

Tandridge District Council

Habitats Regulations Assessment: Stage 1 ADOPTED Screening Report for the Dormansland Neighbourhood Plan

25 September 2024



Glossary

Term	Definition
Habitats Regulations	UK Regulations that protected habitats and species. For the full Regulations follow this link: The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (legislation.gov.uk)
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment – see government guidance here: Habitats regulations assessments: protecting a European site - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Stage 1 Screening	A determination by the Competent Authority regarding whether significant impacts on a site protected by the Habitats Regulations are likely
Competent Authority	The Authority required to undertake Screening and empowered to make the Screening decision
European Site	Special Protection Area or Special Area of Conservation – areas protected for biodiversity value
SPA	Special Protection Area – designated for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within EU countries
SAC	Special Area of Conservation – designated to provide increased protection to a variety of wild animals, plants and habitats
Precautionary principle	An approach to risk management where early consideration improves the opportunity to address potential problems; and that a risk averse approach is taken where uncertainty exists
Appropriate Assessment	A detailed and comprehensive consideration of effects on biodiversity where possible significant harm has been identified with respect to proposals in a Plan. Appropriate Assessment will identify the means to avoid and mitigate for effects
Competent Authority	Authority responsible for making an HRA Screening Opinion (decision)
Ashdown Forest Air Quality Group	Lewes, Mid Sussex, Tandridge, Sevenoaks and Wealden District and Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils collaborating to co-ordinate protection of and contribution to enhancement of Ashdown Forest

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1 Summary

- 1.1 This Stage 1 **draft** Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening Report presents the consideration of Tandridge District Council with respect to the effect that the Dormansland Neighbourhood Plan could have on two European Sites: Ashdown Forest SAC / SPA and the Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment SAC.
- 1.2 The Report sets out, in Section 4, the nature of these two European sites and the reasons for their respective designations.
- 1.3 Consideration has been given to the in-combination effects with other plans.
- 1.4 A draft Screening Report was issued to, and the views requested of Natural England (NE) on July 04, 2024.
- 1.5 At this stage, and recognising the precautionary principle, Tandridge District Council considers that the Neighbourhood Plan would **NOT** be likely to result in significant effects on European Sites in combination with other plans and programmes. Specific factors that have been considered are:
 - risk of increased air pollution;
 - risk of an increase in recreational disturbance affecting ground nesting birds;
 - risk of an increase in recreational disturbance, affecting chalk grassland; and
 - risk of increased water pollution.
- 1.6 Tandridge District Council considers that it is **NOT** necessary to proceed to the next stage of the HRA process, Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment.
- 1.7 Natural England commented by email on September 04:

‘Natural England would agree with the conclusions of the two reports (*SEA and HRA – added by TDC*) which state that no further assessment would be required under either the Habitats Regulations or the Strategic Environmental Assessment regulations.’

NOTE: It will be necessary to review this HRA Screening Report prior to Examination of the Neighbourhood Plan should any significant changes be made to the scope and nature of proposals in the Plan.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 This Stage 1 **draft** Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening Report presents the consideration of Tandridge District Council with respect to the effect that the Dormansland Neighbourhood Plan could have on two European Sites: Ashdown Forest SAC / SPA and the Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment SAC.

Legislation and Regulations

- 2.2 European Sites are protected by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended (the Habitats Regulations):
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), which are designated to provide increased protection to a variety of wild animals, plants and habitats; and
 - Special Protection Areas (SPA), which are designated for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within EU countries.
- 2.3 It is UK Government policy for sites designated under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites) to be treated as having equivalent status.
- 2.4 Regulation 9 of the [Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017](#) necessitates that the Council exercises its duty to protect European Sites.

Likely significant effects

- 2.5 Screening requires consideration by the Competent Authority, in this instance Tandridge District Council, of relevant available information to determine whether a significant effect is likely to occur to a European Site because of proposals and policies in a Plan.
- 2.6 An effect includes anything that would impact upon a site, with temporary, permanent, direct and indirect effects considered.
- 2.7 Development or activities proposed in a Plan that take place outside a protected site may be capable of having a significant effect.
- 2.8 A precautionary principle is applied. This means that where there is not enough information to assess whether a plan or project is likely or not to have a significant effect on a protected site, it should be assumed that a risk may exist.
- 2.9 Proposed mitigation measures cannot be taken into account for the purposes of screening.

In-Combination Effects

- 2.10 Other plans and projects being prepared or implemented in the area may have the potential to cause negative effects on the integrity of European sites.
- 2.11 A further consideration of Screening is, therefore, whether these effects may be exacerbated when experienced in combination with the effects of the Plan being screened, in this instance the Dormansland Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.12 A key consideration in this respect is the possibility that effect of a Plan in isolation that has previously been judged not to be significant could become significant when combined with the Plan that is being screened.

Purpose of this Report

- 2.13 This Stage 1 draft Screening Report and consultation with Natural England establishes either:
- that any risk to a European site is avoided and further (appropriate) assessment is not necessary; or
 - that there is a risk to a European site and further (appropriate) assessment is necessary
- 2.14 This Report sets out the consideration, by Tandridge District Council, of whether the Dormansland Neighbourhood Plan should be the subject of further assessment with respect to the likely impact on protected sites.
- 2.15 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of land use plans is to ensure that consideration is given in preparing and adopting plans to sites protected by European and UK law.
- 2.16 HRA is a staged and iterative process, being revisited as necessary in response to more detailed information, recommendations and any relevant changes to the plan or project until no significant adverse effects remain.
- 2.17 HRA Stage 1 is a check, by the Competent Authority, regarding whether the Plan is:
- directly connected with or necessary for the conservation management of a European site; and / or
 - risks having a significant effect on a European site on its own or in combination with other proposals.

