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Galtres Garden Village

Report to inform a HABITAT REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT February 2022

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 In February 2022, Wold Ecology was commissioned by ID Partnership to prepare a report to inform a Habitats Regulations Assessment. The City of York Council, in this instance are the Competent Authority in determining the impacts of the proposed development; a proposal to create a Garden Village on 93 hectares of land to the north of North Lane, Huntington, York (national grid reference centroid SE 63328 56617) in North Yorkshire.
- 1.2 The proposal is primarily located on arable and pastoral agricultural land bounded by hedgerows, scattered trees, ditches and immature plantations with farmyards and associated buildings (Wold Ecology, 2017). The proposed site is located approximately 1.4km south of Strensall Common Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at its closest point. The wider area is rural in character, with Strensall Common occupying 572 hectares. Strensall Common's nearest official public access (on foot) is 1.8km northeast of the proposal using existing bridleways and roads. Access for vehicles to the main car park is a 5km, 10-minute drive from proposed main entrances.
- 1.3 The proposed development involves the creation of a new garden village consisting of a projected 1753 dwellings. Of the total site area of 92.97 hectares, there is a proposed development area of approximately 77.37 hectares. The main design principals are identified as:
- The creation of attractive residential neighbourhoods within a landscape setting with a series of north south green routes through the site
 - Utilise the site's existing field drainage system to incorporate SuDS
 - Provision of a "continuing care retirement community", including specialist housing and a range of services for the elderly and retired
 - A community hub of shops
 - A new primary school
- 1.4 The York Local Plan (in development) sets out a policy GI2a that designates a 400m exclusion zone around Strensall Common SAC for development and a further 5.5km zone of influence concerning recreational disturbance following the completion of a Recreational Disturbance study by Footprint Ecology (2019). Identified impacts (Footprint, 2019) from recreational disturbance include "*trampling; increased fire incidence; disturbance to grazing livestock; nutrient enrichment from dog fouling; contamination of ponds; contamination from fly tipping, litter etc.; and damage to infrastructure (gates etc.)*".
- 1.5 This report has examined the potential effects arising from the proposal against the vulnerabilities and conservation objectives of the national site network in relation to the assessment and determined likely significant effects with regards to recreational impacts on Strensall Common SAC and therefore an Appropriate Assessment is required. Natural England must be consulted on the results of this report should the City of York Council choose to use this as their assessment of effects.
- 1.6 The Appropriate Assessment and the Galtres Garden Village Assessment of York Local Plan Policy Compliance and Potential Recreational Impacts on Strensall Common SAC (Wold Ecology, 2022) identifies significant effects alone.
- 1.7 A significant adverse effect has been identified in relation to the increase in residential dwellings within 5.5km of Strensall Common and mitigation measures are outlined with the provision of a district level Country Park and excellent access to open space, routes and trails on site that will reduce existing and future recreational pressures on Strensall

Common SAC. Planning conditions should ensure the delivery of mitigation measures in a timely manner.

- 1.8 It is considered that the proposed mitigation measures being secured and implemented, the suite of avoidance and mitigation measures is sufficient to avoid and adverse effect on integrity on the National Site Network.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 In February 2022, Wold Ecology was commissioned by ID Partnership to prepare a report to inform a Habitats Regulations Assessment. The City of York Council, in this instance are the Competent Authority in determining the impacts of the proposed development; a proposal to create a Garden Village on 93 hectares of land to the north of North Lane, Huntington, York (national grid reference centroid SE 63328 56617) in North Yorkshire).
- 2.2 The proposal is currently located on land that is primarily arable and pastoral agricultural land bounded by hedgerows, scattered trees, ditches and immature plantations with farmyards and associated buildings (Wold Ecology, 2017). The proposed site is located approximately 1.4km south of Strensall Common Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at its closest point. The wider area is rural in character, with Strensall Common occupying 572 hectares. The nearest official public access on foot is 1.8km northeast of the proposal using existing bridleways and roads. Access for vehicles to the main car park is a 5km, 10-minute drive from proposed main entrances.
- 2.3 The proposal d development involves the creation of a new garden village consisting of a projected 1753 dwellings. Of the total site area of 92.97 hectares there is a proposed development area of approximately 77.37 hectares.
- 2.4 This document presents the result of the screening process to determine whether the proposal is likely to have a significant effect on any site in the National Site Network (Formerly Natura 2000 network) and includes a record of Appropriate Assessment.
- 2.5 Following the UK's EU exit in January 2021, the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (2019 Regulations) came into force to ensure that the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the 2017 Regulations) operate effectively. Most changes involve the transferring of functions from the European Commission to the appropriate authorities in England and Wales and the creation of a National Sites Network. All other processes or terms in the 2017 Regulations remain unchanged and existing guidance is still relevant.
- 2.6 Under the 2019 Regulations a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening opinion must be undertaken to determine if the project is likely to have a significant effect on site designated within the national sites network (Special Areas of Conservation or Special Protection Area) or International (RAMSAR) site designated for environmental conservation purposes, and hence whether, or not, an Appropriate Assessment is required. This document assesses both the direct and in-combination effects of the proposal on the national site network,
- 2.7 This report contains the results of Stage 1 Screening and Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment in relation to the site investigation for the Galtres Garden Village proposal. Stages 3 – 4 are only required if the Appropriate Assessment stage (Stage 2) concludes that there is likely to be an adverse effect on the integrity on the National Site Network.

