

Little Haven Hotel

Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)

Little Haven Hotel

March 2026

V1



Durham Wildlife Services
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HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT

Little Haven Hotel

CONTENTS

PAGE NO.

1	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
2	INTRODUCTION	3
2.1	Background.....	3
2.2	Site Description.....	4
2.3	Proposals.....	4
2.4	Assessment Objectives	4
3	METHODOLOGY	5
3.1	Desk Based Study	5
3.2	Habitat Regulations Assessment Process	5
3.3	European Conservation Sites	6
3.4	Functionally Linked Land	7
3.5	Cumulative/ In-combination Effects	7
3.6	Zone of Influence	7
3.7	Constraints/Assumptions	7
3.8	Legislation.....	8
3.9	Characterising Ecological Impacts	8
3.10	Ecologist Experience	10
4	ASSESSMENT RESULTS	11
4.1	European Sites Search.....	11
4.2	Designated Sites Qualifying Features	12
4.3	ERIC Consultation	12
4.4	Summary of SPA/SSSI/Ramsar Species Habitat Requirements	16
4.5	Additional Sources of Data	17
4.6	Cumulative/In-Combination Effects	17
4.7	Potential Impacts Identified	17
5	ANALYSIS OF RESULTS	19
5.1	Potential Impact 1: Noise Disturbance	19
5.2	Potential Impact 2: Visual Disturbance.....	24
5.3	Potential Impact 3: Pollution Incidents	24
5.4	Potential Impact 4: Air pollution	25
5.5	Potential Impact 4: Damage to qualifying features.....	26

6	CONCLUSIONS	28
6.1	Summary of potential impacts on European Sites	28
6.2	Appropriate Assessment	28
6.3	Proposed Mitigation	29
6.4	Implementation Plan	31
7	REFERENCES	32

Appendix A Figures

Appendix B Report Conditions

Tables

Table 1: Four stage HRA process	5
Table 2: Classification of characteristics used to evaluate impacts	9
Table 3: Significance of impact.....	9
Table 4: Designated sites qualifying features.....	12
Table 5: Notable bird species within 2km (ERIC NE).....	12
Table 6: Descriptions of designated species (Photos credit rspb.co.uk and bto.org.uk)	16
Table 7: Potential Impact 1: Noise Disturbance	19
Table 8: Disturbance distances for birds (adapted from Goodshop, N.M. and Furness, R.W.).....	20
Table 9: Potential Impact: Visual Disturbance.....	24
Table 10: Potential Impact: Pollution Incidents	24
Table 11: Potential Impact: Air Pollution	25
Table 12: Potential Impact: Damage to features.	26
Table 13: Summary of likely significant effects on designated sites and qualifying features.....	28

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Total Ecology was commissioned by Little Haven Hotel in June 2025 to undertake an assessment of the impact of works at Little Haven Hotel, South Shields. The approximate National Grid Reference for the location is **NZ 36810 68147**

The site is within 2km of the following European Sites

1. Northumbrian Coast SPA (UK90006131) 590m south & 640m north
2. Northumbria Coast Ramsar (UK11049) 590m south & 640m north

It also lies within 5km of the SSSIs.

3. Northumberland Shore 417m northwest
4. Durham Coast 2.1km southeast
5. Tynemouth to Seaton Sluice 1.2km northeast

Whilst these are not European designated Sites, the impact on the qualifying features of the designations should still be considered.

After considering the data and records, the site location, type, size and scale of the project and the qualifying features of the designated areas, the following potential impacts have been identified and discussed in relation to the European Sites and their reasons for designation: On the basis of the above, it is considered that the impacts include the following:

- Disturbance of overwintering, migratory and breeding SPA species by increased noise levels during the works:
 - Disturbance of roosting SPA species.
 - Disturbance of foraging SPA species.
- Disturbance of overwintering, migratory and breeding SPA species by new visual impacts during the works:
 - Disturbance of roosting SPA species.
 - Disturbance of foraging SPA species.
- Pollution of water, and therefore, habitats and food sources during the construction phase.
- Air pollution during the construction phase.
- Damage to qualifying features.

It has been assessed that there will be no direct Adverse Effect on Integrity (AEOI) on the designated areas given the nature of the proposed work. Therefore, the impacts from the proposed works will relate to qualifying/notable species which utilise this site and the nearby Ramsar site.

Use of a CEMP and acoustic barriers would reduce any short-term impacts and long-term impacts to a non-significant level.

Full mitigation measures have been detailed within Table 7 of this report. As a result of the avoidance and mitigation measures to be implemented, the competent authority would be able to conclude no AEOI on the designated sites.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

Total Ecology was commissioned by Little Haven Hotel in June 2025 to undertake an assessment of the impact of works at Little Haven Hotel, South Shields. The approximate National Grid Reference for the location is **NZ 36810 68147**.

The site is within 2km of the following European Sites

6. Northumbrian Coast SPA (UK90006131) 590m south & 640m north
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It also lies within 5km of the SSSIs.

8. Northumberland Shore 417m northwest
9. Durham Coast 2.1km southeast
10. Tynemouth to Seaton Sluice 1.2km northeast

Whilst these are not European Designed Sites, the impact on the qualifying features of the designations should still be considered.

A map of designated sites in relation to the buffer zone are shown in Figure 1.

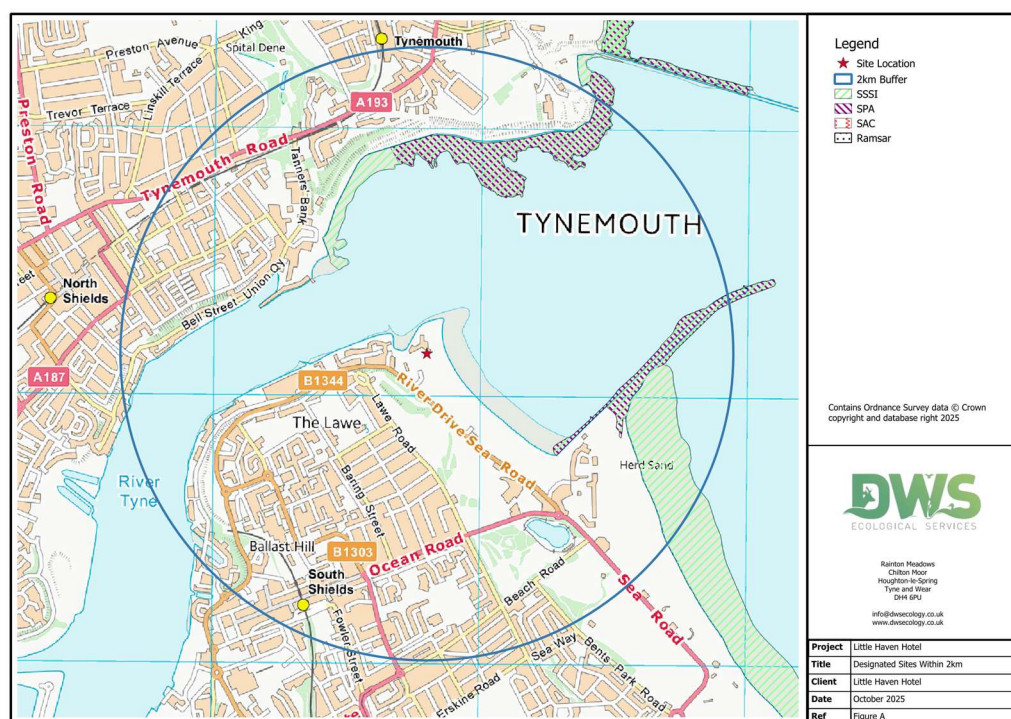


Figure 1: Site location in relation to designated sites

2.2 Site Description

The hotel sits at the edge of South Shields with the estuary of the River Tyne approximately 20m north and 100m east. It comprises of a 2-storey hotel building with 3 wings, with an associated car park that has a central raised and grassed roundabout. There are a variety of outdoor areas for hospitality and dining around the hotel with some more open grassland to the southeast. The site is separated from the estuary by a paved walkway and sea wall to the north, and sand dunes leading to a sandy beach to the east. The town of South Shields lies 120m to the west which has a mix of parkland, residential and commercial areas.