- 2.18 This Report presents the draft findings of Stage 1, Screening; and has been prepared with reference to Government Guidance issued on Published 24 February 2021 and last updated on 6 December 2023: [Habitats regulations assessments: protecting a European site - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/habitats-regulations-assessments-protecting-a-european-site).

Structure of this Report

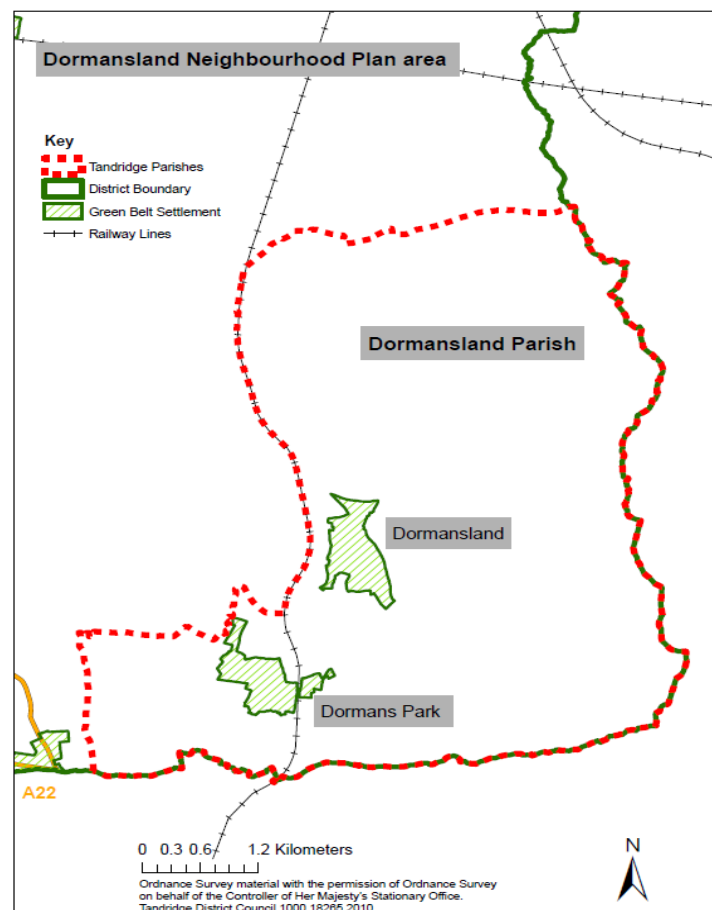
- 2.19 This report is in six parts and consists of this introduction and the following sections:
- **Section 2**, this section, sets out HRA legislation; describes the process of assessment and the effects that are considered in that process; and establishes the purpose of this Report;
 - **Section 3**, the following section, provides details of the Dormansland Neighbourhood Plan and the European Sites that are potentially affected by the Plan;
 - **Section 4** considers the characteristics and vulnerabilities of relevant protected sites and provides context of other relevant plans;
 - **Section 5** presents the consideration of likely significant effects; and
 - **Section 6** confirms the conclusions of the Report.

3 Dormansland Neighbourhood Plan

Dormansland Parish – the Plan Area

- 3.1 The Plan Area encompasses the whole of the Parish of Dormansland (see Map 1 and Map 2).
- 3.2 The Parish of Dormansland lies in the county of Surrey; in the south-east corner of Tandridge District, bordering the Counties of Kent, East Sussex and West Sussex.
- 3.3 Covering an area of 27 square kilometres and with a population of 3,400 (2021 Census), the Parish lies entirely within the Metropolitan Green Belt. About a third of the Plan Area is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), a National Landscape.

Map 1: Dormansland Neighbourhood Plan Area



- 3.4 The urban area is focussed in two main settlements, Dormansland and Dormans Park, sitting 1.5km apart either side of the north-south railway line. Dormansland lies on the eastern side and Dormans Park, a 19th century private residential development,

further to the south on the western side of the railway line. Both settlements are located a similar distance from Dormans station.

- 3.5 The A22 to the west is the main north-south road and the A264 to the south, connecting East Grinstead to Tunbridge Wells, is the main east-west road.
- 3.6 Dormansland has numerous village organisations and activities including cricket, football and tennis and an annual carnival. It retains a village shop and post office (Potters Store) at its centre, as well as Dormansland Primary School and three public houses. Dormans Park is characterised by residential properties in large plots in a wooded setting, protected by covenant.
- 3.7 Landscape and green infrastructure play a significant role in the quality and character of the Parish, with a patchwork of deciduous woodland, copses, arable and pasture fields that wrap around the settlements of Dormansland and Dormans Park. The topography of the High Weald AONB contributes to the setting and undulating character of the landscape with both local and longer views.

Plan Proposals and Policies

- 3.8 Dormansland Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, the Localism Act 2011 and the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Once made (adopted) it will form part of the Tandridge Development Plan.

The Parish Council maintains a website with more details setting out progress on the Neighbourhood Plan here <http://www.dormansland.org.uk/>.

3.9 The Neighbourhood Plan sets out a vision for the Parish.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN VISION FOR DORMANSLAND PARISH

Dormansland Parish will be home to a strong, prosperous and increasingly sustainable community.

The community will live in an area which has retained its distinctive yet varied character and heritage; valued open spaces and Green Belt will have been protected, while changes and new development in the built-up area will have been managed to provide for future needs, preventing the erosion of character of individual roads and streets.

Small businesses will be able to thrive and the community will be supported by a range of local shops and services, primarily located in East Grinstead and Oxted to serve as the main retail centres in the district with Redhill, Crawley and Croydon offering a wider choice of shops and services.

Roads, footpaths, public transport and other amenities would have been improved or managed to provide safer and more sustainable community.

