

REPORT TO INFORM HABITAT REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT

LINK HOUSE FARM, HIGH NEWTON



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A. SUMMARY

E3 Ecology Ltd was commissioned by R&K Wood Planning LLP to produce a report to inform a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) in relation to a proposed development at Link House Farm, High Newton. It is proposed to convert part of an existing barn into holiday accommodation, with 6 new units proposed.

This report will assist the planning authority, as the competent authority, to undertake an Appropriate Assessment in relation to four SPA or SAC sites which lie within 11km: the Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site (500m to the east), the Northumberland Marine SPA (335m to the east), North Northumberland Dunes SAC (140m to the east) and the Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC (270m to the east).

Two further SPA or SAC sites lie within 11km of the proposed development site; the Farne Islands SPA and Newham Fen SAC. However, as these sites lie over 9km and 7km distant from the proposed development site respectively, and either have regulated public access (the Farne Islands) or no public access (Newham Fen), no potential pathways for proposals to result in an adverse effect have been identified. These sites have therefore been screened out in relation to the requirement for an Appropriate Assessment.

This report considers two elements of the proposals, firstly the potential direct effect of the proposals on the sites and qualifying features through mechanisms such as habitat loss and construction disturbance, and secondly the potential indirect effects of the development such as increased recreational activity in the local area.

No direct impacts are envisaged on the SPA or SAC site(s) or qualifying features. The distance to the closest SPA or SAC site (140m to the North Northumberland Dunes SAC), limited scale of the proposed development and location within an existing area of built development is considered sufficient to preclude adverse effects through pathways such as potential spillages, noise/light disturbance and degradation of air quality during the construction phase.

Proposals will not result in the loss of any land from within the SPA or SAC sites and the proposed development site and adjacent land is considered unsuitable to support any of the qualifying species of the Northumbria Coast or the Northumberland Marine SPA. The proposed development site and adjacent land does not support any of the habitats for which the North Northumberland Dunes SAC or the Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC are designated; namely, dunes, inlets or bays, mudflats or sandflats, reefs or sea caves. The proposed development site and adjacent land are also unsuitable for the qualifying species associated with these SACs namely grey seal and petalwort.

Development proposals comprise the construction of 6 units and, as such, will result in a likely increase in recreational pressure on the coastal protected sites, albeit a very limited increase due to the small scale of the development. The proposed holiday lets will however have a strictly enforced no dogs policy, in-line with the existing holiday lets policy, such that there will be no increase in the level of dog walking activity on the adjacent coast as a result of the development.

The following elements are proposed in relation to visitor education and management:

- Access to the beach and dunes will be limited to the current authorised access routes, in line with the existing management plan which is in place at the site¹.
- In addition the on-site amenity and recreational facilities will be publicised to the site users to limit visits to the adjacent coast.

¹ Management Plan, Required in relation to obligation 5.1.4 of the Deed of Undertaking by Link House Farm Limited dated 14th September 2007. Prepared by R&K Wood Planning LLP, September 2013

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- Information on the significance of the designated sites will be provided within the new development.
 - A per unit contribution will be agreed and made to the local authority to fund the coastal mitigation service.

B. INTRODUCTION

E3 Ecology Ltd was commissioned by R&K Wood Planning LLP to produce a report to inform a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) in relation to a proposed development at Link House Farm, High Newton. It is proposed to convert part of an existing barn into holiday accommodation, with 6 new units proposed.

The Habitats Reg's apply a precautionary principle to developments that may affect SPA or SAC sites. Proposals can only be permitted once it has been ascertained that there will be no likely significant effects on the integrity of the sites in question, *unless* there are no alternatives and the development is of over-riding public interest.

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) seeks to assess proposals in order to determine whether they are likely to have significant effects on a SPA or SAC site. HRA comprises a four stage process; Screening, Appropriate Assessment, identifying alternative solutions and identifying compensation measures where imperative reasons of overriding public interest are proven. The first screening stage sets out to identify development proposals which can be screened out of the need for further assessment i.e. they are determined as not likely to have a significant effect on the relevant SPA or SAC sites.

This report will assist the planning authority, as the Competent Authority, to determine whether the development may have a likely significant effect on the interest features of any SPA or SAC sites (Stage 1 of the HRA process) and if a likely significant effect is anticipated, provides information to inform an Appropriate Assessment in relation to the proposed development (Stage 2 of the HRA process).

The site is located approximately 950m to the north of High Newton, Northumberland at an approximate central grid reference of NU233 260. Site location is illustrated below in Figure 1.



FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION

(OS mapping © Crown copyright and database rights 2016/2017 OS 0100039392)

C. RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND PLANNING CONTEXT

C.1 THE BIRDS DIRECTIVE

The Birds Directive (1979) as amended in 2009 (Directive 2009/147/EC) allows for the designation of Special Protection Areas to aid the survival of particularly threatened species and all migratory bird species.

The Article of the Directive relevant to this report is Article 4 which, in summary, requires:

- The identification and classification of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for rare or vulnerable species listed in Annex I of the Directive, as well as for all regularly occurring migratory species, paying particular attention to the protection of wetlands of international importance.
- In respect of the protection areas, Member States shall take appropriate steps to avoid pollution or deterioration of habitats or any disturbance affecting the birds in so far as these would be significant, having regard to the objective of this Article.

Together with Special Areas of Conservation designated under the Habitats Directive, SPAs form a network of European protected areas known as Natura 2000.

C.2 THE CONSERVATION OF HABITATS AND SPECIES REGULATIONS

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) transpose the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive into English and Welsh law.

The aspect of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) which is of particular relevance to this report is Regulation 61 which states:

1. A competent authority, before deciding to undertake, or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for, a plan or project which —
 - a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and
 - b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of that site,- must make an appropriate assessment of the implications for that site in view of that site's conservation objectives.
2. A person applying for any such consent, permission or other authorisation, must provide such information as the competent authority may reasonably require for the purposes of the assessment or to enable them to determine whether an appropriate assessment is required.
3. In considering whether a plan or project will adversely affect the integrity of the site, the authority must have regard to the manner in which it is proposed to be carried out or to any conditions or restrictions subject to which they propose that the consent, permission or other authorisation should be given.

D. METHODOLOGY

D.1 ZONE OF INFLUENCE

The assessment area for direct effects is considered to comprise the area within the development boundary termed 'the proposed development site' and a 400m buffer around it where there may be effects, for example from changes in hydrology or direct disturbance during construction and use of the proposed development site.

For indirect effects, principally relating to additional recreational pressure through increased visitor numbers at the coast, an 11km buffer from the proposed development site has been identified as the zone of influence. This 11km buffer is considered to be precautionary but has been used by the local authority in relation to other proposed developments in Northumberland.

D.2 DESKTOP STUDY

The Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website² was searched for all SPA or SAC sites that lie within an 11km radius of the proposed development site. Qualifying features and conservation objectives of any SPA or SAC sites identified within this buffer were then obtained through the Joint Nature Conservation Committee website³.

The site and surroundings were assessed from aerial photography and 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey maps. An assessment was made of general land use within the site and surrounding land and of recreational facilities in the vicinity of the site such as footpaths, cycleways and public parks. In addition, an assessment was made of potential links to SPA or SAC sites such as footpaths, cycleways and roads.

