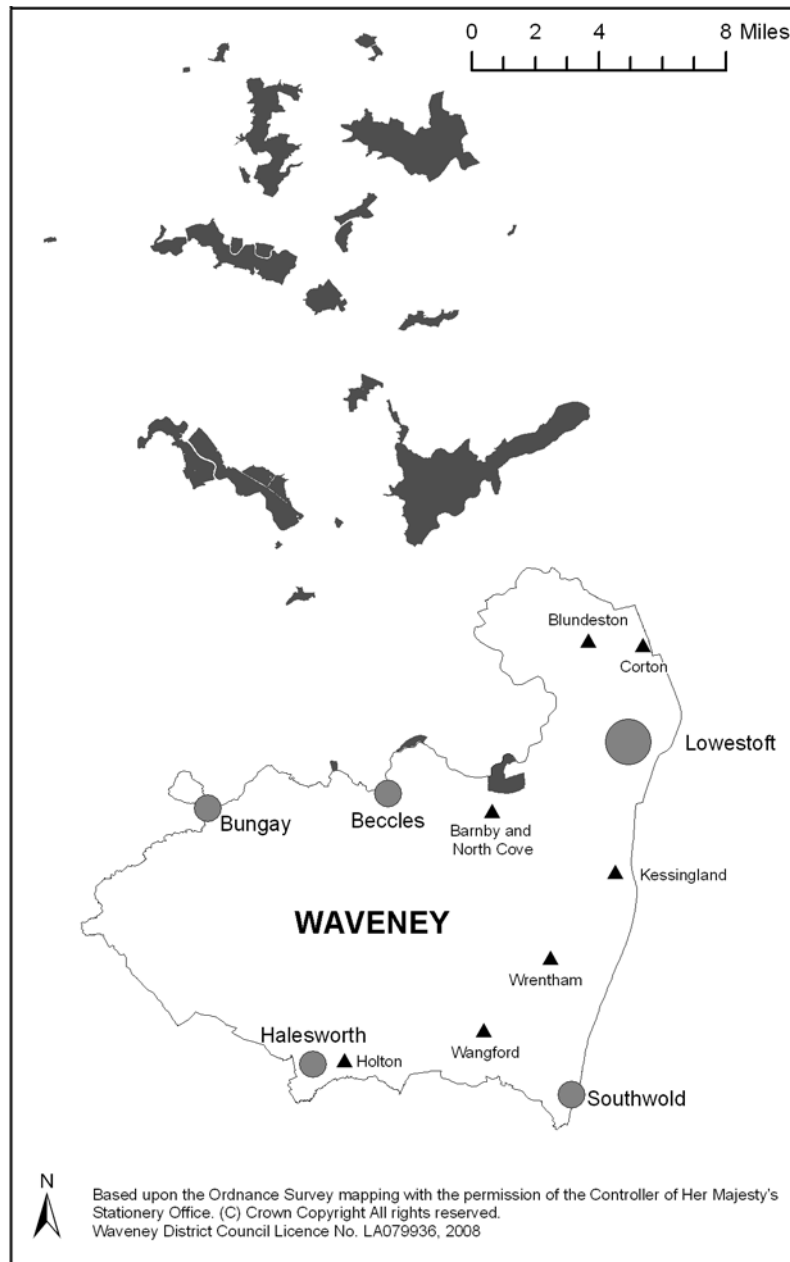
Conservation Objectives

- To maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats for the populations of Annex 1 bird species (bittern, marsh harrier, hen harrier, Bewick's swan, whooper swan, ruff, avocet, golden plover and common tern) of European importance with particular reference to:
 - open water;
 - swamp;
 - fen and fen meadow;
 - reedbed;
 - lowland wet grassland with ditches and water bodies;
 - fen meadow with ditches and water bodies; and
 - saltmarsh.

- To maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats for the populations of migratory bird species (pink-footed goose, shoveler and gadwall) of European importance with particular reference to:
 - open water;
 - swamp;
 - fen;
 - fen meadow with ditches and water bodies; and
 - lowland wet grassland with ditches and water bodies.

- To maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats of the populations of waterfowl that contribute to the wintering waterfowl assemblage of the European importance with particular reference to:
 - open water;
 - swamp;
 - fen;
 - fen meadow with ditches and water bodies;
 - lowland wet grassland with ditches and water bodies;
 - wet woodland; and
 - water bodies.

2.5. Broadland Ramsar



Qualifying features (habitats/species)

- Ramsar criterion 2 - site supports a number of rare habitats and species including:
 - Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae* (Calcium rich fen dominated by great fen sedge)
 - Alkaline fens (Calcium-rich springwater-fed fens)
 - Alluvial forests with Alder, *Alnus glutinosa* and Ash, *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*) (Alder woodland on floodplains)
 - Desmoulin's whorl snail, *Vertigo moulinsiana*
 - Fen orchid, *Liparis loeselii*

- Otter, *Lutra lutra*
- Outstanding assemblages of rare plants and invertebrates
- Ramsar criterion 6 - species/ populations occurring at international levels of importance: Tundra (or Bewick's) swan, *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*
 - Eurasian widgeon, *Anas penelope*
 - Gadwall, *Anas strepera strepera*
 - Northern Shoveler, *Anas clypeata*
 - Pink-footed goose, *Anser brachyrhynchus*
 - Greylag goose, *Anser anser anser*

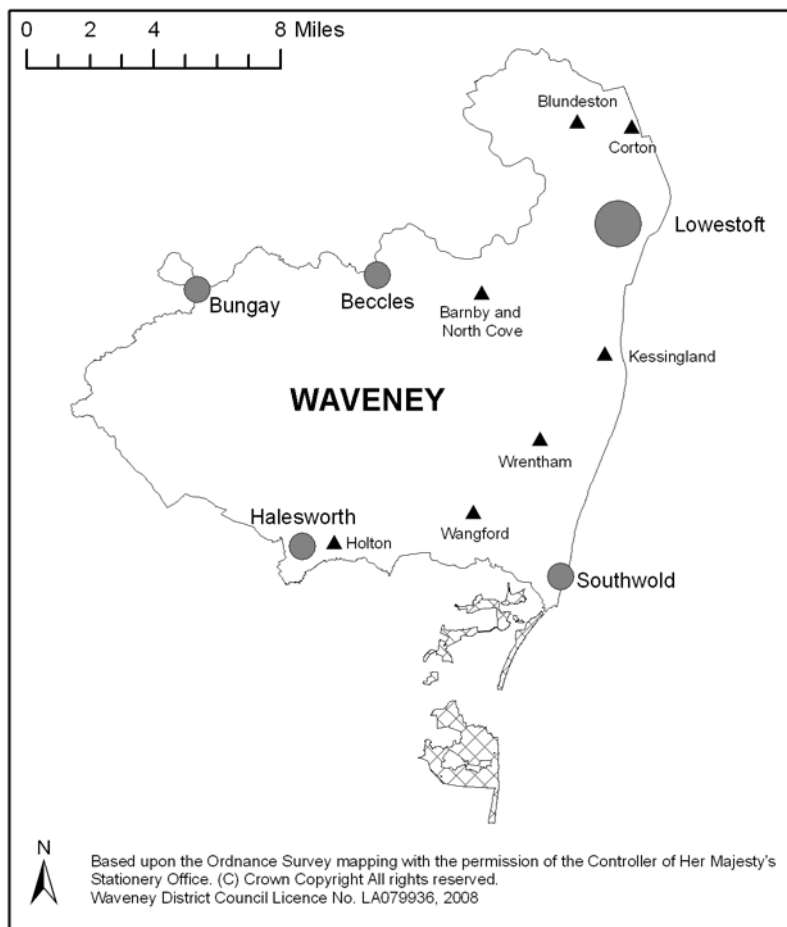
Key environmental features that support site integrity

A mosaic of important and rare habitats, including open water, reedbeds, fens, grazing marshes and carr woodlands. These support a wide range of rare habitats and species, including internationally important breeding and over-wintering populations of a number of bird species.

Vulnerability of site

As above. The site is not subject to adverse ecological change.

2.6. Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SAC



Qualifying features (habitats/species)

- Annual vegetation of drift lines (rare)
 - one of only 4 outstanding localities in the UK.

- European dry heaths
 - one of the best places in the UK

Priority features

- Coastal lagoons

Key environmental features that support site integrity

Deposits of shingle lying at or above mean high-water spring tides, with ephemeral vegetation cover consisting of annual or short-lived perennial species. Open, dry heathland occurs on freely-draining, acidic to circumneutral soils with generally low nutrient content. Ericaceous dwarf-shrubs dominate the vegetation.