3.10 The vision for a future Dormansland is expressed as a series of key objectives:

- protect the character, qualities and identity of the landscape to manage the impacts of any future growth and maintain the spatial and qualitative relationships between the areas;
- identify and enhance the village centre to protect existing community services and amenities and to support the provision of a wider range of services and amenities to meet Parish needs and reinforce the identity and purpose of the village centre;
- plan for improvement, expansion or redevelopment of other amenities including the Memorial Club and school as part of a long-term plan for improving Parish amenities;
- secure the future of the existing employment uses within the Parish and plan for their growth to serve Parish needs;
- work with Lingfield Racecourse and Young Epilepsy to integrate these objectives with their longer-term plans;
- work with Lingfield Parish Council to develop a shared approach to green infrastructure and biodiversity, and to protect and enhance the wider setting of both parishes;

- plan for increased public access to, and enjoyment of local green spaces, the High Weald AONB and the wider parish setting whilst recognising that some areas of significant biodiversity should only have limited public access;
- integrate the existing network of rural lanes, bridleways and footpaths, to improve and extend safe pedestrian and cycling routes;
- identify local green spaces, safeguard and improve their biodiversity and integrate them with the pedestrian and cycle network;
- identify local buildings of heritage value; and
- protect the character of Dormans Park.

3.11 The Plan seeks to achieve these objectives through the detailed policies that are reproduced as Appendix C to this Report.

3.12 The Plan policies provide additional context to the National Planning Policy Framework, to the Tandridge Development Plan and other Development Plans. It clarifies that any sites to meet local housing needs will be allocated through the strategic local plan process not the Neighbourhood Plan.

3.13 Land outside the built up-area is classified as open countryside. All this area is within the Green Belt and accordingly new development will be strictly controlled in line with national Green Belt policies. Policy DNP1 re-affirms, in accordance with the Tandridge Development Plan, that inappropriate development, harmful to the Green Belt, will not be approved other than in very special circumstances.

3.14 Other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are concerned with maintaining existing character, promoting design standards, conserving assets, improving the local environments, promoting sustainable transport and promoting biodiversity.

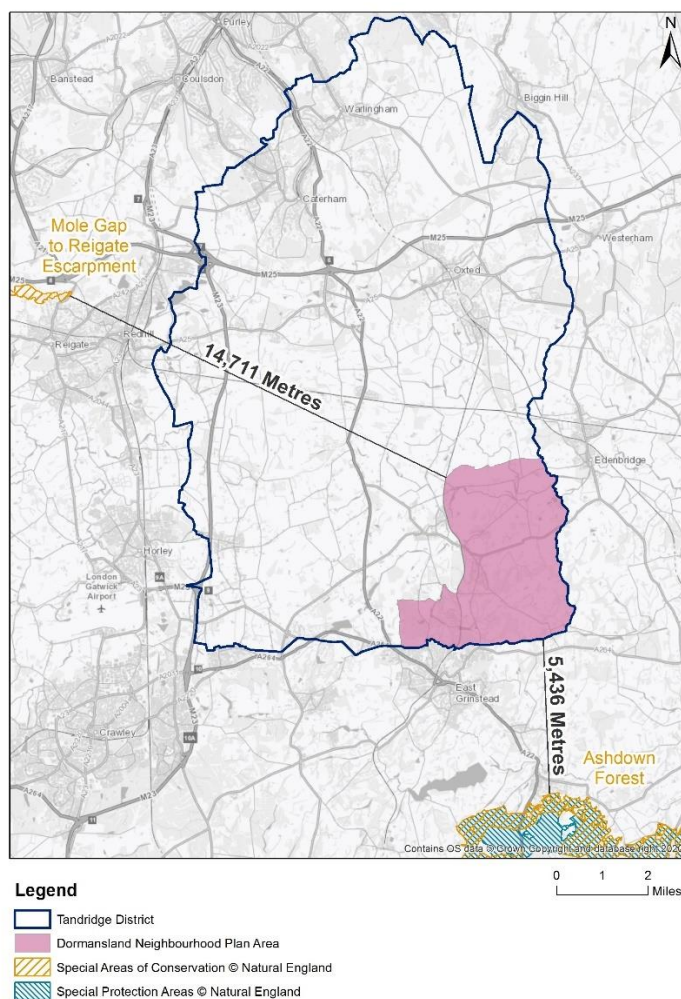
3.15 Of specific relevance to the HRA Screening exercise, Policy DNP7 seeks to establish the Dormansland Green Corridor. Any development within the corridor that is consistent with Green Belt policy is required to have full regard to the ecological value of land that lies within the corridor and development proposals are required to demonstrate how this value may be enhanced. Proposals that will undermine the ecological integrity of the corridor will be resisted. The Green Corridor is entirely outside the Ashdown Forest SPA / SAC 7km buffer zone.

- 3.16 Policy DNP8 proposes Local Green Spaces, which would ensure the land is retained in its current condition and use.

European Sites

- 3.17 There are no European Sites in the Plan Area.
- 3.18 The nearest European Sites are:
- Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC, which is to the south and 5km from the Parish boundary. The 7km buffer zone extends to within the Plan Area (see Map 2)
 - Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment SAC, which is more than 14km from the Plan Area (see Map 2)

Map 2: Location of European Sites



4 Ashdown Forest SPA / SAC and Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment SAC

Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment SAC

- 4.1 Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment SAC is designated for its woodland, chalk grassland, chalk scrub and heathland habitats.
- 4.2 This SAC is more than 14km from the Plan Area (see Map 2).
- 4.3 Specific vulnerabilities associated with the Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment SAC include those listed below. Further details are provided in Appendices 1, 2 and 3.
- recreational pressures
 - grazing regime
 - atmospheric pollution
 - competition from more vigorous acid loving species
 - loss of foraging and roosting sites for Bechstein's bats in the SAC and surrounding areas
 - severance of flight lines for Bechstein's bats
 - loss of foraging areas and refuge habitat for Great Crested Newts within 500m of ponds
 - hydrological changes may impact on ponds within the chalk heath, either through pollution or groundwater abstraction.
- 4.4 The Neighbourhood Plan Area has no direct or indirect physical connection with that site; and the Plan contains no proposals that could directly or indirectly affect the site and the characteristics for which it is protected.