² www.magic.gov.uk

³ www.jncc.gov.uk

E. RESULTS

E.1 DESKTOP STUDY

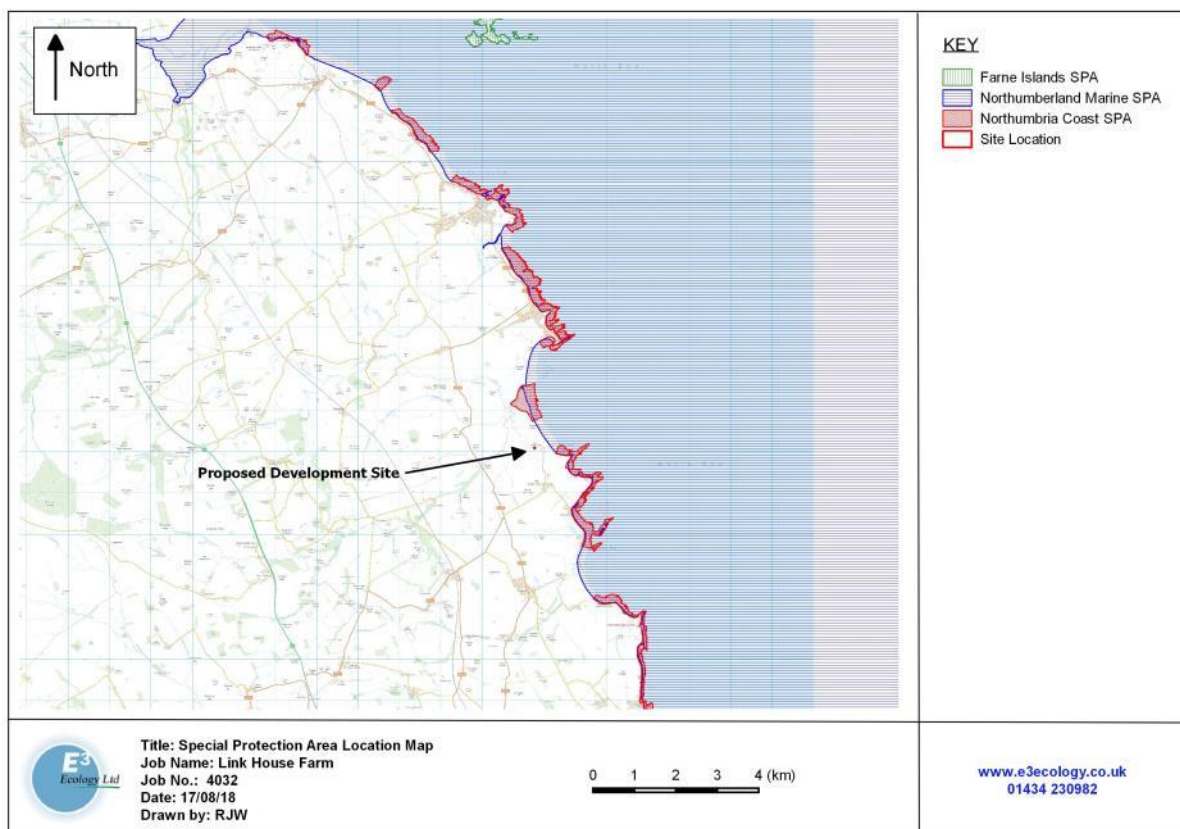
E.1.1 SPA AND SAC SITES

Consultation with the MAGIC website⁴ indicated that sections of the following SPAs and SACs lie within an 11km buffer of the proposed development site:

- Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) (500m to the east)
- Farne Islands SPA (9.6km to the north)
- Northumberland Marine SPA (335m to the east)
- Newham Fen Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (7km to the north west)
- North Northumberland Dunes SAC (140m to the east)
- Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC (270m to the east)

Of the above sites, the Farne Islands SPA lies off shore, over 9km from the proposed development site and public access to the islands is regulated. As such, there is not considered to be a pathway for potential effects associated with the proposed development. Similarly Newham Bog SAC is not accessible to the public and as it lies 7km from the proposed development site there is not considered to be a pathway for potential effects associated with the proposed development. Given this, these two sites are not considered any further within this report.

The location of the sites identified above in relation to the proposed development site is illustrated within the figures below.



⁴ www.magic.gov.uk

FIGURE 2: LOCATION OF SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS IN RELATION TO PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SITE

