

**Nature Supplementary Planning
Document:**

**Strategic Environmental Assessment/
Habitats Regulations Assessment**

Screening Statement

April 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been produced to determine the need for a:

- I. **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- II. **Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)** in accordance with article 6 of the EC Habitats directive 1992, as interpreted by Regulation 61(1) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 as amended (the habitats regulations).

For the proposed Nature Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

2. Policy context

2.1 Government policies and the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) promote and recognise the importance of nature conservation. The NPPF has as one of its key objectives Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (chapter 15).

2.2 The Sefton Local Plan (2017)¹ includes policies NH1 'Nature Assets', NH2 'Nature' and NH3 'Development in the Nature Improvement Area'.

2.3 The Bootle Area Action Plan² has been found "sound" by the Planning Inspectorate and is due to be adopted by the Council in January 2026. This document includes policy BAAP9 'Nature'.

2.4 The proposed Nature SPD will expand upon policies NH1 (Nature Assets), NH2 (Nature) and NH3 (Development in the Nature Improvement Area) of the Local Plan, in addition to policy BAAP9 (Nature) of the Bootle Area Action Plan. These policies are shown in Appendix B. More detail of the scope of the SPD is shown below.

Introduction and Context

2.5 Sefton has an outstanding natural environment, including the Sefton Coast, internationally important nature sites and their supporting habitat, designated national and local sites, priority habitats and priority and protected species. Sefton Council is proposing to prepare a Nature Supplementary Planning Document, reflecting the importance of Sefton's

¹ See www.sefton.gov.uk/localplan

² See https://www.sefton.gov.uk/media/qdfhtv5j/draft_bootle_aap_document_withmods.pdf

natural environment. This will be an update of the current Nature Conservation SPD which it will replace.

2.6 The SPD will provide additional guidance to help implement Sefton Local Plan policies NH1 'Nature Assets', NH2 'Nature' and NH3 'Development in the Nature Improvement Area', in addition to Bootle Area Action Plan policy BAAP9 'Nature'. The SPD will provide a framework for Sefton's development needs to be met sustainably, that is, in a way which protects, enhances and manages the natural environment in a sustainable manner.

Purpose and aims

2.7 The aim of the SPD is to provide additional guidance to applicants, developers and other stakeholders in relation to nature policies in the 2017 Sefton Local Plan, Bootle Area Action Plan and where relevant the Habitats Regulations.

