

derbyshire

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 3

2011 onwards

habitat regulations assessment: screening report June 2010



Maps

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1. Introduction

1.1 Derbyshire County Council is required to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP) under the Transport Act 2000, as amended by the Local Transport Act 2008. With the second LTP period coming to a close in March 2011, a new LTP generally referred to as LTP3, is required to be produced and ready to be implemented from April 2011. As part of the new Plan's development, the Authority is required under the European Directive 92/43/EEC to undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment to assess the potential for significant impacts from the Plan on habitats and species of European importance. This document is the formal screening stage required under the Habitats Regulations. This is an expanded version of the pre-screening report which was consulted upon in October 2009 and includes conclusions following further examination of potential significant issues identified as part of the pre-screening report.

The Habitats Directive

- 1.2 The Habitats Directive¹ provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. This is being done through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000. Natura 2000 sites are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/EEC).
- 1.3 The European guidance on Habitats Regulations Assessment recommends a process of up to four stages:-
1. **Screening** – determining whether the plan alone, or in-combination, is likely to have a significant impact on a European Site. Where potential significant impacts are likely, the Plan's options can be refined to prevent these. If there are no significant impacts then an appropriate assessment is not required and the Plan can proceed.
 2. **Appropriate Assessment** – determining whether in view of the site's conservation objectives, the plan and projects, would have an adverse effect (or risk of this) on the integrity of the site(s) – if it doesn't then the plan can proceed.
 3. **Assessment of alternative solutions** – Alternative solutions are considered where the plan is assessed as having an adverse effect, and where measures cannot be applied to remove the adverse effect. There should be an examination of alternatives considered.
 4. **Consideration in the absence of alternative solutions** - Where no alternatives remain and where adverse impacts remain it, consideration should be made to whether there are imperative reasons of over-riding public interest for the plan to proceed.

2. Screening process

Introduction

- 2.1 The Derbyshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) is not directly connected with, or necessary to, the management of the European sites and therefore, the LTP is required to be assessed under the Habitats Directive.
- 2.2 As mentioned in paragraph 1.1 we have incorporated the Plan's development closely with the requirements of the Habitats Regulations Assessment from the beginning to ensure any potential significant impacts are identified and considered at the earliest stage. This resulted in a pre-screening report which we consulted upon in October 2009. The result of this pre-screening stage was the identification of three issues that required further assessment as to whether they were potential significant impacts:-
- Disturbance due to visitor and tourism pressures
 - Air quality
 - Water quality.
- 2.3 We have now completed a baseline assessment of these three issues alongside our baseline assessment for our Strategic Environmental Assessment. This Screening Report reproduces the initial pre-screening assessment and sets out the findings of our baseline assessment relating to the three key issues.

¹ Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna and Flora

- 2.4 European Commission (2001) guidance recommends that the formal screening stage should comprise:-
1. description of the plan and other plans and projects that in combination have the potential to have significant effects on a European site(s);
 2. identify the potential effects on the European site(s); and
 3. assessing the significance of any effects on the European sites
- Therefore we have followed this process for the pre-screening report.

3. Derbyshire Local Transport Plan and other relevant plans and policies

Derbyshire Local Transport Plan

- 3.1 LTPs covers the maintenance of our local roads (excluding motorways and trunk roads), pavements, public rights of way and greenways, traffic management, public transport services (bus and community rail), community transport, helping people to access services, road safety, and environmental protection. It is therefore not only about tarmac, road signs and new road infrastructure, but covers transport services, information provision, 'hearts and minds' educational work, and linkages with land use planning and local people/ communities.
- 3.2 Unlike the first two LTPs which covered a five-year period, the third LTP will have a longer term strategy. For the third Derbyshire LTP we have chosen a time horizon of 2026; and shorter term implementation plans (3 to 5 years). The area covered by the third Derbyshire LTP comprises the whole administrative county of Derbyshire. This is marginally different to LTP2 because some of the administrative County (rural hinterland around Derby City) was included within the Derby Joint LTP. Derby City are producing a separate Plan for the City Council area.

Key themes for LTP3

- 3.3 As with each new LTP, its policy coverage evolves over time. For this third LTP, we are being asked to consider its contribution to five national transport goals and taking these as over-arching priorities². These goals are similar to our LTP2 strategies:-
- Tackling climate change
 - Supporting economic growth
 - Promoting equality of opportunity
 - Contributing to better safety, security and health
 - Improving quality of life and promoting a healthy natural environment.

Key principles and Transport Vision

- 3.3 Our existing long term strategy (2006-2021) is based on two key principles and a transport vision:-

Key principles

- To adopt sustainable development³ as the common purpose for our transport strategy
- To take a holistic approach in all we do, integrating economic, social and environmental needs

Transport Vision

At the heart of our vision is a transport system that is both fair and efficient
Healthier lifestyles, safer communities and better access to jobs and services will be the result.
To get there, we will improve the choice and accessibility of transport whilst balancing the economic, social and environmental needs of everyone.

Key messages for the next LTP

- 3.5 Our next Local Transport Plan will continue to be active in linking with many other relevant plans and complying with policies at international/European, national, regional, sub-regional and local level. The key messages from these other plans are summarised below. Please also note that following the recent change of government, all reference to national policy context is subject to review.

² Department for Transport LTP3 Final Guidance, July 2009

³ Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, Brundtland Report 1987.

International/European influences key messages

We need to take into account a range of **environmental protection issues** across the whole county, including air quality, biodiversity, flora, fauna and soil, climatic factors, cultural heritage, landscape, townscape, population and human health, material assets and water environment.

Sources: European Directive 2001/42/EC and 92/43/EEC, Strategic Environmental Assessment for Transport Plans and Programmes, Department for Transport 2009

National influences key messages

Five national goals for transport

There are five national transport goals, which should be an over-arching priority for the Local Transport Plan:

- Tackling **climate change**
- Supporting **economic growth**
- Promoting **equality** of opportunity
- Contributing to better **safety, security and health**
- Improving **quality of life** and promoting a **healthy natural environment**

Source: Delivering a Sustainable Transport System Department for Transport November 2008

Regional and sub-regional influences key messages

Better public transport, cycling and walking opportunities

Public transport should be improved, and opportunities for walking and cycling in the East Midlands should be significantly improved.