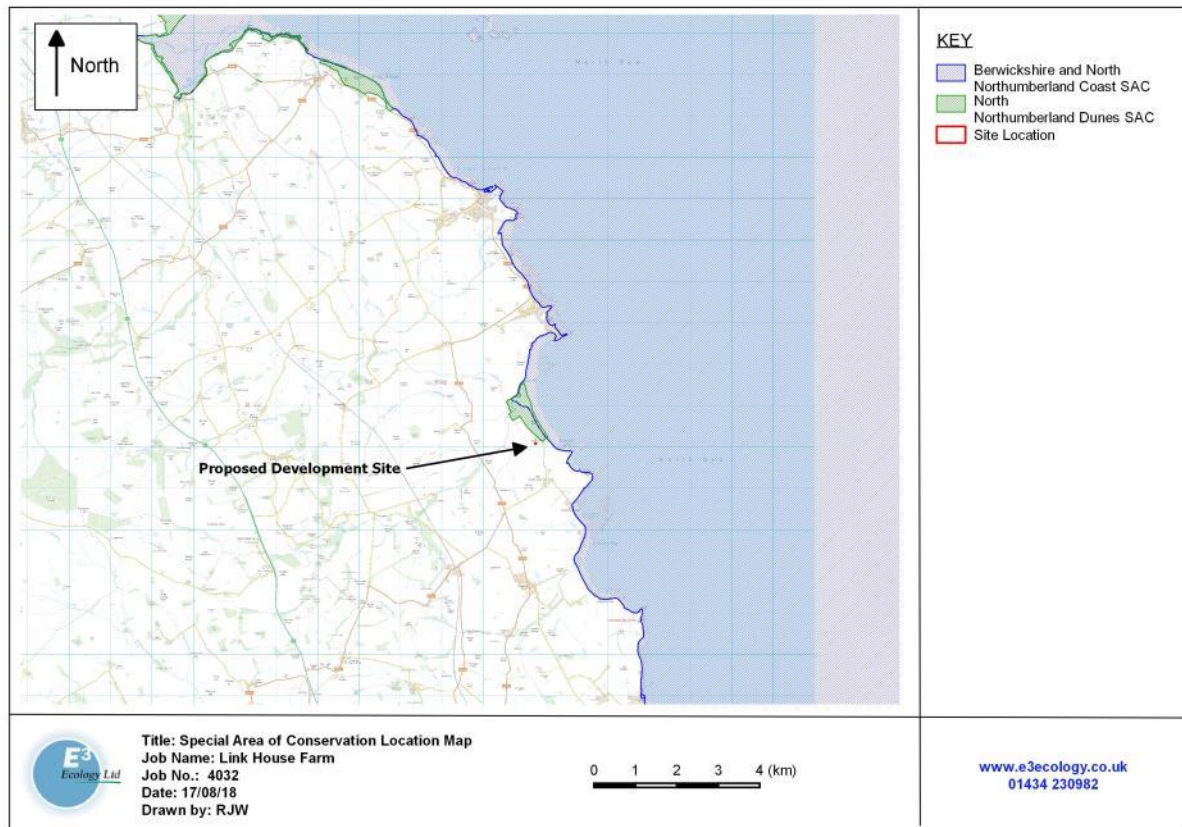


FIGURE 3: LOCATION OF SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION IN RELATION TO PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SITE

The tables below detail the qualifying species and conservation objectives for the Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area and the Northumberland Marine Special Protection Area.

TABLE 1: SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPAs)			
Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area			
Background	Qualifying Species	Conservation Objectives	Current Status
<p>This area of coastline was designated in 2004 and comprises sections of coastline between north Northumberland and the south of County Durham.</p>	<p>The SPA comprises areas of rocky shore supporting a food resource for wading birds which are cited on the designation. There are three species listed on the citation for the protected area, these are purple sandpiper (<i>Calidris maritima</i>); ruddy turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>), little tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>) and arctic tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>). The site is designated for the non-breeding use of the site by the first two species listed and for breeding use by the latter species.</p>	<p>The avoidance of the deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying features, and the significant disturbance of the qualifying features, ensuring the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes a full contribution to achieving the aims of the Birds Directive.</p> <p>Subject to natural change, to maintain or restore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features; • The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features; • The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely; 	<p>There are a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) units within the SPA which are components of the larger designated site.</p> <p>The most recent assessment of these components found that around 63% was classed as in favourable condition, with the remaining 37% being unfavourable recovering.</p> <p>All three units within 6km of the site are in</p>

TABLE 1: SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPAs)			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The populations of the qualifying features; The distribution of the qualifying features within the site. 	favourable condition.
Northumberland Marine Special Protection Area			
<p>The Northumberland Marine SPA is to protect important areas for breeding seabirds and auk species when they are foraging or performing maintenance behaviours (such as preening, bathing and sleeping) in the marine waters around the existing terrestrial SPAs: Coquet Island, Farne Islands, Lindisfarne and the Northumbria Coast. The SPA covers an area from Scremerston, near Berwick-Upon-Tweed, in the north to Blyth in the south. It has a landward boundary up to the Mean High Water except around the existing SPAs of the Farne Islands and Coquet Island, where the landward boundary will be defined by the Mean Low Water Mark. The boundary also includes a 1km seaward extension around Coquet Island and the Farne Islands to protect the maintenance behaviours of auk species; specifically Atlantic puffin and common guillemot.</p>	<p>The Northumberland Marine is for the following qualifying species: sandwich tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>), common tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>), Arctic tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>), roseate tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>), little tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>), puffin (<i>Fratercula arctica</i>) and guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>).</p> <p>The SPA also supports a seabird assemblage of international importance, including the 7 species listed above and great cormorant, European shag, black-headed gull and black-legged kittiwake.</p> <p>Species which do not meet SPA selection criteria due to the numbers present, but which contribute to the overall assemblage include: fulmar, great black backed gull, lesser black backed gull, herring gull and razorbill</p>	<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features; The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features; The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely; The population of each of the qualifying features; and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site. 	Not currently available.

Table 2 provides information on the ecology of each of the qualifying species of the Northumbria Coast SPA.

