

A14
Cambridge to Huntingdon
improvement scheme
Development Consent Order Application

HE/A14/EX/108

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Assessment of implications on European sites

Revised screening matrices for:

Ouse Washes Special Area for Conservation

Ouse Washes Special Protection Area

Ouse Washes Ramsar sites

August 2015



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Ouse Washes Ramsar site

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and scope

- 1.1.1 This report contains revised Annex C: PINS advice note 10 screening matrices from *Appendix 11.12 of the Environmental Statement: Assessment of implications on European sites Stage 1: No significant effects report* submitted with the Development Consent Order Application in December 2014, which were subsequently revised at deadline 4 (Applicant reference REP4-024, PINS reference HE-A14-EX-62).
- 1.1.2 The matrices have been amended following the request from the Examining Authority in Written Question # 2.2.23.

2 Annex C: PINS advice note 10 screening matrices

2.1 Potential impacts

- 2.1.1 Potential impacts upon the three Ouse Washes European sites which are considered within the submitted Habitats Regulations Assessment report (A14 6.3 ES Appendix 11.12) are provided in table C.1 below. Impacts have been grouped where appropriate for ease of presentation.
- Habitat Loss and Habitat Fragmentation;
 - Changes to Water Levels and Water Quality;
 - Inappropriate Management;
 - Air Pollution; and
 - Introduction of Invasive Species.

Table C.1: Impacts considered within the screening matrices:

Designation	Impacts in submission information	Presented in screening matrices as
Ouse Washes SAC 1149 Spined loach <i>Cobitis taenia</i>	Habitat loss and habitat fragmentation	Habitat loss / fragmentation
	Changes to water levels and water quality. Air pollution	Indirect changes to conditions
	Inappropriate management. Introduction of invasive species	Inappropriate management and alien introductions

Designation	Impacts in submission information	Presented in screening matrices as
Ouse Washes SPA Seasonally flooded washland; water bird assemblage (breeding and wintering).	Habitat loss and habitat fragmentation	Habitat loss / fragmentation
	Changes to water levels and water quality. Air pollution	Indirect changes to conditions
	Inappropriate management. Introduction of invasive species	Inappropriate management and alien introductions
Ouse Washes Ramsar site Seasonally flooded washland; water bird assemblage (breeding and wintering); neutral grassland communities; rich aquatic flora	Habitat loss and habitat fragmentation	Habitat loss / fragmentation
	Changes to water levels and water quality. Air pollution	Indirect changes to conditions
	Inappropriate management. Introduction of invasive species	Inappropriate management and alien introductions

Stage 1: Screening matrices

2.1.2 The European Sites included within the screening assessment are:

- Ouse Washes SAC (Matrix 1);
- Ouse Washes SPA (Matrix 2); and
- Ouse Washes Ramsar site (Matrix 3).

2.1.3 As no likely significant effects have been identified, there is no requirement for matrices to summarise the implications for the integrity of each European site.

2.1.4 Evidence for likely significant effects on their qualifying features is detailed within the footnotes to the screening matrices below.

Matrix Key:

✓ = Likely significant effect **cannot** be excluded

✗ = Likely significant effect **can** be excluded

C = construction

O = operation

D = decommissioning

2.1.5 Where effects are not applicable to a particular feature they are greyed out.

- 2.1.6 All decommissioning effects are greyed out, as roads are not designed and managed to be decommissioned and thus consideration of effects during a decommissioning phase would be irrelevant. Were any decommissioning of all or part of the road to be proposed in the future, a separate project would be developed, which would be accompanied by a specific assessment of the implications for European sites. The issue of decommissioning was raised at the Preliminary Meeting on 13 May 2015, namely that roads are not designed and managed to be decommissioned (as opposed to developments such as power stations) and thus the decommissioning column in the matrices is irrelevant to the A14 scheme and should be disregarded, but this was not included in the note of that meeting. As such, in the absence of guidance from the Examining Authority, it has been assumed that this approach towards decommissioning effects (i.e. to disregard them) in the matrices is the appropriate one.
- 2.1.7 Evidence in the matrices refers to Appendix 11.12: Assessment of Implications for European Sites of the Environmental Statement (document reference 6.3). This is referred to in the footnotes as the AIES. Figures referred to are figure numbers from the Environmental Statement (document reference 6.2).