Better use of existing networks

We should make better use of existing transport networks, aiming to achieve quicker, convenient and reliable journeys - to health, cultural, leisure and recreational facilities and services.

City Region development

Sheffield and Manchester City Regions are seeking to accelerate economic growth, and both include parts of Derbyshire.

Environmental protection

We should reduce the negative impacts of travel and transport on people and the natural environment, and maximise energy efficiency.

We need to have regard to the housing, industry, transport and environmental policies in the National Park Management Plan, and specifically address the conservation and enhancement of the National Park.

New development

The location of development should make efficient use of existing physical infrastructure, help to reduce the need to travel, and improve accessibility to jobs and services by increasing the use of public transport, cycling and walking, and reducing traffic growth and congestion.

Current plans for new housing development through designated housing market areas have been outlined in the East Midlands Regional Plan. There are four Housing Market Areas which include parts of Derbyshire (Peak, Dales and Park, Northern, Nottingham and Derby). Between 2006 and 2026, around 63,000 new houses are designated to be built in Derbyshire.

Safer roads

We should improve road safety.

Sources: East Midlands Integrated Regional Strategy, East Midlands Regional Plan, Regional priority travel outcomes, City Regions, Housing Market Areas, Peak District National Park Management Plan.

Local influences - key messages

Local transport services contribute substantially to the delivery of the county council's corporate plans and policies, and those of other agencies at local level:

The Derbyshire Partnership Forum Priorities include:

Improve the **safety** of local people by:

- Road safety initiatives

Reduce **crime and fear of crime** by:

- Street lighting improvement

Promote **health and wellbeing** and reduce health inequalities by:

- Encouraging more people to participate in physical activities

Provide **well connected communities** by:

- Managing, maintaining and improving the transport network (in particular non-principal roads) whilst reducing congestion and the environmental impacts of travel
- Improving local accessibility and promoting healthy and sustainable travel choices (e.g. by ensuring new facilities can be accessed by means other than the private car; improving the quality and use of public transport and more demand responsive transport; improving public transport information; travel planning and improving public rights of way and greenways to encourage walking and cycling).

Council Plan Priorities 2010-2014 (consultation February to April 2010) include:

- **Well managed assets** (manage the £3.5billion highway asset)
- **Giving children the best start in life** (provide road safety education and training to children and young people)
- **Encouraging healthy, active and rewarding lifestyles** (encouraging more walking and cycling within the county)
- **Confident and safe communities** (working in partnership to improve road safety)
- **Making places easier to reach** (improving the condition of roads and pavements, particularly in rural areas, providing an efficient response to highway problems, joining community and public transport services to enable people to access local facilities, and working towards an integrated, well managed and inclusive rights of way and access network)
- **A resilient economy** (develop an economically vibrant and sustainable rural economy through the Market Towns programme)
- **Rich, diverse and protected environments** (encourage biodiversity, and encourage greater use of the Council's country parks and countryside sites, improve environmental sustainability and monitor the effects of climate change, help protect the county's wildlife, and encourage sustainable tourism)
- **A county of cultural opportunity** (establish the Derwent Valley World Heritage corridor and promote the Peak District National Park, Creswell Crags and the National Forest as leading cultural and tourism destinations, and using our cultural assets to promote tourism)

Children and Young People Priorities for Derbyshire

- to reduce **obesity** by promoting healthy eating and physical activity
- to improve personal safety and **reducing the number of children and young people injured or killed in accidents.**
- to provide full access to **children's centre services** for all children in Derbyshire
- to provide full access to **extended services in and around schools** for all children in Derbyshire

Air Quality Management Areas

Designated air quality management areas in Derbyshire (Bolsover and Erewash) currently lie near to the motorway network, but there is evidence of **air quality concerns in Chesterfield.**

Local Investment Plans

Local Investment Plans will set out the investment required for an area to deliver the agreed vision and economic purpose of the place, covering housing and regeneration issues. Developing a modern and sustainable infrastructure, including transport, is seen as the foundation of a successful economy.

Land use

All of Derbyshire's Districts and Boroughs, and the Peak District National Park Authority, are developing core strategies to **guide land use development in the long term.** These have implications for the transport of people and goods. There is ongoing liaison between the county council and districts in the development of their core strategies - most of which are due to be adopted between late 2010 and 2012.

Sources: Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2014, Local Area Agreement, Council Plan consultation draft, Children and Young People's Plan, Districts/Boroughs and Peak District National Park Local Development Framework documents and Local Air Quality Management.

- 3.6 Other plans have implications for transport planning, such as tourism and carbon reduction/dimate change strategies. Also, there are non-transport initiatives which have implications for transport provision such as extended schools, health provision and the 'personal choice' agenda e.g. for schools, hospitals, doctors.
- 3.7 What is clear is that, due to the prevailing and predicted economic dimate, the potential for new major schemes (costing over £5m) within Derbyshire is limited. At this stage of Plan development we do not have any firm plans for major schemes during this LTP period. That should not stop us from identifying where we feel that the problems or challenges posed need addressing, even though there may not be an alternative low-cost solution.

Five principles for the development of the Local Transport Plan beyond 2011:

- Policy context of sustainability/ carbon reduction
- Economic context of financial squeeze
- Realistic financial planning, thinking of the future
- Ambition through effective collaborative working with others at local level, and efficient use of resources
- Assess problems first, then look at a range of solutions.

4. European Sites to be Screened

- 4.1 To select the European sites to be screened, we have decided to include all sites within the coverage of the plan, i.e. the County of Derbyshire, excludng Derby City. Because the plan could have an influence across our boundary, we have also decided to specify a generous buffer zone (15km) including Derby City to act as a precautionary measure; European sites within this buffer zone have also be screened. We will be undertaking this screening as an iterative process and therefore the buffer zone, and European sites included within the assessment may change through recommendations from Environmental Agencies during consultation.
- 4.2 The identified European sites located within the county boundary or within the 15km buffer zone, and the reasons for designation, are listed within Table 4.1 below. The areas covered by the SACs are shown in Map 1 and the SPA in Map 2.