2.3 Proposals

A number of proposals are being made for this site:

1. Single storey extension of the hotel to the southern elevation on the west wing to create a sun lounge.
2. Extension of the existing single storey conservatory to increase conference space on the eastern elevation between the north and east wings.
3. Single storey extension to the northern elevation of the west wing to create a restaurant area.
4. Construction of a gazebo on the northeast corner of the site with revised landscaping around the hotel.
5. Construction of a gym in the centre of the carpark using an area that is currently a grass covered roundabout.
6. Construction of a nursery/beach school in the southeast corner of the site.

The proposed works will be completed in phases with the following initial plans:

Phase 1: Autumn 2026 – Autumn 2027 Hotel extension works.

1. New restaurant constructed to the rear
2. Extension to the existing restaurant/conference area
3. Extension to the hotel entrance

Phase 2: Spring 2027 – Spring 2028 Beach school.

Phase 3: Autumn 2028 – Summer 2029 Gym

2.4 Assessment Objectives

The purpose of a Habitat Regulations Assessment is to assess the potential impact of the proposed development on nearby statutory designated sites, particularly Ramsar, Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA), referred to as 'European Sites'. In this instance, the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast (SSSI/SPA) has been considered.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desk Based Study

An area search was conducted using the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website to ascertain the location of European Sites within the vicinity of the development. Environmental Records Information Centre for the Northeast of England (ERIC) was contacted for records of relevant notable species within 5km of the site. 'A Summer Atlas of Breeding Birds' by Durham Bird Group was consulted for information on species nesting within the area and a review of species habitat requirements etc. was also undertaken. This publication dates from 2000 so it is used as general guidance with professional judgement applied regarding the current situation. The Birds in Durham 2024 Annual Report was also consulted to add clarity to figures.

3.2 Habitat Regulations Assessment Process

The objective is to identify European Sites that are present within suspected influencing distance from the site, outline their conservation value and discuss potential impacts that may be imposed (e.g. indirect impacts such as an increase in dog walkers, or direct impacts such as increased light pollution). Table 1 below highlights the HRA process¹.

Table 1: Four stage HRA process

Stage	Task
Stage 1: Screening	Identify likely impacts of the project upon a European Site, either alone or in combination with other projects, and consider whether these are likely to be significant.
Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment	The consideration of the impacts on the integrity of the European site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, with regard to the site's structure and function and its conservation objectives. Where there are adverse impacts, an assessment of mitigation options is carried out to determine adverse effect on the integrity of the site. If these mitigation option cannot avoid impacts, then development consent if stages 3 and 4 are followed.
Stage 3: Assessment of Alternative Solutions	Examine alternative ways of achieving objectives of the project to establish whether there are solutions that would avoid or have a lesser effect on European Sites.
Stage 4: Imperative Reasons of Over-riding Public Interest (IROPI)	Where no alternative solutions exist and adverse impacts remain, suggest potential compensatory measures to protect the integrity of the European Site.

Where effects are unlikely, a 'finding of no significant effect report' will be prepared. Where effects are judged likely, or lack of information to prove otherwise, proceed to Stage 2. Any project will be subject to an appropriate assessment if it can't be proven beyond significant doubt that there is no significant effect on a European site either alone or in combination with other projects.

The stages required in a HRA are set out in the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) draft 'Planning for the Protection of European Sites: Appropriate Assessment' and the

¹ Reference: IPC (2011) Habitat Regulations Assessment. Advice Note 10.

European Commission's 2001 'Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites'. A process flow chart is shown below.

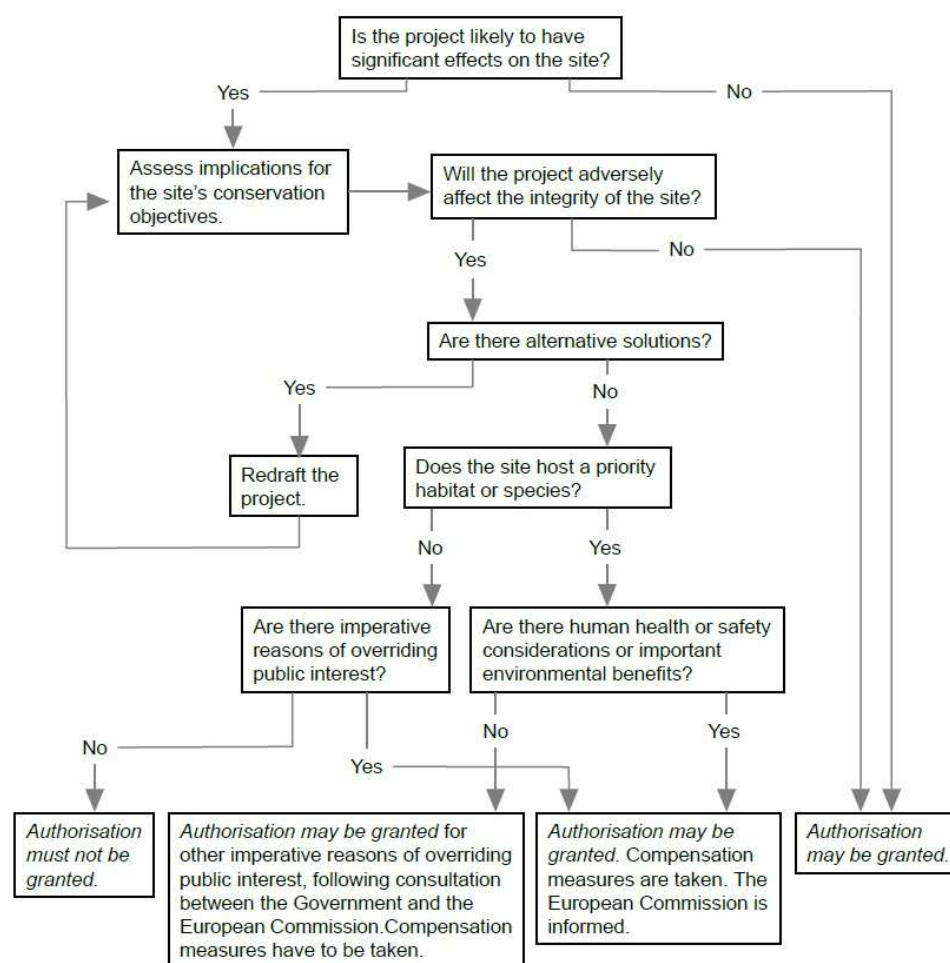


Figure 2. Flow chart indicating stages of Appropriate Assessment

(Chart taken from DCLG (2006) draft 'Planning for the Protection of European Sites: Appropriate Assessment')

3.3 European Conservation Sites

Natura 2000 sites comprise Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated under the EU Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC), and Special Protection Areas (SPA) designated under the EU Birds Directive (Council Directive 2009/147/EC). Ramsar sites are wetland sites of international importance designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. Although not part of the Natura 2000 network, the UK government has chosen to apply the same assessment procedures to plans and projects affecting Ramsar sites (ODPM, 2006, paragraph 6), and they therefore need to be considered in the HRA process.

3.4 Functionally Linked Land

This refers to the function of land outside the European site boundary that it may have for supporting or contributing to the support of populations for which the European site is designated or classified. For example, the European site boundary may encompass a breeding bird colony only, but not include their feeding grounds several kilometres from the designation, which is also important in the viability of the breeding bird population (Chapman & Tydlesley, 2016). The risk of functional linkage between the European sites and SSSI will be discussed.

3.5 Cumulative/ In-combination Effects

The proposals are to carry out repairs to the existing structure. Where appropriate, an assessment of cumulative and in-combination effects will take place where it is possible that the proposals could contribute significantly to the potential impacts identified.

3.6 Zone of Influence

South Tyneside Council utilises a 7.2km buffer zone around the Durham Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Northumbria Coast SPA/Ramsar site as a primary zone of influence for planning.