2.2 Stage 1 matrices

Stage 1 Matrix 1: Ouse Washes SAC

Name of European site: Ouse Washes SAC												
Distance to NSIP: 9,124 m at nearest point												
European site features	Likely Effects of NSIP											
	Habitat loss / fragmentation			Indirect changes to conditions			Inappropriate management and alien introductions			In combination effects		
Stage of Development	C	O	D	C	O	D	C	O	D	C	O	D
1149 Spined loach <i>Cobitis taenia</i>	x_a	x_b	x_c	x_d	x_d	x_c	x_e	x_e	x_c	x_f	x_f	x_c

Evidence supporting conclusions

a: There would be no habitat loss from the site during the construction phase as the site is over 9km from the nearest point of the scheme. There would be no significant loss or fragmentation of habitat used by spined loach outside the SAC (see *paragraphs 6.2.5 and 6.2.6 in the AIES and Figure 11.14: AIES European sites*).

b: There would be no habitat loss during operation of the road as there are no effects on habitat loss/fragmentation, which necessarily occurs at site clearance during the construction phase.

c: Roads are not designed and managed to be decommissioned and thus consideration of effects during a decommissioning phase would be irrelevant.

d: Changes in the water and air environment are predicted to be unlikely to be significant and in places beneficial during both the construction and operation phases. The site or habitats likely to be used by spined loach from the site are not likely to be significantly affected (see *paragraphs 6.3.20 to 6.3.23 and 6.5.22 in the AIES*).

e: As the scheme at its nearest point would be above 9km from the SAC, there would be no change to the management of the site or any habitat significantly used by spined loach from the site during either the construction or operational phases. Invasive species have been recorded near the scheme but best practice construction techniques would control spread of such species where present during the construction phase (see *paragraphs 6.2.5 to 6.2.6 and 6.6.10 in the AIES*).

f: Other projects in the area (e.g. large residential developments) could conceivably act in combination to affect habitat used by spined loach from the site or through changes to water quantity and quality. The distance from the site however makes it unlikely that any in-combination effects on the site would occur. As the effects of the scheme are likely to be beneficial for changes in the water environment, no in-combination effects are predicted (see *paragraphs 6.2.10; 6.3.24; 6.5.22 and 6.6.11 in the AIES*).

Stage 1 Matrix 2: Ouse Washes SPA

Name of European site: Ouse Washes SPA												
Distance to NSIP: 9,124 m at nearest point												
European site features	Likely Effects of NSIP											
	Habitat loss / fragmentation			Indirect changes to conditions			Inappropriate management and alien introductions			In combination effects		
Stage of Development	C	O	D	C	O	D	C	O	D	C	O	D
Species listed on Annex 1 under Article 4.1 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) during the breeding season												
Ruff <i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	xg	xh	xi	xj	xj	xi	xk	xk	xi	xl	xl	xi
Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa limosa</i>	xg	xh	xi	xj	xj	xi	xk	xk	xi	xl	xl	xi
Gadwall <i>Anas strepera</i>	xg	xh	xi	xj	xj	xi	xk	xk	xi	xl	xl	xi
Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>	xg	xh	xi	xj	xj	xi	xk	xk	xi	xl	xl	xi
Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	xg	xh	xi	xj	xj	xi	xk	xk	xi	xl	xl	xi
Garganey <i>Anas querquedula</i>	xg	xh	xi	xj	xj	xi	xk	xk	xi	xl	xl	xi
Species listed on Annex 1 under Article 4.1 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) over winter:												
Bewick's Swan <i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>	xg	xh	xi	xj	xj	xi	xk	xk	xi	xl	xl	xi
Hen Harrier <i>Circus cyaneus</i>	xg	xh	xi	xj	xj	xi	xk	xk	xi	xl	xl	xi

Name of European site: Ouse Washes SPA												
Distance to NSIP: 9,124 m at nearest point												
European site features	Likely Effects of NSIP											
	Habitat loss / fragmentation			Indirect changes to conditions			Inappropriate management and alien introductions			In combination effects		
Stage of Development	C	O	D	C	O	D	C	O	D	C	O	D
Whooper Swan <i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	xg	xh	xi	xj	xj	xi	xk	xk	xi	xl	xl	xi
Assemblage of international importance												
Supporting at least 20,000 waterfowl.	xg	xh	xi	xj	xj	xi	xk	xk	xi	xl	xl	xi

Evidence supporting conclusions

g: There would be no habitat loss from the site during the construction phase as the site is over 9km from the nearest point of the scheme. There would be no significant loss or fragmentation of habitat used by mobile species from the SPA (see *paragraphs 6.2.5 to 6.2.9 in the AIES and Figure 11.14: AIES European sites*).

h: There would be no habitat loss during operation of the road as there are no effects on habitat loss/fragmentation, which necessarily occurs at site clearance during the construction phase.

i: Roads are not designed and managed to be decommissioned and thus consideration of effects during a decommissioning phase would be irrelevant.

j: Changes in the water and air environment are predicted to be unlikely to be significant and in places beneficial during both the construction and operation phases. The site or habitats likely to be used by species from the SPA are not likely to be significantly affected (see *paragraphs 6.3.20 to 6.3.23 and 6.5.22 in the AIES*).

k: The scheme would not affect the management of the site or any habitat significantly used by SPA species from the site during either the construction or operational phases. Invasive species have been recorded near the scheme but best practice construction techniques would control spread of such species where present during the construction phase (see *paragraphs 6.4.6 and 6.6.9 to 6.6.12 in the AIES*).

l: Other projects in the area (e.g. large residential developments) could conceivably act in combination to affect habitat used by SPA species from the site or through changes to water quantity and quality. The abundance of suitable habitat in the area and distance from the site however make it unlikely that any in-combination effects on the site would occur. As the effects of the scheme are likely to be beneficial for changes in the water environment, no in-combination effects are predicted (see *paragraphs 6.2.10; 6.3.24; 6.4.6; 6.5.22 and 6.6.11 in the AIES*).