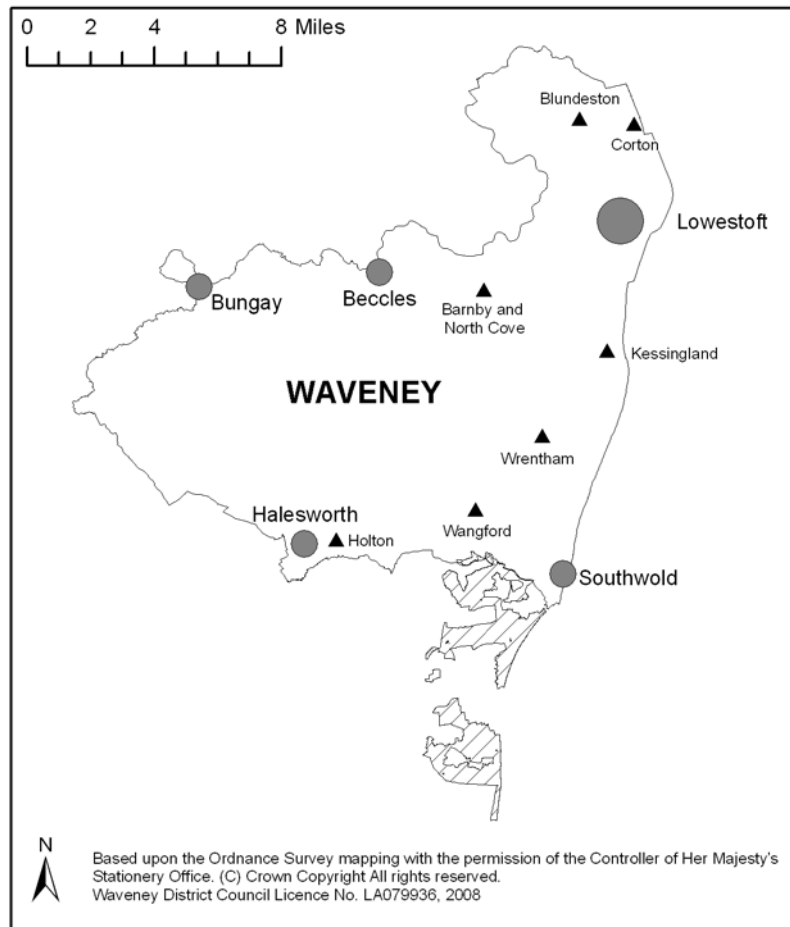
Vulnerability of site

Dry heaths were formed through, and are dependent upon, active management. Without grazing or cutting of heather, scrub and tree invasion onto the heaths is rapid and can be extensive. Bracken can also dominate large areas if suitable management has not been undertaken over the past decade. The heathland at Minsmere forms part of a RSPB reserve. The site management plan includes actions to ensure that open heathland is maintained and areas of scrub and bracken are cleared from former heath. Part is managed as Westleton Heath Nature Reserve. Annual vegetation of drift lines is maintained through the action of natural coastal processes upon the shoreline. The requirement for management is limited and is restricted to ensuring that significant human disturbance of the vegetated shore zone does not occur. This is addressed through the RSPB visitor management plan.

Conservation Objectives

- To maintain, in favourable condition, the:
 - annual vegetation of drift lines;
 - perennial vegetation of stony banks; and
 - European dry heaths.

2.7. Minsmere to Walberswick SPA



Qualifying features (habitats/species)

- During the breeding season:
 - Bittern, *Botaurus stellaris* (35% of GB breeding population)
 - European nightjar, *Caprimulgus europaeus* (0.7% of GB breeding population)
 - Marsh harrier, *Circus aeruginosus* (10.2% of GB breeding population)
 - Pied avocet, *Recurvirostra avosetta* (10.4% of GB breeding population)
 - Little tern, *Sterna albifrons* (1.2% of GB breeding population)
 - Northern shoveler, *Anas clypeata* (2.3% of GB population)
 - Common Teal, *Anas crecca* (4.9% of GB population)
 - Gadwall, *Anas strepera* (3.1% of GB population)

- Over winter:
 - Hen harrier, *Circus cyaneus* (2% of GB population)
 - Northern shoveler, *Anas clypeata* (1% of GB population)
 - Gadwall, *Anas strepera* (1.1% of population)
 - White-fronted goose, *Anser albifrons albifrons* (1.1% of GB population)

Key environmental features that support site integrity

A complex mosaic of habitats including marsh with dykes, reedbeds, mudflats, lagoons, shingle, woodland and lowland heath. These support breeding and over-wintering populations of a number of protected bird species.

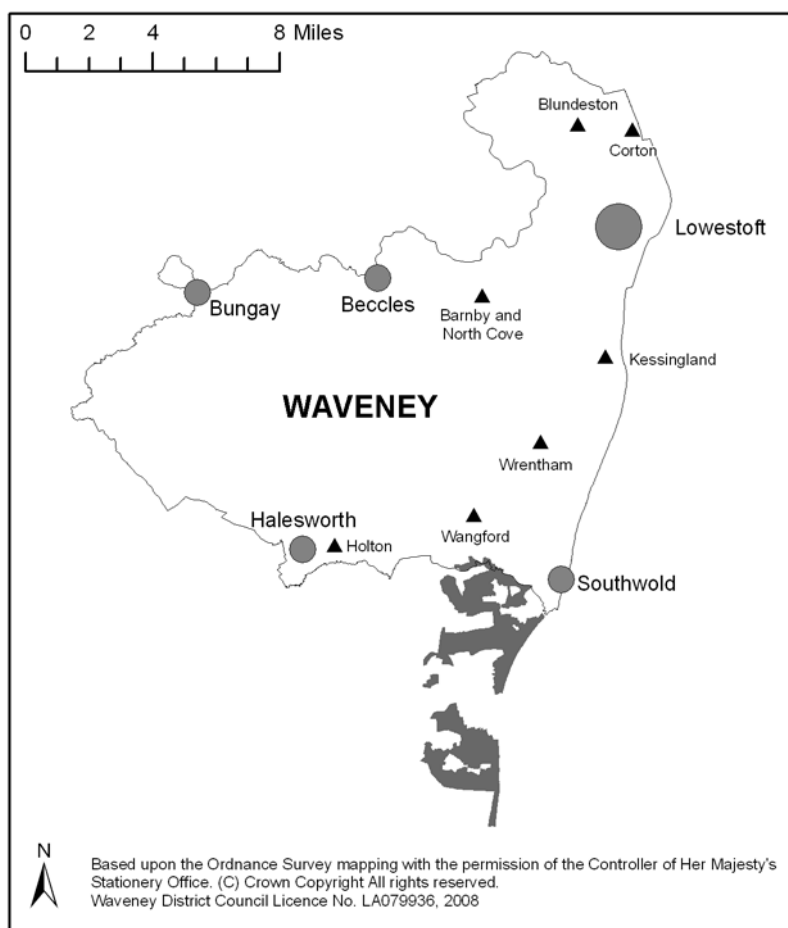
Vulnerability of site

As above. The coastline will be pushed back by natural processes, and this is being addressed in the Shoreline Management Plan. Alternative sites for reedbed creation are being sought to help offset possible future natural losses.

Conservation Objectives

- To maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats for the populations of Annex 1 species (bittern, nightjar and marsh harrier, avocet, little tern, shoveler, teal, and gadwall) and hen harrier.

2.8. Minsmere to Walberswick Ramsar



Qualifying features (habitats/species)

- Ramsar criterion 1 - site contains a mosaic of marine, freshwater, marshland and associated habitats, complete with transitional areas in between. Contains the largest continuous stand of reedbeds in England and Wales, and rare transition in grazing marsh ditch plants from brackish to fresh water.

- Ramsar criterion 2 - site supports a number of rare habitats and species including:
 - Nationally scarce plants and invertebrates.
 - A population of the mollusc *Vertigo angustior* (Narrow-mouthed whorl snail) on the Blyth estuary river walls.
 - An important assemblage of rare breeding birds associated with marshland and reedbeds, including:
 - Bittern, *Botaurus stellaris*
 - Gadwall, *Anas strepera* Common Teal, *Anas crecca*
 - Northern shoveler, *Anas clypeata*
 - Marsh harrier, *Circus aeruginosus*
 - Pied avocet, *Recurvirostra avosetta*
 - Bearded tit, *Panurus biarmicus*

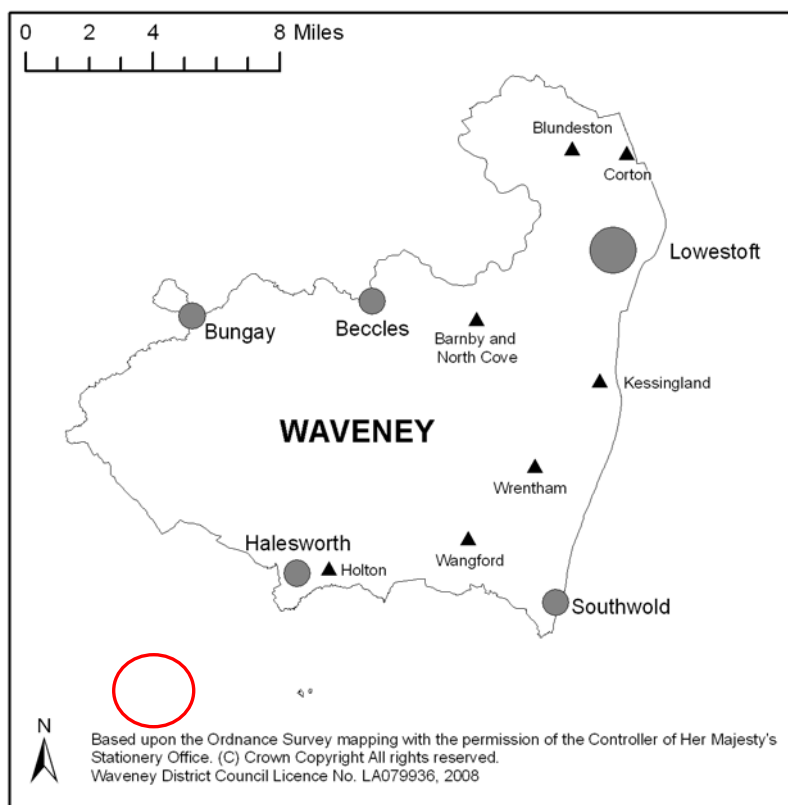
Key environmental features that support site integrity

A complex mosaic of habitats including marsh with dykes, extensive reedbeds, mudflats, lagoons, shingle, woodland and lowland heath. These support breeding and over-wintering populations of a number of rare and protected bird species.