Ashdown Forest SAC and SPA

- 4.5 Ashdown Forest is designated as an SAC due to the presence of Northern Atlantic wet heaths with cross-leaved heath; European dry heaths; and Great Crested Newt.
- 4.6 Ashdown Forest is designated as an SPA due to the presence of European nightjar (breeding); and Dartford warbler (breeding).
- 4.7 The geographic proximity to the Plan Area can be seen in Map 2.

- 4.8 A Site Improvement Plan 'SIP' has been produced by Natural England in partnership with the Environment Agency with support from the [European Union's LIFE+ Nature and Biodiversity programme](#). The SIP sets out plans on how to target efforts on the protected site to get it into a healthy state; and provides insight into the existing challenges facing the protected site (see link: [Ashdown Forest Site Improvement Plan](#)).
- 4.9 The SIP highlights threats including air pollution (the impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition) and public access disturbance. For each threat, a set of actions is identified. It is notable that in relation to atmospheric nitrogen deposition, the mechanism of a 'Site Nitrogen Action Plan' (SNAP) was identified, but the funding and delivery body not yet identified.
- 4.10 The SAC / SPA Area includes 3,213 ha designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- 4.11 Condition Analysis can be found in Appendix 3. SSSI monitoring is undertaken by Natural England as part of their statutory duties. The objectives of SSSI monitoring include informing agreement of the most appropriate site management and contributing to Natural England's monitoring of long-term changes in the natural environment. It is important to note that all Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites are also covered by the statutory national SSSI designation, therefore the condition analysis of SSSI may provide useful insights into the condition of internationally protected sites. However, the data should be treated with caution since the SSSI boundaries cover a slightly greater extent than the international sites, as demonstrated in Table 1, so will include condition assessments of areas not relevant to the HRA.
- 4.12 The table in Appendix 2 shows that more than three-quarters of the Ashdown Forest SSSI is in unfavourable condition, though recovering.

Potential in combination effects: other relevant plans and strategies

- 4.13 Following the Wealden District Council versus the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Lewes District Council and South Downs National Park Authority High Court Judgement, it is particularly important to highlight the importance of considering the cumulative impacts on protected sites.
- 4.14 A summary of the main matters of contextual relevance from other plans are found in Table 1, below, based on a judgement of likely significance. This includes all local planning authorities currently cooperating as part of the Ashdown Forest Air Quality Group.

Table 1: Summary of relevant issues covered in other Plans

Plan	Main Matters of Relevance
Tandridge Development Plan	Housing and commercial development and policies to protect the Ashdown Forest SPA / SAC. No sites proposed in the Ashdown Forest 7km buffer zone. Potential impacts include increased recreation and increased emissions to air from vehicles.
Other District Local Plans	As above The Ashdown Forest working group has noted that the shared objective is to ensure that impacts on the Ashdown Forest are properly assessed through appropriate Assessment (Stage 2 HRA) where necessary.
Surrey County Minerals and Waste Plans	Possible effects from thermal processing emissions, traffic emissions, dust, land take, water discharge, pest and predators and litter. Assessment of these Plans concludes that proposed developments were unlikely to result in harmful impact and that the Plan would not have any alone or in-combination effects on European sites.
Surrey County Transport Plan	Possible effects from traffic emissions. With no site proposals in the Dormansland NP it is concluded that it is unlikely there would be harmful in-combination effects on European sites.
High Weald AONB Management Plan	Includes policies and proposals to protect Ashdown Forest from the harm associated with increased recreational impact.

5 Screening assessment

- 5.1 Taking account of the information available to the Council a Screening Assessment on the likely effect that the Plan on the Ashdown Forest SPA / SAC protected site is presented as Table 2, below. Table 2 is supplemented by consideration of the draft Neighbourhood Plan policies which is provided as Appendix 4 to this Report.



Image: Nightjar (Photo Courtesy of David Bull)

