

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

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| Application reference: | 16/01303/FUL | |
| Application address: | Bargate Shopping Centre and adjoining land In Queensway, East Street, Hanover Buildings and High Street Southampton SO14 1HF | |
| Application description: | Demolition of existing buildings (Bargate Shopping Centre and multi-storey car park; 77-101 Queensway; 25 East Street; 30-32 Hanover Buildings; 1-16 East Bargate; and 1-4 High Street, excluding the frontage); refurbishment of basements and mixed use development comprising 152 flats (63 x one bedroom and 89 x two bedroom) (Use Class C3); 185 units of student residential accommodation (451 bedrooms); retail use (Class A1); flexible retail, office or food and drink use (Classes A1-A3); in new buildings ranging in height from 4-storeys to 9-storeys; with associated parking and servicing, landscaping and public realm (Environmental Impact Assessment Development affects a public right of way and the setting of the listed Town Walls). | |
| HRA completion date: | 20/12/2016 | |
| HRA completed by: | | |
| Lindsay McCulloch Planning Ecologist Southampton City Council Lindsay.mcculloch@southampton.gov.uk | Stephen Harrison Planning Projects Team Leader Southampton City Council stephen.harrison@southampton.gov.uk | |
| Summary | | |
| <p>The project being assessed is a mixed development that will lead to the provision of 152 flats (63 x one bedroom and 89 x two bedroom), student accommodation with a total of 451 bed spaces, retail, office and food and drink outlets. The development is located approximately 1.1km from the Solent and Southampton Water Special Protection Area (SPA)/Ramsar site and approximately 4.7km from the New Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC)/SPA/Ramsar site.</p> <p>The site is currently occupied by a shopping centre and multi-storey car park which will need to be demolished. It is located a significant distance from the European sites and as such construction stage impacts will not occur. Concern has been raised however, that the proposed development, in-combination with other residential developments across south Hampshire, could result in recreational disturbance to the features of interest of the New Forest SPA/Ramsar site.</p> <p>The findings of the initial assessment concluded that a significant effect was possible. A detailed appropriate assessment was therefore conducted on the proposed development. Following consideration of a number of avoidance and mitigation measures designed to remove any risk of a significant effect on the identified European sites, it has been concluded that the significant effects which are likely in association with the proposed development can be overcome.</p> | | |
| Section 1 - details of the plan or project | | |
| European sites potentially impacted | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New Forest SAC | |

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| <p>by plan or project:</p> <p>European Site descriptions are available in Appendix I of the City Centre Action Plan's Habitats Regulations Assessment Baseline Evidence Review Report, which is on the city council's website at</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New Forest SPA ▪ New Forest Ramsar site ▪ Solent and Southampton Water (SPA) ▪ Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar Site |
| <p>Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (provide details)?</p> | <p>No – the development consists of new residential, retail, office and student accommodation which is neither connected to, nor necessary for, the management of any European site.</p> |
| <p>Are there any other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Southampton Core Strategy (amended 2015) (http://www.southampton.gov.uk/policies/Amended-Core-Strategy-inc-CSPR-%20Final-13-03-2015.pdf) ▪ City Centre Action Plan (http://www.southampton.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/adopted-plans/city-centre-action-plan.aspx) ▪ South Hampshire Strategy (http://www.push.gov.uk/work/housing-and-planning/south_hampshire_strategy.htm) <p>The PUSH Spatial Position Statement plans for 104,350 net additional homes, 509,000 sq. m of office floorspace and 462,000 sq. m of mixed B class floorspace across South Hampshire and the Isle of Wight between 2011 and 2034.</p> <p>Southampton aims to provide a total of 15,610 net additional dwellings across the city between 2016 and 2035 as set out in the Amended Core Strategy.</p> <p>Whilst the dates of the two plans do not align, it is clear that the proposed development of the Bargate Shopping Centre site is part of a far wider reaching development strategy for the South Hampshire sub-region which will result in a sizeable increase in population and economic activity.</p> |
| <p>Regulation 68 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) (the Habitats Regulations) is clear that the assessment provisions, i.e. Regulation 61 of the same regulations, apply in relation to granting planning permission on an application under Part 3 of the TCPA 1990. The assessment below constitutes the city council's assessment of the implications of the development described above on the identified European sites, which is set out in Regulation 61 of the Habitats Regulations.</p> | |
| <p>Test 1: the likelihood of a significant effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This test is to determine whether or not any possible effect could constitute a significant effect on a European site as set out in Regulation 61(1) (a) of the Habitats Regulations. | |
| <p>The proposed development is located 1.1km to the west of a section of the Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar Site whilst the New Forest SAC, SPA and Ramsar site are approximately 4.7km to the south.</p> | |