Vulnerability of site

As above. Factors affecting the site's ecological character include erosion and coastal squeeze within the Blyth Estuary and recreational/tourism disturbance, including trampling damage to vegetated shingle and driftline communities, and disturbance of little tern nesting habitat. To mitigate erosion issues, Natural England provides advice in relation to flood and coastal protection management, which will inform the development of Estuary Strategies and second generation Shoreline Management Plans. To address recreational/tourism disturbance, Natural England will work with owners/occupiers and regulatory authorities to develop a strategy to manage visitor pressure on Suffolk vegetated shingle. These measures are likely to include temporary fencing and provision of boardwalks as well as measures to increase visitor awareness of the sensitivity of the shingle habitat (e.g. interpretation, wardening).

2.9. Dew's Ponds SAC



Qualifying features (habitats/species)

- Great crested newt, *Triturus cristatus*
 - one of the best areas in the UK.

Key environmental features that support site integrity

12 farm ponds, containing exceptionally high numbers of great crested newts on a regular basis.

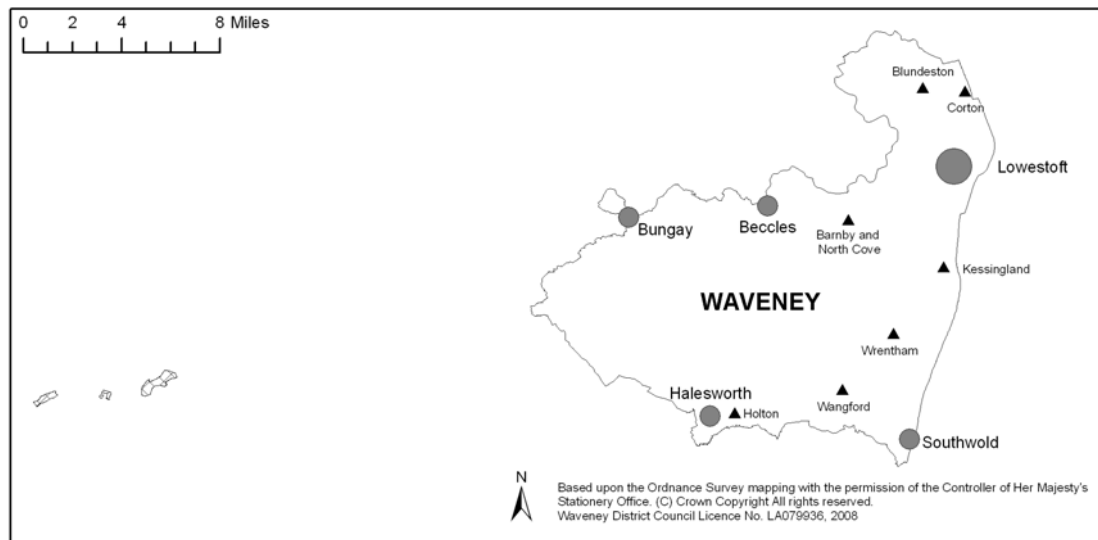
Vulnerability of site

The ponds and grasslands are in private ownership. The site is not vulnerable to water abstraction, flooding, diffuse agricultural pollution etc. and is in conservation management.

Conservation Objectives

- To maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats for the population of great crested newt.

2.10. Waveney and Little Ouse Valley Fens SAC



Qualifying features (habitats/species)

- Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinia caeruleae*)
- Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and the species of the *Caricion davalliana* (less than 1000ha in the UK)
- Demoulin's whorl snail, *Vertigo moulinsiana*
 - one of the best places in the UK for all of the above.

Key environmental features that support site integrity

This site represents *Molinia caerulea* – *Cirsium dissectum* fen-meadow associated with spring-fed valley fen systems in East Anglia, where *Molinia* grassland is very rare. The *Molinia* meadows are found here in conjunction with *Schoenus nigricans* – *Juncus subnodulosus* mire and calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus*. Where the fen-meadow is grazed it is more species-rich, with frequent southern marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*. This site occurs in the East Anglian centre of distribution of calcareous fens and contains very extensive *Cladium* beds, including managed examples, as well as stands in contact zones between small sedge mire and species-poor *Cladium*. The habitat type here occurs in a different hydrological situation to the Broads – spring-fed valley fen rather than flood-plain mire. This site is one of several representing Desmoulin's whorl snail *Vertigo moulinsiana* in East Anglia. At Weston Fen populations of this snail occur in a valley fen.

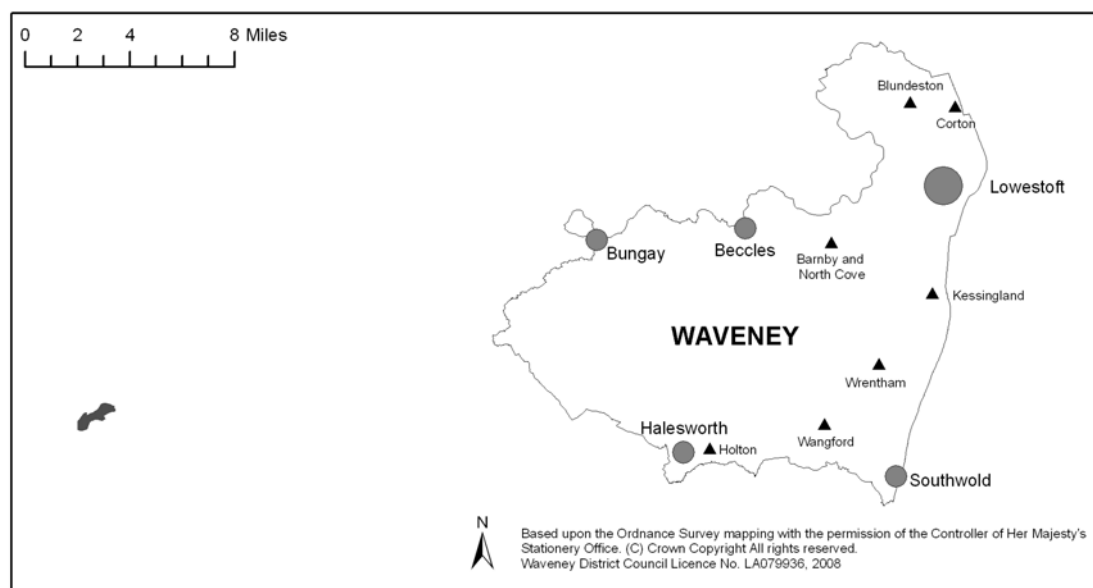
Vulnerability of site

Traditionally, peat was cut for fuel, sedge and reed were harvested for thatching, and the fen meadows were mown for hay. This management declined between 1940 and 1960. Water abstraction, over-deepening of local rivers and land drainage have reduced the groundwater inputs while increasing outflows from the fens. Consequently some areas of peat have undergone periods of drying and rotting which has released nutrients into the system and allowed scrub to progressively invade the fens. Funding has been used to encourage the reintroduction of grazing, relocate one borehole, address the over-deepening of one river, and clear rotted peat and scrub.

Conservation Objectives

- To maintain, in favourable condition, the:
 - Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and the species of the *Caricion davallianae*;
 - Molinia meadows on chalk, peat, clay or silt silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*);

2.11. Redgrave and South Lopham Valley Fens Ramsar



Qualifying features (habitats/species)

- Ramsar criterion 1 - The site is an extensive example of spring-fed lowland base-rich valley, remarkable for its lack of fragmentation.
- Ramsar criterion 2 - The site supports many rare and scarce invertebrates, including a population of the fen raft spider *Dolomedes plantarius*.
- Ramsar criterion 3 - The site supports many rare and scarce invertebrates, including a population of the fen raft spider *Dolomedes plantarius*. The diversity of the site is due to the lateral and longitudinal zonation of the vegetation types characteristic of valley mires.