3.0

BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Habitats Directive) (Directive 92/43/EEC) provides a legal framework for the protection of habitats and species of European importance through the establishment of European Sites, known as Natura 2000. The Natura 2000 network is made up of Special Protection Areas (SPA) (designated under the Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Offshore Marine Sites (OMS). Following the UK's EU-exit this legislation is written into UK law by the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (2019 Regulations) that provides protected for sites within a 'national site network'.
- 3.2 Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the directive require an assessment to be undertaken for plans and projects that are likely to have a significant effect, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, on one or more European sites. Article 6(3) states: *'Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.'*
- 3.3 The 2019 Regulations fulfil the commitment made by government to maintain environmental protections and permit the UK to continue to meet its international legal obligations, such as the Bern Convention, the Oslo and Paris Conventions (OSPAR), Bonn and Ramsar Conventions. Ramsar sites and internationally important wetland habitats have also been included in this Habitat Regulations screening report. The 2019 Regulations confirm that an appropriate assessment must still be undertaken for any plan or project, that either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, are likely to have a significant effect on a SAC, SPA or OMS. Ramsar Sites (1976 Ramsar Convention) and potential SPAs receive the same protection through UK planning policy and are part of the national sites network
- 3.4 The 2019 Regulations require the competent authority to determine whether the plans have any significant adverse effects on European Sites and consider the impact of the plan or project on the site's conservation objectives. If a significant effect is considered likely, then an Appropriate Assessment must be undertaken. A significant effect should be considered likely if it cannot be excluded on the basis of objective information and it might undermine a site's conservation objectives. A risk or a possibility of such an effect is enough to warrant the need for an appropriate assessment.
- 3.5 The Appropriate Assessment should identify mitigation and/or avoidance measures which eliminate or reduce the effects. In the case that the effects cannot be mitigated sufficiently then the Appropriate Assessment should conclude that an adverse effect on the integrity of the national site network will occur. The project can then only progress if a strong case for Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) is made by the competent authority with the necessary compensatory measures in place.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Habitat Regulations Assessment Process

4.1.1 Stage 1: Screening

4.1.1.1 The first stage of testing whether a plan 'is likely to have a significant effect' on a designated site. This process identifies the likely impacts of a project upon the national site network, either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects and considers whether the impacts are likely to be significant. Throughout the assessment the 'Precautionary Principle' must be applied.

4.1.1.2 Assessment of the significance of effects is undertaken by assessing the policies and sites in relation to the designated nature conservation features and whether any effect would compromise the favourable condition of the site in an adverse way.

4.1.1.3 If it can be objectively concluded that there are not likely to be significant effects, no further assessment is necessary, and permission may be granted. If significant effects are identified, it may be necessary to undertake a full Appropriate Assessment. Contrary to previous case law, the Court of Justice to the European Union ruling (People over Wind, Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta, Case C-323/17, 12 April 2018), ruled that mitigation cannot be taken into account when considering the screening test for Likely Significant Effects. Where effects are likely, an Appropriate Assessment should be undertaken.

4.1.2 Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment

4.1.2.1 This stage considers the impact of the project on the integrity of the designated site both alone and in combination with other plans and projects in relation to the site's conservation objectives. If the assessment determines that there is a likelihood of an adverse impact, plans must be drawn up to avoid or mitigate the effects. Development consent can then only be given if stages three and four are completed.

4.1.3 Stage 3 onwards

4.1.3.1 Under Stages 3 and 4, it is necessary to assess if there are alternative solutions and whether there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest. If these tests are met, authorisation may be granted subject to compensation measures being secured.

4.2 Waddenzee judgement ECJ [2004] C-127/02

4.2.1 This judgement forms the legal basis of whether an effect is a Likely Significant Effect (LSE) or not. To determine LSE, it needs to be established whether there is a probability or a risk that the plan or project will have a significant effect on the site. It is not necessary to identify that it would have at this stage, merely whether there is a risk that it might. In line with the judgement in Waddenzee it can only be concluded that a proposal would be unlikely to have a significant effect if such a risk can be excluded on the basis of objective information.

4.3 Paragraph 119 of the NPPF confirms the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where development requiring Appropriate Assessment under the Birds or Habitats Directives is being considered, planned, or determined.