A full list of the qualifying features for each site is provided at the end of this report. The development could have implications for these sites which could be permanent arising from the operational phase of the development.

In their response to the consultation on this planning application, dated 19 August 2016 Natural England raised concerns about insufficient information being provided about potential impacts on the New Forest sites. No objection was raised in respect of the Solent European Marine sites provided a contribution is made to the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership (SRMP).

The following mitigation measures have been proposed as part of the development:

- 5% of the CIL contribution, which will be a minimum of £91,500, will be ring fenced for footpath improvements in the Shoreburs and Weston Greenways;
- A contribution of £24,570 towards the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership;
- 37 parking spaces for the private residential element of the development and no parking spaces for the student accommodation.
- Information on public transport plus pedestrian and cycle route maps will be provided.
- The development will incorporate 226 secure cycle parking spaces for students and 94 for the private apartments. There will be a further 64 spaces for the visitors and the retail units.
- A restrictive tenancy barring students from bringing their own cars will be used. Breaching this clause will result in termination of the tenancy.
- A restrictive tenancy barring students from keeping dogs. Breaching this clause will result in termination of the tenancy.

Conclusions regarding the likelihood of a significant effect

This is to summarise whether or not there is a likelihood of a significant effect on a European site as set out in Regulation 61(1)(a) of the Habitats Regulations.

The project being assessed would lead to the provision of 152 flats, student accommodation with a total of 451 bed spaces, retail, office and food and drink outlets approximately 1.1km from the Solent and Southampton Water Special Protection Area (SPA)/Ramsar site and 4.7km from the New Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC)/SPA/Ramsar site

The site is a former shopping centre and multi-storey car park. It is located a significant distance from the European sites and as such construction stage impacts will not occur. Concern has been raised however, that the proposed development, in-combination with other residential developments across south Hampshire, could result in recreational disturbance to the features of interest of the New Forest SPA/Ramsar site.

The applicant has provided details of several avoidance and mitigation measures which are intended to reduce the identified impacts. However, without more detailed analysis, it is not possible to determine whether the proposed measures are sufficient to reduce the identified impacts to a level where they could be considered not to result in a significant effect on the identified European sites. Overall, there is the potential for permanent impacts which could be at a sufficient level to be considered significant. As such, a full appropriate assessment of the implications for the identified European sites is required before the scheme can be authorised.

Test 2: an appropriate assessment of the implications of the development for the identified European sites in view of those sites' conservation objectives

The analysis below constitutes the city council's assessment under Regulation 61(1) of the Habitats Regulations

The identified potential effects are examined below to determine the implications for the identified European sites in line with their conservation objectives and to assess whether the

proposed avoidance and mitigation measures are sufficient to remove any potential impact.

In order to make a full and complete assessment it is necessary to consider the relevant conservation objectives. These are available on Natural England's web pages at <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6528471664689152> .

The conservation objective for Special Protection Areas is to, "Avoid the deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying features, and the significant disturbance of the qualifying features, ensuring the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes a full contribution to achieving the aims of the Birds Directive."

Ramsar sites do not have a specific conservation objective however, under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), they are considered to have the same status as European sites.

TEMPORARY, CONSTRUCTION PHASE EFFECTS

The designated sites are all located a substantial distance away from the development site and are therefore outside the zone of influence of construction activities. As a consequence, there will be no temporary, construction phase effects.