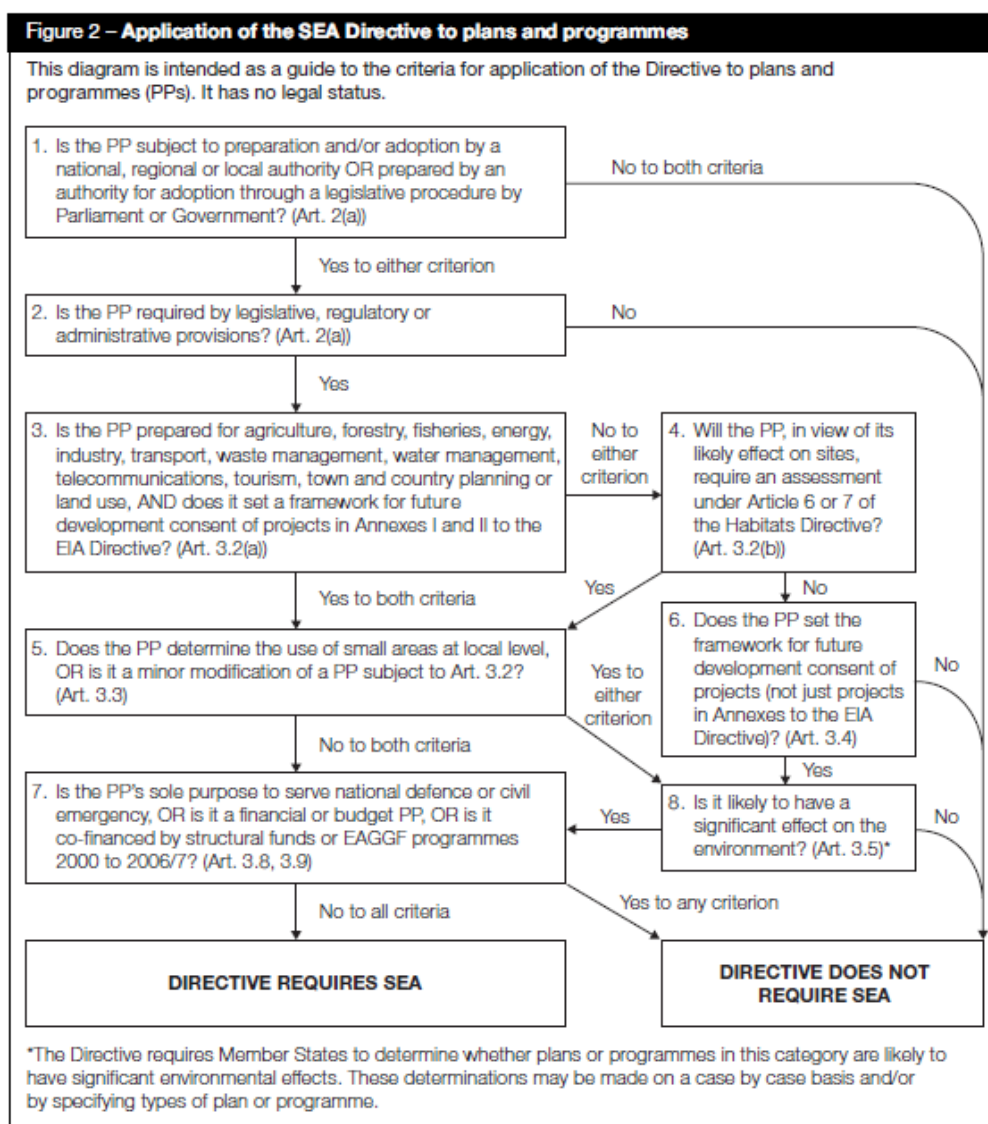
2.8 The updated SPD will focus on the protection of nature assets, with a section on policy requirements for enhancement as part of development proposals, separate to national requirements for 10% mandatory biodiversity net gain.

2.9 The updated SPD will also include information about the Local Wildlife Sites selection and designation process and put forward an approval process for candidate new Local Wildlife Sites. Sites have gone through the process and met the site selection criteria can be approved as Local Wildlife Sites in the interim before the adoption of a new Local Plan.

Part 1- SEA Screening

3. Screening

3.1 The 2012 regulations³ are clear that sustainability appraisal is not required for supplementary planning documents (SPDs). However, the requirement for a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) is set out in the “Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004”. Despite no longer requiring sustainability appraisal, SPDs may still require SEA if it is concluded that it would have significant environmental effects⁴. This report screens the draft Nature SPD to determine if it may have significant environmental effects and therefore a Strategic Environment Assessment is required.



³ The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal#full-publication-update-history>, paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 11-008-20140306

Table 1: Establishing the need for SEA

Stage [from the flowchart]	Answer	Reason
1. Is the SPD subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament of Government? (Article 2(a))	Yes	SPD to be adopted by Sefton Council.
2. Is the SPD required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Article 2(a))	Yes	The detail that the Council wish to provide to the policies found in the Local Plan and Bootle Area Action Plan can only be given due weight if it is contained in a SPD.
3. Is the SPD prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art. 3.2(a))	No	The SPD is for town and country planning purposes but does not set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive.
4. Will the SPD, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Article 3.2(b))	No	The screening statement concludes that an assessment under the Habitats Directive is not required. (<i>*see part 2 of this report</i>)
6. Does the SPD set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Article 3.4)	Yes	Although the Local Plan and Bootle Area Action Plan policies will set the overall framework, the SPD will provide additional guidance on the interpretation of these policies.
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Article 3.5)	No	See ' Figure 2 ' below, 'Determining the likely significance of effects'

Table 2: Determining the likely significance of effects on the environment

SEA Directive Annex II: Criteria for determining likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5)	Sefton Comment
<i>The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:</i>	
1a) The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	The SPD will be providing additional guidance on existing policies that set the broad framework.
1b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	The SPD can only expand on existing policies and should not introduce new policies not contained in higher order plans.
1c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	The SPD will promote sustainable development by ensuring new development is complicit with policies ensuring the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, protection and long-term management of natural assets
1d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	The SPD will seek to minimise potential environmental impacts by setting out requirements for developments that may affect natural assets in Sefton. However, the impact is likely to be positive as the SPD will set out requirements and guidance to ensure that Sefton’s natural assets are protected and enhanced.
1e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The SPD will help to implement directives relating to the environment by providing the detailed requirements and guidance to ensure development is consistent with legislation.
<i>Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</i>	