This zone is considered in this HRA. However, a 2km zone of influence has been used when assessing effects on designated species for the following reasons:

1. The nature of the construction works are short term and temporary, and they are limited to a small area within the grounds of the hotel.
2. Any noise created by the construction works will be buffered inland by the existing buildings and infrastructure of South Shields.
3. The additional visitors to site once the construction is completed will not be significant when compared to the current visitor rate within the area.

3.7 Constraints/Assumptions

At the time of writing this HRA the full details of works are not available. Therefore a worst-case scenario has been adopted when assessing impacts based on activities typically involved in this type of construction.

A contractor for the site has not yet been appointed, therefore the recommendations within this HRA will be written into the contractor agreement as minimum requirements and must form part of the CEMP. Where possible, the contractor should look at additional measures to avoid, minimise or mitigate the factors identified within this HRA.

3.8 Legislation

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

The UK is bound by the terms of the EC Birds and Habitats Directives and the Ramsar Convention. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the 'Habitats Regulations') provide for the protection of 'Natura 2000 sites', which are SAC's and candidate SAC's designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC), and SPAs classified under the Birds Directive (Council Directive 2009/147/EC). As a matter of policy, the UK Government has chosen to also apply the HRA process to Ramsar sites and potential SPAs; together Natura 2000 sites, Ramsar sites and potential SPAs are known as 'European Sites'. Regulation 61 of the Habitats Regulations restricts the granting of planning permission for development which is likely to significantly affect a European site, and which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site, by requiring that an 'appropriate assessment' is first carried out of the implications of the development for the site's conservation objectives.

3.9 Characterising Ecological Impacts

The CIEEM EcIA guidance states that when describing ecological impacts and effects, reference should be made to the following characteristics as required:

Positive or negative

- Positive – a change that improves the quality of the environment e.g. by increasing species diversity, extending habitat or improving water quality. This may also include halting or slowing an existing decline in the quality of the environment.
- Negative – a change which reduces the quality of the environment e.g. destruction of habitat, removal of foraging habitat, habitat fragmentation, pollution.

Extent

- The spatial or geographical area over which the impact/effect may occur under a suitably representative range of conditions (e.g. noise transmission under water).

Magnitude

- Refers to size, amount, intensity and volume. It should be quantified if possible and expressed in absolute or relative terms e.g. the amount of habitat lost, percentage change to habitat area, percentage decline in a species population.

Duration

- Defined in relation to ecological characteristics (such as the lifecycle of a species) as well as human timeframes. The duration of an activity may differ from the duration of the resulting effect caused by the activity.

Frequency and timing

- Frequency – frequency of a negative impact
- Timing – negative impacts may be more significant depending on timing of works.

Reversibility

- Are negative impacts reversible.

These characteristics are used to assess the magnitude of impacts on a scale of nil impact through to high impact as set out in the table below.

Table 2: Classification of characteristics used to evaluate impacts

Characteristic	Magnitude of Impact			
	Nil	Low	Medium	High
Extent	Nil area impacted	Small, localised area/site only	<>	Over a wide area e.g. district wide
Magnitude	Nil loss/change	Minimal loss/change	<>	Substantial loss/change
Duration	Nil duration	Short term (length depending on IEF being impacted and type of impact) – e.g. weeks or several months	<>	Long term (length depending on IEF being impacted and type of impact) – e.g. several years
Timing	Timing has no impact	Non-critical timing	<>	Critical timing
Frequency	Nil impacts	Single or rare event	<>	Frequent and/or numerous event
Reversibility	Nil impacts	Reversible	<>	Irreversible

The likely effect of the proposal is determined by combining the magnitude of impact and the importance of the receptor to give a level effect as shown in Table 3. The evaluation is based on the embedded mitigation being implemented, and with professional judgement applied based on the various site assessments.

Table 3: Significance of impact

Magnitude of Impact	IEF Importance							
	Negligible	Site	Local	District	County	Regional	National	International/ European
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Low	Nil	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Minor	Minor	Moderate	Moderate
Medium	Nil	Negligible	Minor	Minor	Moderate	Moderate	Major	Major
High	Nil	Minor	Minor	Moderate	Moderate	Major	Major	Major

To provide additional context, the effect levels as set out above, are described below. In general, major and moderate effects are considered significant, whilst minor, negligible and nil/neutral effects are

considered to be not significant. For consistency, the following terminology is used to express the effects, these terms can be used in relation to adverse and beneficial effects: -

Major

- Major Adverse – considerable effects (by extent, duration or magnitude) or of more than local significance. This is considered Significant. This relates to medium or high impacts to important ecological features (IEF) of National and European level importance.
- Major Beneficial – Major gains for IEF of high nature conservation importance (National and European level importance).

Moderate

- Moderate Adverse – limited effects which might be considered Significant, but significance is likely to be subject to professional judgement. Effects might be to an IEF that is able to adapt/tolerate/recover or a IEF of County importance. Minor reversible/short term impacts on IEF of National/European Importance would also be classed as Moderate.
- Moderate Beneficial – Gains for IEF of County/Regional level importance.

Minor

- Minor Adverse – slight, very short or highly localised effects. These effects are likely to be considered as Not Significant overall and relate to habitats and species important on a Local level, or minor impacts at County level.
- Minor Beneficial – small, measurable gain for any habitats/species.
- Negligible – No noticeable or measurable effect, Not Significant.
- Nil/Neutral – no effect, so Not Significant.

3.10 Ecologist Experience

Melissa Young BSc, ACIEEM

Melissa has been working with Total Ecology since 2022 as a sub-contractor and became a full time Ecologist with the company in 2023. Prior to that she volunteered with a variety of groups including the Wildlife Trusts at Durham and Northumberland, Durham Bat Group, Durham Botany Group and The Mammal Society where she helped with a range of projects and surveys. She has also been a biodiversity volunteer with the Wildfowl and Wetlands trust since 2012, assisting in undertaking surveys covering great crested newts, water voles, reptiles, birds, bats, small mammals, insects, invertebrates, botany and biodiversity. She is a class 2 bat licence holder, a class one newt licence holder and licenced to survey small mammals including shrews through trapping. She has experience in performing a number of Habitat Regulation Assessments for clients.

4 ASSESSMENT RESULTS

4.1 European Sites Search

The results obtained from the MAGIC search revealed the following designated sites within 5km of the site.

1. Northumbria Coast SPA (UK90006131) 590m south & 640m north
2. Northumbria Coast Ramsar (UK11049) 590m south & 640m north

It also lies within 5km of the SSSIs.

3. Northumberland Shore 417m northwest
4. Durham Coast 670m southeast
5. Tynemouth to Seaton Sluice 1.2km northeast

Whilst these are not European Designed Sites, the impact on the qualifying features of the designations should still be considered.

Based on the designated features for these sites (Table 4), the potential impacts to disturb the birds covered in the designations are considered due to the proximity of the works to these features and the nature of the works.

Breeding birds

- Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

Non-breeding birds;

- Knot *Calidris canutus*
- Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*
- Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*
- Redshank *Tringa totanus*
- Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*
- Sanderling *Calidris alba*
- Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

The proposed works will have no impact on the vegetative or geographical importance of these sites, so these features are not considered within this HRA.

4.2 Designated Sites Qualifying Features

Table 4: Designated sites qualifying features

Site	Summary of Designation
Northumbria Coast SPA	The site is designated for supporting important numbers of breeding little tern <i>Sterna albifrons</i> as well as populations of overwintering migratory purple sandpiper <i>Calidris maritima</i> and turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i>
Northumbria Coast Ramsar	The site is designated as it supports the following species/populations occurring at levels of international importance: Breeding Birds: • Little tern Species with peak counts in winter • Purple sandpiper • Turnstone
Northumberland Shore SSSI	Stretching from the Scottish border to the Tyne estuary, this SSSI provides important wintering grounds for shorebirds, and is of international or national significance for six species; • Purple sandpiper • Turnstone • Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i> • Golden plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> • Ringed plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> • Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>
Durham Coast SSSI	The Durham Coast between South Shields and Hart Warren is of considerable biological, geological and physiographic interest. It contains most of the paramaritime Magnesian Limestone vegetation in Britain, as well as a species-rich dune system, and supports nationally important numbers of wintering shore birds and breeding little terns which contribute to the internationally important populations of the north-east coast.
Tynemouth to Seaton Sluice SSSI	This site has been designated for its considerable importance for interpreting the palaeogeographical structure of Britain during the Middle Carboniferous. It is also designed as it supports a significant proportion of the internationally important winter populations of; • Purple sandpiper • Sanderling • Turnstone With locally important numbers of; • Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i> • Ringed plover • Golden plover

4.3 ERIC Consultation

Biological records data was requested from ERIC Northeast within 2km of the site. The relevant protected and notable species are summarised below.