Table 2: Ashdown Forest SAC / SPA Screening Assessment

Key environmental conditions to support	Likely Significant Effect from Neighbourhood Plan on Protected Site including in-combination impacts
Low recreational disturbance	Recreational impacts including disturbance, particularly from dog walkers, could have a significant effect on the breeding success of the protected ground nesting birds at the site. Visitor data collated to support the Tandridge District Local Plan (Ashdown Forest Visitor Surveys 2016 and 2009) demonstrates that most visitors come from areas local to the Forest (within 7km). This conclusion was supported in the District Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment, and is an agreed position with Wealden District Council, Lewes District Council, Tunbridge Wells District Council and Sevenoaks District Council. Dormansland Neighbourhood proposes no additional development but includes Policy DNP7 that supports the creation of a 'green corridor'. The policy requires full regard to the ecological value of land that lies within the corridor and that development proposals are required to demonstrate how this value may be enhanced. Proposals that will undermine the ecological integrity of the corridor will be resisted. The green corridor does not overlap with the Ashdown Forest SPA / SAC 7km buffer zone. Policy DNP12 re-emphasises policy in higher order plans that requires measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of residential development upon the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) in line with the Tandridge District Council policy. It is the view of Tandridge District Council that there are not likely to be any significant effects on the Ashdown Forest as a result of recreational impacts.
Minimal air pollution	Additional development would risk an increase in traffic movements on roads passing through or close to the protected site, thereby risking increasing air pollution and nitrogen disposition within the site. The Neighbourhood plan proposes no additional development and promotes sustainable transport. It is the view of Tandridge District Council that there are not likely to be any significant effects on the Ashdown Forest as a result of air pollution.
Relatively unpolluted water	There do not appear to be any river systems that connect to the Forest from Dormansland Parish. No hydrological pathways are known to exist. As a result, no significant effect is likely and such issues can be screened out from further parts of the HRA process.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 As established in Section 3 of this Report, the Neighbourhood Plan policies provide additional context to the National Planning Policy Framework, to the Tandridge Development Plan and other Development Plans. It supplements those Plans but does not promote or support additional development or activity that could have a harmful effect on the Ashdown Forest SPA / SAC.
- 6.2 The assessment, detailed in Section 4 and Section 5 of this Report, has informed the view of Tandridge District Council that there are not likely to be any significant effects on any European / protected site in the context of the Habitats Regulation 2017.
- 6.3 Specifically, it is not likely that there would be significant effects on the Ashdown Forest SPA / SAC, with reference to potential recreational activity, air quality or hydrological pathways.

Appendix 1 – Citations

Appendix 1a – Citation for Ashdown Forest SAC

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

Citation for Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Name: Ashdown Forest
Unitary Authority/County: East Sussex
SAC status: Designated on 1 April 2005
Grid reference: TQ451306
SAC EU code: UK0030080
Area (ha): 2729.00
Component SSSI: Ashdown Forest SSSI

Site description:

Ashdown Forest contains one of the largest single continuous blocks of lowland heath in south-east England, with both dry heaths and, in a larger proportion, wet heath. The wet heath element provides suitable conditions for several species of bog-mosses *Sphagnum* spp., bog asphodel *Narthecium ossifragum*, deergrass *Trichophorum cespitosum*, common cotton-grass *Eriophorum angustifolium*, marsh gentian *Gentiana pneumonanthe* and marsh clubmoss *Lycopodiella imundata*. The site supports important assemblages of beetles, dragonflies, damselflies and butterflies, including the nationally rare silver-studded blue *Plebejus argus*.

The dry heath in Ashdown Forest is dominated by heather *Calluna vulgaris*, bell heather *Erica cinerea* and dwarf gorse *Ulex minor*, with transitions to other habitats. It supports important lichen assemblages, including species such as *Pycnothelia papillaria*. This site supports the most inland remaining population of hairy greenweed *Genista pilosa* in Britain.

The damming of streams, digging for marl, and quarrying have produced several large ponds in a number of areas of the forest. Although often largely free of aquatic vegetation there may be localised rafts of broadleaved pondweed *Potamogeton natans*, beds of reedmace *Typha latifolia* and water horsetail *Equisetum fluvatile*. These species are particularly abundant in the marl pits. Some of the ponds have large amphibian populations, including the great-crested newt *Triturus cristatus*.

Qualifying habitats: The site is designated under article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following habitats listed in Annex I:

- European dry heaths
- Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*. (Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath)

Qualifying species: The site is designated under article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following species listed in Annex II:

- Great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*

This citation relates to a site entered in the Register of European Sites for Great Britain.
 Register reference number: UK0030080
 Date of registration: 14 June 2005
 Signed: *Tim Salmon*
 On behalf of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs



Ashdown Forest SAC UK0030080
 Compilation date: May 2005 Version: 1
 Designation citation Page 1 of 1

Appendix 1b – Citation for Ashdown Forest SPA

EU Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds: Special Protection Area

ASHDOWN FOREST (EAST SUSSEX)

The Ashdown Forest proposed Special Protection Area (pSPA) is an extensive area of common land on mainly sandy soils between East Grinstead and Crowborough in East Sussex. It comprises a mosaic of wet and dry heath, valley bog and woodland, and supports several uncommon plants, a rich invertebrate fauna and nationally important numbers of breeding nightjar and Dartford warbler. The boundary of the pSPA is coincident with that of the Ashdown Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest.

The site qualifies for designation under Article 4.1 of the EU Birds Directive by regularly supporting nationally important breeding populations of two Annex 1 species. The site supports 35 pairs of nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* (1991-92 survey), representing 1.1% of the British population, and 20 pairs of Dartford warbler *Sylvia undata* (1994 survey), representing 2.1% of the British population. Other regularly occurring Annex 1 species include woodcock *Lullula arborea*, hen harrier *Circus cyaneus* and great grey shrike *Lanius excubitor*.

The diverse range of heathland and woodland habitats on the site supports an important assemblage of breeding species, some of which have declined in England over recent years. Notable species regularly breeding on the site include hobby *Falco subbuteo*, tree pipit *Anthus trivialis*, redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*, stonechat *Saxicola torquata* and wood warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*, in addition to nightjar and Dartford warbler.