SEA Directive Annex II: Criteria for determining likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5)	Sefton Comment
2a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	The anticipated effects on the sustainability of the areas covered by the SPD are expected to be positive by limiting possible negative impacts associated with poorly designed new development. The duration of impacts is likely to be long-term as once a development has been built, this has a permanent permission.
2b) The cumulative nature of the effects	The cumulative nature of effects on the environment is likely to be positive.
2c) The trans-boundary nature of the effects	The SPD will have a positive effect on nature sites, many of which are cross boundary.
2d) The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	The SPD will seek to address environmental impacts of new development.
2e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The SPD will cover the borough of Sefton therefore the impact of the SPD will have a relatively wide area, particularly around nature sites.
2f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage, II. Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values III. Intensive land-use 	The SPD will help to implement directives relating to the environment by providing the detailed requirements and guidance to ensure development is consistent with legislation.
2g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	None identified. Any new development will need to satisfy the relevant planning policies for protecting these areas before permission is granted.

4. Consultation

4.1 The Council consulted with the three statutory environmental bodies [see below] on this screening report and the determination. The table below sets out their comments, and an indication of Sefton's response to these.

Statutory Body	Summary of Comments
Environment Agency	No comments
Historic England	No comments
Natural England	Natural England has reviewed the draft SEA and HRA screening statement since the draft SPD has been provided and agrees with the conclusions that neither an SEA nor an Appropriate Assessment will be required for the SPD.

5. Conclusion and statement of reasons

5.1 The SPD is supplementing and will provide further guidance on policies NH1 (Nature Assets), NH2 (Nature) and NH3 (Development in the Nature Improvement Area) of the Local Plan, in addition to policy BAAP9 (Nature) of the Bootle Area Action Plan. The SPD merely expands upon the policies to set out guidance on how the Council will ensure the protection, provision, enhancement and on-going management of open space.

5.2 The views of the statutory consultees are set out above

5.3 It is considered that the Nature SPD will not give rise to any significant environmental effects. Therefore, it is considered that a Strategic Environmental Assessment ***is not required*** for the proposed Nature Supplementary Planning Document.

Part 2- HRA Screening

6. HRA Screening

6.1 The requirement for a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with article 6 of the EC Habitats directive 1992, as interpreted by Regulation 63(1) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the habitats regulations). An assessment of the “likely significant effects” of a plan or project on sites of international nature conservation importance is required. These are now referred to as the national sites network⁵, although were formerly known as Natura 2000 sites. This part of the document sets out Sefton Council’s screening of the draft Nature SPD in accordance with the Habitats Regulations.

6.2 The Sefton Local Plan (2017) was subject to an HRA. The Publication Draft HRA Report (January 2015)⁶ was produced by AECOM (formerly URS) included an assessment of in combination effects taking into account other plans and projects as well as Local Plan site allocations, policies and objectives and the impact of the plan as a whole. The Sefton Local Plan (2017) was also subject to a second HRA produced by AECOM (May 2016) at Modifications Stage⁷.

6.3 The Bootle Area Action Plan (2025) was subject to an HRA (May 2024)⁸ that assessed in combination effects taking into account other plans and projects, site allocations and policies.

6.4 In terms of the Nature SPD the “parent policies” are Policies NH1 (Nature Assets), NH2 (Nature) and NH3 (Development in the Nature Improvement Area) of the Local Plan, in addition to policy BAAP9 (Nature) of the Bootle Area Action Plan. The policies were all “screened out” meaning that there would not need to be an additional HRA. The HRA comments on the policies are shown below.