TABLE 2: SPA QUALIFYING SPECIES - ECOLOGY		
Site	Species	Ecology
Northumbria Coast SPA	Purple Sandpiper	The purple sandpiper is a medium-sized wading bird that is larger, stockier and darker than a dunlin. This species is mainly a winter visitor to almost any rocky coast in the UK. Most are found in Orkney, Shetland and along the east coast of Scotland and northern England – the species is scarce south of Yorkshire, other than in Devon and Cornwall. Wintering numbers in the UK are approximately 13,000 birds (October-March) ⁵ .
	Ruddy Turnstone	Smaller than a redshank, turnstones have a mottled appearance with brown or chestnut and black upperparts and brown and

⁵ <http://rspb.org.uk>

TABLE 2: SPA QUALIFYING SPECIES - ECOLOGY		
Site	Species	Ecology
		white or black and white head pattern, whilst their underparts are white and legs orange. Wintering numbers in the UK are approximately 51,000 birds (October-March) ⁸ .
	Little Tern	Little tern is the smallest species of tern breeding in the UK, nesting exclusively on beaches, spits or inshore islets. Colonies are found around much of the coastline, but the main concentration is in south and east England.
	Arctic Tern	Slightly smaller than a common tern, the adult arctic tern has a dark red bill and legs, and long tail streamers. In Britain and Ireland, the arctic tern is almost exclusively a coastal breeder, usually nesting on the immediate shoreline and virtually never more than 10 km from the coast. Nearly 90% of the arctic terns breeding in Britain and Ireland are found in Scotland, Orkney and Shetland and throughout the Outer and Inner Hebrides. There are also some colonies on the east and north coasts. In England, they are found mainly in the northeast and the northwest, with very small numbers in north Norfolk and along the south coast.
Northumberland Marine SPA	Arctic Tern	As above
	Common Tern	Adults have an orange-red bill, usually with a black tip. A significant proportion of the British population breeds in Scotland, particularly in the northern and western Isles and on the west coast, but with sizeable colonies also along the east coast firths. Common Terns also commonly breed inland on riverine shingle and islands, not only in Scotland but also in England. Coastal colonies in England are mainly concentrated in the north-east, East Anglia, at a few localities along the south coast, and in the north-west.
	Roseate Tern	A rare breeder, with the largest colony being found at Coquet Island. The roseate tern has pale upperparts and very pale pink flushed underparts, with a black bill with red base during the breeding season.
	Sandwich Tern	A large tern, with black legs and black, yellow tipped bill during the summer. British colonies are very scattered and mostly confined to coastal shingle beaches, sand dunes and offshore islets. In a few places, small islets in coastal freshwater bodies are used. The largest colonies are on the east coast of Britain, especially north-east England and East Anglia, with smaller but important colonies in north Wales, north-west England, north-east Scotland and Northern Ireland.
	Little Tern	As above
	Puffin	Puffins nest on exposed coasts and islands facing the ocean. The vast majority of the British and Irish population breed in Scotland with the St. Kilda archipelago holding the largest colony (Lloyd et al. 1991). Other principal breeding areas include Shetland (particularly Fair Isle and Foula), Orkney, Sule Skerry, the Isle of May and the Western Isles including the Shiant Islands. The main breeding area in England lies in the north-east, with large colonies on the Farne Islands, Coquet Island and on the Bempton-Flamborough cliffs.
	Guillemot	The main concentrations of breeding guillemots are located in northern Scotland, with smaller populations in England, largely in Northumberland and North Yorkshire. Guillemots are a coastal, cliff nesting species, with brown upper parts and pale underparts, and a slender bill.

The table below details the North Northumberland Dunes Special Area of Conservation and the Berwick and North Northumberland Coast Special Area of Conservation.