SPA Citation
ICC
May 1994

This citation / map refers to a site approved
in the Register of European sites for Great Britain
Register reference number UK5002181
Date of registration 25 AUG 1993
Signed [Signature]
on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Environment

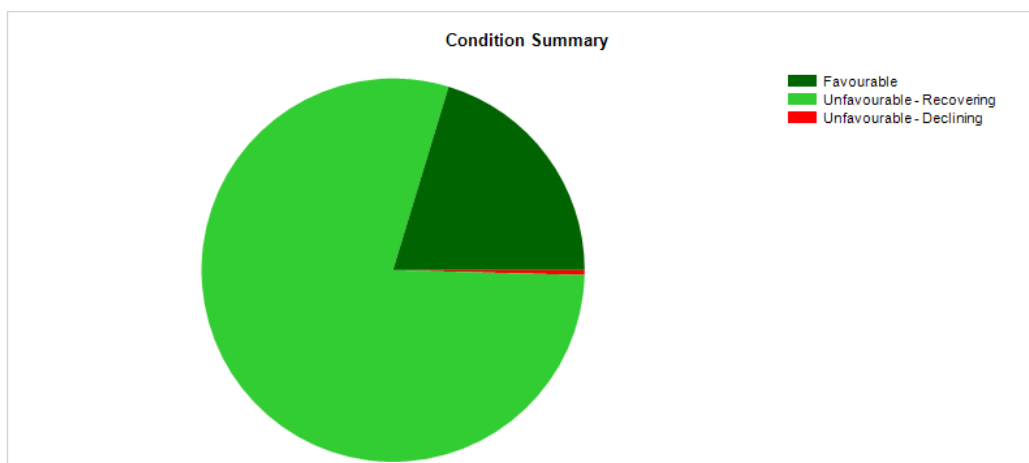
Appendix 2 – Site of Special Scientific Interest Condition Analysis

Site: Ashdown Forest SSSI

Report generated on: 24 Jul 2017

	Sites	Units	Units Assessed
Total number	1	127	127
Total area (ha)	3,213.09	3,213.12	3,213.12

	% meeting area of favourable or unfavourable recovering	Favourable	Unfavourable - Recovering	Unfavourable - No change	Unfavourable - Declining	Partially destroyed	Destroyed	Not Assessed
Area (ha)	3,200.19	652.64	2,547.55		12.93			
Percentage	99.60%	20.31%	79.29%	0.00%	0.40%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%



Source: SSSI detail (naturalengland.org.uk)

Appendix 3 – Detailed description of Ashdown Forest SAC and SPA

Characteristics of Ashdown Forest SAC and SPA

Extent	2,729 hectares (SAC), 3,207 hectares (SPA) 60% Heath, Scrub, Maquis and Garrigue, Phygrana. 40% Mixed woodland.
Proximity to Dormansland Parish	Site boundary 5.436km. The 7km buffer zone extends into part of the Plan Area.
Site Description from information on the Joint Nature Conservation Council's website www.jncc.defra.gov.uk	SAC – Ashdown Forest contains one of the largest single continuous blocks of lowland heath in south-east England, with both European dry heaths and, in a larger proportion, wet heath. The <i>Erica tetralix</i> – <i>Sphagnum compactum</i> wet heath element provides suitable conditions for several species of bog-mosses <i>Sphagnum</i> spp., bog asphodel <i>Narthecium ossifragum</i>, deergrass <i>Trichophorum cespitosum</i>, common cotton-grass <i>Eriophorum angustifolium</i>, marsh gentian <i>Gentiana pneumonanthe</i> and marsh clubmoss <i>Lycopodiella inundata</i>. The site supports important assemblages of beetles, dragonflies, damselflies and butterflies, including the nationally rare silver-studded blue <i>Plebejus argus</i>, and birds of European importance, such as European nightjar <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>, Dartford warbler <i>Sylvia undata</i> and Eurasian hobby <i>Falco subbuteo</i>. The dry heath in Ashdown Forest is an extensive example of the south-eastern <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> – <i>Ulex minor</i> community. This vegetation type is dominated by heather <i>Calluna vulgaris</i>, bell heather <i>Erica cinerea</i> and dwarf gorse <i>Ulex minor</i>, with transitions to other habitats. It supports important lichen assemblages, including species such as <i>Pycnothelia papillaria</i>. This site supports the most inland remaining population of hairy greenweed <i>Genista pilosa</i> in Britain. SPA – Ashdown Forest qualifies under Article 4.1 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following species listed on Annex I of the Directive: During the breeding season; Dartford Warbler <i>Sylvia undata</i>, 29 pairs representing at least 1.8% of the breeding population in Great Britain (Count as at 1994). Nightjar <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>, 35 pairs representing at least 1.0% of the breeding population in Great Britain (Two year mean, 1991 & 1992).
Key environmental conditions to support site integrity	· Minimal air pollution. · Relatively unpolluted water (approx. neutral pH). · Low recreational disturbance. · Suitable foraging and refuge habitat within 500m of ponds. · Balanced hydrological regime to maintain wet heath.

	· Grazing management to prevent succession. · Some ponds deep enough to retain water throughout February to August (at least once in three years). · Good connectivity of landscape features.
Vulnerability	SAC (from the Ashdown Forest SAC Natura 2000 data form - http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/protectedsites/sacselection/n2kforms/UK0030080.pdf) Ashdown Forest is one of the most extensive areas of heathland in south-east England. The optimum management for this site is grazing; however, only approximately 19% of the SAC is grazed. Spread of scrub and bracken is a major threat to the SAC. The majority of the SAC (including the grazed area) is managed sympathetically by the Conservators of Ashdown Forest but there is high demand on resources for scrub clearance, bracken mowing, etc., particularly in the ungrazed area. There is ongoing liaison with the Conservators and other landowners/managers to increase the area of grazed heathland. Obstacles to grazing include public opposition to fencing, availability of graziers/suitable livestock, and constraints on dog-walkers. In general, public access is not a threat to the SAC, unless it prevents expansion of the grazed area. Also, possible long-term drying out of the site may take place, due to borehole extraction and transpiration from increase in vegetation cover. Consultations with the Environment Agency over the possible impact of extraction are ongoing. Recent increased scrub clearance is likely to have a beneficial effect on wet heath. SPA (from the Ashdown Forest SPA Natura 2000 data form - http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/SPA/UK9012181.pdf) Lack of management is the main threat to the site. Succession from open heathland to woodland is rapidly taking place and a lack of resources makes appropriate and sustainable management difficult. The majority of the site is managed by the Conservators of Ashdown Forest, who manage the site sympathetically and according to an agreed management plan. The key vulnerability is the lack of grazing which is now being addressed through a Grazing Strategy. Obstacles to grazing include the need for fencing, constraints on dog walkers and other forms of informal recreation, the availability of appropriate stock and the fragmentation of the heathland blocks within the site. The spread of invasive/non-native species, such as bracken and rhododendron, also poses a threat. The areas not under the Conservators remit tend not to be grazed and have varying degrees of conservation management. Most of the recreation on the site is informal, such as walking and horse riding. However, in places the use is intense resulting in damage to rights of way and