Policy NH1- Nature Assets

2015 HRA Report:

- *“No implications.*
- *This outlines policy for the protection of environmental assets.*
- *There are no impact pathways.”*

2016 HRA Report:

⁵ See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-the-habitats-regulations-2017/changes-to-the-habitats-regulations-2017>

⁶ See <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/media/1763/jan-2015-hra-of-submission-local-plan-web.pdf>

⁷ See [Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Proposed Modifications to Sefton Local Plan](#)

⁸ See https://www.sefton.gov.uk/media/y5ul1h2m/07-final_hra_baap_may2024.pdf

- *“No new HRA implications identified by Proposed Modifications.*
- *The proposed modifications to this policy do not provide for new impact pathways or change the conclusions from the previous iteration of the Local Plan HRA.*
- *This policy remains screened out.”*

NH2- Nature

2015 HRA Report:

- *“No implications.*
- *This provides protective policy for European designated sites and features for which they are designated.*
- *There are no impact pathways.”*

2016 HRA Report:

- *“No new HRA implications identified by Proposed Modifications.*
- *This policy remains screened out.”*

NH3- Development in the Nature Improvement Area

2015 HRA Report:

- *“No implications.*
- *This provides policy for development within the Nature Improvement Area.*
- *There are no impact pathways.”*

2016 HRA Report:

- *“No new HRA implications identified by Proposed Modifications.*
- *This policy remains screened out.”*

BAAP9- Nature

2024 HRA Report:

- *“It is considered that there are no impact pathways or LSE, although policy is likely to have a positive effect on ecology and the wider environment.”*

6.5 The SPD is supplementing and providing further guidance on policies NH1 (Nature Assets), NH2 (Nature) and NH3 (Development in the Nature Improvement Area) of the Local Plan and policy BAAP9 (Nature) of the Bootle Area Action Plan. The SPD merely expands upon the policies to set out the guidance in relation to nature policies in the Local Plan, Bootle Area Action Plan and, where relevant, the Habitats Regulations.

6.6 Sefton has also adopted (May 2023) an ‘Information Note: Managing and mitigating the impact of recreation pressure on the Sefton Coast - Sefton’s Interim Approach for housing

development⁹, supported by Natural England. This manages and mitigates (to ‘no adverse impacts’) the cumulative impact of housing development on recreation pressure on the Sefton Coast. It is an interim approach pending the agreement of a Liverpool City Region-wide approach.

6.7 Bootle Area Action Plan policy BAAP9 is supplementary to Local Plan policies NH1 and NH2. Part 1 of the policy refers to national mandatory (10%) biodiversity net gain (BNG). Part 2 of this policy introduces a clear requirement for net gain of biodiversity for proposals exempt from mandatory BNG. Part 3 of the policy requires all relevant development proposals to adhere to the Council’s approach to the mitigation and management of recreation pressure on the internationally important nature sites on the Sefton Coast”, as described above. Parts 2 and 3 are in line with Local Plan nature policies.

6.8 The following national site network sites are located within Sefton:

- Sefton Coast SAC
- Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site
- Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site (small part of site is at Seaforth Nature Reserve, the rest is approx. 1km+ away on Wirral).

6.9 In addition the following national site network sites are located outside of Sefton but were “screened in” to the HRA of the Local Plan publication.

- Liverpool Bay SPA
- Manchester Mosses SAC –
However, Sefton’s Local Plan HRA Report concluded that Sefton is not adjacent to the M62; that the Local Plan includes proportionate measures to minimise its contribution to M62 vehicle movements; and that Sefton’s effect on atmospheric nitrogen deposition on Manchester Mosses SAC is effectively inconsequential. This was screened out in the HRA of the Bootle Area Action Plan. Thus this site is not considered further in this HRA screening document.

6.10 Below is an assessment of potential pathways for impacts to the national site network sites taking into account the HRA of the Publication version of the Local Plan.

Table 3: Assessment of likely significant effects (taking into account HRA Report for Publication Draft Local Plan (2015), HRA of the Proposed Modifications to Local Plan (2016) and HRA of Publication Draft Bootle Area Action Plan (2024)

Potential pathway and national site network sites affected	HRA regarding likely significant effects	Further comments
Recreational pressure / disturbance	No significant impacts.	SPD has no influence on location or number of new homes

⁹ See https://www.sefton.gov.uk/media/pcuot4fe/recpressureinfofnote_25-26rates_rev.pdf

