Torbay Local Plan - Proposed Submission Plan

Modifications to the Habitats Regulations Assessment in Response to Natural England Further Advice (August 2014)

The black text represents changes to the HRA to address Natural England objections in April

The red text represents changes to the HRA to address Natural England objections in August

| **Page No.** | **Section**  | **Paragraph / Policy** | **Editorial modification suggested to address NE objection** |
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| 17 | 5 | 5.1.5 | Replace *"unacceptable recreational pressure"* with *"additional recreational pressure"* in the second sentence. |
| 21 | 7 | 7.1.2 | Although Torbay has a high ratio of accessible natural greenspace that provides considerable alternative recreational resources closer to the main population centres, the intrinsic and historic appeal of the SAC and the visitor experience is such that a proportion of new residents and visitors will always be likely to be drawn to this site for itself. Provision or enhancement of nearby greenspace to replicate the experience of visiting Berry Head may help reduce recreational pressure on Berry Head further, but should be seen as part of a package of measures and not the only means of mitigation. All mitigation must be delivered within a timescale linked to that of the development and targeted to resolve impacts to the European site. ~~in accordance with the accessible natural greenspace standard may help to minimise the need for recreational resources on European sites, provided that it is delivered within a timescale linked to that of the development and will fulfil a function similar to that of the European site~~ |
| 21 | 7 | 7.1.3 | Delete the last sentence and add the following to the end of the paragraph: *"The HRA has been informed by additional evidence[[1]](#footnote-1) in relation to the potential recreational impact on the Berry Head component of South Hams SAC arising from the new development."* |
| 21 | 7 | 7.1.5 | Delete "*this guidance will eventually be replaced by"* and add instead *"this guidance will be supplemented with".* |
| 22 | 7 | 7.1.8 | Delete "does not" in the first line and add a reference to the HRA Site Appraisal Report of Torbay Local Plan Strategic Delivery Areas (Proposed Submission Plan) 2014.Replace "*Devon County Council"* with "*Torbay Council*" in the second bullet point.  |
| 22 | 7 | New paragraph 7.1.10 | The HRA Site Appraisal Report of Torbay Local Plan Strategic Delivery Area (2014)[[2]](#footnote-2) has been prepared in support of the HRA of the Local Plan, and provides an appraisal of key site proposals within the Plan. It also identifies the likely effects arising from those proposals (e.g. their likely effect on the integrity of South Hams SAC in relation to greater horseshoe bats), and makes recommendations, where required, for appropriate mitigation measures (commensurate with levels of information and certainty available at the Plan Making stage of the planning process) |
| 22 | 7 | 7.2.4, 7.2.5 & 7.2.6 | Add new text following the NE marine advice: *"There are a number of measures contained within the Local Plan Policies and Evidence Base that would reduce the impact of development proposed by the Local Plan on coastal waters. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 (SFRA2) recommends considering the potential benefits that an appropriately designed sustainable drainage system could have on the biodiversity, amenity value, water quality and resource value of development and/or surrounding area. It also recommends considering the vulnerability and importance of ecological resources when determining the suitability of drainage strategies / sustainable drainage systems."**"Policy W5 states that development proposed by the Local Plan may be required to provide financial contribution towards the enhancement of the waste water treatment works (WWTW). Policy ER2 states that the Council will require development proposals to provide appropriate sewerage systems and support measures to reduce the amount of storm water and grey water going into the shared sewer. The Council will also consider the use of natural sewage treatment methods and sustainable urban drainage measure as promoted in the Torbay Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which have informed Local Plan Policies."