Table 4.1 European Sites that will be assessed through the development of the 3rd Derbyshire Local Transport Plan.

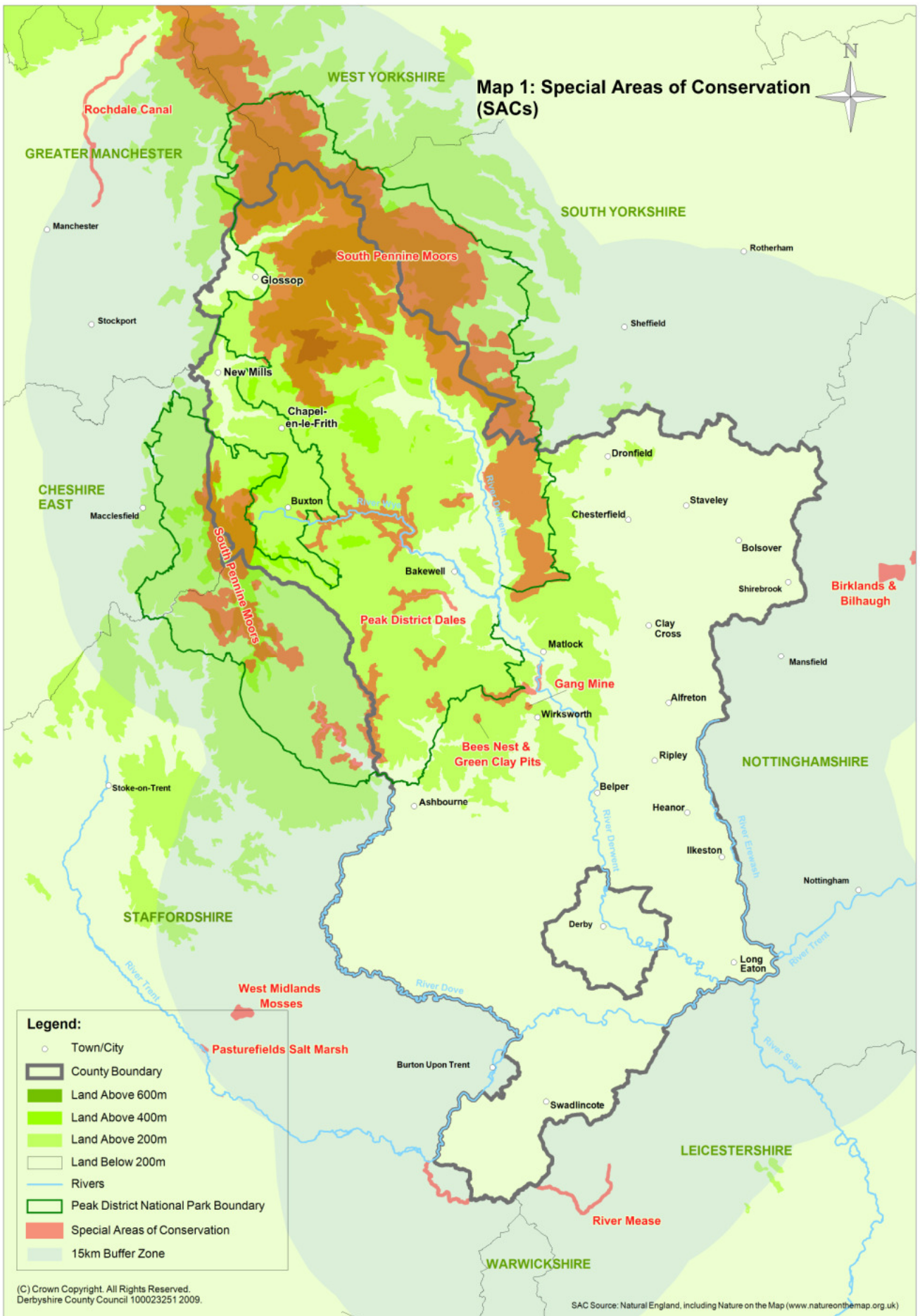
Site Name	Distance from Derbyshire County Boundary	Summary of Reasons for Designation
Bees Nest & Green Clay Pits SAC	Within Derbyshire	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates for which the area is considered to support a significant presence. This site is also considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom for great crested newts.
Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC	6.9km from Derbyshire boundary in Nottinghamshire	Selected for old acidophilous oak woods, noted for its rich invertebrate fauna.
Gang Mine SAC	Within Derbyshire	Is an example of Calaminarian grasslands in an anthropogenic context in northern England. Natural limestone outcrops supporting species typical of calaminarian grasslands are rare and small. This has been chosen to provide an example of the habitat type on sedimentary rocks.
Pasture Fields Salt Marsh SAC	14.1km from Derbyshire boundary in Staffordshire	This is the only known site in the UK of a natural salt spring with inland saltmarsh vegetation.