Potential pathway and national site network sites affected	HRA regarding likely significant effects	Further comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sefton Coast SAC • Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA & Ramsar site • Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site • Liverpool Bay SPA (in-combination disturbance of birds through increase in ship movements and recreational pressure) 		<p>proposed, nor ship movements. SPD provides more detailed guidance to help implement the Local Plan nature policies NH1, NH2 and NH3, in addition to Bootle Area Action Plan policy BAAP9.</p>
<p>Disturbance to qualifying species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sefton Coast SAC • Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site • Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site 	<p>No significant impacts.</p>	<p>SPD provides more detailed guidance to help implement the Local Plan nature policies NH1, NH2 and NH3, in addition to policy BAAP9 of the Bootle Area Action Plan and specifically on the protection and enhancement of nature assets.</p>
<p>Coastal squeeze</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sefton Coast SAC • Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site • Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site 	<p>No significant impacts.</p>	<p>SPD has no direct impact on coastal squeeze. SPD provides more detailed guidance to help implement the Local Plan nature policies NH1, NH2 and NH3, in addition to policy BAAP9 of the Bootle Area Action Plan which have been screened out.</p>
<p>Direct habitat loss through expansion of the Port at Seaforth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site 	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>SPD has no influence on Port expansion.</p>
<p>Direct habitat loss through mineral extraction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site. 	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>SPD has no influence on minerals expansion.</p>

Potential pathway and national site network sites affected	HRA regarding likely significant effects	Further comments
<p>Loss of habitat / supporting habitat outside the national site network site boundary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sefton Coast SAC • Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site 	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>SPD has no direct impact on coastal squeeze. SPD provides more detailed guidance to help implement the Local Plan nature policies NH1, NH2 and NH3, in addition to policy BAAP9 of the Bootle Area Action Plan, which have all been screened out.</p>
<p>Reduction in water quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sefton Coast SAC • Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site • Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site • Liverpool Bay SPA - potential for 'in combination' effects with other plans and projects (through sewage effluent discharges). 	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>SPD will have no additional impacts compared to its parent policies which have been screened out.</p>
<p>Reduction in air quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sefton Coast SAC • Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site • Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site 	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>SPD will have no additional impacts compared to its parent policies which have been screened out.</p>
<p>Mineral extraction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site 	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>SPD has no influence on minerals expansion.</p>
<p>Dredging and disturbance of sediments/benthic habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site 	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>SPD has no influence on dredging or disturbance of benthic habitats, or on Port expansion.</p>

Potential pathway and national site network sites affected	HRA regarding likely significant effects	Further comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liverpool Bay SPA (following Port expansion) 		

6.11 The SPD will not have any significant effects on a SAC or national site network sites above and beyond any significant effects that the Local Plan and Bootle Area Action Plan are likely to have, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects. The “parent policies” in the Local Plan and Bootle Area Action Plan were screened out meaning no further assessment is needed. The SPD is unlikely to give rise to impacts/significant effects on national site network sites.

7. Consultation

7.1 The Council consulted the statutory body for the purposes of HRA, Natural England. The table below provides their response.

Statutory Body	Comments
Natural England	Natural England has reviewed the draft SEA and HRA screening statement since the draft SPD has been provided and agrees with the conclusions that neither an SEA nor an Appropriate Assessment will be required for the SPD.

8. Conclusion and statement of reasons

8.1 The SPD is supplementing and will provide further guidance on policies NH1 (Nature Assets), NH2 (Nature) and NH3 (Development in the Nature Improvement Area) of the Local Plan, in addition to policy BAAP9 (Nature) of the Bootle Area Action Plan. The SPD merely provides additional guidance to help implement the policies and provide guidance regarding their implementation. There are no significant effects on national site network sites in Sefton.

8.2 The comments of Natural England are set out above.

8.3 On the basis of the above information, Sefton Council is of the opinion and concludes that the proposed plan to which this screening opinion relates – the Nature Supplementary Planning Document - :

a) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site,

b) is not likely to have a significant effect on each of the following sites:

- Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar site
- Ribble and Alt Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Sefton Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore Ramsar site
- Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore Special Protection Area (SPA).
- Liverpool Bay SPA.
- Manchester Mosses SPA.

either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

And accordingly, **no “appropriate assessment” is required** to be made under Regulations 61, 62 and 63 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations (as amended) before the Council decides to undertake, or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for this plan.