PERMANENT, OPERATIONAL EFFECTS.

New Forest SPA/Ramsar site

The New Forest National Park attracts a high number of visitors (13.3 million annually), and is notable in terms of its catchment, attracting a far higher proportion of tourists and non-local visitors than similar areas such as the Thames Basin and Dorset Heaths. Research undertaken by Footprint Ecology, Sharp, J., Lowen, J. and Liley, D. (2008) Changing patterns of visitor numbers within the New Forest National Park, with particular reference to the New Forest SPA. Footprint Ecology.), indicates that 40% of visitors to the area are staying tourists, whilst 25% of visitors come from more than 5 miles (8km) away. The remaining 35% of visitors are local day visitors originating from within 5 miles (8km) of the boundary.

The report states that the estimated number of current annual visits to the New Forest is predicted to increase by 1.05 million annual visits by 2026 based on projections of housing development within 50km of the Forest, with around three quarters (764,000) of this total increase originating from within 10km of the boundary (which includes Southampton).

The application site is located 4.7km from the nearest part of the New Forest SPA and Ramsar site in terms of linear distance and as such, students resident in the proposed development would fall into the category of non-local day visitors.

Characteristics of visitors to the New Forest

In addition to visitor numbers, the report, "Changing patterns of visitor numbers within the New Forest National Park", 2008 also showed that:

- 85% of visitors to the New Forest arrive by car.
- 23% of the visitors travelling more than 5 miles come from the Southampton/Eastleigh area (see para 2.1.1).
- One of the main reasons for visiting the National Park given in the 2005 Visitor Survey was dog walking (24% of visitors - Source New Forest National Park Visitor survey

2005).

- Approximately 68% of visitors to UK National Parks are families.
(Source:www.nationalparks.gov.uk).

The majority of the visitors to New Forest locations arriving from Southampton could therefore be characterised as day visitors, car-owners in family groups and many with dogs.

The proposed residential accommodation is divided into private flats (35% of bed spaces) and student flats (65% of bed spaces). The residents of the private flats with parking spaces could potentially fit the profile of typical visitors to the New Forest however, whilst students may fall within the first two of the above bullet points they are unlikely to have dogs or visit as part of a family group.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

Occurrence of students

The peak period for visitor numbers in the New Forest National Park is the summer, Sharp, J., Lowen, J. and Liley, D. (2008), which also coincides with the critical breeding period of woodlark, nightjar and Dartford Warbler which are features of interest of the New Forest SPA. Although students would be able to remain in occupation within their accommodation throughout the year (tenancies would be for a complete year) many, particularly undergraduates, will vacate their accommodation and return home over the summer period.

There is no direct evidence of the extent to which students contribute to visitor numbers to the New Forest National Park. However, the characteristics of typical visitors to the New Forest are consistent with an analysis of visitors to the North York Moors National Park in 2002 which showed that skilled manual workers, poor retired couples, young single parents and students were more likely to use the local Moorsbus Network but were poorly represented in surveys at car parks (Countryside Recreation News April 2002, "Missing Persons - who doesn't visit the people's parks". Bill Breaker).

It would therefore be reasonable to conclude that there are likely to be very low numbers of students visiting the New Forest, particularly during the sensitive summer period.

Car ownership and accessibility

Data gathered as part of the visitor survey undertaken by Footprint Ecology in 2008 clearly indicated that the majority of visitors travel to the New Forest by car. The proposed development will have 147 car parking spaces however, 110 of these will be reserved for the retail elements of the scheme. Leaving just 37 spaces for the private apartments and none for the student accommodation (Transport Assessment). In addition, the tenancy agreements for the student accommodation will include a restrictive clause barring students from bringing their own cars.

This would be enforced by termination of the letting agreement (see para 3.9.3 of the Transport Assessment, July 2016 submitted with the planning application). On this basis the student accommodation element of the development can reasonably be described as car free.

Car parking on the campuses of both universities is very limited. Solent Southampton University (SSU) does not have any on campus parking whilst the University of Southampton (UoS) is

seeking to further reduce levels of car use from the current 4.6% down to 4.2% by 2015 (UoS Travel Plan).