TABLE 3:: SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION			
Background	Qualifying Habitats/ Species	Conservation Objectives	Current Status
North Northumberland Dunes Special Area of Conservation			
Designated in 2005, the North Northumberland Dunes SAC comprises a number of dune systems on the north east coast of England.	The site supports the following qualifying habitats: fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes), dunes with creeping willow, embryonic shifting dunes, humid dune slacks, and shifting dunes along the shoreline with marram (white dunes). The site also supports the Annex II species petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>).	<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species. • The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats. • The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species. • The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely. • The populations of qualifying species, and, • The distribution of qualifying species within the site. 	The SAC comprises units of the following SSSIs: Alnmouth Saltmarsh and Dunes SSSI, Bamburgh Coast and Hills SSSI, Bamburgh Dunes SSSI, Lindisfarne SSSI, Newton Links SSSI and Warkworth Dunes and Saltmarsh SSSI.
Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast Special Area of Conservation			
<p>Designated in 2005, the Berwickshire & North Northumberland Coast SAC comprises an extensive and diverse stretch of coastline and has several characteristic, sediment-dominated embayments in north-east England, including Budle Bay, Beadnell Bay and Embleton Bay.</p> <p>Each of these areas is relatively exposed and uniform in nature and is characterised by crustacean /polychaete- and bivalve/polychaete-biotopes. In the subtidal zone, Beadnell and Embleton Bays form a sandy break in the otherwise continuous reef habitat in this site.</p>	<p>The site supports the following qualifying habitats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large shallow inlets and bays. • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide. (Intertidal mudflats and sandflats) • Reefs • Submerged or partially submerged sea caves <p>Qualifying species: Grey seal</p>	<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species • The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats • The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species • The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely • The populations of qualifying species, and, • The distribution of qualifying species within the site. 	The SAC comprises units of the following SSSIs: Bamburgh Coast and Hills SSSI, Burnmouth Coast SSSI, Castle Point to Cullernose Point SSSI, Howick to Seaton Point SSSI, Lindisfarne SSSI, Newton Links SSSI, Northumberland Shore SSSI, St Abb's Head to Fast Castle SSSI and The Farne Islands SSSI.

E.1.2 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SITE

Figure 3 below illustrates the boundary of the proposed development site while Figure 4 illustrates the land use within 500m of the site boundary.



FIGURE 4: SITE EXTENT
(Reproduced under licence from Google Earth Pro.)



FIGURE 5: SITE AND SURROUNDINGS (500M BUFFER)
(Reproduced under licence from Google Earth Pro.)

E.2 FIELD SURVEY

The site comprises an agricultural shed, currently used for stabling horses, surrounded by existing development, bare ground and semi-improved grassland.

Habitats present within the survey area are described in more detail within a separate report (4032 Link House R02).

F. ASSESSMENT

F.1 POTENTIAL MECHANISMS OF EFFECT FROM DEVELOPMENT

F.1.1 DIRECT EFFECTS

Direct effects on SPA and SAC sites are only likely to result from direct habitat loss within the designated sites or loss of habitats suitable for use by qualifying species and which have a functional link to the designated sites. There may also be effects through disturbance during construction or changes in hydrology as a result of construction work to land within the designated sites or to land which has a functional link to the designated site.

F.1.2 INDIRECT EFFECTS

It is considered that there are only limited "pathways" that could contribute to indirect effects on the SPA and SAC sites; principally, this is disturbance associated with increased recreational activity, primarily dog walking, due to the increase in residents associated with any completed residential development.

F.2 SCREENING ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

TABLE 4: SCREENING ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON THE NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND DUNES SAC						
Mechanism of Effect	Description of Activity	Impact/Effect	Likely Significant Effect (without mitigation)	Mitigation	Likely Significant Effect (with mitigation)	Further Action Required
Construction Phase (Direct)						
Direct habitat loss	No loss of SAC habitat – the proposed development site lies 140m from the SAC.					No
Storage of potential pollutants/spillages	Due to the distance between the proposed development site and the SAC (140m), the limited scale of the proposed development and location within an existing area of built development, no effects are anticipated. Works will be largely limited to internal works to the existing building.					No
Degradation in air quality	Due to the distance between the proposed development site and the SAC (140m), the limited scale of the proposed development and location within an existing area of built development, no effects are anticipated.					No
Spread of invasive species	No invasive species have been recorded within the proposed development site. Due to the distance between the proposed development site and the SAC (140m), the limited scale of the proposed development and location within an existing area of built development, no effects are anticipated.					No
Operational Phase (Indirect)						
Degradation in air quality	Given the limited scale of the proposed development (6 units) and distance to the SAC (140m), no adverse effects are anticipated.					No
Degradation in water quality	Potential for degradation of water quality in the local area.	Potential degradation of the Natura site through impacts on the ground water once site occupied.	Potential – albeit limited by the small scale of the proposed development	A drainage strategy will be submitted to and agreed with the local authority.	No	No
Increased recreational pressure associated with an increase in activity at the coast.	Potential increase in disturbance of habitats on site.	Potential increase in disturbance to ground flora.	Potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strict enforcement of an existing no dog policy. • Access to the beach and dunes will be limited to the current authorised access routes. In addition the on-site amenity and recreational facilities will be publicised to the site users to limit visits to the adjacent coast. • Information on the significance of the designated sites will be provided within the new development. • Funding of coastal mitigation service as per local authority guidance. 	No	No – see discussion below