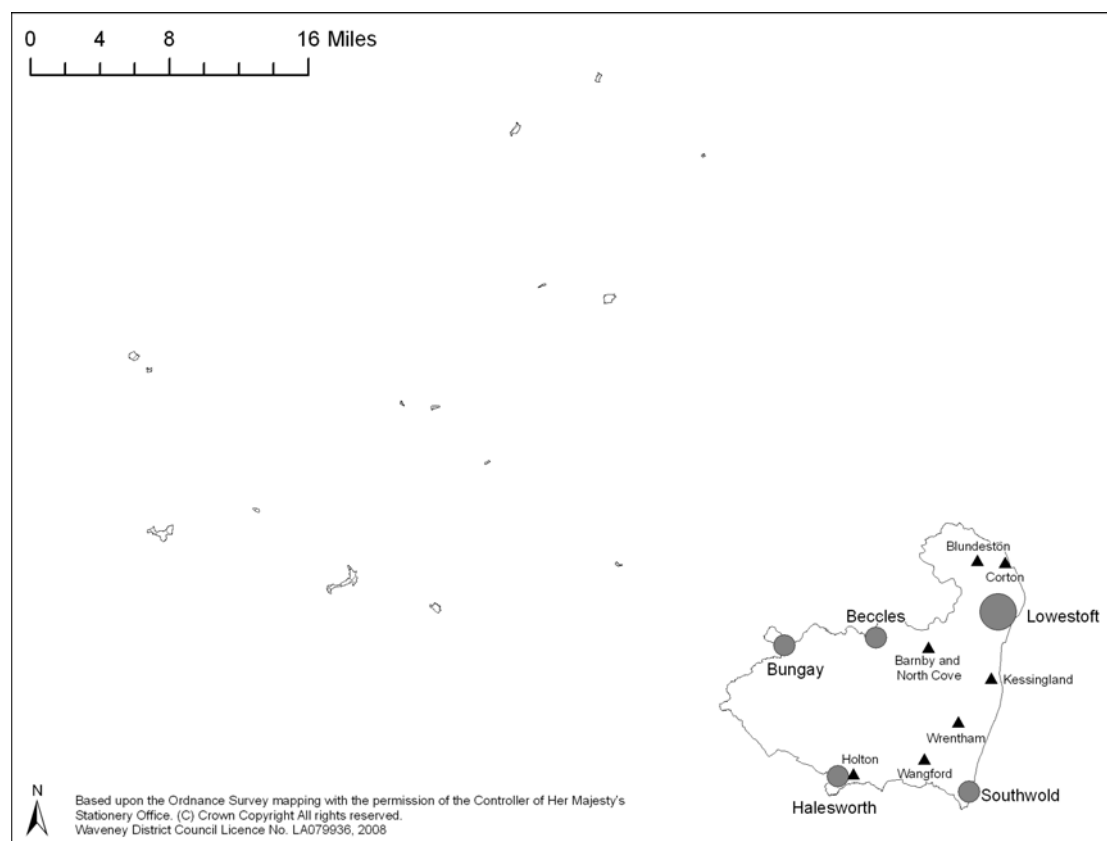
Key environmental features that support site integrity

Redgrave and Lopham Fen is an extensive area of spring-fed valley fen in the headwaters of the River Waveney. It is the largest fen in lowland England. The site is remarkable for its lack of fragmentation. The diversity of the site is due to the lateral and longitudinal zonation of the vegetation types characteristic of valley mires, such as dry birch woodland, scrub and carr, floristically-rich fen grassland, mixed fen, wet heath and areas of reed and saw sedge. The site supports many rare and scarce invertebrates, including a population of the fen raft spider *Dolomedes plantarius*.

Vulnerability of site

The site has been affected by dredging, eutrophication, and pollution from agricultural pesticides and fertilisers. It is hoped that catchment nutrient-loading will be investigated to address eutrophication and fertiliser pollution. However, the site is not reportedly subject to adverse ecological change.

2.12. Norfolk Valley Fens SAC



Qualifying features (habitats/species)

- Alkaline Fens
- Narrow-mouthed whorl snail, *Vertigo angustior*
- Demoulin's whorl snail, *Vertigo moulinsiana*
 - one of the best places in the UK for all of the above.

Key environmental features that support site integrity

A variety of valley-head spring-fed fens – very rare in the lowlands. Very ancient wetlands around pingos support a rich assemblage of rare species including Demoulin's whorl snail. A strong population of Narrow-mouthed whorl snail at Flordon Common occurs with yellow iris, which is maintained by light grazing.

Vulnerability of site

These alkaline fens are generally small in area and surrounded by intensively-farmed land. They are very vulnerable to reductions on the water table and a decrease in the volume of spring flows arising from groundwater abstraction. In recent decades scrub

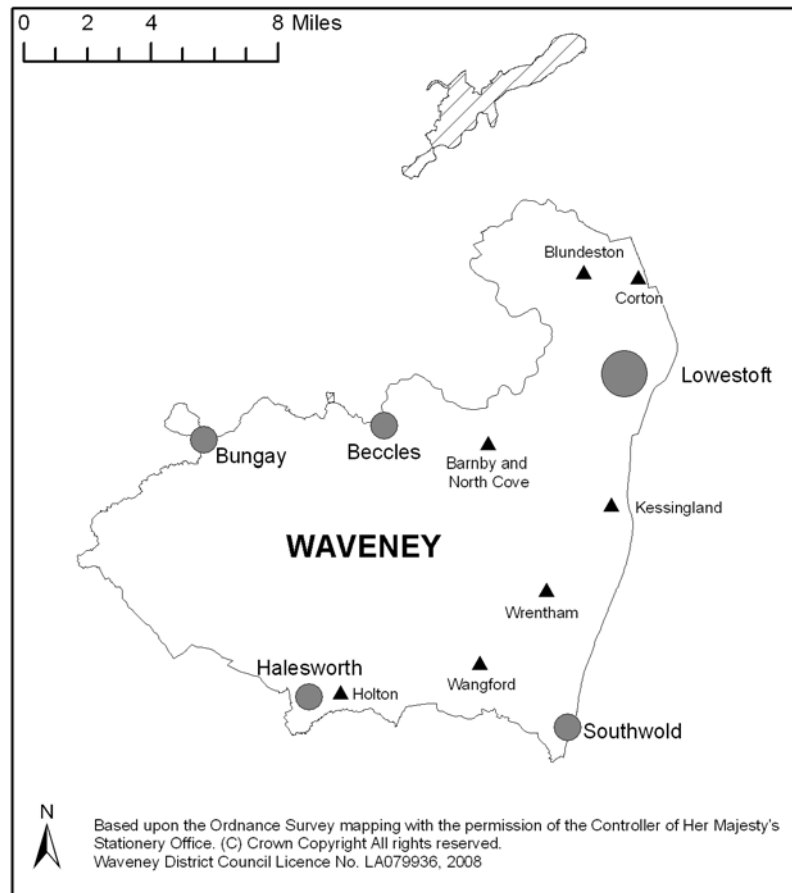
and woodland has spread due to the cessation of traditional cutting and grazing management and the drying-out of the fens. These sites are now largely isolated from the rural/agricultural economy of which they were once a part, and in many instances this traditional management has become uneconomic. Management agreements and payments including through Countryside Stewardship and Environmentally Sensitive Areas, help towards the reintroduction or promotion of the continued use of traditional management. Improved understanding of the water needs of these wetlands is required and is the subject of work by the Environment Agency and Natural England. Any effects of groundwater abstraction which are identified will be addressed through appropriate licensing regimes, and the Environment Agency Review of Consents and Asset Management Plans.

Conservation Objectives

- To maintain, in favourable condition, the:
 - alkaline fens;
 - Molinia meadows on chalk, peat, clay or silt silt-laden soils
 - (*Molinion caeruleae*);
 - European dry heaths;
 - Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*;
 - calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the Caricion davalliana;
 - alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion alvae*); and semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia).

- To maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats for the population of:
 - Desmoulin's whorl snail; and
 - narrow-mouthed whorl snail.

2.13. Breydon Water SPA



Qualifying features (habitats/species)

- During the breeding season:
 - Common Tern, *Sterna hirundo* (1.3% of GB breeding population)

- Over winter:
 - Tundra (or Bewick's) swan, *Cygnus columbianus bewickii* (5.6% of population in GB)
 - Eurasian Golden Plover, *Pluvialis apricaria* (2% of GB population)
 - Pied Avocet, *Recurvirostra avosetta* (3.3% of population in GB)

- On passage:
 - Ruff, *Philomachus pugnax* (7.7% of population in GB)

Key environmental features that support site integrity

An inland tidal estuary with extensive areas of mudflats exposed at high tide – the only tidal flats on the east coast of Norfolk. Extensive areas of floodplain grassland adjacent to the tidal areas. Smaller areas of saltmarsh. These habitats support internationally important assemblages of over-wintering wildfowl.