Table 5: Notable bird species within 2km (ERIC NE)

Common Name	Scientific Name	Count	Conservation Status	Year	Cited Species
Common Redpoll	<i>Acanthis flammea</i>	1	Red	2017	×
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	12	Red NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2012	×
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	1	Red NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2012	×

Common Name	Scientific Name	Count	Conservation Status	Year	Cited Species
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	125	Red	2018	✖
Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	38	Red	2024	✖
Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	11	Red	2017	✖
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	9	Red	2013	✖
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	20	Red	2018	✖
Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	1	Red Schedule 1 NERC UK BAP	2012	✖
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	33	Red	2018	✖
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	2	Red NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2010	✖
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	1	Red Schedule 1	2012	✖
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	272	Red NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2018	✓
Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	53	Red	2018	✖
Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	13	Red	2010	✖
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	106	Red	2018	✖
Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>	14	Red NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2018	✖
Smew	<i>Mergellus albellus</i>	7	Red	2008	✖
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	1	Red NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2017	✖
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	180	Red NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2024	✖
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	41	Red NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2018	✖
Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	16	Red NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2024	✖
Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	1	Red NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2010	✖
Willow Tit	<i>Poecile montanus</i>	4	Red NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2012	✖
Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	1	Red	2012	✖
Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	9	Red	2017	✖
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	8	Red	2013	✖

Common Name	Scientific Name	Count	Conservation Status	Year	Cited Species
Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	1	Red NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2012	✖
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	1179	Red NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2024	✖
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	56	Red Schedule 1	2013	✖
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	3	Red	2009	✖
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	74	Red NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2024	✖
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	10	Amber	2013	✖
Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	66	Amber	2018	✖
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	40	Amber	2018	✖
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	385	Amber	2024	✖
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	385	Amber	2018	✖
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	30	Amber	2018	✖
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	4	Amber	2013	✖
Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	2	Amber	2024	✖
Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	4	Amber	2013	✖
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	763	Amber	2024	✓
Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	2	Amber Schedule 1	2024	✖
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	8	Amber	2024	✖
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	222	Amber	2018	✖
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	2	Amber	2009	✖
Whitethroat	<i>Curruca communis</i>	87	Amber	2018	✖
Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	112	Amber NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2024	✖
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	19	Amber	2018	✖
Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	88	Amber	2013	✖
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	72	Amber	2018	✖
Shag	<i>Gulosus aristotelis</i>	3	Amber	2010	✖
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	12	Amber	2018	✖
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	138	Amber	2018	✖
Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>	32	Amber	2009	✖
Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	1	Amber Schedule 1	2017	✖
Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>	4	Amber	2024	✖
Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	68	Amber	2024	✓
Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	18	Amber	2013	✖

Common Name	Scientific Name	Count	Conservation Status	Year	Cited Species
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	6	Amber	2017	✖
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	2	Amber	2017	✖
Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	1	Amber	2017	✖
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	48	Amber	2018	✖
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	49	Amber NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2024	✖
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	76	Amber NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2018	✖
Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	3	Amber Schedule 1	2024	✓
Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	21	Amber	2018	✓
Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>	1	Amber Schedule 1	2017	✖
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	71	Amber	2018	✓
Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	3	Amber	2010	✖
Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	20	Amber	2012	✓
Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	1	Amber	2012	✓
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	4	Amber Schedule 1	2017	✖
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	64	Amber Schedule 1	2018	✖
Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	530	Amber	2024	✓
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	126	Amber	2018	✖
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	11	Amber Schedule 1	2013	✖
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	24	Amber NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2018	✖
Common Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>	1	Amber	2023	✖
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	39	Green Schedule 1	2017	✖
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	1	Green Schedule 1	2023	✖
Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	10	Green Schedule 1	2017	✖
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	10	Green Schedule 1	2013	✖
Little Gull	<i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>	2	Green Schedule 1	2012	✖
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	2	Green Schedule 1	2009	✖
Lesser Redpoll	<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>	33	UK Status Not Listed NERC UK BAP Tees Valley BAP	2013	✖

4.4 Summary of SPA/SSSI/Ramsar Species Habitat Requirements

The table below summarises the species mentioned in the various designations and gives a brief overview of their habitat requirements and behaviours.

Table 6: Descriptions of designated species (Photos credit rspb.co.uk and bto.org.uk)

Species	Description	
Birds		
Little Tern	A summer visitor to the UK, the little tern arrives in April to breed in coastal colonies and departs in August/September. It winters on the west coast of Africa, migrating along the west coast of Europe. British and Irish populations are almost entirely coastal, favouring sand and shingle beaches for nesting, it nests at lower densities than other UK breeding tern species. In its wider breeding range, it breeds in both coastal and inland sites. The loss of colonies has occurred throughout the UK and Ireland, however there are clusters of new colonies in the northeast of England and the northeast of Scotland.	
Knot	Winter visitor to larger estuaries, the majority of the winter population migrates to the UK from Iceland, Greenland and Canadian Arctic. The Wash hosts the vast majority of this population with peak counts of around 200K birds. Other birds stop off in the UK on their migratory passage from their breeding grounds in the circumpolar regions of the high arctic to their wintering grounds in Africa.	
Golden Plover	During the summer this bird breeds in the uplands, but over winter it will congregate in large flocks in muddy estuaries and on lowland farmland. Unlike other waders that use the estuaries for feeding, golden plover primarily uses them as roosting sites, preferring instead to feed in fields of short grass and stubble.	
Purple Sandpiper	A winter visitor to almost any rocky shore in the UK where it can be seen foraging amongst shingle, rocks and seaweed for its prey, often in mixed flocks with other waders such as Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i> , redshank, and oyster catcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> . They have been seen to be very faithful to their wintering grounds and will return to the same stretch of coast year after year. A couple of pairs breed in Scotland on secret sites but the majority breed in Scandinavia, Svalbard, Greenland and some Arctic islands.	
Redshank	Redshank are found throughout the year in the UK, breeding mostly at lowland wet grassland sites such as open marshes, mires, and saltmarshes, particularly in Scotland and northern England. They breed in high densities to benefit from communal territorial defence. Like most waders, chicks are able to leave the nest soon after hatching making them vulnerable to predators, so they rely on hiding in tall vegetation close to damp patches where they can find invertebrate food. Large numbers of redshank migrate from Iceland to winter in the UK, while some migrate to the south of Europe and north of Africa for the winter. Their habitats include grasslands, heathland and moorland, freshwater, farmland, coastal, and wetlands.	

Ringed Plover	Resident throughout the year the vast majority of birds are found around the coast, particularly in the north and east of the country. They are short distance migrants so may winter in southern parts of the country or in northern France. However, birds from northern Europe, particularly Scandinavia, may travel to the UK to winter here. It nests between April and July on bare gravel, shingle and sand at the coast and around flooded gravel pits and reservoirs.	
Sanderling	These small waders arrive in the UK from the arctic breeding sites in late summer and stay until late spring, although non-breeding birds may be found along our coasts throughout the year. They have a preference for long sandy beaches where they feed at the tide line on buried prey. They are often seen in groups chasing the waves up and down the beach to feed on the wet sand but prevent themselves from being caught by the water.	
Turnstone	Turnstones are aptly named, turning over small stones, seaweed and other items on the shoreline to look for food. They are a long-distance migrant, travelling from their breeding grounds in the arctic tundra to spend the winter on rocky shores, gravel beaches and estuaries. Studies have shown them to be highly faithful to their wintering sites, returning to the same specific locations year after year.	