TABLE 5: SCREENING ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON THE BERWICKSHIRE AND NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND COAST SAC						
Mechanism of Effect	Description of Activity	Impact/Effect	Likely Significant Effect (without mitigation)	Mitigation	Likely Significant Effect (with mitigation)	Further Action Required
Construction Phase (Direct)						
Direct habitat loss	No loss of SAC habitat – the proposed development site lies 270m from the SAC.					No
Storage of potential pollutants/spillages	Due to the distance between the proposed development site and the SAC (270m), the limited scale of the proposed development and location within an existing area of built development, no effects are anticipated.					No
Degradation in air quality	Due to the distance between the proposed development site and the SAC (270m), the limited scale of the proposed development and location within an existing area of built development, no effects are anticipated. Works will be largely limited to internal works to the existing building.					No
Spread of invasive species	No invasive species have been recorded within the proposed development site. Due to the distance between the proposed development site and the SAC (270m), the limited scale of the proposed development and location within an existing area of built development, no effects are anticipated.					No
Operational Phase (Indirect)						
Degradation in air quality	Given the limited scale of the proposed development (6 units) and distance to the SAC (270m), no adverse effects are anticipated.					No
Degradation in water quality	Potential for degradation of water quality in the local area.	Potential degradation of the Natura site through impacts on the ground water once site occupied.	Potential – albeit limited by the small scale of the proposed development	A drainage strategy will be submitted to and agreed with the local authority.	No	No
Increased recreational pressure associated with an increase in activity at the coast.	Potential increase in disturbance of habitats on site..	Potential increase in disturbance to ground flora..	Potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strict enforcement of an existing no dog policy. • Access to the beach and dunes will be limited to the current authorised access routes, in line with the existing management plan in place at the site. In addition the on-site amenity and recreational facilities will be publicised to the site users to limit visits to the adjacent coast. • Information on the significance of the designated sites will be provided within the new development. • Funding of coastal mitigation service as per local authority guidance. 	No	No – see discussion below
TABLE 6: SCREENING ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON THE NORTHUMBRIA COAST SPA						

TABLE 5: SCREENING ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON THE BERWICKSHIRE AND NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND COAST SAC						
Mechanism of Effect	Description of Activity	Impact/Effect	Likely Significant Effect (without mitigation)	Mitigation	Likely Significant Effect (with mitigation)	Further Action Required
Mechanism of Effect	Description of Activity	Impact/Effect	Likely Significant Effect (without mitigation)	Mitigation	Likely Significant Effect (with mitigation)	Further Action Required
Construction Phase (Direct)						
Direct habitat loss	No loss of SAC habitat.					No
Loss of functional land	No loss of land utilised by wintering Qualifying Species, (see discussion below) whilst site offers no breeding opportunities for Qualifying Species.					No
Noise associated with construction	Due to the distance between the proposed development site and the SPA (500m), no effects are anticipated.					No
Increased light levels	Due to the distance between the proposed development site and the SPA (500m), no effects are anticipated.					No
Degradation in air quality	Due to the distance between the proposed development site and the SPA (500m), no effects are anticipated.					No
Spread of invasive species	Due to the distance between the proposed development site and the SPA (500m), no effects are anticipated.					No
Operational Phase (Indirect)						
Degradation in Water Quality	Potential for degradation of water quality in the local area.	Potential degradation of the Natura site through impacts on the ground water once site occupied.	Potential	A detailed drainage strategy will be submitted to and agreed with the local authority.	No	No
Increased noise/light disturbance associated with the new development	Due to the distance between the proposed development site and the SPA (500m), no effects are anticipated. Proposals lie within the existing building complex at the site.					No
Cat ownership	The proposed development is for holiday lets and holidaymakers will not be allowed to bring cats. As such, no effects through increased predation are anticipated.					No
Increased recreational pressure associated with an increase in activity at the coast.	Potential increase in disturbance to qualifying species.	Potential displacement from foraging/roosting/resting areas as a result of increased disturbance of qualifying species.	Potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strict enforcement of an existing no dog policy. • Access to the beach and dunes will be limited to the current authorised access routes, in line with the existing management plan in place at the site. In addition the on-site amenity and recreational 	No	No – see discussion below

Mechanism of Effect	Description of Activity	Impact/Effect	Likely Significant Effect (without mitigation)	Mitigation	Likely Significant Effect (with mitigation)	Further Action Required
				facilities will be publicised to the site users to limit visits to the adjacent coast. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on the significance of the designated sites will be provided within the new development. Funding of coastal mitigation service as per local authority guidance. 		