Vulnerability of site

The Breydon Water estuary is a robust ecosystem, the most sensitive feature being the high tide roost at its northern end. However efficient drainage, recent droughts and poor water management systems have adversely affected the wet grassland part of the site (Halvergate Marshes). A Water Level Management Plan and a feasibility study to overcome the water resource problems have been completed, and it is hoped that a scheme will commence to address this. The Environmentally Sensitive Area scheme has helped to raise water levels and encouraged sensitive management, particularly of the ditches. Appropriate standards of flood defence are required for the wet grassland part of the site, works are currently underway via the Environment Agency Broads Strategy. Breydon Water and its hinterland lie within the Broads, one of the family of National Parks. As such, it is largely free from development pressures. Future pressure for development may arise around the site, associated with Great Yarmouth, but regulation of such plans is covered by the Habitats Regulations 1994.

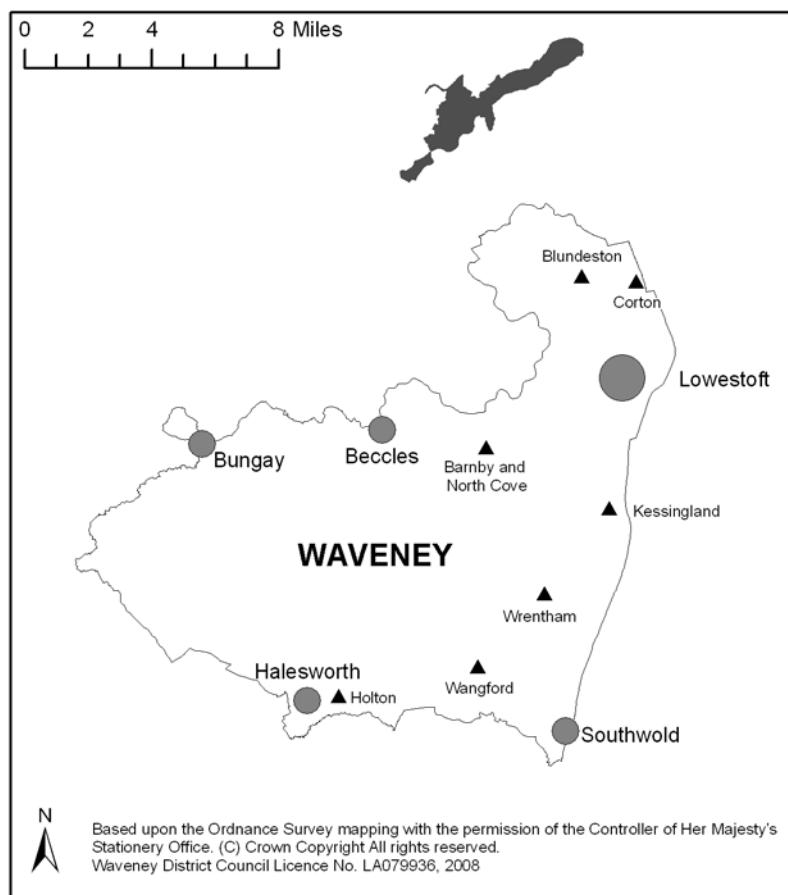
Conservation Objectives

- To maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats for the populations of *Annex 1* bird species (Bewick's swan, Avocet, Golden plover, Common tern and ruff) of European importance with particular reference to:
 - intertidal mudflats and estuary;
 - salt marsh; and
 - lowland wet grassland with ditches and water bodies.

- To maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats for the populations of migratory bird species (Lapwing) of European importance with particular reference to:
 - intertidal mudflats and estuary;
 - salt marsh; and
 - lowland wet grassland with ditches and water bodies.

- To maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats of the populations of waterfowl that contribute to the wintering waterfowl assemblage of European importance, with particular reference to:
 - intertidal mudflats and estuary;
 - salt marsh; and
 - lowland wet grassland with ditches and water bodies.

2.14. Breydon Water Ramsar



Qualifying features (habitats/species)

- Ramsar criterion 5 - Assemblages of international importance: species with peak counts in winter, 68,175 waterfowl.
- Ramsar criterion 6 - Species/ populations occurring at levels of international importance:
 - Tundra (or Bewick's) swan, *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*
 - Northern Lapwing, *Vanellus vanellus*
 - (5 additional species identified for possible future consideration under criterion 6)

Key environmental features that support site integrity

An inland tidal estuary with extensive areas of mudflats exposed at high tide – the only tidal flats on the east coast of Norfolk. Extensive areas of floodplain grassland adjacent to the tidal areas. Smaller areas of saltmarsh. These habitats support internationally important assemblages of over-wintering wildfowl.

Vulnerability of site

As above. The site is not subject to adverse ecological change.

3. Waveney Development Management Policies (DPD)

The Development Management Policies DPD will assist in the implementation of the Core Strategy (adopted January 2009), which sets out in strategic terms, the Council's overall approach to future development in the District (excluding the Broads Authority area). The Development Management policies will apply to the whole District, except the Broads Authority area. The policies will also apply to the sites in the Site Specific Allocations document and the Area Action Plan. The Waveney Development Management Policies DPD contains criteria based policies for use in making decisions on planning applications. This includes policies for a range of topics, including sustainable development, natural, built and historic assets, housing, climate change, transport, employment, tourism, retail, leisure and office development and open space.

The Development Management Policies have been developed in accordance with the vision and strategy set out in the Waveney Core Strategy, which was the first DPD of the Waveney Local Development Framework to be prepared and was adopted in January 2009.

The 32 policies in the Waveney Development Management Policies preferred options are listed in table 2 below. An assessment of whether each policy is likely to have a significant impact on Natura 2000 sites is included in section 5 of this report.

Table 2. Policies in the Waveney Development Management Policies preferred options consultation document

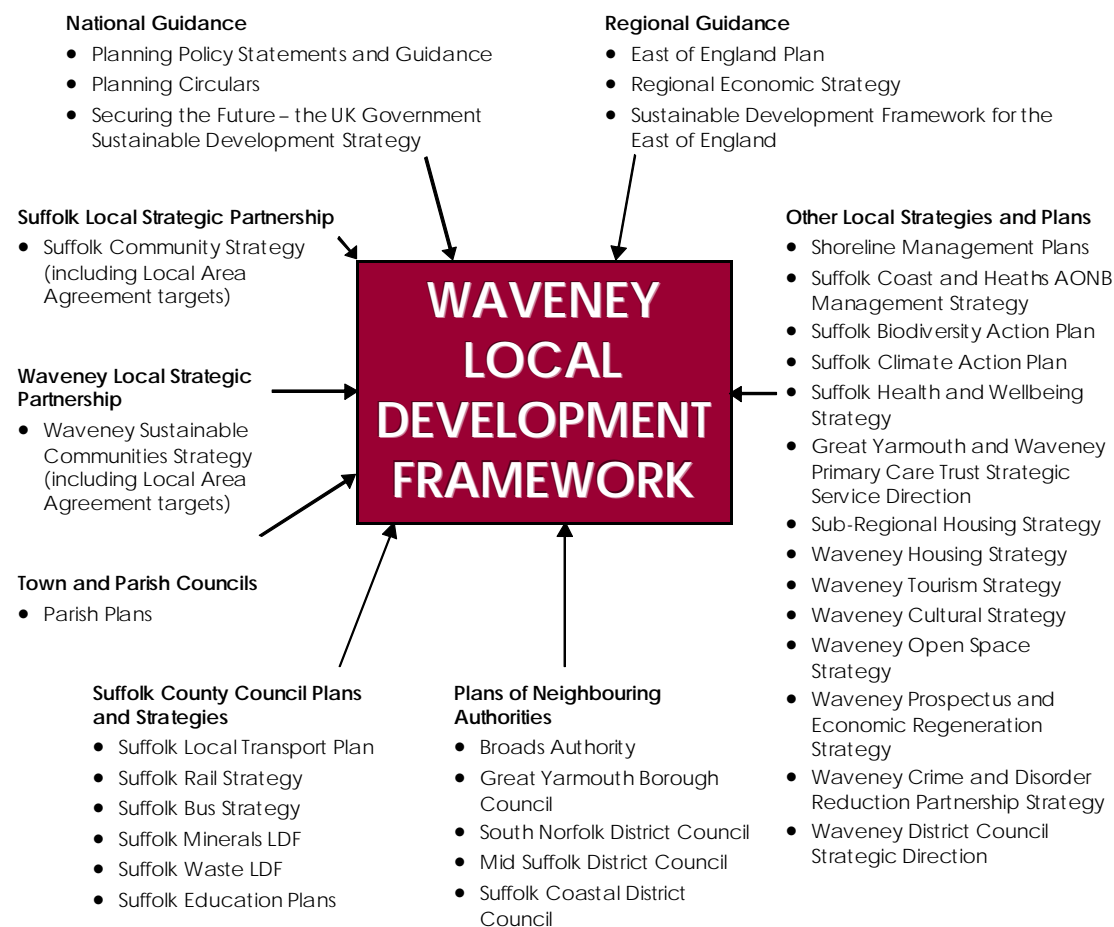
Ref	Policy
DM01	Physical Limits
DM02	Design Principles
DM03	Low Carbon and Renewable Energy
DM04	Sustainable Construction
DM05	Carbon Emissions and Carbon Compliance
DM06	Coastal Erosion
DM07	Relocation and Replacement for Development affected by Coastal Erosion
DM08	Existing Industrial Areas and Employment Sites
DM09	Re-use, Adaption and Replacement of Rural Buildings for Employment Use
DM10	Town Centre Boundaries
DM11	Lowestoft Town Centre Core and Main Shopping Streets
DM12	Lowestoft Town Centre Office Areas
DM13	Kirkley and Oulton Broad District Shopping Centres
DM14	Local Shopping Centres
DM15	Neighbourhood and Village Shops and Facilities
DM16	Housing Density