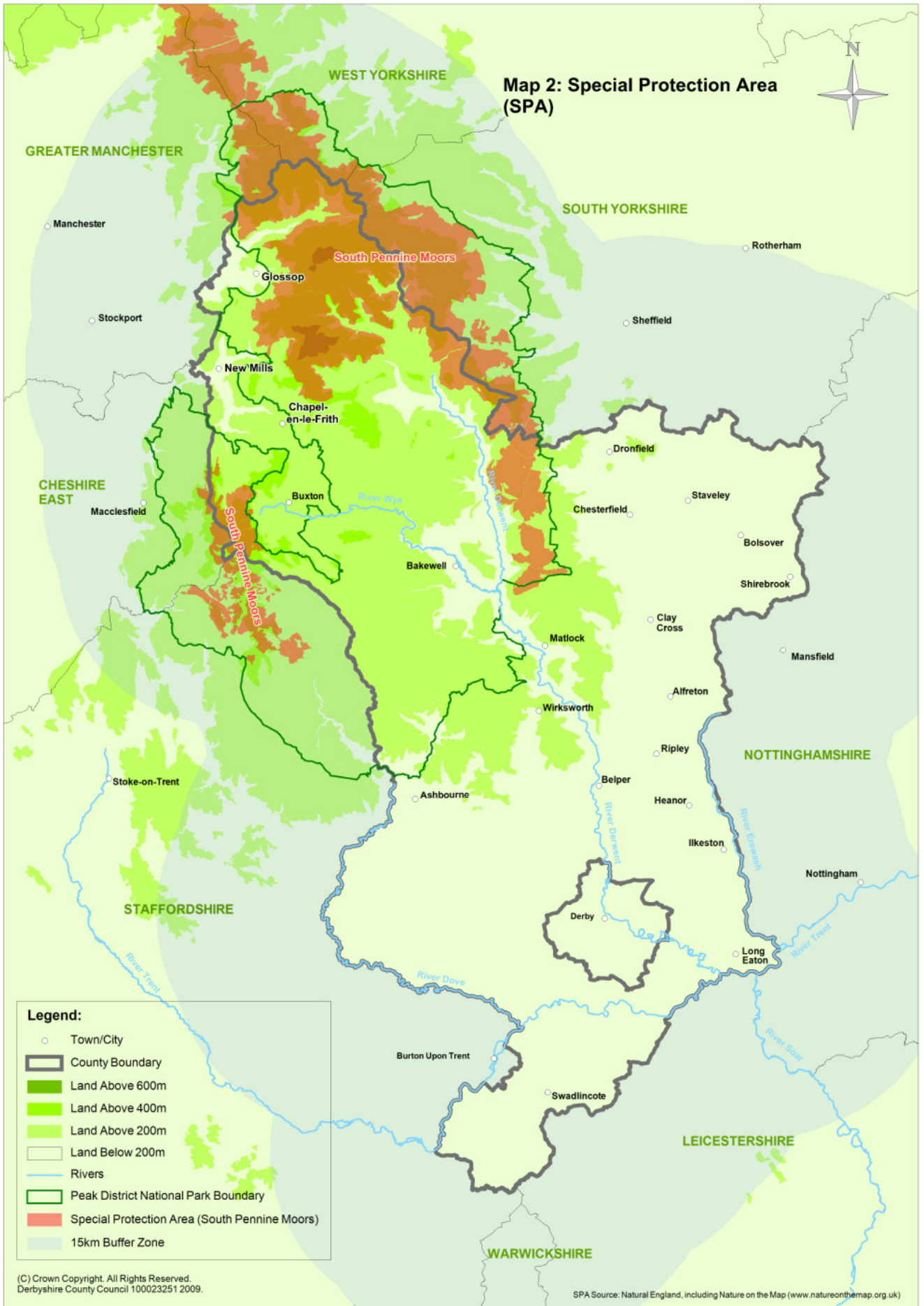
Site Name	Distance from Derbyshire County Boundary	Summary of Reasons for Designation
Peak District Dales SAC	Within Derbyshire	Site has been selected for number of habitats and species. Habitats are mainly related to calcareous areas – semi natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates; Tillio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines; European dry heaths; Calaminarian grasslands of the Violetalia calaminariae; Alkaline fens; Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels; Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation. Species are related to those living in the River Dove – White-dawed Crayfish; Brook Lamprey; and Bulhead.
River Mease SAC	Within Derbyshire extending into buffer zone	Habitat is a watercourse of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitans and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation. Species are Spined Loach for which the river is one of only four known outstanding localities in the UK; Bullhead; White-clawed Crayfish; and Otter.
Rochdale Canal SAC	11.5km from Derbyshire boundary in Greater Manchester	Has been selected for supporting a significant population of floating water-plantain in a botanically diverse water plant community.
South Pennine Moors SAC	Within Derbyshire extending into buffer zone	Has been selected for a number of habitat types – European dry heaths; Blanket Bogs which are a priority feature and is the most south-easterly occurrence in Europe; Old Sessile woods with Ilex and Blechnum around the fringes of upland heath and bogs; Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix; and Transition mires and quaking bogs.
South Pennine Moors SPA ¹	Within Derbyshire extending into buffer zone	Site is of importance for several upland breeding species, including birds of prey and waders. During the breeding season the site is of importance for Golden Plover, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon and Dunlin.
West Midlands Mosses SAC	8.7km from Derbyshire boundary in Staffordshire	Contains three pools which are examples of natural dystrophic lakes and ponds in the lowlands of England and Wales. Also Transition mires and quaking bogs.

Source: www.natureonthemap.org.uk
www.jncc.gov.uk (Joint Nature Conservation Committee)

Notes:

1. The South Pennine Moors SPA encompasses both the Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) and its subsequent extension South Pennine Moors Phase 2.





5. LTP3 Screening results

Introduction

- 5.1 In our Pre-screening report published in October, we briefly examined each of the Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA) within Derbyshire and our nominated buffer-zone. This assessment is reproduced in Annex 1 for information. For each SAC/SPA, the table lists the key environmental conditions required to maintain support site integrity. To avoid duplicating work we have taken these from existing Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRAs) relating to land-use plans; sources are listed at the end of the table. Against these we have made an initial assessment as to whether our plan is likely to pose a significant effect by using information on site vulnerability, again contained in existing HRAs.

Pre-Screening Results

- 5.2 The results of the pre-screening assessment identified three potential impacts from the Derbyshire LTP3. We had considered scoping these out at the pre-screening stage, but Natural England suggested that we should not look to screen these out until we have clear justification to do so. We have therefore examined these three issues in more detail as part of the establishment of the environmental baseline for the SEA focussed on the SACs and SPA potentially affected. This process will provide a more robust way of assessing potential effects.
- 5.3 The three potential significant effects that we examine in more detail are:-

Disturbance Due to Visitor and Tourism Pressure - A number of European sites have issues regarding a potential for disturbance from an increase in visitors. This generally relates to an increase in recreational activities within the sites by walkers and cyclists.

Air Quality - A number of the sites are already exceeding critical loads related to air quality, although it is not clear whether this is traffic-related.

Water Quality - A number of the European sites are vulnerable to decreases in water quality. Although there is little information as to whether any of the European sites are currently subject to pollution from highway drainage, it is possible that highway drainage could have the potential to contribute to this.

Recreational disturbance and damage

- 5.4 Annex 1 identified five SACs and the South Pennine Moors SPA as potentially being vulnerable to recreational disturbance. The primary reasons for qualifying features can be grouped into flora for the SACs and obviously birds for the SPA. We examine these in the paragraphs below.