Students will therefore be expected to travel around Southampton on foot, bicycle and public transport. To support this the development will provide:

- Pedestrian route information, cycle route maps and public transport information;
- 226 secure cycle parking spaces;
- A restrictive tenancy barring students from bringing their own cars. Breaching this clause will result in termination of the tenancy.

The Transport Assessment, in insets 2.1 and 2.4, shows that the site benefits from its location in the city centre and is therefore highly accessible by public transport, bicycle and on foot. There are bus stops on two side of the development, Queensway and Hanover Buildings, providing access to the majority of routes within the city and with approximately 90 – 100 buses per hour. The site is therefore highly accessible to residing students whilst the nearby Portswood Road is both pedestrian and cycle friendly.

The high level of accessibility, restrictive tenancies and few parking spaces mean that it is very unlikely that the students will have access to cars.

Recreation options for students

Students at both universities have extensive opportunities to access sports and recreational facilities and are positively encouraged to make use of these. Details of the UoS facilities can be found at the following web address:

http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/imported/transforms/content-block/UsefulDownloads_Download/67A7C84E3D424F08B28A6E76CADD46E5/2015-16%20Sport%20and%20Wellbeing%20Brochure.pdf . Solent University has two major sports centres in the city centre, extensive playing fields at Test Park Sportsground, Fitness Centres and access to a range of local sports clubs and recreational facilities (details available on SSU website <http://www.solent.ac.uk/sport/facilities/facilities-home.aspx>).

In addition, Southampton benefits from an extensive network of common land, green corridors, city and district parks and local green spaces, which provide opportunities for quiet recreation of the type available to visitors to the New Forest. In particular, the Central Parks are located across the road from the development whilst Southampton Common, a 125 hectare natural green space in the heart of the city, is accessible via quiet routes and dedicated cycle lanes from the application site. Just to the north of the Common lie the Outdoor Sports Centre, Southampton City Golf Course, and the Alpine Snow Centre which provide opportunities for organised and informal recreation activities. Outside the city centre are the Greenways, a series wooded stream corridors which connect a number of open spaces. The three most significant of these, Lordsdale, Shoreburs and Weston, are within easy cycling distance of the development site and provide extended opportunities for walking and connections into the wider countryside.

Inset 2.1 of the Transport Assessment (page 10) shows walking distances from the development site. Southampton Common lies within 15 minutes cycling distance north of the site and offers a wide range of opportunities for recreation and a healthy lifestyle. Mayflower Park is a 15 minute walk to the south west of the site and allows access to the River Test waterfront. The general accessibility of the site to a wide range of services gives residents the opportunity to walk on a regular basis.

The road network around the application site also encourages cycling. Inset 2.4 of the Transport Assessment (page 14), is an extract from the Southampton Cycle Map which demonstrates that carriageways adjacent to the site are quiet routes appropriate for cycling. These cycle routes link the development site with Southampton Common (15 min) and National Cycle Route 23 which passes through Southampton. It is reasonable to expect that students will make use of the many leisure activities and commercial centres of Southampton.

The availability of good quality and accessible open space described above, combined with sport and recreation facilities at both universities, reduces the likelihood that students would travel to the New Forest for recreational purposes.

Visiting the New Forest National Park using public transport

The linear distance to New Forest SPA/Ramsar site is approximately 4.7km however, by road the distance is somewhat longer. The shortest route, using the Hythe Ferry, is 7.6km whilst the closest section when travelling purely by road is approximately 11.3km. It is unlikely, therefore, that visits made on foot or by bicycle will a frequent occurrence.

Should students choose to visit the National Park using public transport they are unlikely to find it a straight forward proposition. Direct travel from the development site is not possible. The first stage of a visit requires a journey to Southampton Central Station or the bus interchange in the city centre.

Travelling onward from Southampton city centre, the destinations for train and bus services are the urban centres which, aside from Beaulieu Road, lie outside the New Forest SPA/Ramsar site. Once at these locations further travel is required to reach the designated site. Table 1 below provides details of the train services available from Southampton Central Railway Station.