4.5 Additional Sources of Data

The 'Summer Atlas of the Breeding Birds of County Durham' (2000), the Durham Bird Report (2024) and The Birds of Durham (2012) were consulted for data on the aggregation of breeding birds for the area along with relevant information from the British Trust for Ornithology for population and distribution information.

4.6 Cumulative/In-Combination Effects

A search of the South Tyneside Planning Portal shows only 1 relevant application within the immediate area of the site which relates to the extension of a neighbouring building. No details for new, large scale or major developments were found in the local area. Access to details in the wider area was not possible from the current planning portal.

Given the nature of the works proposed at this site, and the current planning applications in the local area, the cumulative impact on the site is considered to be negligible.

4.7 Potential Impacts Identified

The area of interest lies within 5km the Northumbria Coast SPA and Ramsar, along with the Northumberland Shore, Durham Coast and Tynemouth to Seaton Sluice SSSI sites.

The following potential impacts have been discussed in relation to the European Sites, and their reasons for designation:

- Disturbance of migratory, breeding and waterbird assemblage SPA/SSSI/Ramsar species by increased noise levels during the works:
 - Disturbance of roosting/resting SPA/SSSI/Ramsar species.
 - Disturbance of foraging SPA/SSSI/Ramsar species.
- Disturbance of migratory, breeding and waterbird assemblage SPA/SSSI species by new visual experiences during the works:
 - Disturbance of roosting/resting SPA/SSSI/Ramsar species.
 - Disturbance of foraging SPA/SSSI/Ramsar species.
- Pollution of water, and therefore, habitats and food sources during the works
- Air pollution during the works.
- Damage to qualifying features.

5 ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Each impact has been assessed below to identify the likelihood of effects on the European sites and/or qualifying features and whether these could be significant. Avoidance measures which are incorporated in the project development are taken into consideration within this assessment.

5.1 Potential Impact 1: Noise Disturbance

Table 7: Potential Impact 1: Noise Disturbance

Potential Impact	Receptor
Disturbance of migratory, breeding and waterbird assemblage SPA/SSSI/Ramsar species by increased noise levels during the works.	Roosting/breeding and/or foraging SPA/SSSI/Ramsar species or other species of conservation concern.
Increased noise from onsite operations (increased visitor numbers) post construction.	
Significant impact likely without avoidance/mitigation methods?	
Designated Sites	Qualifying Features
Short-Term: Nil Long-Term: Nil	Short-Term: Nil - Negligible Long-Term: Nil

5.1.1 Discussion

Noise disturbance must be considered in both the construction and the operational phase of the developments on site.

Initially, noise will be produced through general construction disturbance, such as use of heavy machinery, noise producing equipment, ground works and increases in vehicular traffic.

Once operational, noise disturbance can be produced through the additional visitors and increased usage of the site.

The 2009 IECS report gives an illustrative overview of the effects of disturbance to waterbirds from different activities that may arise as a result of a construction project. Five levels of disturbance impact are defined for feeding and roosting as shown below in Figure 3.

Level	Impact	Effect Level	dBA	Type of Noise
1	No impact	Low	Below 50	Regular construction noise
2	Behavioural changes (alarm calls, heads up, change in feeding/roosting activity)	Moderate	Equal to or below 70	Piling noise
3	Movement within zone	Moderate to high	Above 70	Piling noise
4	Movement out of zone but remaining on site	High	Above 85	Piling noise
5	Movement off site	High	Not defined	

Figure 3: Disturbance levels for birds.

A paper from the Scottish Government (Finding out the Fate of Displaced Birds (Searle, K.R., Mobbs, D.C., Butler, A., Furness, R.W., Trinder, M.N., and Daunt, F. 2018), lists the following potential negative impacts of displacement effects and barrier effects on adult bird mortality caused by offshore renewables developments (ORDs)

Displacement Effect

- Increased flight cost
- Increased competition in buffer zone around ORD lowering the intake rate of non-displaced birds in this zone
- Displacement to a new location with lower prey availability and greater competition effects
- Reduced foraging time
- Potential for unattendance
- Potential for increased energy requirement (DER) during following time step

Barrier Effect

- Increased flight cost
- Increased flight time
- Reduced foraging time, leading to reduced energy intake at this time step
- Potential for unattendance
- Increased energy requirement (DER) during the following time step – e.g. because of a reduction in the time spent undertaking low-energy activities (such as a resting at sea).

Whilst this study was focused on offshore developments, the effects can be applied to onshore works for works within the zone of influence.

Disturbance Distances Review (Goodshop, N.M., and Furness, R.W. 2022) is a NatureScot Research Report that outlines buffer zones for studied species in both the breeding and non-breeding seasons based on pedestrian access. These can be used in conjunction with the preferred habitats of the qualifying species to determine the level of likely impact.

Table 8: Disturbance distances for birds (adapted from Goodshop, N.M. and Furness, R.W.)

Species	Likely sensitivity to disturbance	Breeding Season Buffer Zone	Nonbreeding season buffer zone
Avocet*	No Data	No Data	No Data
Black-headed Gull	No Data	No Data	No Data
Common Tern	Medium/High	200 – 400m	NA
Gadwall	Medium	100 – 200m	100 – 200m
Greenshank*	Medium/High	300 – 500m	300 – 500m
Herring Gull	No Data	No Data	No Data
Knot	Medium	NA	100 – 300m
Little Tern*	Medium	100 – 300m	NA
Purple Sandpiper*	Low/Medium	<300m	<300m
Redshank	Medium	100 – 200m	200 – 300m
Ringed Plover	High	100 – 200m	100 – 300m
Ruff*	No Data	No Data	No Data
Sanderling	No Data	No Data	No Data

Sandwich Tern	High	>200m	NA
Shelduck	High	100 – 400m	100 – 400m
Shoveler	Medium	100 – 200m	100 – 200m
Wigeon	High	100 – 200m	200 – 500m

*Schedule 1 bird species in England that receive a higher level of protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 where it is an offence, subject to certain causes, to intentionally or recklessly: disturb any wild bird in a given list (known as a Schedule 1 list) while it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young; or disturb dependent young of such a bird.

When considering these buffer zones, it is important to note that the work location is <30m from both a publicly accessed beach and a promenade. Both areas are regularly used by pedestrians, cyclists, families and dog walkers, therefore, any birds using these areas can be assumed to be habituated to a degree of disturbance within their zones.

Influencing factors to consider when analysing whether there is a significant impact caused by noise:

- Document entitled Waterbird Disturbance Mitigation Toolkit (Cutts, Hemingway and Spencer, 2013) states noise below 50db is low impact. However, birds in industrialised/urban areas are likely to be habituated to higher noise disturbance levels, and noise between 55-72dB in some highly disturbed areas e.g., industrial or urban areas and adjacent to roads, may feature a low level of disturbance provided the noise level was regular as birds will often habituate to a constant noise level. For this location, the section of coastline affected is in an urbanised area adjacent to roads, housing and leisure areas, it is considered highly likely that the birds will have habituated to a constant noise level that is slightly greater than the stated level for low impact.
- Sudden loud noises, in comparison to constant and consistent noise, causes the largest impact and elicits a disturbance response in birds (Cutts, Hemingway and Spencer, 2013).
- Average construction noise is around 80-90dB; full range is typically 78dB (such as power saws) to 111dB (such as pneumatic breakers).
- Noise pollution reduces by approximately 6dB per doubling of distance and barriers including buildings and walls reduce this further.

No definitive details of the machinery to be used on site during construction is currently available. Figure 3 indicates that piling has the most significant effect on the birds. Due to the sandy nature of the substrate at this site, piling is not being considered for foundations, instead a concrete base will be created to support the structures being built. According to BS 5228-1:2009 (British Standard, 2009) the loudest machinery generated from general site activities is a 110v generator, producing 120dB at source. This is above the threshold for significance, therefore noise disturbance on birds using SPA/SSSI would be a significant impact. It is unlikely such a generator would be in constant use so when it is used intermittently the noise may have more of an impact due to its novelty in the environment.