5.0

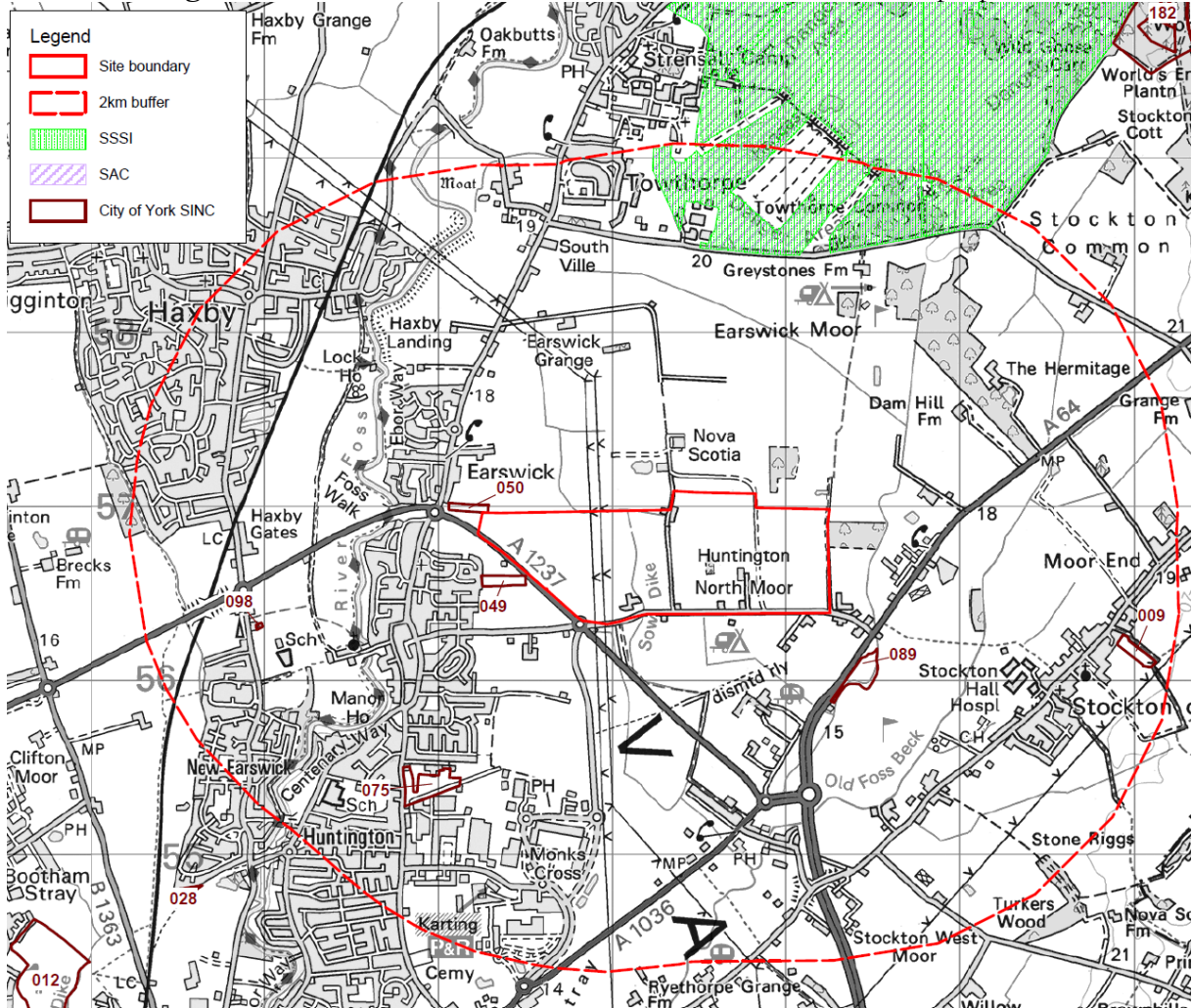
SCREENING

5.1

Sites within 10 km of the proposal are identified, together with details of the:

- Conservation objectives and characteristics of each site, including vulnerabilities and threats
- Individual and cumulative impact of plans, policies and proposals.
- Connectivity of the proposals with the site.

Figure 1: Location of Strensall Common SAC in relation to the proposal



5.2 The designated sites are:

Site	Designation	Distance from the proposed development
River Derwent	SAC	7.2 km east. Screened out due to distance and lack of pathways to impacts
Strensall Common	SAC	1.4km north. Screened in
Lower Derwent Valley	SPA SAC Ramsar	8.7km south Screened out due to distance and lack of pathways to impacts

5.3

Sites beyond 10 km have been screened out due to the nature of the proposal. Strensall Common SAC will be taken forward for screening assessment; whilst the proposal does not meet the criteria currently listed for impacts on this site (SSSI Impact Risk Zones - to assess planning applications for likely impacts on SSSIs/SACs/SPAs & Ramsar sites (Natural England, 2021), there is increasing evidence about the impacts on heathland from

recreational disturbance. In response to concerns about recreational impacts on Strensall Common SAC, the York Local Plan (in development) sets out a proposed policy GI2a which sets out a 400m exclusion zone around Strensall Common SAC and a further 5.5km zone of influence concerning recreational disturbance following the completion of a Recreational Disturbance study by Footprint Ecology (2019) (see Appendix 2 for full wording). Any development sites within this distance from Strensall SAC must accord with policy G12a to ensure that recreational pressure impacts identified in the City of York Local Plan HRA (2020) on Strensall Common SAC are mitigated.

Table 1: National site network covered by this Screening Report, their features and vulnerability.

Site Name	Location	Area	Qualifying features	Conservation Objectives	Vulnerability of site
Strensall Common SAC	1.4km north of proposal	569.63 hectares	<p>Annex I habitats present as a primary reason for selection of this site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix Strensall Common, together with Skipwith Common, is an example of acidic lowland heath in northern England. The wet element is well-represented by M16 <i>Erica tetralix</i> – Sphagnum compactum wet heath, although its extent has been reduced by drainage. It is a noted locality for marsh gentian <i>Gentiana pneumonanthe</i>, narrow buckler-fern <i>Dryopteris carthusiana</i> and long-leaved sundew <i>Drosera intermedia</i>. 4030 European dry heaths Strensall Common, with Skipwith Common, is one of only two extensive areas of open heathland remaining in the Vale of York. There is a complex mosaic of 4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with i and dry heath elements. The H9 i – <i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i> dry heath is noted for petty whin <i>Genista anglica</i> and bird's-foot <i>Ornithopus perpusillus</i>. 	<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent and distribution of the qualifying natural habitats The structure and function (including typical species) of the qualifying natural habitats, and, The supporting processes on which the qualifying natural habitats rely. 	<p>Pressure and/or threats to the integrity of the qualifying species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Access/Disturbance Inappropriate scrub control Air Pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition Change in land management Urban Edge effect <p>The main issues affecting the SAC have been identified as public access and disturbance particularly linked to dog walkers and dogs off leads.</p>

5.4 **Potential Impacts**

5.4.1 To assess whether any likely significant effects (LSE) will impact upon the national site network, as a result of the proposed development, or in combination with ‘other plans’, it is necessary to identify potential impacts that could cause an LSE on a designated site. The following potential impacts have been identified and assessed.