Part 3- Appendices

Appendix A- Contact details

local.plan@sefton.gov.uk

Appendix B -

Extract from Sefton Local Plan (2017):

NH1 NATURE ASSETS

- 1. Sefton's natural assets together with its landscape character should continue to contribute to the Borough's sense of place, local distinctiveness and quality of life. Development proposals and other initiatives should contribute positively towards achieving this.**
- 2. A hierarchical approach will be taken to the protection and enhancement of Sefton's natural assets, according to their designation and significance.**
- 3. Development should seek to protect and manage Sefton's natural assets (including natural habitats, sites, the Ecological Network and green infrastructure). Where possible, development should:
 - a. Maintain, restore, enhance or extend these natural assets; and**
 - b. Create new habitats and green infrastructure; and**
 - c. Secure the long-term management of these natural assets.****
- 4. Where it has been demonstrated that appropriate protection or retention of natural assets cannot be achieved, and there are no alternatives, mitigation and/or as a last resort compensatory provision will be required.**
- 5. The main priorities are improving access, quality, linkages and habitat within the city region ecological network (including the Nature Improvement Area), improving access to and the quality of public open space and other outdoor facilities available to the public and urban trees.**

NH2 NATURE

- 1. Development which may result in a likely significant effect on an internationally important site must be accompanied by sufficient evidence to enable the Council to make a Habitats Regulations Assessment. Adverse effects should be avoided, or where**

this is not possible they should be mitigated, to make sure that the integrity of internationally important sites is protected. Development which may adversely affect the integrity of internationally important sites will only be permitted where there are no alternative solutions and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest, and where suitable compensatory provision has been made. Such mitigation or compensation must be identified before development commences. Any mitigation or compensation must be functional before any likely adverse effect arises and should be accompanied by a dedicated project related Habitats Regulations Assessment. This also applies to sites and habitats outside the designated boundaries that support species listed as being important in the designations of the internationally important sites (i.e. supporting habitat).

2. Development which may affect other designated sites of nature and/or geological conservation importance, Priority Habitats, legally protected species and/or Priority Species will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there is no significant harm.

3. Development which may cause significant harm will only be permitted in:

a. National sites (including Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves): where there are no alternatives and where the reasons for and the benefits of development clearly outweigh the impact on the nature conservation value of the site and its broader contribution to the national network,

b. Local Sites (including Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites): where the reasons for and the benefits of development clearly outweigh the impact on the nature conservation value of the site and its broader contribution to the ecological network,

c. Priority Habitats: where the reasons for and the benefits of development on balance clearly outweigh the impact on the nature conservation value of the habitat and its broader contribution to the LCR Ecological Network, and d. Protected and Priority Species: where it is demonstrated that no significant harm will result.

4. Where it has been demonstrated that significant harm cannot be avoided, appropriate mitigation, replacement or other compensatory provision may be required, to accord with the hierarchy of sites. The location of appropriate mitigation, replacement or other compensatory measures will be targeted, using a sequential approach as follows:

a. On site

b. Immediate locality and / or within the Core Biodiversity Area

c. LCR Nature Improvement Area within the Borough, and lastly

d. LCR Nature Improvement Area outside the Borough.

5. Where significant harm resulting from development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated, then planning permission will be refused.

6. Development proposals which affect sites of nature conservation importance, Priority Habitats, legally protected species or Priority Species must be supported by an Ecological Appraisal and include details of avoidance, mitigation and / or compensation, and management, where appropriate.

7. Designated nature sites are shown on the Policies Map. Plan policies apply to other sites recognised during the Plan period as being of nature conservation importance, including land provided as compensation.

NH3 DEVELOPMENT IN THE NATURE IMPROVEMENT AREA

Development within the Nature Improvement Area will be permitted where it:

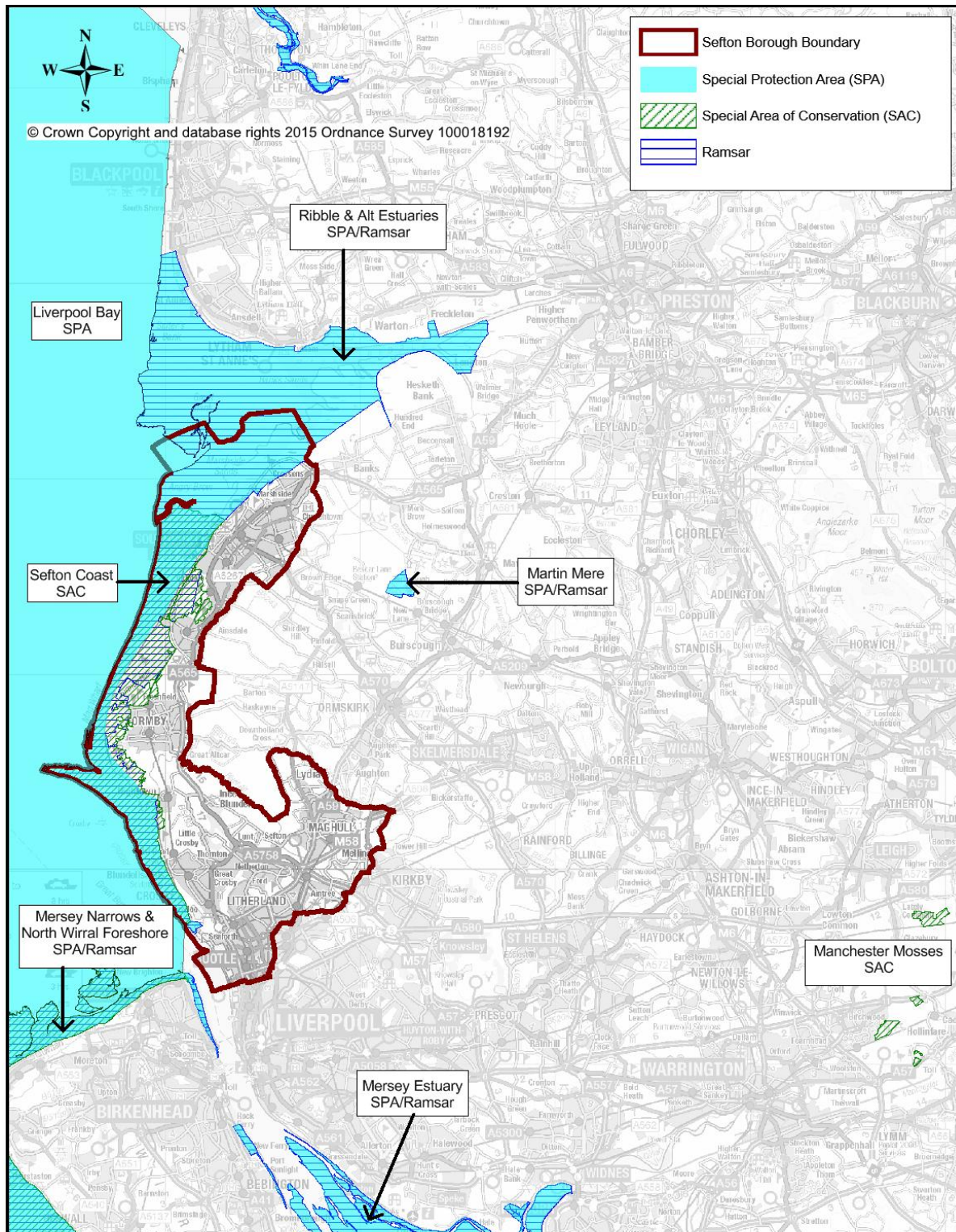
- a. Enables the functioning of the Nature Improvement Area**
- b. Contributes to the opportunities for habitat creation and / or habitat management as set out in the NIA Focus Area profiles, and**
- c. Is consistent with other policies in the Plan.**

Extract from Bootle Area Action Plan (2025):

BAAP9 NATURE

- 1. All applicable major and minor development proposals must demonstrate that they are meeting the legal requirements of the Environment Act 2021 regarding Biodiversity Net Gain.**
- 2. For development proposals that are exempt from national BNG requirements, the Council will encourage developers to take opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity within the development having regard to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Opportunities to create and improve wildlife corridors and 'stepping stones' that connect existing and new areas of biodiversity value in the area should be taken.**
- 3. All relevant development proposals must adhere to the Council's approach to the mitigation and management of recreation pressure on the internationally important nature sites on the Sefton Coast, in line with Local Plan Policies NH1 and NH2 and to meet the legal requirements set out in the Habitats Regulations.**

Appendix C – National site network and Ramsar (formerly Natura 2000) sites in Sefton



Sefton Council

Department of the
Built Environment
 Derek McKenzie
 Interim Head of Planning Services

Natura 2000 Sites in and around Sefton

Date: 1st July 2015

Scale @ A4: 1:250,000