DM17	Housing Type and Mix
DM18	Affordable Housing
DM19	Conversion of Properties to Flats
DM20	Residential Annexes
DM21	House Extensions and Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside
DM22	Housing Development in the Countryside
DM23	Hotels and Guesthouses
DM24	Existing and Proposed Holiday Sites
DM25	Existing and Proposed Open Space
DM26	Re-Use of Vacant School Buildings and Playing Fields
DM27	Protection of Landscape Character
DM28	Strategic Gaps and Open Breaks
DM29	Protection of Biodiversity and Geodiversity
DM30	Protecting and Enhancing the Built and Historic Environment
DM31	Archaeological Sites
DM32	Southwold Harbour

4. Other key plans and strategies

A range of other plans and strategies were taken into account during the preparation of the Core Strategy and subsequently inform the preferred options for the Waveney Development Management Policies DPD, and a selection of the key documents is shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Key plans and strategies influencing the Waveney Local Development Framework



When assessing the impact of Development Management policies on European sites, their cumulative effect in combination with these additional strategies and plans needs to be taken into account. Some of the key points in relation to European sites are summarised below.

Two Shoreline Management Plans cover the stretch of coastline from Kelling in North Norfolk to Felixstowe in South Suffolk. A policy of “no active intervention or managed realignment” is proposed for several parts of the shoreline, including from Kessingland to Easton Bavents and from Walberswick to Sizewell. Coastal erosion here will have particular implications for the European sites at Benacre to Easton Bavents and Minsmere to Walberswick. It is not considered that the Development Management policies will alter, increase or exacerbate the impact of coastal erosion

on these sites in combination with the Shoreline Management Plans. For example, the policies do not prevent the migration of Natura 2000 habitats due to erosion, as in the countryside inland of Benacre to Easton Bavents and Minsmere to Walberswick, development will only take place in exceptional circumstances.

The East of England Plan (May 2008) proposes a total of 140,400 additional dwellings in Norfolk and Suffolk between 2001 and 2021. Within Norfolk and Suffolk, Growth Points are identified at Thetford and Norwich, and Key Centres for Development and Change are identified at Bury St Edmunds, Ipswich, Kings Lynn, Norwich, Thetford, Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft. Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft are also identified as Strategic Employment Locations, Major Town Centres and Regional Transport Nodes. Both towns will be the focus of future growth in their respective local authority areas. Great Yarmouth and Waveney are identified as priority areas for regeneration. A Habitats Regulations assessment has been prepared for the East of England Plan, and it was not concluded to have a significant impact on the integrity of European sites in itself. The potential for 'in combination' effects was recognised for a small number of sites in other parts of the Region, but not for any of those included in this screening report. The Waveney Core Strategy is in conformity with the East of England Plan, and interprets these regional policies at a local level. A number of key aspects of the Core Strategy originated from the East of England Plan and have been assessed in consultation with Natural England, as having no impact on European sites (for example, the total amount of housing and job growth, the identification of Lowestoft as a focus for regeneration and development). Therefore no significant effects are considered to result from the Waveney Core Strategy in combination with the East of England Plan. The Development Management policies will provide locally specific, criteria based policy guidance for the determination of planning applications which will help implement the aims and objectives of the Core Strategy. Each policy has been appraised against specific sustainability objectives including a range of environmental issues to determine the likely impact for environmentally sensitive sites and wider environmental concerns including climate change. No significant effects are considered to result from the Waveney Development Management policies in combination with the Core Strategy and East of England Plan.

For the Core Strategy plans of other local authorities were taken into account. All will have to accommodate housing and employment growth to be in conformity with the East of England Plan, for example. Most of Waveney's towns serve rural hinterlands outside the District, and there are no large centres of population adjacent to the boundaries where development could have a significant impact on European sites within Waveney. The nearby town of Great Yarmouth shares an Urban Regeneration Company (1st East) with Lowestoft. The Preferred Option for the Area Action Plan being prepared for the 1st East area of Great Yarmouth was published in January 2007, while the Preferred Option for the Great Yarmouth Borough Core Strategy was published in August 2006. Similarly to Lowestoft, Great Yarmouth will be a focus for regeneration, housing, employment and retail growth in future, with development particularly directed to brownfield, waterfront sites. The neighbouring District of Mid Suffolk adopted its Core Strategy in September 2008. Suffolk Coastal District Council is currently carrying out consultations for their Core Strategy and other development plan documents and South Norfolk are working on their Core Strategy but have not yet published Preferred Options for any development plan documents. The focus for development in sustainable and accessible locations will be reinforced by the Development Management Policies DPD. The policies will direct development to towns and larger villages with defined physical limits as far as possible and they will prevent inappropriate development in environmentally sensitive locations both in rural

and urban areas. The Development Management Policies DPD will reinforce protection for sites with landscape, biodiversity or geodiversity value.

Oulton Broad is a part of the wider Broads ecosystem. The Broads National Park is managed by the Broads Authority, and includes parts of 6 local authority areas in Norfolk and Suffolk. The Broads Authority is preparing the Local Development Framework for the Broads National Park area, and the Broads Authority Core Strategy was adopted in September 2007. This includes policies to encourage sustainable tourism across the Broads area, directing it to accessible locations. Policies to increase tourism in other parts of Norfolk and Suffolk may have a cumulative impact on the number of visitors to the area in combination with policies in the Waveney Core Strategy, by improving the profile and attraction of the whole area as a tourist destination. The Waveney Development Management Policies DPD will encourage environmentally sensitive and sustainable tourism development only in appropriate locations. However, it is possible that increasing tourism development in Waveney could reduce visitor pressure in other (possibly more sensitive) locations, by providing alternative destinations. In any case, the impact of any increase in visitors to the Broads or any other European site could be managed through appropriate visitor management techniques and strategies, and it is not considered that any significant impacts would occur as a result.

The Development Management Policies DPD has been informed by national and regional planning policy and the Waveney Core Strategy in combination with the plans and strategies of other local authorities as detailed above.

In conclusion, it is not considered that the Waveney Development Management policies will have an impact on any European site in combination with the plans and strategies of other local authorities.

5. Assessment of likely effect of Waveney Development Management policies on Natura 2000 sites

Table 3. Likely significant impacts of policies in the Waveney Development Management Policies Development Plan Document

Development Management Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Natura 2000 sites	Sites that could possibly be affected by policy	Likely significant effect identified from Core Strategy?	Likely significant effect identified in combination with other plans?	AA needed?
DM01 Physical Limits	This policy expands on Core Strategy policy CS01 which sets out the strategic approach to accommodating development in the District to 2021. The physical limits define the extent of the existing built up areas of the towns and larger villages. Most new development is anticipated to be built within the defined physical limits on brownfield land, mainly in Lowestoft and the market towns, with only small-scale development permitted in villages and the surrounding countryside. As a result of this policy little if any development is anticipated near the Natura 2000 sites at Minsmere to Walberswick and Benacre to Easton Bavents. Overall no significant impacts are likely on any Natura 2000 sites as a result of this approach. Site specific proposals will be assessed in a later DPD.	All in table 1	No	No	No
DM02 Design Principles	This policy aims to ensure good and sustainable design in all new development proposals. This is unlikely to impact significantly on specific designated sites, though should have a positive impact on reducing the impacts of development on the environment generally, for example by minimising use of resources such as water and energy consumption, and promoting cycling and walking. This in turn helps reduce contributions to climate change. The requirements to protect, create and enhance natural features and landscaping could have a positive influence on designated sites by protecting and increasing connectivity between habitats	All in table 1	No	No	No
DM03 Low Carbon and Renewable Energy	This policy relates to the production of large and small-scale renewable and low carbon energy by way of stand alone energy generation or renewable energy schemes. The policy states that these schemes will not be permitted in areas of national importance, which includes Natura 2000 sites unless it can be demonstrated that the objectives of the	All in table 1	No	No	No