A CEMP is recommended to be put in place to reduce the impact of noise by minimising idling of machinery and the use of acoustic barriers. This CEMP must also include a designated area for loading/unloading of vehicles that is away from the shore front (ideally in the carpark area) and surrounded by acoustic barriers

In addition to the proposed works, the background noise on site and within the zone of influence must be taken into account. This is a busy area with many visitors, nearby roads, residential and industrial areas that will create a consistent level of background disturbance.

Overall, the noise impact on the work locations and their zone of influence is considered to be of moderate to significant risk but this must be considered in relation to the individual species concerned based upon their habits and the duration of the works.

The proposed works will take place during daylight hours adjacent to the beach and the river where the tide could be at any level. This means there is the potential for birds to be using the area at the time for any activity including roosting and foraging. The current use of the area by hotel guests and the general public, including a large number of dog walkers, makes it largely unsuitable for breeding birds. Whilst the presence of breeding birds cannot be completely ruled out, the probability of any of the protected species breeding in this area, or the area of direct influence, is extremely low.

Further consideration must also be given to the impact of additional traffic and human noise as a result of increased visitor numbers to the site. Whilst the additional traffic and people would not be considered significant when compared to the current level of site use, there will be an increase in noise from operation of the restaurant, conference centre and the beach school.

When taken in combination, the noise disturbance on site will have the most impact on the birds using the foreshore for foraging and roosting. Each of these are considered in turn below.

Little Tern: This small tern feeds on fish along the shoreline by plunging into the water to catch its prey. As a breeding bird it has preferred sites that it will return to year after year, and the species is not recorded as nesting within 2km of this site. There are also no records of the birds foraging within 2km of site. Given the lack of records and the availability of nearby alternative foraging habitats, the effect on this species by noise disturbance is considered to be **Nil and Not Significant**.

Knot: A wader that visits the UK in large numbers during winter and on migration but can be found year-round. No records of Knot were returned within 2km therefore the effect on this species will be **Nil and Not Significant**.

Golden Plover: Another wintering wader, this bird will congregate in muddy estuaries or on lowland farmland. No records of golden plover were returned within 2km of site by ERIC. The Durham Bird Report states that larger flocks of up to 500 were observed at Whitburn during the winter months. This site is approximately 6.75km southeast and would not be impacted by construction noise or visitor numbers, therefore the impacts on this species will be **Nil and Not Significant**.

Purple Sandpiper: Generally considered to be a wintering bird on UK coasts, they require a small buffer zone and are considered to be of low/medium risk of disturbance. The breakwater and the piers around the river mouth provide some limited suitable habitat for this species but no records were returned within 2km. Therefore the impact on this species will be **Nil and Not Significant**.

Redshank: These birds breed in coastal marshes, lowland wet grassland and rough pasture on moorland fringes therefore their use of the area around the works will be foraging. They may also roost on the rocks at high tide. There are over 500 records of redshank within 2km and the birds have been observed foraging along the rocks and the riprap at the piers and the breakwaters during site visits, particularly at low tide. However, numbers have been small with only 1 or 2 birds observed. They may roost on the pier in larger numbers at high tide. For roosts on the pier, that structure will provide a buffer for construction noise, reducing it below significant levels. The breakwater is less attractive to roosting birds as a result of constant use by pedestrians. Overall construction noise will have a **Nil and Not Significant** impact on this species.

Ringed Plover: Ringed Plover will nest on suitable beaches, however, the beaches at the work locations are fully submerged at high tide making them unsuitable for nesting. Therefore, the risk of disturbing breeding birds is negligible. Only 9 records of this species were returned within 2km and the most recent is from 2013. Foraging birds may be disturbed by the works but this risk is tempered by the low number of birds in the area plus the regular pedestrian disturbance; so the risk may be classified as **Nil and Not Significant**.

Sanderling: A bird most commonly found in winter or during the migration periods, Sanderling will use the intertidal range of sandy beaches for foraging. A paper by Smith et al (1996) states that disturbance of sanderling depending on the speed and manner of approach of pedestrians and flock variables but provides no details on noise disturbance. Another paper by Thomas et al (2003) recommends a buffer zone of <30m for pedestrian activity but again provides no data for noise disturbance. No records of sanderling were returned within 2km but small flocks were observed during site visits on Sandhaven beach to the south of South Pier, an area heavily used by dog walkers. The pier will also provide a buffer to the construction noise, making the impact on this species **Nil and Not Significant**.

Turnstone: These long-distance migrants breed in the arctic before travelling to the UK to overwinter. Only 4 records were returned by ERIC for the 2km area around site, but birds were observed on South Groyne and South Pier where, on the latter, they were taking scraps of bait from fishermen and were not flushed unless dogs and humans came within about 5m. Given the small number of birds on site, their current habituation to disturbance from humans, the noise buffer provided by the pier and the availability of nearby alternative foraging habitats, the overall impact on this species will be **Nil and Not Significant**.

5.2 Potential Impact 2: Visual Disturbance

Table 9: Potential Impact: Visual Disturbance

Potential Impact	Receptor
Disturbance of migratory, breeding and waterbird assemblage SPA/SSSI/Ramsar species by new visual experiences during the works:	European designated sites and qualifying features via water pathway, other aquatic and terrestrial mammals, bird, fish and vegetation
Significant impact likely without avoidance/mitigation methods?	
Designated Sites	Qualifying Features
Short-Term: Nil	Short-Term: Nil
Long-Term: Nil	Long-Term: Nil

5.2.1 Discussion:

Qualifying species, particularly birds, are subject to visual disturbance from new or novel stimulus as a predator/prey response. On this project, visual disturbance can be created by:

- Movement of plant and machinery to and from the compound to work locations.
- Movement of people to and from the compound to work locations.
- Presence of new features at work locations: - workers in hi-vis/PPE which is different to the appearance of the 'usual' pedestrians in the area, equipment in use at a location, the erection of safety barriers etc.
- Changes in behaviour and routes of normal pedestrian traffic because of diversions for safety around works.

The information provided in the section above for noise disturbance can also be applied to visual disturbance for this assessment. Using the same criteria based on the likelihood of encountering the species in the location at the time of the works and the level of background (habituated) disturbance, the impact risk is judged to be negligible in the short-term and nil in the long-term.

5.3 Potential Impact 3: Pollution Incidents

Table 10: Potential Impact: Pollution Incidents

Potential Impact	Receptor
Pollution of water, and therefore, habitats and food sources.	European designated sites and qualifying features via water pathway, other aquatic and terrestrial mammals, bird, fish and vegetation
Significant impact likely without avoidance/mitigation methods?	

Designated Sites	Qualifying Features
Short-Term: Low Impact Long-Term: Negligible	Short-Term: Low Impact Long-Term: Negligible

Discussion

This works location is within the European sites by being part of the associated coastline of the SPA Marine Designation. A potential pathway exists to impact these sites through a water pollution event, spread directly via the sea. This may cause negative impacts if bird habitat and food sources are affected and / or cause injury to birds and marine life, present along the east of the docks. An additional pathway into the water course exists via drainage and runoff, wet cement and concrete are alkaline and corrosive and toxic to marine life, and along with soil and dust particulates, can also lead to increased siltation, sedimentation and nutrient enrichment entering the sea.

A CEMP is recommended to be in place to ensure any risk of a pollution incident occurring is minimised and procedures are in place should an incident occur.

These include;

- The use of plant nappies
- The provision of spill kits within the working area.
- Storage of plant and equipment in the compound and away from the works locations when not in use.
- All re-fuelling to take place in a designated area where spill kits are available that is at least 10m away from surface water draining and watercourses.
- Restricting cleaning of machinery to the compound with suitable procedures in place to prevent spills and seepage.
- Daily checks on machinery to ensure safety and reduce the risk of leaks.
- The use of biodegradable oils wherever possible.

Given the small-scale nature of the works, it is not expected that pollution will have a significant impact on the designated sites, nor adjacent habitats.

Therefore, the short-term risk to the designated sites and qualifying features is deemed to be low in the short-term and negligible in the long-term.