5.4.2 **Air Quality** – Changes in the composition of air quality as a result of the project development or an increase in number of trips near the vicinity of a designated site that could damage vegetation and harm species living in these habitats.

5.4.3 **Water Quality** – Changes in the quality of water composition in the watershed as a result of development in or near to the designated site, and increased pollution that could alter the water quality entering the water network and could damage vegetation and habitats/species at these sites.

5.4.4 **Hydrology** – Changes in the hydrological cycle affected by heat, surface run off, loss of permeable surfaces etc. and can result in drought or flooding of designated sites that could damage vegetation or harm species living in these habitats.

5.4.5 **Water Supply** – Changes in the levels of demand for water supply as a result of new development, for example housing and employment sites, may increase levels of water abstraction, potentially affecting designated sites which are hydrologically connected to the source of water supply.

5.4.6 **Habitat/Species Disturbance** – Disturbance both to habitats and to species travelling to the national site network through ecological isolation and fragmentation if development restricts migratory routes to designated sites and/or that impacts on food resources or breeding grounds.

5.4.7 **Recreational/ Visitor Pressure** – Disturbance to habitats and to species as a result of development, if it significantly increases the number of people and dogs visiting designated sites and the associated added pollution and contamination of sites because of a larger footfall.

5.4.8 **Urban Edge Effects** – Includes unauthorised access to designated sites, predation from cats, litter and fire, changes in lighting and noise.

5.5 **Potential Pathways**

5.5.1 There is also a need to establish a set of particular pathways where potential impacts may be able to find a path to a designated site. Where no pathways exist to the designated site, the potential impacts can be ruled out as they will not have a likely significant effect on the site.

5.5.2 **Wind** – an assessment of whether the potential impacts outlined above, specifically air quality can reach the national site network via the prevailing wind.

5.5.3 **River Network** – an assessment of whether potential impacts, specifically water quality, and hydrology are connected via the river network to the national site network.

5.5.4 **Water Supply** – an assessment of the connectivity of the water supply in the surrounding area i.e., reservoirs and the national site network.

- 5.5.5 **Roads and Footpath network** – distance to designated sites in relation to the road network and the feasibility of air, noise, and light pollution from increased traffic on the roads, due to a higher population or greater accessibility or numbers of people through and across the surrounding area.
- 5.5.6 **Species movement** – distance between the proposed development site and the national site network and the location of other important habitats within the impact zone such as functional land, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Country Parks, Biological Heritage Sites and Local Nature Reserves.

5.6 Project Details

- 5.6.1 The proposal as at the plan stage and is accompanied by a high-level concept masterplan that aims to ensure the highest design standards and policy adherence for the proposal.
- 5.6.2 The proposal development involves the creation of a new garden village consisting of a projected 1753 dwellings. Of the total site area of 92.97 hectares, there is a proposed development area of approximately 77.37 hectares. The main design principals are identified as:
- The creation of attractive residential neighbourhoods within a landscape setting with a series of north south green routes through the site
 - Utilise the site’s existing field drainage system to incorporate SuDS
 - Provision of a “continuing care retirement community”, including specialist housing and a range of services for the elderly and retired
 - A community hub of shops
 - A new primary school
- 5.6.3 Following the release of the draft Strensall Common policy G12a, the masterplan has undergone rigorous assessment and review and subsequent reassessment in relation to open space and recreational impacts, these are addressed within the separate document Galtres Garden Village: Assessment of York Local Plan Policy Compliance and Potential Recreational Impacts on Strensall Common SAC (Wold Ecology, February 2022) which should be read alongside this document.

5.7 Assessment of effects

Table 2: Assessment of Impacts on Qualifying Features

Strensall Common SAC		
Qualifying Feature	Potential Impact	Site Assessment
<p>Annex I habitats present as a primary reason for selection of this site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> European dry heaths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct physical loss or damage 	<p>Construction and Operation No effect. The site is sufficiently separated that there will be no direct effect.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Access/Disturbance 	<p>Construction No effect. Operation The proposal leads to an increase in population within 1.4 – 2.5 km of Strensall Common Likely Significant Effect.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Pollution 	<p>Construction Strensall Common is situated upstream of the proposal. Best practice construction adherence to pollution prevention and control guidance will ensure negative impacts on adjacent watercourses. Operation Strensall Common is situated upstream of the proposal; Change of use will reduce nitrates entering the local system and outlined SuDS scheme will lead to long term water quality and biodiversity improvements. No likely significant effect at the masterplan stage. These measures should be secured alongside any future permissions in the interest of best environmental practice.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inappropriate scrub control 	<p>Construction and Operation No effect.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air Pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition 	<p>Construction Short term increases in dust and NO_x levels will be experienced during the construction phase. The proposal lies over 200m from Strensall Common, therefore any impacts from deposition can be ruled out in line with guidance from the Institute of Air Quality Management (2019). Dust generation during the construction stage will be managed in line with best practice. No significant NO_x generating activities involved in the project. Operation</p>

		The strategic network does not lie within 200m of Strensall Common. The location of the proposal, to the north of York, means that increases in traffic will be prominently away from the protected habitat. No likely significant effect.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban Edge effect 	Construction and Operation The proposal is sufficiently separated from Strensall Common that no urban edge effects will be experienced. No effect
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in land management 	Construction and Operation No effect.