Development Management Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Natura 2000 sites	Sites that could possibly be affected by policy	Likely significant effect identified from Core Strategy?	Likely significant effect identified in combination with other plans?	AA needed?
	which includes Natura 2000 sites unless it can be demonstrated that the objectives of the designation are not compromised. This is unlikely to impact significantly on Natura 2000 sites, though should have a positive impact on reducing contributions to climate change.				
DM04 Sustainable Construction	This policy aims to ensure good and sustainable design in new development. This is unlikely to impact significantly on specific designated sites, though should have a positive impact on reducing the impacts of development on the environment generally, for example by ensuring all new domestic and commercial developments minimise energy and water use, make use of renewable energy technologies and sustainable material and construction methods. This in turn helps reduce contributions to climate change. Overall, it is unlikely that there would be any significant impacts for Natura 2000 sites.	All in table 1	No	No	No
DM05 Carbon Emissions and Carbon Compliance	This policy requires all new buildings to contribute to on-site reduction of CO2 emissions or a contribution to a carbon fund for strategic energy generation. This policy will have no direct impacts for designated sites but through efforts to reduction carbon emissions through building design and energy efficiency or through contributions to larger scale renewable energy projects there are wider benefits for the natural environment by reducing contributions to climate change. Overall, it is unlikely that there would be any significant impacts for Natura 2000 sites.	All in table 1	No	No	No
DM06 Coastal Erosion	This policy promotes sustainable design and directs development away from areas at high risk of coastal erosion. This indirectly prevents development close to European sites that are in the coastal erosion risk zone, (e.g. Benacre to Easton Bavents, Minsmere to Walberswick). This policy is not likely to have a significant impact on Natura 2000 sites.	Benacre to Easton Bavents SAC/SPA, Minsmere to Walberswick SAC/SPA/Ramsar	No	No	No
DM07 Relocation and Replacement of	The policy directs development away from areas at high risk of coastal erosion to sites in more sustainable locations. This indirectly prevents development close to European sites that are in the coastal erosion risk zone (e.g. Benacre to Easton Bavents, Minsmere to	Benacre to Easton Bavents SAC/SPA, Minsmere to	No	No	No

Development Management Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Natura 2000 sites	Sites that could possibly be affected by policy	Likely significant effect identified from Core Strategy?	Likely significant effect identified in combination with other plans?	AA needed?
Development affected by Coastal Erosion	Walberswick). This policy is not likely to have a significant impact on Natura 2000 sites.	Walberswick SAC/SPA/Ramsar			
DM08 Existing Industrial Areas and Employment Sites	This policy is concerned with the protection of existing industrial areas and employment sites from development for other uses. Existing sites are located within or on the edge of the main towns. New locations for employment sites are identified at Lake Lothing and the outer harbour in Lowestoft, Bungay and Gisleham, South Lowestoft. The main focus is on sites within towns and on previously developed land in accessible locations. Ensuring accessible locations helps reduce the need to travel by car and reduce contributions to climate change. It is not considered likely that existing or proposed employment sites and uses of this scale would cause significant impacts on any designated sites.	The Broads SAC, Broadland SPA/Ramsar	No	No	No
DM09 Re-use, Conversion and Replacement of Buildings in the Countryside for Employment Use	This policy sets out the approach to re-using buildings and sites in the countryside for small-scale alternative employment uses including farm diversification and tourism purposes. The policy does not permit development of greenfield sites but allows some redevelopment of previously developed land where it is close to or within rural villages. The policy also aims to ensure that the scale and design of new proposals appropriate to its surroundings, i.e. landscape, materials, traffic generation etc. As a result of this policy little if any development is anticipated near any Natura 2000 sites and overall no significant direct or indirect impacts are likely.	All in table 1	No	No	No
DM10 Town Centre Boundaries	This policy contains criteria for guiding the location of new retail, leisure and office development and protecting existing town centre uses conversion to other uses. Previously developed land in central accessible locations is favoured, with the aims of reducing the need to travel by car and preventing out of town shopping development. This helps reduce contribution to climate change and loss of greenfield land. There are no Natura 2000 sites within or adjacent to town centre areas defined on the proposals maps.	All in table 1	No	No	No

Development Management Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Natura 2000 sites	Sites that could possibly be affected by policy	Likely significant effect identified from Core Strategy?	Likely significant effect identified in combination with other plans?	AA needed?
	Therefore no development is anticipated in or adjacent to a designated site as a result of this policy. It is unlikely to have any impact on Natura 2000 sites, and site specific proposals will be assessed in a later DPD.				
DM11 Lowestoft Town Centre Core and Main Shopping Streets	This policy is locally specific and contains criteria for protecting and guiding the location of new retail and leisure uses within Lowestoft Town Centre. The aim is to concentrate development in accessible locations to promote and revitalise the town centre and reduce the need to travel by car. This helps reduce contribution to climate change. It is unlikely to have any impact on Natura 2000 sites.	None	No	No	No
DM12 Lowestoft Town Centre Office Areas	This policy specifically provides criteria for the location of office development within Lowestoft town centre within defined boundaries. The aim is to prevent further loss of residential properties close to the town centre services and facilities while providing office areas in accessible locations without compromising other town centre uses. This will help reduce the need to travel by car and reduce contributions to climate change. The office areas are not located near any Natura 2000 sites and will have no significant impacts.	None	No	No	No
DM13 Kirkley and Oulton Broad District Shopping Centres	This policy is locally specific and aims to prevent loss of shops and facilities to other uses and provides criteria for the type of uses that will be acceptable in both locations within defined boundaries. The aim is to ensure that shopping areas meet the needs of the local community by providing a range of types of shops and services in accessible locations. This will help reduce the need to travel by car and reduce contributions to climate change. Kirkley District Shopping centre is not located near any Natura 2000 sites Oulton Broad District Shopping centre is close to The Broads SAC and Broadlands SPA but the policy is unlikely to have any significant impacts for Natura 2000 sites.	The Broads SAC, Broadland SPA	No	No	No
DM14 Local Shopping Centres	This policy aims to protect local shopping centres for the benefit of the local community where they provide facilities for nearby residential areas. As these are in more accessible locations this policy may help reduce the number of unnecessary car journeys and reduce contributions to climate change. These Local Shopping Centres are located within the	None	No	No	No

Development Management Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Natura 2000 sites	Sites that could possibly be affected by policy	Likely significant effect identified from Core Strategy?	Likely significant effect identified in combination with other plans?	AA needed?
	built up areas of the towns and are not located near any Natura 2000 sites and will have no significant impacts.				
DM15 Neighbourhood and Village Shops and Facilities	This policy aims to protect individual shops, facilities and services from changes to other uses where they provide for local communities in both rural and urban areas. This will help reduce the need to travel by car where they are in accessible locations and reduce contributions to climate change. It is unlikely that the policy will have any significant impact for any Natura 2000 sites.	None	No	No	No
DM16 Housing Density	This policy aims to make the best use of development land, to maximise density in order to prevent unnecessary loss of greenfield sites on the edge of settlements. Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM01 of the Development Management Policies DPD both aim to restrict development to towns and larger villages with defined physical limits and on previously development land. This policy will reinforce the strategic aims of both policies and encourages higher density development in the most accessible locations, where services and facilities are available and reduction in the number of car journeys is made possible. This could help reduce contributions to climate change. Overall the policy is unlikely to have any adverse impact on Natura 2000 sites, and site specific proposals will be assessed in a later DPD.	All in table 1	No	No	No
DM17 Housing Type and Mix	This policy contains criteria based guidance for providing the type and mix of properties on new residential developments to meet local need. It will help to ensure that all new developments consider the wider community housing needs. This policy will have no impacts for Natura 2000 sites, and site specific proposals will be assessed in a later DPD	None	No	No	No
DM18 Affordable Housing	This policy sets out the approach for the provision of affordable housing to meet the needs of the District. As with all new housing it is anticipated to be on previously developed land within the physical limits of Lowestoft, the market towns and larger villages. Only in exceptional circumstances will affordable housing be permitted in the countryside. The policy generally sets out the percentage of all new development that	None	No	No	No

Development Management Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Natura 2000 sites	Sites that could possibly be affected by policy	Likely significant effect identified from Core Strategy?	Likely significant effect identified in combination with other plans?	AA needed?
	should be affordable and will be used alongside other Development Management and Core Strategy policies to determine planning applications for housing proposals. The policy will have no significant impacts for Natura 2000 sites.				
DM19 Conversion of Properties to Flats	This policy aims to ensure that conversion of properties to flats does not adversely or cumulatively impact upon the neighbourhood in which the conversion takes place. Due to its particular aims the policy is very locally and site specific and relates to conversion of existing properties, which are neither within or close to designated sites, and it is unlikely that this type of development will significantly impact any Natura 2000 sites.	None	No	No	No
DM20 Residential Annexes	This policy gives a criteria based approach to determining proposals for residential annexes and will be used alongside other Development Management and Core Strategy policies. As the policy relates to existing development sites, this policy is unlikely to have any significant impacts on specific Natura 2000 sites.	None	No	No	No
DM21 House Extensions and Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside	This policy aims to ensure that extensions to existing houses and replacement housing in the countryside is of a scale appropriate for its location and in order to maintain a stock of smaller more affordable homes particularly where they are in less sustainable locations. As the policy relates to existing development sites, this policy is unlikely to have any significant impacts on specific Natura 2000 sites	None	No	No	No
DM22 Housing Development in the Countryside	Most growth is anticipated to be built on previously developed land within existing physical limits of the main towns with only small-scale development permitted in villages and the surrounding countryside. This policy sets out the approach to housing development located outside the physical limits and the exceptional circumstances when it will be considered appropriate. Policy DM01 sets out where most growth will take place and Policy DM22 sets out the criteria for determining planning applications for housing in the countryside. This policy will be used alongside other Development Management and Core Strategy policies when determining development proposals. As a result of this policy little if any development is anticipated near the Natura 2000 sites and overall no	Benacre to Easton Bvents SAC/SPA, The Broads SAC, Broadland SPA/Ramsar, Minsmere to Walberswick SAC/SPA/Ramsar	No	No	No