Table 1 Train services from Southampton Central to New Forest Locations

| Destination | Service frequency (outside of peak hours) | Journey time |
|--------------------|--|---------------------|
| Ashurst | 1 service per hour | 10 mins |
| Beaulieu Road | 6 services between 0900- 1800 | 14 mins |
| Lyndhurst | No service | |
| Brockenhurst | 4 services per hour | 16 mins |
| Lymington | 2 services per hour (change at Brockenhurst) | 20 mins |
| Burley | No service | |

The only direct bus service from Southampton to the locations in the New Forest identified above is the Bluestar 6 service which runs hourly from the city centre (during the day) to Lyndhurst, Brockenhurst and Lymington taking 30-40 minutes. Other services are available throughout the National Park from those locations.

Clearly, whilst it is possible to reach the designated site from the proposed halls of residence the process is complicated and likely to be costly. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that there are only likely to be a very small number of visits as a consequence.

Dog ownership

The use of restrictive tenancies will prevent students from keeping dogs in the new development which removes a significant source of disturbance to the ground nesting birds.

PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL APARTMENTS

The private residential apartments benefit from a small amount of car parking, with just 24.3% of the flats having a parking space, it is therefore likely that the development will result in a small number of recreational visits to the New Forest. Each flat will be allocated a cycle space and the majority of the residents will therefore be in a similar situation to the students, relying upon walking and cycling to get around.

It is not feasible to ban the keeping of dogs however, it would be expected that the number of dogs would be lower than for a development with gardens. In addition, these dogs are likely to be smaller breeds that can be exercised easily in parks.

Mitigation

Although the likely frequency of recreational visits to the New Forest, arising from the proposed development, is low, there is still the risk of recreational impacts. Southampton City Council has therefore undertaken to use 5% of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions to upgrade footpaths and infrastructure in the City's greenways. The greenways are a series of wooded stream valleys within Southampton's urban area which provide opportunities for walks in a semi-natural environment. Two of the greenways, Shoreburs and Weston, fall within the 5km cycle catchment area shown in Inset 2.3 of the Transport Assessment. Not only are these within easy cycling distance they can be accessed via quiet roads and National Cycle Route Number 2 directly from the development. The development will generate a minimum CIL contribution of least £1,830,000 which will result in £91,500 funds to pay for improvements within the two greenways.

Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar site

In 2008 the Council adopted the Solent Disturbance Mitigation Project in collaboration with other Councils within the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire in order to mitigate the effects of new residential development on the Solent and Southampton Water SPA. This enables financial contributions to be made by developers to fund appropriate mitigation measures.

The private residential element of the development will result in a net increase in the population. There is therefore the risk that the development, in-combination with other residential developments across south Hampshire, could lead to recreational impacts upon the Solent and Southampton Water SPA. The likelihood of recreational impacts occurring is dependent upon the ability of the new residents to visit coastal locations.

The On-site Visitor Survey, undertaken as part of phase II of the Solent Disturbance and Mitigation Project's research, established that 50.5% of all the visitors to the coast arrived by car as compared to 46% visiting on foot. At Weston Shore, the closest section of accessible coast to the development, 62% arrived by car, 38% by foot and 0% by bicycle or bus. It would therefore be appropriate to charge the full SRMP contribution on the units with car parking, which amounts to 24.3% of the non-student accommodation. This is also the same proportion of the new households that could be expected to keep a dog according to the Pet Food

Manufacturers annual survey <http://www.pfma.org.uk/pet-population-2016>.

$$37 \quad \times \quad 176 \quad = \quad 37 \times 176 = \text{£}6512$$

For those visitors arriving by foot, the On-Site Visitor Study¹ recorded just 9% of visitors travelling more than 2km to reach the coast. The Bargate development is located 2.9km by road and is therefore likely to generate only a very limited number of foot visitors. Weston Shore is now easier to reach by bicycle following the opening of cycle lanes over the Itchen Bridge, even so, fewer than half of the residents could be expected to travel to the coast as the median cycling distance recorded was just 1.9km. It would therefore be appropriate to charge a 50% contribution on the car free units.