6.0 DISCUSSION

6.1 The proposal has been assessed against the vulnerabilities of the qualifying species and habitats of Strensall Common SAC. Potential LSEs on qualifying features of Strensall Common SAC ‘alone’ have been identified through the screening process and will be taken forward to appropriate assessment. LSE scoped into the Appropriate Assessment (AA) are as follows.

6.2 Recreational Disturbance

6.2.1 Given the scale and proximity of the proposal to Strensall Common, a likely significant effect can not be ruled out in the absence of mitigation and therefore an appropriate assessment is required.

Table 4: Summary of likely significant impacts

European Sites	Assessment of potential impact on European Site	Likely significant effect	Assessment on in-combination effect	LSE identified in-combination	Appropriate Assessment
Strensall Common SAC	Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> European dry heaths	Yes	Can be screened out from further assessment	N/A	Yes

6.3 In-combination

6.3.1 Whilst impact alone has been identified, recreational disturbance has been identified as a key issue in the wider area with authorised access causing detrimental impacts both directly and indirectly to qualifying habitats and to their appropriate management. Recreational impacts of the proposed development must be considered in a wider context given the proposed increases in residential properties within the zone of influence. For the purpose of this assessment, strategic and proposed allocation and sites up to 7.5km from Strensall Common have been included in the assessment of effects in line with the precautionary principle and evidence resulting from the Footprint and PCP visitor surveys. Searches extended to Ryedale District Council where no applications for major residential dwellings were returned, City of York Council and East Riding of Yorkshire covering allocations at Stamford Bridge.

6.3.2 Table 5 details the results of the assessment and assesses green space provision within each site or allocation. Sites that lie within 7.5 km of Strensall Common SAC cannot be ruled out of the screening stage due to the risk of likely significant effects occurring due to their proximity to Strensall Common and associated increases in recreational pressure. Increases in residents within 5.5km of Strensall Common are detailed and these are all likely to contribute additional recreation pressure on Strensall Common designated habitats.

Table 5: Assessment of Strategic Allocations and Applications and Open Space Provision within 7.5 km of Strensall Common

Code	Name	Distance to Strensall Common (straight line) (km)	Dwellings Local Plan	Outlined Dwellings	Estimated Population	Proposed Open Space (ha)	Size (ha)	Required On-site Open Space (ha)	Over/Under Provision (ha)	Notes
ST35	Queen Elizabeth Barracks, Strensall	Adjacent	n/a	500	1200	12	28	7.00	5.00	
H59	Queen Elizabeth Barracks – Howard Road, Strensall	Adjacent	n/a	45	108	0	1.34	0.63	-0.63	Open space contributed as part of ST35
E18	Towthorpe Lines, Strensall	Adjacent	n/a						n/a	
n/a	Galtres Garden Village	1.4	n/a	1753	4207	39.73	92.97	24.53	15.20	
ST9	Land North of Haxby	2.1	735	735	1764	9.04 ¹	35	10.28	-1.24	¹ Outlined open space in local plan; additional open space required within development. Open Space indicative.
ST8	Land North of Monks Cross	2.5	968	970	2328	23.4	39.5	13.57	9.83	18/00017/OUTM includes 14.4 ha country park; 3G, grass pitches and 4 play areas. Open Space indicative
H46	Land to North of Willow Bank New Earswick	3.5	104	117	281	1.32	2.74	1.64	-0.32	20/02495/FULM Addresses deficiencies in ward,
n/a	Huntington South Moor	3.9	n/a	300	720	2.96	11.6	4.20	-1.24	21/00305/OUTM Outline planning application. Open space indicative
E11	Annamine Nurseries, Jockey Lane	4							n/a	Industrial

ST14	Land West of Wigginton Road	4.6	1348	1348	3235	TBC	55	18.86	n/a	Strategic allocation requires policy compliance due to proximity to SAC
ST7	East of Metcalfe Lane	4.8	845	845	2028	TBC	34.5	11.82	n/a	
ST17	Nestle South	5.5	763				7.05	0.00		
ST17	Nestle South - West	5.5	n/a	302	725	0.85	5.07	4.23	-3.38	21/01371/FULM Approved
ST17	Nestle South - East	5.5	n/a	258	619	0.33	1.98	3.61	-3.28	10/01960/FULM Completed. Agreement for financial contribution to off site sports and play provision within the local area.
H1	Gas Works site at Heworth Green	6	336	336	806	0.5	3.54	4.70	-4.20	Outline with 1 parcel fully consented. Construction commenced. Contribution for off-site open space provision. Open Space indicative
H31	Eastfield Lane, Dunnington	6	76	83	199	0.29	2.51	1.16	-0.87	20/01626/FULM
H55	Land at Laythorpe	6	20	TBC	Unknown	Unknown	0.2	Unknown	n/a	
H3	Burnholme School	6.1	72	83	199	0.76	2.35	1.16	-0.40	20/01916/OUTM Approved, off site contribution for sport.
H22	Former Heworth Lighthouse	6.4	15	TBC	Unknown	Unknown	0.29	Unknown	n/a	
n/a	Eboracum Way	6.5	n/a	62	149	0	0	0.87	-0.81	19/01467/FULM Approved. Contribution to off-site open space.
H7	Bootham Crescent	6.6	86	96	230	0.403	1.72	1.34	-0.94	Approved
n/a	Duncombe Barracks	6.6	n/a	34	82	0.07	0.65	0.48	-0.41	Approved. Contribution to off-site open space.
H58	Clifton Without Primary School	6.6	25	TBC	Unknown	Unknown	0.7	Unknown	n/a	