Flora

- 5.5 The five SACs which we identified as potentially being vulnerable to recreational damage are detailed in Table 5.1 below together with the qualifying flora features. Potential damage to flora from walking and cycling is likely to be either the result of erosion of soils which can lead to loss of soils that support species, or damage to the hydrological stability of the landscape; and trampling of species.

Table 5.1 Special Areas of Conservation and qualifying features vulnerable to recreation damage

Site Name	Qualifying features
Birklands & Bilhaugh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old acidophilous oak woods with quercus robur on sandy plains
Gang Mine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calaminarian grasslands of the violetalia calamariae
Peak District Dales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) • Tillio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines • European dry heaths • Calaminarian grasslands of the violetalia calamariae • Alkaline fens • Calcareous and clacshist screes of the montane to alpine levels (Thlaspietea rotundifolii)/ Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation
South Pennine Moors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Dry Heaths • Blanket Bogs/ Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix/ Transition mires and quaking bogs • Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles
West Midlands Mosses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds • Transition mires and quaking bogs

Bold denotes primary reason for selection of site

- 5.6 In terms of examining whether there is a potential significant impact in relation to soil erosion and trampling we need to look at whether there is currently a significant issue and whether the plan is likely to increase this. In terms of walking and cycling, impact is likely to occur where footpaths or cycleways become eroded or are extended and begin to significantly impact upon a wider area. Most evidence we have available relates to the Peak District National Park which acts as a good proxy to the impact elsewhere because it draws most visitors to Derbyshire being host to 10 million recreational visits per year⁴; the north western area of Derbyshire hosts the majority of public rights of way in the County; and the largest SACs vulnerable to recreation are in this area.
- 5.7 A study of footpath condition has been undertaken by the Moors for the Future Partnership focussed on the moorland areas within the Peak District National Park. Some of these footpaths are located within the South Pennine Moors SAC area. Footpath condition is examined under a number of parameters which relate to flora. Those that relate to flora are bare ground width, worn vegetation width, water scarification and soil structure. Footpath condition was assessed on 50 metre sections and grouped into various banding levels depending on their condition against the parameters. Of the length of surveyed footpaths in the SAC (119 km) only 2.9% were classified in the worst two levels for bare ground (where bare ground was 2.7 metres or more); 0.6% were in a similar category for worn vegetation; and 9.1% had soil structure damaged and evidence of water scarification. Some of these sections were associated with the busiest footpaths such as the Pennine Way. The Moors for the Future website highlights such routes as being restored by the Moors for the Future Partnership to reduce this damage and that damage in future is likely to reduce.
- 5.8 Integrating people with the landscape and wildlife is a key aspiration for Natural England and is an aspiration that fits with a number of our Council Plan priorities. During the third LTP period it is unlikely that a significant number of new routes will be introduced within the SACs during the Plan period. Therefore it is unlikely that flora would be impacted upon significantly from new infrastructure. Although the Plan will seek to encourage walking and cycling for a number of reasons e.g. health, local economy, climate change it is difficult to quantify this as we do not currently have data about usage of routes. However, it is clear from anecdotal evidence that many of the paths are used by high numbers. Encouragement of walkers and cyclists is likely to be encouraged by other policies and organisations and an in-combination effect could be considered. However, many agencies such as the Moors for the Future Partnership are working towards reducing the environmental impact and therefore should an increase in walking and cycling it is unlikely that further damage would be likely.
- 5.9 In summarising the impact on flora in the SACs we recognise that there are localised issues of soil erosion and loss of flora alongside some of the busiest footpaths. Where this is an issue, mitigation measures are being undertaken which allows flora to recover. In taking LTP3 forward following the Council Plan priorities it will be seeking to encourage people to enjoy Derbyshire's landscape and biodiversity alongside the protection of the environment. We therefore conclude that recreational disturbance and damage for flora is not a significant issue requiring further assessment. But we

⁴ <http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/index/news/mediacentrefacts.htm>

should recognise in developing the plan the importance that footpath restoration works such as stone flagging busy footpaths have in restoring flora and habitats and that enhancement of these habitats should be considered in developing LTP3 particularly where policies encourage more people to enjoy the countryside.

Birds

- 5.10 The Special Protection Area for the South Pennines relates to the breeding of five species of birds – Golden Plover, Merlin, Peregrine, Short eared owl and Dunlin. Of these, all but Peregrine are ground nesting birds which are potentially vulnerable to disturbance from walkers and cyclists. An analysis of moorland breeding bird distribution and change in the Peak District, which covers most of the SPA in Derbyshire, has been produced by the Moors for the Future Partnership⁵. This analysis considered recreational disturbance. Although this did not focus on all species that we are concerned with it provides a proxy to the likelihood of disturbance to ground nesting species.
- 5.11 This report concluded that a number of species, particularly ground nesting waders such as Curlew, Golden Plover, Lapwing, and Snipe avoid areas of habitat close to footpaths. However, over a 1km area it was found that this did not appear to have an impact on overall density of population. Indeed, the study found that populations of wader species regarded as sensitive to visitor pressures are increasing in the Peak District. This suggests that visitor pressure is not currently a major driver of population change. In relation to SPA key species, the report notes that Golden Plover populations are stable and Merlin populations have increased since the early 1970s alongside considerable increases in recreational pressures. Mitigation measures such as paving busy routes such as the Pennine Way is helping to reduce the spatial impact. Since 2000 large areas of open access land have been designated by Natural England; as part of this only one site has required mitigation measures – Beeley Moor which requires dogs to be on leads through the nesting season which suggests that disturbance is a more localised issue.
- 5.12 In conclusion disturbance to birds is similar to that of flora. Localised issues may occur alongside some of our busiest footpaths, but looking at the impact across the wider habitat it would appear that this is not considered significant. The Council Plan priorities that the LTP3 will help deliver will help protect the environment and further restoration works such as those being undertaken by Moors for the Future will no doubt reduce disturbance further. Localised management techniques such as keeping dogs on leads may be required in some locations, but these can be dealt with at a local level.