5.4 Potential Impact 4: Air pollution

Table 11: Potential Impact: Air Pollution

Potential Impact	Receptor
Air pollution during the construction phase	Surrounding environment and site fauna.
Significant impact likely without avoidance/mitigation methods?	
Designated Sites	Qualifying Features
Short-Term: Low Impact	Short-Term: Low Impact

Long-Term: Negligible	Long-Term: Negligible
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5.4.1 Discussion

The proposed works will create some level of particulate pollution. This could relate to:

- Use of vehicles and machinery producing increased particulates and gases.
- Dust generated from drilling activities.
- Improper storage of materials.

It is expected that a temporary increase in traffic and movement of machinery will occur during the works. Increased vehicular pollution, such as nitrogen deposition may be caused, and dust particles may be released by movement over unconsolidated surfaces and from the storage and movement of materials. These impacts will be temporary as the works are expected to last 3 – 4 days. Once the works are completed there will be no ongoing or long-term impacts on the site.

The impact of the above will be minimised through adherence to a recommended CEMP. This will include:

- No unnecessary idling of vehicles,
- Vehicles should be shut down when not in use,
- Use vacuum attachments on power tools wherever possible to reduce dust generation.
- Damping down or covering of any earth stockpiles within the compound.

Given the small-scale nature of the works, it is not expected that air pollution will have a significant impact on the designated sites, nor adjacent habitats.

Therefore, the short-term risk to the designated sites and qualifying features is deemed to be low in the short-term and negligible in the long-term.

5.5 Potential Impact 4: Damage to qualifying features

Table 12: Potential Impact: Damage to features.

Potential Impact	Receptor
Damage to qualifying features	Damage to qualifying features within the SPA, SSSI and nearby Ramsar
Significant impact likely without avoidance/mitigation methods?	
Designated Sites	Qualifying Features
Short-Term: Low Impact Long-Term: Negligible	Short-Term: Negligible Long-Term: Negligible

5.5.1 Discussion

There are a variety of habitats designated under the SPA, SSSI and Ramsar. The habitats with the potential to be damaged in this project are the intertidal sands and the sand dunes. Machinery and

personnel will not need to access these habitats during the works as all areas of the works location are hardstanding or within the boundary of the hotel.

As the beach is publicly accessible, pedestrian traffic already occurs on this habitat. The construction works will be of a relatively short duration (several months rather than years) and are small scale so are unlikely to significantly increase the amount of pedestrian traffic in the area.

Plant and machinery will travel to site locations using existing paths and tracks. Some travel alongside the sand dunes may be required. Machinery should not leave the existing paths but there is a risk that tracks may extend onto the edge of the dune (less than 1m) due to the width of machines. This has the possibility to damage the habitat through the churning of sand by excavator tracks or trailer wheels, leading to a moderate short term impact risk. That risk can be mitigated by;

- Minimising the number of times machinery needs to travel across the habitat
- Planning the route to the works to ensure the time on sensitive habitats is kept to a minimum
- Ensuring all waste from site is contained within the work area and cleared completely at the end of the project.

All of these factors have been addressed in the Method Statement provided by the contractors on this project. Therefore, the impact risk to qualifying habitats in the short-term can be deemed to be low.

Once works are complete access to the locations is no longer required. Therefore, no additional pedestrian or vehicular traffic will be required, and the long-term impact risk can be deemed to be negligible.

The qualifying features include the fauna of the area. The new features to be built will be within the existing site boundary and have been designed to include green walls and roofs which will provide some additional foraging habitat for birds. There is a risk of damage to species through the works is collision with construction equipment. The speed at which this equipment is moved along the short minimises this risk, and equipment will be stationary through the works. The work area and machinery will not be elevated in any way and no tall structures are involved therefore travelling birds will have the ability to avoid collision. Whilst machinery is moving it will be banked at all times so the banksperson can highlight the risk of a potential collision to machinery operators and avoiding action taken. Therefore, the risk of impact in this case is deemed to be negligible.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Summary of potential impacts on European Sites

Table 13: Summary of likely significant effects on designated sites and qualifying features

Potential Impact	Likelihood for significant effect on European Sites
Disturbance of migratory, breeding and waterbird assemblage SPA/SSSI/Ramsar species by increased noise levels during the works. Increased noise from onsite operations (increased visitor numbers) post construction.	<u>Designated Sites</u> Short-term: Nil Long-term: Nil <u>Qualifying features</u> Short-term: Nil - Negligible Long-term: Nil
Disturbance of migratory, breeding and waterbird assemblage SPA/SSSI/Ramsar species by increased noise levels during the works	<u>Designated Sites</u> Short-term: Nil Long-term: Nil <u>Qualifying features</u> Short-term: Nil Long-term: Nil
Pollution of water, and therefore, habitats and food sources.	<u>Designated Sites</u> Short-term: Low Impact Long-term: Negligible <u>Qualifying features</u> Short-term: Low Impact Long-term: Negligible
Air pollution during the construction phase	<u>Designated Sites</u> Short-term: Low Impact Long-term: Negligible <u>Qualifying features</u> Short-term: Low Impact Long-term: Negligible
Damage to qualifying features.	<u>Designated Sites</u> Short-term: Low Impact Long-term: Negligible <u>Qualifying features</u> Short-term: Negligible Long-term: Negligible

The works are within the zone of influence for a SPA and Ramsar and SSSI sites. The construction works are short term. The new structures to be constructed are non-residential and will not significantly increase the number of visitors to the area. The potential impact is not considered to undermine the conservation objectives for the qualifying features.

6.2 Appropriate Assessment

The main direct impact to qualifying features will be the risk of increased air and water pollution during the works. Due to the nature of the works this will form a temporary, short-term disturbance only. Furthermore, this disturbance needs to be evaluated against the existing background disturbance from pedestrians and local facilities.

Noise pollution during the construction phase is likely to be significant at the source. This has been calculated based on the worst-case scenario of 120dB on site noise. Mitigation measures will be needed as noise pollution is expected to have a low risk without appropriate measures in place. Acoustic barriers

must be used on site during the construction phase. These reduce noise levels by at least 30dB, which would reduce noise levels along the adjacent coastline (although not on-site) to acceptable non-significant levels.

6.3 Proposed Mitigation

To reduce the likely significant impacts identified to suitable levels, the following mitigation measures are proposed in Table 7. The measures below are all measures that would form part of a CEMP for the construction phase of the site. Implementing the proposed mitigation will reduce the likely significant impacts identified to a suitable level and protect the integrity of the European Sites.

As a result of the avoidance and mitigation measures to be implemented (detailed in Table 7), the competent authority would be able to conclude no AEOI on SPA.

Impact identified relating to designated sites and qualifying features.	Mitigation
Noise disturbance during works	It is expected that during the works, noise from vehicles and machinery will be caused. Implementing pollution prevention good practice should aim to reduce disturbance caused by noise wherever possible. Generalised noise reduction, which reduces impacts on wildlife are as follows: • Restrict working hours to 8am – 6pm (Monday – Sunday) • Noisy vehicles fitted with exhaust silencers wherever possible. • No unnecessary idling of vehicles – vehicles should be shut down when not in use. • Noisy tools fitted with manufacturer recommended mufflers or silencers. Specific noise reduction mitigation must be implemented on site: • The developer will implement quieter processes or machinery (such as soft-start machinery where the noise levels are controlled and gradually increase) when it is possible. • Use new equipment which is generally much quieter than old equipment. Use of certain manufacturers known to produce equipment specifically incorporating noise reduction. The production of noise and active reduction of noise should be taken into account when selecting any machinery to use. For example, noise-reducing saw blades can cut noise levels in half when cutting masonry blocks. • If old (and generally noisier) equipment is being used, fit simple modifications such as new mufflers or sound absorbing materials. • Proper maintenance and inspections of equipment can reduce noise levels by as much as 50%. • Compressors should be fitted with properly lined and sealed acoustic covers which should be kept closed whenever in use. Pneumatic percussive tools should be fitted with mufflers or silencers of the type recommended by the manufacturers. • Equipment which breaks concrete, brickwork or masonry by bending or bursting or “nibbling” shall be used in preference to percussive tools where practicable. • Where practicable, rotary drills and bursters activated by hydraulic, chemical or electrical power shall be used for excavating hard or extrusive material. • Where practicable, equipment powered by mains electricity shall be used in preference to equipment powered by internal combustion engine or locally generated electricity.