Development Management Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Natura 2000 sites	Sites that could possibly be affected by policy	Likely significant effect identified from Core Strategy?	Likely significant effect identified in combination with other plans?	AA needed?
	significant impacts are likely. Site specific proposals will be assessed in a later DPD.				
DM23 Hotels and Guest Houses	This policy seeks to promote sustainable tourism development in Waveney. It aims to protect the conversion of existing hotels and guest houses to other uses and new hotels and guest houses will be directed to existing settlements and expected to be located in areas with good access to public transport and other services and facilities, reducing the need for car travel and preventing development in rural or countryside locations, which will help to reduce contributions to climate change. It is not likely that this policy will have any significant impact on Natura 2000 sites.	Benacre to Easton Barents SAC/SPA, The Broads SAC, Broadland SPA/Ramsar, Minsmere to Walberswick SAC/SPA/Ramsar	No	No	No
DM24 Existing and Proposed Holiday Sites	This policy seeks to promote sustainable tourism development in Waveney. Although they are already protected by national policy and Core Strategy policy CS13 state that development likely to have an impact on European sites will not be permitted, this policy reinforces the need to protect areas of particular landscape value. This policy will guide new tourist development to locations that reduce the need to travel by car. It will specifically prevent development that would have an impact on Natura 2000 sites and therefore no such impacts are anticipated.	Benacre to Easton Barents SAC/SPA, The Broads SAC, Broadland SPA/Ramsar, Minsmere to Walberswick SAC/SPA/Ramsar	No	No	No
DM25 Existing and Proposed Open Space	This policy protects open spaces, some of which may form part of a network of habitats which link to Natura 2000 sites. Policy DM25 seeks to ensure that open space needs of the District are addressed, which could help relieve visitor pressure on European sites. The policy is unlikely to have a significant impact on Natura 2000 sites.	Benacre to Easton Barents SAC/SPA, The Broads SAC, Broadland SPA/Ramsar, Minsmere to Walberswick SAC/SPA/Ramsar	No	No	No
DM26	This policy seeks to make use of existing school sites and playing fields that become	None	No	No	No

Development Management Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Natura 2000 sites	Sites that could possibly be affected by policy	Likely significant effect identified from Core Strategy?	Likely significant effect identified in combination with other plans?	AA needed?
Re-use of Vacant School Buildings and Playing Fields	vacant due to school reorganisation. The sites are located in Lowestoft and the market towns with defined physical limits and are therefore in sustainable and accessible locations and not within or close to designated sites. This policy will be used alongside other Development Management and Core Strategy policies when considering development proposals. This is unlikely to have any significant impacts for Natura 2000 sites.				
DM27 Protection of Landscape Character	This policy aims to protect and enhance the landscape character of the whole District. Higher levels of policy already protect European sites, so there is no need to give further protection in Policy DM27 and Policy DM29 gives protection to locally important sites of biodiversity and geodiversity importance. Protection of landscapes indirectly protects species and wildlife corridors that could have a positive impact on European sites by increasing connectivity with a network of habitats across the District and beyond. This policy will be used alongside other Development Management policies and Core Strategy policies when considering development proposals. This is unlikely to have any significant impacts for Natura 2000 sites.	All in table 1	No	No	No
DM28 Strategic Gaps and Open Breaks	This policy aims to protect open areas within and between built up areas to prevent coalescence of settlements as identified on the proposals maps and are not close to or within designated sites. Higher levels of policy already protect European sites, so there is no need to give further protection in Policy DM28. This policy will be used alongside other Development Management policies and Core Strategy policies when considering development proposals. This is unlikely to have any significant impacts for Natura 2000 sites.	None	No	No	No
DM29 Protection of Biodiversity and Geodiversity	This policy aims to protect and enhance sites of biodiversity and geodiversity. Higher levels of policy already protect European sites, so there is no need to give further protection in Policy DM29. The protection given to locally important sites, species and wildlife corridors could have a positive impact on European sites by increasing	All in table 1	No	No	No

Development Management Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Natura 2000 sites	Sites that could possibly be affected by policy	Likely significant effect identified from Core Strategy?	Likely significant effect identified in combination with other plans?	AA needed?
	connectivity with a network of habitats across the District and beyond. One impact of this could be to allow species to adapt to changing climatic conditions. This policy will be used alongside other Development Management policies and Core Strategy policies when considering development proposals. This is unlikely to have any significant impacts for Natura 2000 sites.				
DM30 Protecting and Enhancing the Built and Historic Environment	This policy aims to ensure that built and historic assets (important buildings, historic townscapes, parks, gardens and landscapes etc) are protected from inappropriate development. This is unlikely to have any significant impact on Natura 2000 sites.	None	No	No	No
DM31 Archaeological Sites	This policy aims to ensure that archaeological assets are protected from development. Archaeological sites affected by development would be located away from any designated sites therefore this is unlikely to have any significant impact on Natura 2000 sites.	None	No	No	No
DM32 Southwold Harbour	Southwold harbour is a working harbour area, which is also important for tourism because of its unique character and natural environment. This policy aims to protect all aspects of this area and prevent inappropriate development, while trying to sustain indigenous business uses. This policy promotes sustainable development in an area that is at high risk of flooding. This indirectly prevents development close to European sites that are in high flood risk areas e.g. Benacre to Easton Bavents, Minsmere to Walberswick, or adjacent river that flows through European sites. This policy is not likely to have a significant impact on Natura 2000 sites.	Benacre to Easton Bavents SAC/SPA, Minsmere to Walberswick SAC/SPA/Ramsar	No	No	No

6. Summary and conclusions

The Development Management Policies DPD contains criteria based policies against which planning applications will be determined. They are locally specific policies that will deliver the strategic aims and objectives of the Waveney Core Strategy, which directs most new development to previously developed land within the existing boundaries of towns and larger villages, of which no European sites fall within development boundaries.

Reflecting this overall settlement strategy, a number of the policies aim to reduce the need to travel by car by promoting development and retaining facilities and services in sustainable locations. This will consequently help to reduce contributions to climate change. Policies promoting sustainable design in new development will also help reduce use of fossil fuels. This could be seen as reducing future impact on European sites, since climate change has the potential for significant impacts on biodiversity.

One of the broad locations identified for development in the Core Strategy is the Lake Lothing and harbour area of central Lowestoft. This is in close proximity to Oulton Broad, at the southern end of the Broads SAC and Broadland SPA/Ramsar sites. Mutford Lock separates the saltwater Lake Lothing from the freshwater Broad. This urban area is already developed, mainly for employment uses, and replacing the existing industrial development with other uses is not anticipated to have significant impact on Oulton Broad or the wider ecosystem of the Broads and its reasons for designation as a European site. The Development Management policies DPD will inform the determination of applications within this area.

The condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs - which include all European Sites, amongst others) is included in the monitoring framework for the Core Strategy and a similar monitoring framework will be included for the Development Management policies DPD. This will allow any adverse impacts on SSSIs to be monitored and policies reviewed if necessary, for example to avoid significant impacts from increased visitor pressure as a result of future development and increased tourism.

Whilst Core Strategy policies set out to maintain and enhance a network of green spaces, including by protecting locally important wildlife habitats for their own sake and providing open spaces for use by residents of new and existing development, Development Management policies further reinforce the need to consider the natural environment and the impacts development proposals may have on sensitive habitats. Wildlife corridors will also increase connectivity between habitats, facilitate migration of species, and enable wildlife to adapt to a changing climate. Many of the policies emphasise the importance of protecting the natural environment and encourage enhancement and provision of new natural environments where development is permitted. Consequently development proposals may provide opportunities for establishing new wildlife habitats. This could be beneficial in relieving visitor pressure on European sites.

The policies contained in the Core Strategy have already been judged to have no significant impacts on Natura 2000 sites. Development Management policies have been assessed and identified in accordance with the Core Strategy policies. All suggested policies submitted for consideration have also been subject to Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment, to help identify the preferred policies for use in making decisions on planning applications.

In conclusion, the preferred policies and options in the Waveney Development Management DPD are not considered to have any significant impact on European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and strategies. Therefore it will not be necessary to carry out a full Appropriate Assessment of the document.

List of abbreviations

DPD	Development Plan Document
GB	Great Britain
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

Sources of background information

- Natura 2000 Standard Data Forms and Information Sheets on Ramsar Wetlands, at www.jncc.gov.uk - Details of protected sites.
- East of England Regional Spatial Strategy Habitats Directive Assessment Report, December 2006, ERM Ltd, at www.gos.gov.uk/goee/docs/193657/193668/Part2 - Conservation objectives for protected sites.