Air Quality

- 5.13 Air quality was identified as a potential issue for two SACs, Bees Nest and Green Clay Pits and Peak District. In terms of Bees Nest and Claypits SAC we suggested within the pre-screening assessment that because this was only located close to a minor road it was unlikely that the SAC would be subject to any significant increase in traffic in future and therefore this site could be screened out. The Peak District SAC therefore remains to be assessed.
- 5.14 Local air quality monitoring in Derbyshire relating to traffic is undertaken in busy urban areas where traffic and congestion levels are such that poor air quality is potentially an issue. Therefore less monitoring is available for rural areas. Nationally, additional air quality monitoring is undertaken by the Government at monitoring sites known as the Automatic Urban and Rural Network (AURN). There are two AURN sites in Derbyshire which provide a general proxy to air quality in a rural (Ladybower) and urban (Chesterfield) context. The Ladybower monitoring site is located within the Peak District National Park and therefore provides a good proxy to air quality levels across the Peak District SAC.
- 5.15 The Peak District SAC qualifying features are restricted to flora and water wildlife. Therefore for this screening assessment we are focussing on the potential impact of air quality on flora. The UK Air Quality Standards Regulations 2007 include thresholds for protection of vegetation and ecosystems. Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) is relevant to traffic pollution, where a threshold of 30 µgm⁻³ is estimated to having a negative impact. As can be seen from Table 5.2 below, the annual averages for NO₂ are well below the thresholds, even within an urban context. General trends show that air quality is improving.

⁵ A project to restore large parts of internationally important Peak District moors

Table 5.2 Annual Averages of Nitrogen Dioxide

Year	Chesterfield	Ladybower
	NO ₂	NO ₂
2000	-	11.3 µg m ⁻³
2004	-	9.2 µg m ⁻³
2008	17.8 µg m ⁻³	7.7 µg m ⁻³

- 5.16 We have also estimated levels of air pollutants caused by vehicle emissions for the road network in Derbyshire using the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) air quality screening model. However, the outputs did not provide any additional information to the more detailed monitoring conducted by the district and borough authorities and/or AURN sites. Although this model uses a number of assumptions, it did allow us to project the data forward to the end of the Plan period to consider the potential impact of technological advances etc which confirmed that air quality would continue to improve, thereby reducing the potential impact further.
- 5.17 It would appear from the results that air quality in relation to biodiversity is an issue that can be screened out. We should acknowledge that there may be specific habitats and species that in the short-term, prior to technological advances, could be vulnerable to poor air quality. It is likely that these will be identified on a site by site basis through existing working relationships and considered at the scheme design stage.

Water Quality

- 5.18 Water quality was identified as a potential significant impact for two SACs, River Mease and Peak District. During our baseline assessment for the Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report we have not discovered any information or examples of traffic-related water pollution. During LTP2 we are only aware of one instance where highway run-off was damaging a SSSI, where water run-off was reported by Natural England into Hungerhill Swallet. A mitigation scheme is currently in the draft programme for 2010/11. Anecdotal evidence of water pollution, including salt run-off, was noted within the SEA of LTP2 in relation to the stream in the Via Gellia which may have been affecting Cromford Canal SSSI. Examination of the Cromford Canal Conservation Management Plan 2007 found no reference to water pollution from highway run-off.
- 5.19 Although highway run-off could have the potential to affect water quality, it is unlikely that it would be a significant impact. Should localised issues occur these can be dealt with at scheme level rather than at a strategic level assessment. We therefore suggest that water quality is screened out.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 In conclusion, this screening assessment has found that it is unlikely that the implementation of LTP3 will have a significant impact upon the Special Protection Area and Special Conservation Areas contained within Derbyshire and the 15km buffer-zone. Therefore we conclude that we believe there is no further requirement for an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations Assessment in relation to LTP3. At this stage, this is a draft statement as we are now seeking the views of environmental bodies and local environment groups about this.
- 6.2 In terms of the potential transport issues we have concluded that recreational disturbance is unlikely to affect flora and birds significantly and measures can be taken to reduce localised issues within LTP3. Air quality is unlikely to be a significant issue for flora and that during the Plan period air quality is likely to continue to improve. Water quality is not currently a significant issue in relation to highway run-off and where localised issues occur these can be tackled at scheme level.
- 6.2 The examination of the issues within the SACs and SPA will enable us to take forward opportunities for enhancing the habitats for flora and fauna within these areas into LTP3 development.

Annex 1 Screening Summary Table for Derbyshire LTP3

Site Name	Qualifying Features*	Key Environmental Conditions to support site integrity	Possible impacts arising from Derbyshire LTP3	Is there a risk of significant effect?	Possible impacts from other trends, plans etc	Is there a risk of significant 'in combination' effects?
Bees Nest & Green Clay Pits SAC	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) Great Crested Newts (<i>Triturus cristatus</i>) occur in a number of ponds on site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining appropriate grazing or rotational cutting may be used to retain the presence of positive indicator species and prevent domination by rank grasses and scrub, though some scrub can be ecologically beneficial. Maintenance of habitat diversity including unshaded, medium sized ponds, and a variety of terrestrial habitat and suitable resting, foraging and hibernation areas. Control or elimination of fish and invasive/ alien aquatic plants may be required 	<p>Although nitrogen deposition already exceeds critical load for dominant habitat site, the Plan is unlikely to contain policies to significantly increase traffic flows along what is a minor road adjacent to the site and therefore air quality is unlikely to be significantly affected.</p> <p>None</p>	<p>No</p> <p>No</p>	<p>Unlikely to be any transport proposals in this area that could be undertaken to support any development. Therefore unlikely to be any in combination effects.</p>	<p>No</p>
Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC	Old acidophilous oak woods with <i>Quercus robur</i> on sandy plains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate woodland management to maintain the extent and characteristics of the habitat. 	<p>Site is vulnerable to an increase in recreation. However, should improved rights of way/ greenways be linked to/ from Derbyshire it would be via more regularised routes which would protect vulnerable areas.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Nottinghamshire County Council LTP plans likely to be compatible with Derbyshire LTP and therefore unlikely.</p>	<p>No</p>
Gang Mine SAC	Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of suitable habitat including available substrate enriched with heavy metals, bare ground, short sward structure and low levels of dead plant matter. Maintenance of habitat suitable for characteristic species such as spring sandwort and alpine penny cress with an absence of suitably low levels of invasive species. Sporadic management such as occasional light grazing may be beneficial. 	<p>Site is vulnerable to an increase in recreation. A network of rights of way cross the site, but it is located in a fairly remote area, and therefore unlikely to be subject to a significant increase in visitors.</p> <p>Site is sensitive to nutrient enrichment to which increased road traffic could make worse, however LTP is unlikely to contain policies to significantly increase road traffic and therefore the site is unlikely to be significantly affected.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>No</p>