Stage 1 Matrix 3: Ouse Washes Ramsar Site

Name of European site: Ouse Washes Ramsar Site												
Distance to NSIP: 9,124 m at nearest point												
European site features	Likely Effects of NSIP											
	Habitat loss / fragmentation			Indirect changes to conditions			Inappropriate management and alien introductions			In combination effects		
Stage of Development	C	O	D	C	O	D	C	O	D	C	O	D
Ramsar criterion 1 - Seasonally-flooding washland	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
Ramsar criterion 2 - Nationally scarce plants												
Small water pepper <i>Polygonum minus</i>	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
Whorled water-milfoil <i>Myriophyllum verticillatum</i> ,	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
Greater water parsnip <i>Sium latifolium</i> ,	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
River waterdropwort <i>Oenanthe fluviatilis</i> ,	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
Fringed water-lily <i>Nymphoides peltata</i>	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
Long-stalked pondweed <i>Potamogeton praelongus</i>	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo

Name of European site: Ouse Washes Ramsar Site												
Distance to NSIP: 9,124 m at nearest point												
European site features	Likely Effects of NSIP											
	Habitat loss / fragmentation			Indirect changes to conditions			Inappropriate management and alien introductions			In combination effects		
Stage of Development	C	O	D	C	O	D	C	O	D	C	O	D
Hair-like pondweed <i>Potamogeton trichoides</i>	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
Grass-wrack pondweed <i>Potamogeton compressus,</i>	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
Tasteless water-pepper <i>Polygonum mite</i>	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
Marsh dock <i>Rumex palustris.</i>	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
Ramsar criterion 2 - Relict fenland fauna, including British Red Data Book species												
Large darter dragonfly <i>Libellula fulva</i>	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
Rifle beetle <i>Oulimnius major</i>	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo

Name of European site: Ouse Washes Ramsar Site												
Distance to NSIP: 9,124 m at nearest point												
European site features	Likely Effects of NSIP											
	Habitat loss / fragmentation			Indirect changes to conditions			Inappropriate management and alien introductions			In combination effects		
Stage of Development	C	O	D	C	O	D	C	O	D	C	O	D
Ramsar criterion 5 - Assemblages of international importance												
59133 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003)	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
Ramsar criterion 6 – species/populations occurring at levels of international importance: Qualifying species												
Bewick's swan <i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
Whooper swan <i>Cygnus Cygnus</i>	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
Eurasian wigeon <i>Anas Penelope</i>	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
Gadwall <i>Anas strepera</i>	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
Eurasian teal <i>Anas crecca</i>	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
Northern pintail <i>Anas acuta</i>	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo
Northern shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>	xm	xn	xo	xp	xp	xo	xq	xq	xo	xr	xr	xo

Evidence supporting conclusions

m: There would be no habitat loss from the site during the construction phase as the site is over 9km from the nearest point of the scheme. There would be no significant loss or fragmentation of habitat used by mobile species from the Ramsar site (see *paragraphs 6.2.5 to 6.2.9 in the AIES and Figure 11.14: AIES European sites*).

n: There would be no habitat loss during operation of the road as there are no effects on habitat loss/fragmentation, which necessarily occurs at site clearance during the construction phase.

o: Roads are not designed and managed to be decommissioned and thus consideration of effects during a decommissioning phase would be irrelevant.

p: Changes in the water and air environment are predicted to be unlikely to be significant and in places beneficial during both the construction and operation phases. The site or habitats likely to be used by features from the site are not likely to be significantly affected (see *paragraphs 6.3.20 to 6.3.23 and 6.5.22 in the AIES*).

q: The scheme would not affect the management of the site or any habitat significantly used by mobile species from the site during either the construction or operational phases. Invasive species have been recorded near the scheme but best practice construction techniques would control spread of such species where present during the construction phase (see *paragraphs 6.4.6 and 6.6.9 to 6.6.12 in the AIES*).

r: Other projects in the area (e.g. large residential developments) could conceivably act in combination to affect habitat used by mobile species from the site or through changes to water quantity and quality. The abundance of suitable habitat in the area and distance from the site however make it unlikely that any in-combination effects on the site would occur. As the effects of the scheme are likely to be beneficial for changes in the water environment, no in-combination effects are predicted (see *paragraphs 6.2.10; 6.3.24; 6.4.6; 6.5.22 and 6.6.11 in the AIES*).