Mechanism of Effect	Description of Activity	Impact/Effect	Likely Significant Effect (without mitigation)	Mitigation	Likely Significant Effect (with mitigation)	Further Action Required
Construction Phase (Direct)						
Direct habitat loss	No loss of SPA habitat.					No
Loss of functional land	No loss of land utilised by Qualifying Species, (see discussion below).					No
Noise associated with construction	Due to the distance between the proposed development site and the SPA (335m), no effects are anticipated.					No
Increased light levels	Due to the distance between the proposed development site and the SPA (335m), no effects are anticipated.					No
Degradation in air quality	Due to the distance between the proposed development site and the SPA (335m), no effects are anticipated.					No
Spread of invasive species	Due to the distance between the proposed development site and the SPA (335m), no effects are anticipated.					No
Operational Phase (Indirect)						
Degradation in Water Quality	Potential for degradation of water quality in the local area.	Potential degradation of the Natura site through impacts on the ground water once site occupied.	Potential	A detailed drainage strategy will be submitted to and agreed with the local authority.	No	No

TABLE 7: SCREENING ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON THE NORTHUMBERLAND MARINE SPA						
Mechanism of Effect	Description of Activity	Impact/Effect	Likely Significant Effect (without mitigation)	Mitigation	Likely Significant Effect (with mitigation)	Further Action Required
Increased noise/light disturbance associated with the new development	Due to the distance between the proposed development site and the SPA (335m), no effects are anticipated.					No
Cat ownership	The proposed development is for holiday lets and holidaymakers will not be allowed to bring cats. As such, no effects through increased predation are anticipated.					No
Increased recreational pressure associated with an increase in activity at the coast.	Potential increase in disturbance to qualifying species.	Potential displacement from foraging/roosting/resting areas as a result of increased disturbance of qualifying species.	Potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strict enforcement of an existing no dog policy. • Access to the beach and dunes will be limited to the current authorised access routes, in line with the existing management plan in place at the site. In addition the on-site amenity and recreational facilities will be publicised to the site users to limit visits to the adjacent coast. • Information on the significance of the designated sites will be provided within the new development. • Funding of coastal mitigation service as per local authority guidance. 	No	No – see discussion below

F.3 DISCUSSION

F.3.1 DIRECT IMPACTS

The proposed development site and adjacent land is considered unsuitable to support any of the qualifying species of the Northumbria Coast SPA. Purple sandpiper and ruddy turnstone largely rely on rocky shore habitats, although will forage within grassland, whilst little tern and Arctic tern breed exclusively on sandy/shingle beaches or onshore inlets.

The Northumberland Marine SPA is designated to protect important areas for breeding seabirds and auk species when they are foraging or performing maintenance behaviours (such as preening, bathing and sleeping) in the marine waters. The proposed development site and adjacent habitat is not suitable for such use by these species.

The proposed development site and adjacent land does not support any of the habitats for which the North Northumberland Dunes SAC or the Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC are designated; namely, dunes, inlets or bays, mudflats or sandflats, reefs or sea caves. The proposed development site and adjacent land are also unsuitable for the qualifying species associated with these SACs namely grey seal and petalwort.

The distance to the closest site (140m to the North Northumberland Dunes SAC), limited scale of the proposed development, nature of proposals (largely limited to internal works to an existing building) and location within an existing area of built development is considered sufficient to preclude adverse effects through pathways such as potential spillages, noise/light disturbance and degradation of air quality during the construction phase.

F.3.2 INDIRECT IMPACTS

Development proposals comprise the construction of 6 units and, as such, will result in a likely increase in recreational pressure on the coastal protected sites identified above, albeit a very limited increase due to the small scale of the development. The proposed holiday lets will however have a strictly enforced no dogs policy, in-line with the existing holiday let policy, such that there will be no increase in the level of dog walking activity on the adjacent coast as a result of the development.

The following elements are proposed in relation to visitor education and management:

- Access to the beach and dunes will be limited to the current authorised access routes, in line with the existing management plan which is in place at the site⁶.
- In addition the on-site amenity and recreational facilities will be publicised to the site users to limit visits to the adjacent coast.
- Information on the significance of the designated sites will be provided within the new development.
- A per unit contribution will be made to the local authority to fund coastal mitigation service.

⁶ Management Plan, Required in relation to obligation 5.1.4 of the Deed of Undertaking by Link House Farm Limited dated 14th September 2007. Prepared by R&K Wood Planning LLP, September 2013