Site Name	Qualifying Features*	Key Environmental Conditions to support site integrity	Possible impacts arising from Derbyshire LTP3	Is there a risk of significant effect?	Possible impacts from other trends, plans etc	Is there a risk of significant 'in combination' effects?
Pasture Fields Salt Marsh SAC	Inland Salt Meadows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inland saltmarsh dependent upon traditional agricultural management, with livestock grazing and no, or minimal use, of agricultural chemicals. Dependent upon the brine source being maintained and, whilst the hydrology of the site is not fully understood, it would be likely to be vulnerable to any abstractions of water from the underground aquifer. 	None. Site integrity has no relation to transport issues.	No	None	No
Peak District Dales SAC	<p>Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia)</p> <p>Tillio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines</p> <p>European dry heaths</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sward structure and composition provide a valuable indication of habitat quality Maintaining appropriate grazing or rotational cutting may be used to retain the presence of positive indicator species and prevent domination by rank grasses and scrub, though some scrub can be ecologically beneficial Appropriate woodland management is required in particular to maintain natural processes and a diverse woodland structure, tree generation potential and a diverse age structure, control of invasive species and support characteristic species and habitat types. Without management heathland becomes progressively dominated by bracken, gorse and/or scrub and trees. Appropriate management is therefore required to maintain the extent of heaths, structural diversity including undisturbed bare ground, age, structure and vegetation mosaic. Grazing can 	<p>This is a complex SAC intersecting a large number of SSSIs. 6% of these have a condition assessment of Unfavourable No Change or Unfavourable Declining, although the reasons are unrelated to transport – inappropriate grazing, weed control or scrub control and poor water quality due to high phosphate levels.</p> <p>Some sites are vulnerable to increased visitor pressure which the Plan may contribute to increasing tourism by improving rights of way and building new greenways however these will be expected to protect sensitive locations.</p> <p>Water quality is an issue, and although highway drainage could affect the sites, the plan is unlikely to contain any policies which would worsen the situation.</p> <p>Although nitrogen deposition, of which increased traffic can contribute, the Plan is unlikely to contain policies to significantly increase traffic flows and therefore air quality is unlikely to be significantly affected.</p>	No	Not expected. Unlikely that significant development will take place in rural areas and therefore the LTP is unlikely to contain policies or measures which would, in combination increase traffic levels and therefore reduce air quality.	No

Site Name	Qualifying Features*	Key Environmental Conditions to support site integrity	Possible impacts arising from Derbyshire LTP3	Is there a risk of significant effect?	Possible impacts from other trends, plans etc	Is there a risk of significant 'in combination' effects?
Peak District Dales SAC (continued)	<p>Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>violetalia calaminariae</i></p> <p>Alkaline fens</p> <p>Calcareous and clacshist screes of the montane to alpine levels (<i>Thlaspietea rotundifolii</i>)/ Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation</p>	<p>play an important role in management. Control of invasive species required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of suitable habitat with characteristic species assemblages, and substrate enriched with heavy metals, areas of bare ground with characteristically short sward structure and suitably low levels of dead plant matter • Sporadic management such as occasional light grazing • Appropriate management, usually in the form of light grazing, is required to maintain sward structure and composition. • Control of inappropriate and invasive species. • Hydrology, water quality and air quality must be maintained. Although groundwater levels need to be high, standing water may be detrimental for alkaline fen communities. • Maintenance of the extent of habitat with characteristic pioneer calcicole and basiphilous species • Maintenance of natural processes such as erosion 				

Site Name	Qualifying Features*	Key Environmental Conditions to support site integrity	Possible impacts arising from Derbyshire LTP3	Is there a risk of significant effect?	Possible impacts from other trends, plans etc	Is there a risk of significant 'in combination' effects?
Peak District Dales SAC (continued)	<p>White-clawed (or Atlantic stream) crayfish (Austropotamobius pallipes)</p> <p>Brook lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>)/ Bullhead (<i>Cottus gobio</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of extent of habitat and water quality • The absence of introduced species and crayfish plague is especially important and can be introduced by human activity, therefore maintaining visitor awareness initiatives, sympathetic management of fishery practices and regular monitoring is important. • River's natural structure and form should be maintained to support a natural flow regime that will help ensure the provision of resting pools for fish, conserve the quality of the riverbed as fish spawning habitat and avoid the creation of artificial barriers to the passage of migratory fish • Any exploitation of fish populations or other native animals or plants should be at a sustainable level, without manipulation of the rivers capacity to support them or augmentation by excessive stocking. 				

Site Name	Qualifying Features*	Key Environmental Conditions to support site integrity	Possible impacts arising from Derbyshire LTP3	Is there a risk of significant effect?	Possible impacts from other trends, plans etc	Is there a risk of significant 'in combination' effects?
River Mease SAC	<p>General</p> <p>Watercourses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitans</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation</p> <p>Spined loach (<i>Cobitis taenia</i>)/ Bullhead (<i>Cottus gobio</i>)/ White-clawed crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of water quality and availability requires management to minimise pollution inputs and appropriate water abstraction. • The river's natural structure and form should be maintained to support a natural flow regime, including the avoidance of constriction of the river or blockage of its floodplain. • Natural flow regime required for maintenance of natural erosion and sedimentation processes and hence channel morphology. • Riparian areas and the wider catchment need to be managed sensitively to avoid excessive run off of soil particles and nutrients into the river. • The structure and composition of bankside and aquatic vegetation should be maintained. • Maintenance of suitable habitat and appropriate management will help to ensure the provision of habitat suitable for spawning and shelter, including gravel dominated substrate with areas of sand and silt, patchy vegetation cover provided by submerged and marginal macrophyte assemblages, slack water, resting pools for fish, a presence of submerged woody debris, and the absence of artificial barriers. • Any exploitation of fish populations or other native animals or plants should be at a sustainable level, without manipulation of the rivers capacity to 	None. Water quality is an issue, to which highway drainage/ highway flood prevention could contribute. However, should the Plan propose measures in this area, they would be an improvement on the current situation and therefore should not affect water quality in this location.	No	Unlikely any transport proposals relating to water quality would be undertaken in conjunction with other Plans.	No