* *"South West Water is currently constructing a 2,000 cubic meter underground storm storage tank in the south-east corner of Abbey Park, on Torquay Seafront, to provide extra capacity in the sewerage system and reduce discharges from the network in extremely wet weather. The work is part of a £5 million investment designed to improve bathing water quality in Torbay ahead of the European Union's revised Bathing Water Directive which comes into effect in 2015. These might include increasing storm water storage capacity in the sewerage network and improving combined sewer capacity at key locations including Cockington Lane, Abbey Park, Cary Parade, Old Mill Road, Roundham Road and Beacon Hill in Torquay and Littlegate Road in Paignton."* |
| 25 | 8 | 8.1.1 | • Requiring provision or enhancement of ~~to the accessible natural~~ greenspace ~~standard may help to minimise the need for~~ which may help reduce recreational ~~resources~~ pressure on the South Hams SAC ~~that they are~~ if delivered within a timescale linked to that of the development and ~~will fulfil~~ if the greenspace provides a function similar to that of the SAC. |
| 26 | 8 | 8.2.5 | Delete PolicyTO3 from the list.  |
| 26 | 8 | 8.2.7   | Add the following Policies to the list: SDT3, SDP3, SDP4, SDB1 and SDB3. |
| 27 | 8 | New paragraph | Add a new paragraph that reflects the findings of the Recreational Impact on Berry Head Report: *A report by Footprint Ecology (2014) identified that there is evidence to suggest that additional impacts on the Berry Head to Sharkham Point component of the SAC, arising from the level of growth proposed by the Local Plan, are a realistic possibility. The data available suggests that there is a zone of influence of approximately 5km driving distance. The report concluded that the possibility of significant effects cannot be ruled out and mitigation measures will be necessary. The potential mitigation measures identified include:*1. *the development of a detailed management plan addressing habitat management and visitor use;*
2. *habitat management required to increase the resilience of the site over and above that already required to maintain the interest features of the site; and*
3. *increased visitor engagement work;*
4. *~~management work at Sharkham Point to provide an alternative location for dog-walkers if visitor work suggests this may be effective."~~*
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| 28 | 9 | 9.0.3 | Delete "This will eventually replace the guidance published by Natural England in 2010." |
| 28 | 9 | 9.0.4 | Replace the paragraph with the following text:*"Further work will be undertaken by the Council and associated stakeholders to develop, and provide costs for, the mitigation measures identified by the Footprint Ecology report to mitigate increased recreational pressure on the South Hams SAC within the SDB1 policy area. The Council will produce a Supplementary Planning Document to set out the evidence base, mitigation costs and approach for securing developer contributions.* *As part of this work, a detailed, up-to-date management plan for the Berry Head to Sharkham Point component of the South Hams SAC, addressing habitat management and visitor use, will be developed. This plan will consider existing recreational impact and ensure that management to meet the conservation objectives of the site is progressed in order to fulfil legal obligations relating to the maintenance and restoration of the site interest. The plan will also provide a baseline for the mitigation required to take account of the additional pressure that new housing is likely to bring."* |
| 30 | 10 | References  | Include the following in the list of references:Footprint Ecology (2014) - The Recreational Impacts on Berry Head - Additional HRA Work for the Torbay Local Plan by Footprint Ecology ; Kestrel Wildlife Consultants Ltd. (2014) HRA Site Appraisal of Torbay Local Plan Strategic Delivery Areas. |
| xxxix | Appendix 5 | Policy SS2 | Add the following sentence to column 4:*"The level of growth within the SDB1 policy area could cause additional recreational pressure on the calcareous grassland and European dry heath at berry Head component of South Hams SAC."*In column 5, replace *"all Future growth Areas"* with *"all development within:* * *SDP3.2 - Great Park;*
* *SDP3.3 -Totnes Road Future Growth Area;*
* *SDP 3.4 - Brixham Road Future Growth Area;*
* *SDB 3.2* ***-*** *Wall Park Future Growth Area."*