$$\frac{115}{5} \quad \times \quad \frac{176}{2} \quad = \quad 115 \times 88 = \text{£}10,120$$

The proposed student accommodation will result in a net increase in the population of the city and thus lead to significant impacts on the Solent and Southampton Water SPA. However, due to the characteristics of this type of residential development, specifically the absence of car parking and the inability of those living in purpose built student accommodation to have pets, the level of disturbance created, and thus the increase in bird mortality, will be less than C3 housing. The SDMP research showed that 47% of activity which resulted in major flight events was specifically caused by dogs off of a lead². As such, it is considered that the level of impact from purpose built student accommodation would be half that of C3 housing and thus the scale of the mitigation package should also be half that of C3 housing.

Assuming a typical 3 bedroomed house can accommodate 5 students, for the purposes of providing SPA mitigation, five study bedrooms will therefore be considered a unit of residential accommodation.

The calculation to establish the level of the mitigation package required is as follows:

$$\frac{S}{5} \quad \times \quad \frac{176}{2}$$

S = number of study bedrooms

$$\frac{451}{5} \quad \times \quad \frac{176}{2} \quad = \quad 90.2 \times 87 = \text{£}7937.6$$

It is considered that, subject to a level of mitigation, which has been calculated as a total of £24,570, being secured through a legal agreement, appropriate and effective mitigation measures will have been secured to ensure that effects associated with disturbance can be satisfactorily removed. The applicant has agreed to enter into a legal agreement to this effect.

¹ Fearnley, H., Clarke, R. T. & Liley, D. (2010). The Solent Disturbance & Mitigation Project. Phase II - On-site visitor survey results from the Solent region. ©Solent Forum / Footprint Ecology.

² See paragraph 3.15 of the Solent Disturbance and Mitigation Project Phase II bird disturbance fieldwork

Conclusions regarding the implications of the development for the identified European sites in view of those sites' conservation objectives

Conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn from the evidence provided:

- Residents of the new accommodation will have only limited access to cars making travel

to the New Forest and many coastal locations difficult.

- The availability of a wide range of open spaces, including a number of semi-natural sites, within easy cycling reach of the development will reduce the need to travel to the New Forest
- Evidence suggests that low car and dog ownership amongst students contributes to the relatively low proportion of students in the make-up of visitor numbers to the New Forest.
- The private residential development may result in a low level of additional recreational activity in the New Forest arising from the apartments with a car parking space.
- The private residential development may result in a low level of additional recreational activity at the coast arising from the apartments with a car parking space and a small number of residents that are prepared to cycle to Weston Shore.

The following mitigation measures have been proposed as part of the development:

- 5% of the CIL contribution, which will be a minimum of £91,500, will be ring fenced for footpath improvements in the Shoreburs and Weston Greenways;
- A contribution of £24,570 towards the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership;
- Just 6% of the accommodation will have a parking space;
- Information on public transport plus pedestrian and cycle route maps will be provided.
- The development will incorporate 226 secure cycle parking spaces for students and 152 for the private apartments. There will be a further 74 spaces for the visitors and the retail units.
- A restrictive tenancy barring students from bringing their own cars will be used. Breaching this clause will result in termination of the tenancy.
- A restrictive tenancy barring students from keeping dogs. Breaching this clause will result in termination of the tenancy.