	disturbance to the Forest. Where possible these problems are being addressed through the Integrated Management Plan of the Conservators of Ashdown Forest and through a horse-riding permit system.
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Appendix 4 - Neighbourhood Plan draft policies

Policy in the draft Dormansland Neighbourhood Plan	Consideration of significant environmental effect to supplement Table 2 of the Report
DNP1 – Spatial Plan The Parish will continue to be defined by the Metropolitan Green Belt, the High Weald AONB and its high landscape quality. The village of Dormansland will remain a defined village in the Green Belt. Development that is suited to this village setting will therefore only be appropriate within the settlement boundary of Dormansland and where any impact on the setting of the AONB is effectively moderated and the current Management Plan should be a material consideration. Development that would normally be appropriate outside the settlement boundary and in rural settings will only be appropriate in the remainder of the Parish if it will not undermine the permanent openness of the Green Belt and if it can be demonstrated that there are exceptional circumstances. Proposals for the reuse of previously-used land or for suitable infill or plot subdivision within settlement boundaries will be supported provided they accord with other policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and the Tandridge Local Plan.	Policy DNP1 provides clarity with respect to Green Belt spatial policy. It supplements the Tandridge Development Plan but does not significantly amend the scope and interpretation for spatial distribution of development in the District.
DNP2 – Good design in Dormansland Village Development will be supported, provided the design respects the important features of the street scene and utilises materials which are in keeping and are not obviously incongruous with the character of the village. Proposals should have special regard to the Dormansland Character Appraisal and: - Avoid adversely impacting on views into the village from the surrounding hills and from the High Weald AONB; - In the defined village, new building heights should be restricted to no more than 2 storey, including within the roof space and replacement dwellings should be restricted to the height of replaced building. - Flatted accommodation is not characteristic development within the village, save for a few exceptions and new buildings which propose to be flatted development will generally not be supported unless they meet the requirements of the Dormansland Design Guide - Where the topography of the land allows, key views out of the village into the surrounding countryside should be maintained; - New development should avoid harm to the integrity or visual quality of local heritage assets; - Proposals should identify the essential architectural form and scale in proximity to the proposed new building, and interpret these in the design;	Policy DNP2 provides clarity to supplement Detailed Policies in the Tandridge Development Plan.

Policy in the draft Dormansland Neighbourhood Plan	Consideration of significant environmental effect to supplement Table 2 of the Report
g. Materials for new buildings, alterations and extensions, should be restrained and reflect and complement the texture and colours of those found locally, materials foreign to the area, such as flint, should be avoided; h. To maintain the rural feel of the settlement, boundary treatment should use hedging and grassed verges instead of panel fencing and consideration should be given to replacing native hedgerows where they have been lost; and, i. Lighting of external areas should meet the appropriate standards (Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light GN01:2011) as published by the Institute of Lighting Professionals.	
DNP3 – Good Design in Dormans Park Proposals for extensions or alterations to, or the replacement of, a building within Dormans Park will be supported provided they are not disproportionate to the size of the original building. Replacement boundary treatments should avoid solid fencing and walls, but use hedging, especially if these are native species, to maintain the sylvan nature of the Park and increase biodiversity. Entrance gates should be simple, visibly permeable and rural in character, and security measures discreet. Applications to link existing or replacement outbuildings to the main house will not be considered inappropriate or disproportionate so long as: a. They are solely for uses ancillary to the main dwelling and do not accommodate primary functions such as kitchen, living rooms, bedrooms or bathrooms. b. The outbuilding is of a subservient scale and form to the main house. c. The outbuilding is in close proximity to the main house; and, d. The proposed link is subservient in scale and form to both the main house and the outbuilding and will not have a detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt. Unless very special circumstances can clearly be demonstrated, new development and sub-division of plots below 0.25 hectares is to be treated as inappropriate development.	Policy DNP3 provides clarity to supplement Detailed Policies in the Tandridge Development Plan.
DNP4 – Education Provision Proposals for the development of permanent extra classrooms or for nursery provision at Dormansland Primary School, as shown on the Policies Map, will be supported provided the proposals do not harm the amenity of residents living near the school or create additional highway safety concerns.	Policy DNP4 provides clarity to supplement Detailed Policy in the Tandridge Development Plan.