Replace the second paragraph in column 5 with *"development within the SDB1 policy area should have regard to Policy NC1 concerning the need to mitigate the impact of additional recreational pressure on the SAC."*  |
| xl | Appendix 5 | Policy SS11 | Add to column 2 South Hams SAC.Add the following sentence to column 4:*"The level of growth within the SDB1 policy area could cause additional recreational pressure on the calcareous grassland and European dry heath at the Berry Head component of South Hams SAC."*Replace the second paragraph in column 5 with *"development within the SDB1 policy area should have regard to Policy NC1 concerning the need to mitigate the impact of additional recreational pressure on the SAC."*  |
| xlii  | Appendix 6 | SDT2  | Replace the text in Column 4:*"The level of growth suggested in this area could potentially have negative impacts on the reefs of the Marine cSAC as a result of potential increase in use of Hope’s Nose CSO."* |
| ~~xlii~~ | ~~Appendix 6~~ | ~~SDT3~~ | ~~Add Edginswell mitigation objectives to column 5 as follows:~~1. *~~Any detailed proposals for development in the area should first be informed by appropriate bat surveys undertaken during a suitable time of year.~~*
2. *~~If the site is developed, consideration should be given to seeking a biodiversity offset for loss of grassland (foraging) habitat and internal hedgerows.~~*
3. *~~The provision of a western buffer would be consistent with the four principles set out in the proposed modified Local Plan NC1 Policy.~~*
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| xlii | Appendix 6 | SDT4 | Replace the text in column 4 with The level of growth suggested in this area could potentially have negative impacts on the reefs of the Marine cSAC as a result of potential increase in use of Hope’s Nose CSO. |
| xliii | Appendix 6 | Policy SDP3 | Add mitigation objectives to column 5 as follows:*"Greater horseshoe bat Mitigation objectives for Great Parks, Totnes Road FGA ~~Yalberton Industrial Estate and Claylands~~ and Brixham Road GFA should be implemented as recommended by the HRA Site Appraisal Report of Torbay Local Plan Strategic Delivery Areas (Proposed Submission Plan)* *2014"* |
| ~~xliii~~ | ~~Appendix 6~~ | ~~Policy SDP4~~ | ~~Add Clennon Valley mitigation objectives to column 5 as follows:~~1. *~~Leisure related development within the valley and tourism related development along its margins should provide appropriate mitigation measures based upon all of the principles set out in modified NC1 Policy.~~*
2. *~~Provision of landscape buffers between development and areas of semi-natural vegetation in the valley; control of light spill; mitigation for the loss of potential foraging and commuting habitat to ensure retention of connectivity along the valley; retention, where appropriate, of features through development that are likely to be used by GHBs; and developer contributions towards the provision of bespoke purpose-built roosts in appropriate locations along the valley.~~*
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| xliii | Appendix 6 | Policy SDB1 | Replace category A5 with C4 in column 2. Replace *"N/A"* in column 3 with "*South Hams SAC."*Replace the text in column 4 with the following text:*"The strategic area lies within the sustenance zone and strategic flyways for GHBs, without appropriate design and mitigation, is likely to have significant effects on the integrity of the South Hams SAC both alone and in combination with other projects."**"The level of growth within the SDB1 policy area could cause additional recreational pressure on the calcareous grassland and European dry heath at the Berry Head component of South Hams SAC."**~~The level of growth suggested in this area could potentially have negative impacts on water quality from contaminated run-off."~~*Delete *"N/A"* in column 5 and add the following text:*"Greater horseshoe bat mitigation objectives for* *~~Fishcombe Cove and~~ Wall Park Future Growth Area should be implemented as recommended by the HRA Site Appraisal Report of Torbay Local Plan Strategic Delivery Areas (Proposed Submission Plan)* *2014"*Add the following mitigation measures for sites within Brixham built up area:1. Protection and management of existing trees
2. Retention of former hedge-lines; managed as part of the development
3. No increase in lighting in these areas to greater than 0.5 lux