As such, visitor pressure on European and other protected sites in the New Forest and the Solent European sites arising from the proposed development is likely to be extremely low and it can therefore be concluded that, subject to the implementation of the identified mitigation measures, **significant effects arising from recreational disturbance will not occur.**

European Site Qualifying Features

The New Forest SAC

The New Forest SAC qualifies under Article 3 of the Habitats Directive by supporting the following Annex I habitats:

- Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (*Littorelletalia uniflorae*) (primary reason for selection)
- Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or of the *Isoëto-Nanojuncetea* (primary reason for selection)
- Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix* (primary reason for selection)
- European dry heaths (primary reason for selection)
- *Molinia* meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*) (primary reason for selection)
- Depressions on peat substrates of the *Rhynchosporion* (primary reason for selection)
- Atlantic acidophilous beech forests with *Ilex* and sometimes also *Taxus* in the shrub layer (*Quercion robori-petraeae* or *Ilici-Fagenion*) (primary reason for selection)
- *Asperulo-Fagetum* beech forests (primary reason for selection)
- Old acidophilous oak woods with *Quercus robur* on sandy plains (primary reason for selection)
- Bog woodland (primary reason for selection)
- Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*) (primary reason for selection)
- Transition mires and quaking bogs
- Alkaline fens

The New Forest SAC qualifies under Article 3 of the Habitats Directive by supporting the following Annex II species:

- Southern Damselfly *Coenagrion mercurial* (primary reason for selection)
- Stag Beetle *Lucanus cervus* (primary reason for selection)
- Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus*

The New Forest SPA

The New Forest SPA qualifies under Article 4.1 of the Birds Directive by supporting breeding populations of European importance of the following Annex I species:

- Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata*
- Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*
- Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*
- Woodlark *Lullula arborea*

The SPA qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Birds Directive by supporting overwintering populations of European importance of the following migratory species:

- Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

New Forest Ramsar Site

The New Forest Ramsar site qualifies under the following Ramsar criteria:

- Ramsar criterion 1: Valley mires and wet heaths are found throughout the site and are of outstanding scientific interest. The mires and heaths are within catchments whose uncultivated and undeveloped state buffer the mires against adverse ecological change. This is the largest concentration of intact valley mires of their type in Britain.
- Ramsar criterion 2: The site supports a diverse assemblage of wetland plants and animals including several nationally rare species. Seven species of nationally rare plant are found

on the site, as are at least 65 British Red Data Book species of invertebrate.

- Ramsar criterion 3: The mire habitats are of high ecological quality and diversity and have undisturbed transition zones. The invertebrate fauna of the site is important due to the concentration of rare and scarce wetland species. The whole site complex, with its examples of semi-natural habitats is essential to the genetic and ecological diversity of southern England.

Solent and Southampton Water SPA

Solent and Southampton Water SPA qualifies under Article 4.1 of the Birds Directive by supporting breeding populations of European importance of the following Annex I species:

- Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*
- Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*
- Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*
- Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*
- Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

The SPA qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Birds Directive by supporting overwintering populations of European importance of the following migratory species:

- Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa islandica*
- Dark-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*
- Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*
- Teal *Anas crecca*

The SPA also qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Birds Directive by regularly supporting at least 20,000 waterfowl, including the following species:

- Gadwall *Anas strepera*
- Teal *Anas crecca*
- Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*
- Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa islandica*
- Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*
- Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*
- Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*
- Dark-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*
- Wigeon *Anas penelope*
- Redshank *Tringa tetanus*
- Pintail *Anas acuta*
- Shoveler *Anas clypeata*
- Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*
- Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*
- Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*
- Dunlin *Calidris alpina alpina*
- Curlew *Numenius arquata*
- Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar Site

The Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar site qualifies under the following Ramsar criteria:

- Ramsar criterion 1: The site is one of the few major sheltered channels between a substantial island and mainland in European waters, exhibiting an unusual strong double tidal flow and has long periods of slack water at high and low tide. It includes many wetland habitats characteristic of the biogeographic region: saline lagoons, saltmarshes, estuaries, intertidal flats, shallow coastal waters, grazing marshes, reedbeds, coastal

woodland and rocky boulder reefs.

- Ramsar criterion 2: The site supports an important assemblage of rare plants and invertebrates. At least 33 British Red Data Book invertebrates and at least eight British Red Data Book plants are represented on site.
- Ramsar criterion 5: A mean peak count of waterfowl for the 5 year period of 1998/99 – 2002/2003 of 51,343
- Ramsar criterion 6: The site regularly supports more than 1% of the individuals in a population for the following species: Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, Dark-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*, Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca* and Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa islandica*.