Policy in the draft Dormansland Neighbourhood Plan	Consideration of significant environmental effect to supplement Table 2 of the Report
Any proposals to extend the school should include a plan to promote sustainable travel measures to support an increase in the size of the school population and to minimise the volume of vehicle traffic to and from the school. Proposals for the change of use of existing educational buildings and land will be resisted unless alternative prior provision is made within the parish taking account of its green belt status.	
DNP5 – Rural Diversification The re-use of an existing building in the countryside will be supported provided that it will enable enterprise, farm diversification or recreation that benefits the rural economy without harming the open character of the landscape. Proposals for housing development in the countryside will only be granted in exceptional circumstances where such a dwelling is: - required to serve the essential uses of agriculture, forestry or some other special and justified need, - in harmony with the landscape (in terms of its design and siting), and - sited within or immediately adjacent to an existing group of dwellings or on a previously developed site suitably located to serve the purpose, unless it can be shown that there are overriding reasons why it must be built elsewhere. The re-use and development of any such housing must also be in accordance with all other planning policies applicable to that location, including but not limited to policies applying within the Green Belt. Development in the parts of Dormansland Parish within the High Weald AONB should preserve and enhance the statutory purposes and duty of the AONB and should make a positive contribution to maintaining and enhancing its special qualities.	Policy DNP5 provides clarity to supplement policies in the Tandridge Development Plan.
DNP6 – Promoting the Natural Environment Development proposals will be supported provided they comply with other Local and Neighbourhood Plan Policies and the following principles: - They protect and enhance wildlife areas, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest and contain measures to sustain and improve biodiversity; - They do not adversely affect the distinctive local character of the open landscapes of the parish or harm valued public views and vistas; - They protect and where possible enhance footpaths and public rights of way; - They contain measures that will help to mitigate the impacts of, and adapt to, climate change;	Policy DNP6 provides clarity to supplement policies in the Tandridge Development Plan.

Policy in the draft Dormansland Neighbourhood Plan	Consideration of significant environmental effect to supplement Table 2 of the Report
e. It can be demonstrated that they include sustainable drainage design features to manage the risk of surface water flooding within their boundary and elsewhere in the parish; f. Where applicable, they include mitigation measures where flooding from any source could occur on the site to ensure that any development on that site is safe from flooding and surface water retention and shall not increase the flood risk elsewhere, including: I. Sites should be developed so as not to increase or be likely to increase surface water run off rates and discharge volumes leaving the site; II. Any development must employ a suitable range of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) measures in a SuDs treatment train; and, III. Areas at risk of surface water flooding should be avoided; In addition, any development proposals should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by ensuring the protection of local assets such as mature trees, hedgerows and woodland, and support a 'net gain' in biodiversity wherever possible through the provision of additional habitat for wildlife and green spaces.	
DNP7 – Dormansland Green Corridor The Neighbourhood Plan designates the 'green corridor', as shown on the Policies Map. Any development within the corridor which is consistent with Green Belt policy is required to have full regard to the ecological value of land that lies within the corridor and development proposals are required to demonstrate how this value may be enhanced. Proposals that will undermine the ecological integrity of the corridor will be resisted.	Policy DNP7 provides clarity to supplement policies in the Tandridge Development Plan.
DNP8 – Local Green Spaces The Neighbourhood Plan designates the following locations as Local Green Spaces, as shown on the Policies Map: 1. The Newhache Green 2. Dormansland Recreational Ground including the tennis courts. 3. The New Farthingdale Green 4. Colin Anderson playing field 5. Dormansland Cricket ground 6. Station Fields XXXII. Proposals for development on the land will only be supported if the open character of the land is preserved, unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated.	Policy DNP8 seeks to retain the land in current state.
DNP9 – Village Hall	

Policy in the draft Dormansland Neighbourhood Plan	Consideration of significant environmental effect to supplement Table 2 of the Report
Proposals for a new Village Hall scheme will be supported, provided the scheme delivers a high-quality design to replace the War Memorial Hall and comprises a multi-purpose facility of a size capable of accommodating the following requirements: a. A multi-purpose main hall that responds to Sports England Design Guidance b. A Committee Room and Parish office c. Kitchen, toilets, and adequate storage d. Parking to approved standards. The new hall should be designed to be energy and resource efficient to minimise running costs and manage thermal comfort.	Policy DNP9 supports the provision of a replacement building that is outside the Ashdown Forest SPA / SAC 7km buffer zone.
DNP10 – Community Facilities The Neighbourhood Plan defines the following properties as community facilities: i. The Old House at Home, The Plough and the Royal Oak Public Houses ii. St John’s Church, the Centenary Rooms and the Parish Room (Green Hut), iii. The Baptist Church iv. Dormans Station XL. Proposals that will result in either the loss of, or cause significant harm to a defined facility will be resisted, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the operation of the facility, or the on-going delivery of the community value of the facility, is no longer financially viable. Development proposals to sustain or extend the viable use of existing community facilities and the development of new facilities will be supported.	Policy DNP10 seeks to retain properties in current state
DNP11 – Local Heritage Assets The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following buildings that have local heritage significance by way of their local historical and/or architectural value to the local community. 1. The Grange, Felcourt Road 2. Grange Lodge, Felcourt Road 3. Yew Lodge, Felcourt Road 4. Pleasance Cottage, Swissland Hill, 5. The Clock House and Chestnut Cottage, Swissland Hill, 6. Dorinwell, Furze Field Chase, 7. Ralph’s Cottage, Ford Manor Road,	Policy DNP11 seeks to protect heritage / current form.

Policy in the draft Dormansland Neighbourhood Plan	Consideration of significant environmental effect to supplement Table 2 of the Report
8. Ho Chee Cottages, Plough Road, 9. Starborough Cottages, Dormans Station Road 10. Dormans Station, Dormans Station Road 11. Hop Vines, The Platt, 12. St John's Parish Room (The Green Hut), The Platt, 13. Hill House, Baldwins Hill & Garden, Lingfield Road, Proposals that will result in a scale of harm to, or loss of, the building or structure that has not had full regard to its significance as a local heritage asset will be resisted.	
DNP12 – Ashdown Forest SPA mitigation All residential proposals shall include measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of residential development upon the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) in agreement with the Council and Natural England. This may include the provision of a bespoke SANG, a financial contribution towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring and any other measures that are required to satisfy Habitats Regulations, Tandridge District Council's Ashdown Forest SPA Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy and relevant guidance.	Policy DNP12 reflects existing policy / practice