Add the following sentence to column 5 *"development within the SDB1 policy area should have regard to Policy NC1 concerning the need to mitigate the impact of additional recreational pressure on the SAC."*  |
| xliv | Appendix 6 | Policy SDB2 | Add the following sentence to column 4: *"The level of growth within the SDB1 policy area could cause additional recreational pressure on the calcareous grassland and European dry heath at the Berry Head component of South Hams SAC."*Add the following sentence to column 5: *"development within the SDB1 policy area should have regard to Policy NC1 concerning the need to mitigate the impact of additional recreational pressure on the SAC."*  |
| xliv | Appendix 6 | Policy SDB3 | Add the following sentence to column 4: *"The level of growth within the SDB1 policy area could cause additional recreational pressure on the calcareous grassland and European dry heath at the Berry Head component of South Hams SAC."*Add Wall Park mitigation objectives to column 5 as follows:Adequate mitigation should be provided, in accordance with the HRA Site Appraisal Report, that ensures:1. there are no further restrictions on potential movement of GHBs along the strategic flyway through the future growth area; and
2. the retention and enhancement of foraging and on-site roosting opportunities.

Add the following sentence to column 5: *"development within the SDB1 policy area should have regard to Policy NC1 concerning the need to mitigate the impact of additional recreational pressure on the SAC."*  |
| xlv | Appendix 7 | Policy TO1 |  Column 4: *"An increase in tourist accommodation, and therefore visitors, within the SDB1 policy area could cause additional recreational pressure on the calcareous grassland and European dry heath at Berry Head component of South Hams SAC ~~and Lyme Bay and Torbay Marine cSAC."~~*Replace the second paragraph in column 5 with: *"development within the SDB1 policy area should have regard to Policy NC1 concerning the need to mitigate the impact of additional recreational pressure on the SAC."*  |
| xlv | Appendix 7 | Policy TO3 | Replace category C2 with B in column 2.Replace the text in column 4 with the following:*"The proposed improvements and/or extension of the three harbours are not likely to have significant negative impact on the site."*Remove the Policy restriction in column 5: *“Any proposal that may lead to likely significant effects on sites protected under European legislation will only be permitted where no adverse effect on the integrity of the site can be shown”.*And Replace "*YES"* with *"N/A"*  |
| xlvi | Appendix 7 | Policy C1 | Add the following sentence to column 4:*"The level of growth within SDB1 policy area*, *could cause additional recreational pressure on the calcareous grassland and European dry heath at the Berry Head component of South Hams SAC."*Replace the second paragraph in column 5 with: *development within the SDB1 policy area should have regard to Policy NC1 concerning the need to mitigate the impact of additional recreational pressure on the SAC."*  |
| xlvi | Appendix 7 | Policy NC1 | Add the following sentence to column 4:*"The level of growth suggested by the Local Plan, within SDB1 policy area could cause additional recreational pressure on the calcareous grassland and European dry heath at the Berry Head component of South Hams SAC."*Add the following to column 5:*“Development around the edge of the built up area that is within the Berry Head SAC Sustenance Zone and/or is coincident with any of the Strategic Flyways will, as appropriate, be required to provide:* 1. *‘~~A belt of~~  linear features’ and ‘stepping stones’ in order to maintain and improve the ecological coherence of the landscape necessary to maintain in ‘favourable conservation status’ the Torbay population of greater horseshoe bats.*
2. *To ensure this, development likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of the South Hams SAC will be required to provide biodiversity conservation measures that contribute to the overall enhancement of greater horseshoe bat habitat ~~this ‘favourable buffer’ for GHBs~~ in Torbay. Such measures should be based on the following principles:*
* *The maintenance of GHB dark and unlit habitat connectivity across the landscape;*
* *The provision of adequate foraging habitat;*
* *The provision, where appropriate, of adequate permeability through built development following existing and new flight paths;*
* *The provision of new bespoke roosts where they will provide ‘stepping stones’ across the landscape."*

Replace the second paragraph in column 5 with *“Developer contributions to fund the mitigation measures needed to manage increased recreational pressure on the South Hams SAC resulting from residential development and tourist accommodation within the SDB1 policy area will be sought.”* |
| xlviii | Appendix 7 | Policy ER1 | Add to column 4:Steps must be taken to reduce the amount of stormwater in CSOsAdd policy restriction to column 5:The Council should produce SUDS or WSUD SPD to support the existing Torbay Flood Management Strategy. |
| xlix | Appendix 7 | Policy W5 | Add to column 4:Development of previously developed land and permitted development (such as home extensions) could increase hard surface and consequently increase the amount of rainfall that enters the CSOs. Add policy restriction to column 5:Development of previously developed land and permitted development should introduce SUDS to ensure they do not exacerbate sewer flooding and CSO spills. In particular brownfield development which may discharge into Hope's Nose CSO should deliver SUDS or WSUD. |

1. Footprint Ecology (2014) - Recreational Impacts on Berry Head: Additional HRA Work for the Torbay Local Plan [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. M. Oxford/ Kestrel Wildlife Consultants Ltd. (2014) - HRA Site Appraisal of Torbay Local Plan Strategic Delivery Areas [↑](#footnote-ref-2)