	- Neither any part of the works nor any maintenance of plant shall be carried out in such a manner as to cause unnecessary noise or vibration except in the case of an emergency when the work is absolutely necessary for the saving of life or property or the safety of the works. - Plant shall be maintained in good working order so that extraneous noise from mechanical vibration, creaking and squeaking is kept to a minimum. - Noise emitting machinery which is required to run continuously shall be housed in a suitable acoustic lined enclosure wherever practicable. - Care should be taken to reduce noise when loading or unloading vehicles or dismantling scaffolding or moving materials etc. Contractors will be signed up to the Considerate Constructors Scheme. The Considerate Constructors Scheme is a scheme whereby construction sites, companies and suppliers voluntarily register and agree to abide by the Code of Considerate Practice, designed to encourage best practice beyond statutory requirements. Acoustic barriers must be used. These reduce noise levels by at least 30dB.
Visual disturbance during works	Movement of personnel and machinery to and from the work location as well as the works themselves are expected to cause visual disturbance to qualifying features, particularly birds. To minimise this disturbance contractors should aim to: - Reduce the number of times movement between compound and work areas are required. - Keep areas of movement to existing pedestrian areas wherever possible, e.g. personnel going to and from facilities should use the existing promenade as much as possible rather than walking along the intertidal range. - Ensure alternative pedestrian routes are clearly marked where appropriate to prevent other beach users creating extra disturbance when avoiding the works segregated areas.
Damage to qualifying features	Minimising damage to the intertidal range - Plan appropriate routes to minimise the travel distance over the habitat. - Minimise the number of times the habitat needs to be transversed either by machinery or personnel. - Use appropriately maintained vehicles with suitable tracks and tyres to minimise churn on the sand. - Ensure all waste is contained within the site. - Ensure the site is cleared upon completion of works.
Environmental pollution (Water & Air)	Fuel spills from vehicles/ Accidental spillage of fuel and chemicals. - All re-fuelling etc which poses a spillage risk of fuel or other chemicals will take place in a designated area (where spill kits are available). - Spill kits will be available in the fuelling designated area. - The designated area will be at least 10m from surface water drainage. - The ground will be covered in an impermeable sheet. - A preference for using biodegradable oils wherever possible. - Dilution of any hazardous materials will take place within the designated area only. - Any major spillage which could lead to pollution of the watercourse is reportable to the Environment Agency. <u>Improper storage of fuel and chemicals</u> Fuel and chemicals with potential to be hazardous to the environment will be stored in a lockable unit. Transportation of any hazardous materials will be undertaken under a suitable method statement outlining course of action to prevent spillage and ensure safe use.

	Storage areas equipped with spillage kits. Pollutants entering the sea. Wet cement, concrete and grout which are alkaline and corrosive. Increased siltation, sedimentation and nutrient enrichment entering the sea. • Allocate a designated area on site where mixing and washing takes place. • Provide the ground with an impermeable cover. • Locate the designated area at least 10m from surface water drainage. • A siltbuster will be available on site as an alternative emergency mechanism particularly after heavy rainfall. • Wash water is collected and settled out before treatment or disposal to foul sewage (with permission). • Plant and wheel washing will be undertaken in a designated area of hard standing at least 10 metres from any watercourse or surface water drain, run-off collected in an impermeable sump, and resulting suspended solids in the water allowed to settle before being discarded in foul sewage (with relevant permission) OR treated on site and discarded via surface water drainage. Potential sources of air pollution includes. Use of vehicles and machinery producing increased CO² and other gases. Use of electric tools. Additionally, pollution prevention will be in place to minimise this impact: Burning of materials on site not permitted. Wheel wash facilities available to minimise dust. Any earth stockpiles within the compound to be treated accordingly to prevent dust such as damping down or covering. Inspections undertaken of the road and access points, sweeping roads as necessary to collect volatile materials from surfaces. Any skips will be covered overnight to prevent littering. No unnecessary idling of all vehicles and heavy machinery. All volatile chemicals and fuels will be safely deposited in a lockable store or stored in a bunded area as appropriate. Use of vacuum attachments on power tools.
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6.4 Implementation Plan

The implementation plan outlined below should be followed during the works.

- All contractors should be fully briefed on all mitigating control measures to be adopted on site.
- A responsible person will be nominated to implement briefing on control measures, such as the site manager or principal contractor.
- All contractors on site will be expected to comply with all recommended mitigation measures within this report. Non-compliance is reportable to the site manager.
- A record of non-compliance will be kept by the site manager, and measures taken to rectify the issue.
- Any pollution incidents should be immediately reported to the EA Incident Hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

7 REFERENCES

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Wildlife Aid Foundation Website <https://wildlifeaid.org.uk/wildlife-facts/herring-gull/> accessed July 2025

APPENDIX A

Figures



Legend

- ★ Site Location
- 2km Buffer

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Rainton Meadows
Chilton Moor
Houghton-le-Spring
Tyne and Wear
DH4 6PU

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www.dwsecology.co.uk

Project	Little Haven PEA
Title	Location Plan
Client	Little Haven Hotel
Date	November 2024
Ref	Figure 1



Legend

★ Site Location

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2013



Rainton Meadows
Chilton Moor
Houghton-le-Spring
Tyne and Wear
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Project	Littlehaven Hotel
Title	Aerial Overview
Client	Little Haven Hotel
Date	November 2024
Ref	Figure 2

APPENDIX B

Report Conditions

Durham Wildlife Services

REPORT CONDITIONS

Little Haven Hotel – Habitats Regulations Assessment

This report is produced solely for the benefit of Little Haven Hotel and no liability is accepted for any reliance placed on it by any other party unless specifically agreed in writing otherwise.

This report is prepared for the proposed uses stated in the report and should not be used in a different context without reference to Durham Wildlife Services. In time improved practices, fresh information or amended legislation may necessitate a re-assessment. Opinions and information provided in this report are on the basis of Durham Wildlife Services using due skill and care in the preparation of the report.

This report refers, within the limitations stated, to the environment of the site in the context of the surrounding area at the time of the inspections. Environmental conditions can vary, and no warranty is given as to the possibility of changes in the environment of the site and surrounding area at differing times.

This report is limited to those aspects reported on, within the scope and limits agreed with the client under our appointment. It is necessarily restricted, and no liability is accepted for any other aspect. It is based on the information sources indicated in the report. Some of the opinions are based on unconfirmed data and information and are presented as the best obtained within the scope for this report.

Reliance has been placed on the documents and information supplied to Total Ecology by others but no independent verification of these has been made and no warranty is given on them. No liability is accepted, or warranty given in relation to the performance, reliability, standing etc of any products, services, organisations or companies referred to in this report.

Whilst skill and care have been used, no investigative method can eliminate the possibility of obtaining partially imprecise, incomplete, or not fully representative information. Any monitoring or survey work undertaken as part of the commission will have been subject to limitations, including for example timescale, seasonal and weather-related conditions.

Although care is taken to select monitoring and survey periods that are typical of the environmental conditions being measured, within the overall reporting programme constraints, measured conditions may not be fully representative of the actual conditions. Any predictive or modelling work, undertaken as part of the commission will be subject to limitations including the representativeness of data used by the model and the assumptions inherent within the approach used. Actual environmental conditions are typically more complex and variable than the investigative, predictive and modelling approaches indicate in practice, and the output of such approaches cannot be relied upon as a comprehensive or accurate indicator of future conditions.

The potential influence of our assessment and report on other aspects of any development or future planning requires evaluation by other involved parties.

The performance of environmental protection measures and of buildings and other structures in relation to acoustics, vibration, noise mitigation and other environmental issues is influenced to a large extent by the degree to which the relevant environmental considerations are incorporated into the final design and specifications and the quality of workmanship and compliance with the specifications on site during construction. Durham Wildlife Services accept no liability for issues with performance arising from such factors

March 2026