n/a	Bootham Park Hospital	6.6	n/a	170	408	2.6	7.23	2.38	0.22	21/02108/FULM Pending Approval. Residential care community
n/a	Cherry Tree House	6.7	n/a	48	115	0	0.4	0.67	-0.67	20/02034/FULM Apartments on brownfield site; off site contribution for open space would be required
E10	Chessingham Park, Dunnington	6.8	n/a						n/a	Industrial
SMB-B	Land North of A166, Stamford Bridge	6.8	n/a	122	293	0.71	6.50	1.71	-1.00	16/01701/STREM Completed and occupied. Contribution for off-site open space provision
n/a	Church House	6.9	n/a	11	26	0.01	0.07	0.15	-0.15	21/00601/FULM Pending Approval. Apartments. Contribution to off-site open space.
n/a	Shipton Road Clifton	6.9	n/a	54	130	0.06	0.53	0.76	-0.70	19/01042/FULM Assisted Living
ST32	Hungate	7	483		1159		2.17	6.76	Unknown	Outline approved. Construction ongoing with some phases complete. Apartment blocks with internal amenity space
H23	Former Grove House	7	11	32	77	0.1	0.25	0.45	-0.35	17/01129/FULM Apartments
SMB-A	Land South of A166, Stamford Bridge	7.1	n/a	192	461	0.40	8.70	2.69	-2.29	Completed and occupied
H56	Land at Hull Road	7.3	70	69	166	2.75	4.7	0.97	1.78	18/02824/REMM Consented and some elements complete. Open space includes retained protected woodland.

7.0 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The purpose of the Appropriate Assessment is to further examine any likely significant effects that have been identified during screening, as well as consider any effects which were uncertain or not well understood. These are taken forward for assessment in accordance with the “precautionary principle”. The Appropriate Assessment appraises the consequences of the project or plan, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of the conservation objectives of the International Site. Appropriate Assessment methodology includes a test of whether the plan proposals will result in significant adverse effects on site integrity which can be defined as “The integrity of a site is the coherence of its ecological structure and function, across its whole area, that enables it to sustain the habitat, complex of habitats and/or the levels of populations of the species for which it was classified.” (ODPM, 2005)
- 7.2 Likely significant effects on qualifying species and habitats of Strensall Common SAC ‘alone’ have been identified through the screening process. In line with the People Over Wind judgement, mitigation measures cannot be taken into account during the screening phase.
- 7.3 **Recreational Disturbance Impacts**
- 7.3.1 This document should be read alongside Galtres Garden Village Assessment of York Local Plan Policy Compliance and Potential Recreational Impacts on Strensall Common SAC (Wold Ecology, February 2022) which undertakes a full review of the effects on Strensall Common in relation to recreational disturbance alone and in combination.
- 7.3.2 Critical to the development of the York Local Plan has been addressing the impact on Strensall Common from an increase in housing in close proximity to the designated site. An adverse effect on integrity could not be ruled out due to uncertainties relating to the proposed mitigation measures and allocations were recommended for removal to ensure the integrity of the national site network. A report commissioned by York City Council, and undertaken by Footprint Ecology has provided a better understanding of the impacts and sources of recreational disturbance at the site with people living within 500m of the Common visiting the site frequently, with 75% of visitors coming from a radius of 5.5km. Alongside this, the Defence Infrastructure Organisation commissioned their own report on Recreational Pressure on Strensall common to support their proposed allocations in Strensall; Pickersgill Consultancy and Planning Ltd (PCP) (2019) that broadly supported the results of the Footprint Report.
- 7.3.3 Using methods set out in the ‘Footprint Ecology Visitor Survey and Impacts of Recreation at Strensall Common report’ adapted for travel distances predictions suggest an increase in access to Strensall Common as a result of the addition of the proposed development at Galtres Garden Village, increasing from an initial 8.2% for City of York Local Plan Allocations to 13.1% with Galtres Garden Village. This increase is considered significant given that recreation disturbance is a current direct threat to qualifying habitats and an indirect threat to the favourable management of the site through increased impacts on grazing animals. The additional allocation at Galtres Garden Village will contribute to the growing pressures related with those sites already put forward for allocation within the City of York Local Plan. Galtres Garden Village will contribute a predicted change in visits of 3.3% (3km band) to 5.0% (2.5 km band).

- 7.3.4 For several of the identified allocations, proposed and consented developments within 7.5km of Strensall Common, open space provision is not outlined or is below the requirements of York Local Plan Policies. Both the Footprint Ecology survey (Liley, 2019) and the PCP 2019 Visitor Survey results outline that beyond 5.5 km impacts from recreational pressure are negligible and these allocations can be screened out of further in-combination assessment in accordance with the City of York draft Strensall Common SAC policy.
- 7.3.5 Identified impacts (Footprint, 2019) from recreational disturbance include “trampling; increased fire incidence; disturbance to grazing livestock; nutrient enrichment from dog fouling; contamination of ponds; contamination from fly tipping, litter etc.; and damage to infrastructure (gates etc.)”.
- 7.3.6 There remains uncertainty with regards the effects from City of York Council Local Plan Strategic Allocations with regards the quantity of open space to be delivered on site and whether proposals will be compliant with the draft Strensall Common Policy. Allocations at ST8 Land North of Monks Cross has been designed through to the project stage and the allocation delivers sports and play provision alongside a large-scale Country Park which has potential to attract some of the recreational pressures away from Strensall Common. At the project stage, all sites need to be able to deliver high quality open space. The assessment of proposals in Table 5 shows the difficulties in delivering either the quantity or quality of open space on site required to adequately mitigate recreational pressures on Strensall Common SAC particularly on small or constrained sites. Large scale proposals such as ST8 and Galtres Garden village are able to deliver open space alongside community resources and a high residential design specification.

