



North  
Tyneside  
Council

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# North Tyneside Draft Northumberland Square Conservation Area Management Strategy Supplementary Planning Document

## Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Statement

North Tyneside Council  
May 2023



## **Draft Northumberland Square Conservation Area Management Strategy Supplementary Planning Document**

The Northumberland Square Conservation Area Management Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) would assist North Tyneside Council (the Council) in fulfilling its statutory duties in respect of conservation areas, principally the duties to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas, and to draw up, consult upon and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement<sup>1</sup>.

The SPD would support the delivery of the High Streets Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) scheme for the Northumberland Square conservation area. The HAZ scheme, funded by Historic England, aims to support physical improvements to the historic and built environment, which in turn would facilitate more varied and vibrant uses for the area, including cultural, leisure and tourism uses. A key focus is for community participation and for increased understanding of and involvement in the heritage and culture of the area.

The SPD would also form a basis for day-to-day decision-making and guidance for the management of the area in the future.

The SPD would supplement and provide further guidance on the implementation of North Tyneside Local Plan 2017 policies. The policies within the Local Plan that are most relevant are:

- S2.1 Economic Growth Strategy
- DM6.1 Design of Development
- DM6.2 Extending Existing Buildings
- DM6.3 Advertisements and Signage
- S6.4 Improving Image
- S6.5 Heritage Assets
- DM6.6 Protection, Preservation and Enhancement of Heritage Assets
- AS8.11 The North Shields Sub Area
- AS8.13 The Beacon Centre and Wider Regeneration of North Shields Town Centre
- AS8.14 North Shields Town Centre Public Realm

### **European Sites**

It is necessary to avoid adverse impacts upon habitats and species of European nature conservation importance (“European Sites”). European Sites are protected under the European Directive (92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna (the “Habitats Directive”). The Habitats Directive establishes a network of internationally important sites designated for their ecological status. These comprise of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Additionally, it is a matter of policy throughout the UK that Ramsar sites identified through the Ramsar Convention (1971) should receive the same protection. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the “Habitats Regulations”) transpose the Habitats Directive in England and Wales.

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<sup>1</sup> Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, s72 and s71



The Habitats Directive requires Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening and, if necessary, Appropriate Assessment (AA) to be undertaken on proposed plans or projects that are likely to have a significant effect on one or more European Sites either individually, or in combination with other plans and projects.

The AA carried out for the Local Plan<sup>2</sup> advised that the Northumbria Coast SPA/Ramsar and Durham Coast SAC are the sites where likely significant effects as a result of increased recreational disturbance may occur. The AA concluded that implementation of the Local Plan could cause adverse impacts to the Durham Coast SAC and particularly to the Northumbria Coast SPA /Ramsar through residential pressure within a local catchment and visitor pressure from a wider catchment. This would arise from development particularly within a 6km buffer zone of the coast, but also with some impacts from a wider catchment. The AA therefore identified that appropriate mitigation would be required for development to take place without leading to adverse impact.

Local Plan policy DM5.6 *Management of International Sites* recommends a range of actions and mitigation that would be appropriate to avoid or reduce adverse impacts upon European Sites. To be most effective over the longer term, a strategic approach to manage impacts at the coast has been established in the Coastal Mitigation SPD.

### **Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening and Appropriate Assessment**

Section 63 of the Habitats Regulations sets out that a competent authority, before deciding to undertake, or give any consent for a plan or project must make an AA of the implications of the plan or project if it is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, unless it is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of that site.

The SPD would provide a basis for decision-making and sets out some regeneration projects that would be implemented at a local level. Nothing within the SPD would extend beyond the scope of the policy framework set out within the Local Plan, which has been subject to full assessment of its likely effects.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment screening has been carried out alongside this HRA screening that concludes that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects arising from the proposed SPD beyond those already assessed as part of the preparation of the Local Plan.

For these reasons, North Tyneside Council has screened out the SPD from further stages of the HRA process.

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<sup>2</sup> North Tyneside Council Local Plan Habitat Regulations Assessment - Appropriate Assessment, March 2017, Capita <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Habitat%20Regulations%20Assessment%20March%202017.pdf>