Site Name	Qualifying Features*	Key Environmental Conditions to support site integrity	Possible impacts arising from Derbyshire LTP3	Is there a risk of significant effect?	Possible impacts from other trends, plans etc	Is there a risk of significant 'in combination' effects?
River Mease SAC (Continued)	Otter (<i>Lutra Lutra</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> support them or augmentation by excessive stocking. The absence of introduced/ alien species is important. Maintenance of terrestrial habitat with cover; shelter and holt sites provided by dense scrub and mature trees along river banks. Maintenance of suitably low levels of disturbance. 				
Rochdale Canal SAC	Floating water plantain (<i>Luronium natans</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of open situations with a moderate degree of disturbance where growth of emergent vegetation is held in check. Maintenance of water levels 	None. Site integrity has no relation to transport issues.	No	None	No
South Pennine Moors SAC	European Dry Heaths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate heathland management is required to maintain the extent of the heaths, the structural diversity including undisturbed dwarf shrub, varied age structure and vegetational mosaic. Grazing plays an important role in this management. The control of inappropriate and invasive species is required. Specific grouse moor management contributes to the maintenance of habitat mosaic. Maintaining hydrological conditions as wet heaths require wet soils during winter with a dry surface in summer. Also importance of water quality, including lack of eutrophication and maintenance of oligotrophic character. Air pollution and atmospheric deposition is likely to be an important cause of eutrophication for wet and dry heaths. 	Some sites are vulnerable to increased visitor pressure which the Plan may contribute to increasing tourism by improving rights of way and building new greenways however these will be expected to protect sensitive locations.	No	Unlikely to be any transport proposals in this area that could be undertaken to support any development. However, the HRA of the RSS states that the SP Moors SAC is under multiple development-related pressures relating to the Housing Market Areas, which may create adverse effects e.g. increases in traffic	No Development options are being addressed through the East Midlands Regional Plan Partial Review Process

Site Name	Qualifying Features*	Key Environmental Conditions to support site integrity	Possible impacts arising from Derbyshire LTP3	Is there a risk of significant effect?	Possible impacts from other trends, plans etc	Is there a risk of significant 'in combination' effects?
South Pennine Moors SAC (Continued)	<p>Blanket Bogs/ Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix/ Transition mires and quaking bogs</p> <p>Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of habitat extent and species composition are important for this habitat, with some areas requiring management of scrub encroachment in addition to minimising the levels of trampling and damage from recreational activities including fire-setting. • Mires and bogs are sensitive to changes in hydrology and maintenance of natural regimes, water quality, and avoidance of water table lowering are important factors. • Areas that have suffered previous damaging activities require enhancement including revegetation of bare peat, increased vegetational diversity in response to past heavy sheep grazing and a reduction of erosion through gullyng. • Appropriate woodland management is required in particular to maintain natural processes and create a diverse woodland structure, allow tree regeneration potential, control invasive species and support characteristic species and habitat types. • To increase the extent of native character woodland without detriment to other key habitats. 				

Site Name	Qualifying Features*	Key Environmental Conditions to support site integrity	Possible impacts arising from Derbyshire LTP3	Is there a risk of significant effect?	Possible impacts from other trends, plans etc	Is there a risk of significant 'in combination' effects?
South Pennine Moors SPA	<p>Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>)</p> <p>Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>)</p> <p>Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>)</p> <p>Short Eared Owl (<i>Asio flammeus</i>)</p> <p>Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina schinzii</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of the extent of suitable habitat mosaic including areas of tall mature heath and grass sward suitable for nesting short-eared owl and merlin whilst maintaining shorter, recently grazed and burnt areas suitable for nesting golden plover. • Maintaining low-levels of disturbance and predation are especially important for ground nesting birds and management of human access should direct disturbance away from sensitive areas. Predator control may be required. • Maintenance of the extent of habitats suitable for providing adequate food supply such as small mammals, nesting birds and invertebrates. 	Some sites are vulnerable to increased visitor pressure which the Plan may contribute to increasing tourism by improving rights of way and building new greenways however these will be expected to protect sensitive locations and regularising routes we would expect to lead to less disturbance in any case.	No	Unlikely to be any transport proposals in this area that could be undertaken to support any development. Therefore unlikely to be any in combination effects.	No
West Midlands Mosses SAC	<p>Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds</p> <p>Transition mires and quaking bogs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of habitat extent and suitable conditions for characteristic species are important for these habitats. • Management of scrub encroachment and natural succession required to reduce nutrient enrichment. • Levels of disturbance such as trampling and damage from recreational activities should be maintained at appropriate levels. • These habitats are sensitive to changes in hydrology and maintenance of natural regimes, and characteristic water quality and chemistry are important factors. 	The site is vulnerable to increased visitor pressure but given its location, it is very unlikely that the Plan will contribute to increasing disturbance from tourism or recreational activities.	No	Unlikely that any development would be supported by measures through the Derbyshire LTP.	No

Notes

Qualifying Features:-

***Bold text denotes primary reason for selection of site.** Normal text denotes a qualifying feature, but not the primary reason

Sources of Information

Key Environmental Conditions to support site integrity:-

Environmental conditions have been taken from the East Midlands RSS Partial Review Habitats Regulations Assessment Pre-Screening Report October 2008, except:

Pasture Fields Saltmarsh SAC - Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Local Development Framework: Information to Inform the Appropriate Assessment of the Core Strategy May 2008

Rochdale SAC – taken from Screening Opinion of the Impact of the Rochdale MBC Biodiversity and Development Supplementary Planning Document on the Rochdale SAC 2007



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