8.0 MITIGATION

- 8.1 Effects alone were identified from the proposal at Galtres Garden Village at the masterplan stage and an iterative approach has been taken to design modification to ensure that open space provision on site can contribute both to promoting on-site use of open space and mitigating current recreational impacts on Strensall Common from existing settlements.

Figure 2: Outlined Open Space Provision at Galtres Garden Village



- 8.2 High quality, accessible open space has been core to the design process alongside the retention of existing ecological and landscape features. Numerous trails and loops are present within the master plan design to offer varied safe off-road walking routes around and through the proposal.
- 8.3 The delivery of a large scale Country Park on site was a key requirement with natural features and landscape delivered alongside year-round accessible walking routes. Existing natural features re-used in this area will add to the short-term desirability of this site which will increase as habitats mature and biodiversity enhancements are delivered.
- 8.4 The location of the proposed Galtres Garden Village offers an opportunity to deliver a district level Country Park. Phase 2 works will include higher level facilities e.g., café, toilets, and educational opportunities.
- 8.5 Biodiversity features will be provided within the development and a landscaping strategy shall ensure wildlife friendly landscaping throughout the site.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 Subject to the proposal being carried out in accordance with the recommended mitigation measures in relation to delivery of open space on site; this assessment determines that the proposal will not adversely affect the integrity Strensall Common SAC either alone or in combination with other plans or projects and the project may be authorised subject to securing the recommended measures. This assessment determines that the current indicative masterplan for Galtres Garden Village is compliant with proposed City of York Local Plan policies GI6 and GI2a. City of York Local Plan allocations must also be compliant with policies GI6 and GI2a . In-combination risks are considered low but not significant.
- 9.2 Whilst proposals result in a large increase in housing within 2km, the travel adjusted distances outlined within Appendix 3 are considered to be a reasonable and well-argued modification to calculating the project scale impacts in relation to changes in recreational visits to Strensall Common SAC. Access constraints and the commitment to high quality and extensive green space within the development will significantly mitigate the number of visits to Strensall Common. Increases will be experienced through destination visits, however, daily visits for dog walking, running and walking will be adequately mitigated on site. The positioning and scale of the proposed district level Country Park, combined with perimeter pathways will, medium to longer term, attract use from adjacent settlements and has the potential to reduce existing demands on Strensall Common. Phase 1 delivery of the Open Space will include varied walking routes, picnic tables, benches and car parking provision.
- 9.3 The creation of a large-scale district Country Park offering an alternate destination for residents of Huntington, Earswick, south and central Haxby and the proposed Galtres Garden Village will provide opportunities to displace the existing demand from Strensall Common from visitors from outside the village. This is particularly noteworthy in relation to promoting daily dog walking visits away from the sensitive habitats of Strensall Common. Year round, safe dog walking areas free from sheep and cattle will offer an attractive alternative to Strensall Common. Mitigation measures associated with the proposed Galtres Garden Village will help to address existing open space deficiencies in the wider area.
- 9.4 Open space provision, as indicated by figures within the Galtres Garden Village Masterplan (ID Partnership, 2022), achieves, or is well above the York Open Space Standards in terms of quantity. Delivery of the Country Park is outlined as part of the pre-occupation of phase 1 of the development. The location of the proposed Galtres Garden Village offers an opportunity to deliver a district level Country Park. Phase 2 works will include higher level facilities e.g., café.
- 9.5 A significant adverse effect has been identified in relation to the increase in residential dwellings within 5.5km of Strensall Common and mitigation measures are outlined with the provision of a district level Country Park and excellent access to open space, routes and trails on site that will reduce existing and future recreational pressures on Strensall Common SAC. Planning conditions should ensure the delivery of mitigation measures in a timely manner.
- 9.6 It is considered that the subject to the proposed mitigation measures being secured and implemented, the suite of avoidance and mitigation measures is sufficient to avoid and adverse effect on integrity on the National Site Network.

10.0

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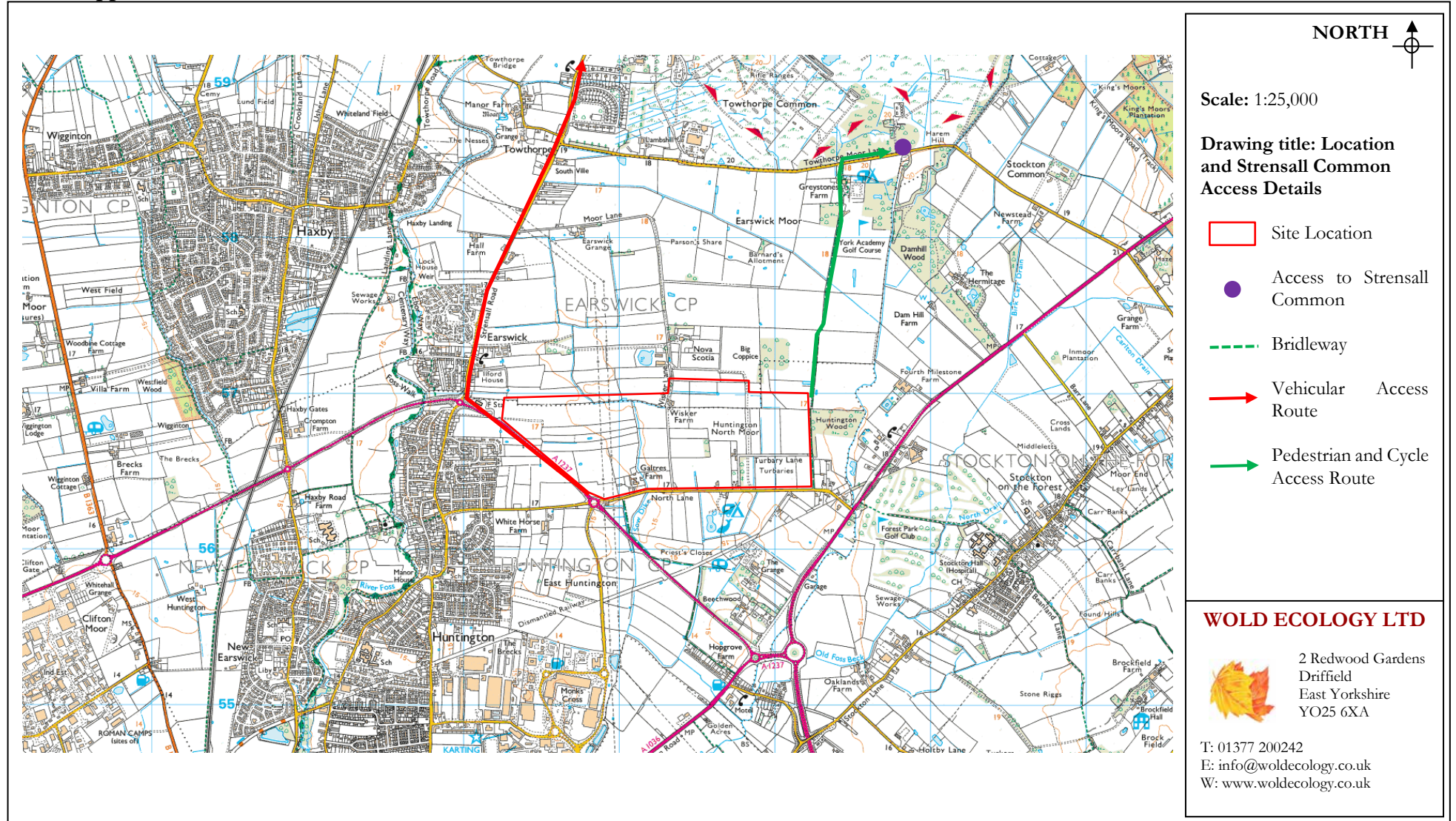
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11.0 Appendix 1: Strensall Common Access Routes



Scale: 1:25,000

Drawing title: Location and Strensall Common Access Details

-  Site Location
-  Access to Strensall Common
-  Bridleway
-  Vehicular Access Route
-  Pedestrian and Cycle Access Route

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Concept Plan, Galtres Garden Village: 1753 units



Appendix 2: Policy GI 6: New Open Space Provision

All residential development proposals should contribute to the provision of open space for recreation and amenity. The successful integration of open space into a proposed development should be considered early in the design process. The precise type of on-site provision required will depend on the size and location of the proposal and the existing open space provision in the area. Where there are deficiencies in certain types of open space provision in the area surrounding a proposed development, the Council will seek variations in the component elements to be provided by the developer in order to help to overcome them. Requirements will be calculated using the Council's up to date open space assessment and will be in line with the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy. The Council will encourage on-site provision where possible but off-site provision will be considered acceptable in the following circumstances:

- i. if the proposed development site would be of insufficient size in itself to make the appropriate provision (in accordance with the Council's standards) feasible within the site; or
- ii. in exceptional circumstances, if taking into account a site's characteristics including but not limited to the accessibility/capacity of existing open space sites/facilities and the circumstances of the surrounding area the open space needs in the context of an up-to-date Playing Pitch and Built Sports Facility Strategy, it can be demonstrated that of the proposed residential development can be met more appropriately by providing either new or enhanced provision off-site;
- iii. on strategic sites, where through strategic master planning agreements that provide for green infrastructure approaches which make accessible provision beyond allocated site boundaries. Open space standards as set out in the most up to date open space evidence base document should still be used as a guide to overall provision.**

New open space is identified on the proposals map at:

- OS1: Land North of Manor Church of England Academy
- OS2: Land to North of Poppleton Juniors, Millfield Lane, Poppleton
- OS5: Germany Beck
- OS6: Land abutting the River Foss at Heworth Croft

Indicative new significant areas of open space have been identified in connection with the following strategic sites, as shown on the proposals map:

- OS7: Land at Minster Way at ST7
- OS8: New Parkland to the East of ST8
- OS9: New Recreation and Sports Provision to the south of ST9
- OS10: New Area for Nature Conservation on land to the South of A64 in association with ST15
- OS11: Land to the East of ST31

This new open space will be complemented by further on-site provision of local green and open space (as required in this and other relevant sections of the plan), and both should be planned cohesively in order, where appropriate, to:

- manage impacts on the city's historic character and setting;
- **mitigate and compensate for ecological impacts, and provide for ecological enhancement;**
- **meet open space requirements arising from new development;**
- **accommodate drainage infrastructure, flood storage and attenuation; retain and enhance landscape and heritage features; and**
- **frame pedestrian and cycle linkage.**

The precise delineation and extent of the new open space will be set through detailed master planning and the planning process. The areas indicated on the proposals map are a guide to general extent based on current understanding of site and other conditions

Appendix 3: Galtres Garden Village: Assessment of York Local Plan Policy Compliance and Potential Recreational Impacts on Strensall Common SAC

Please refer to the separate report.