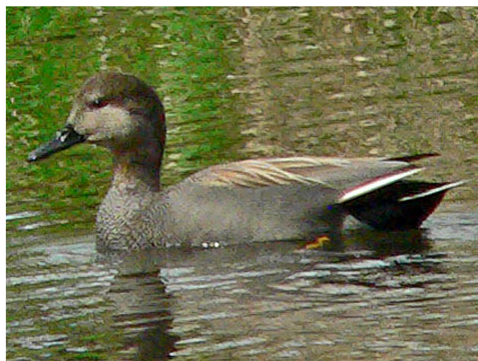




London Borough of Waltham Forest  
**Walthamstow Town Centre Area Action  
Plan – Habitats Regulations Assessment  
of the Inspector’s Main Modifications**

Report  
February 2014



## Revision Schedule

### **Habitats Regulations Assessment** February 2014

Rev	Date	Details	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by
01	February 2014	First Issue	<b>Dr Graeme Down</b> Ecologist	<b>Dr James Riley</b> Principal Ecologist	<b>Dr Jo Hughes</b> Technical Director
02	February 2014	Final Issue	<b>Dr Graeme Down</b> Ecologist	<b>Dr James Riley</b> Principal Ecologist	<b>Dr Jo Hughes</b> Technical Director

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background to the Project

- 1.1.1 The Walthamstow Town Centre Area Action Plan was subjected to Examination in Public. As a result of that process, the planning inspector has directed the Council to make nineteen main modifications and a series of minor modifications. The Area Action Plan was subjected to Habitats Regulations Assessment which concluded that it would not result in a likely significant effect on any European sites.
- 1.1.2 For completeness, and to ensure that the original HRA conclusion still applies, the major modifications to the AAP have also been subjected to HRA. That is the purpose of this report. By definition the minor modifications make changes of wording and presentational detail but not policy substance to the AAP and therefore it is not necessary for them to be subjected to HRA. The minor modifications are therefore not discussed further in this report.

## 1.2 Current Legislation

- 1.2.1 The need for Habitats Regulations Assessment is set out within Article 6 of the EC Habitats Directive 1992, and interpreted into British law by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. The ultimate aim of the Directive is to “*maintain or restore, at favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of Community interest*” (Habitats Directive, Article 2(2)). This aim relates to habitats and species, not the European sites themselves, although the sites have a significant role in delivering favourable conservation status.
- 1.2.2 The Habitats Directive applies the precautionary principle to European sites. Plans and projects can only be permitted having ascertained that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the site(s) in question. Plans and projects may still be permitted if there are no alternatives to them and there are Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) as to why they should go ahead. In such cases, compensation would be necessary to ensure the overall integrity of the site network.
- 1.2.3 In order to ascertain whether or not site integrity will be affected, an Appropriate Assessment should be undertaken of the plan or project in question:

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**Box 1. The legislative basis for Appropriate Assessment****Habitats Directive 1992**

Article 6 (3) states that:

*“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives.”*

**Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010**

The Regulations state that:

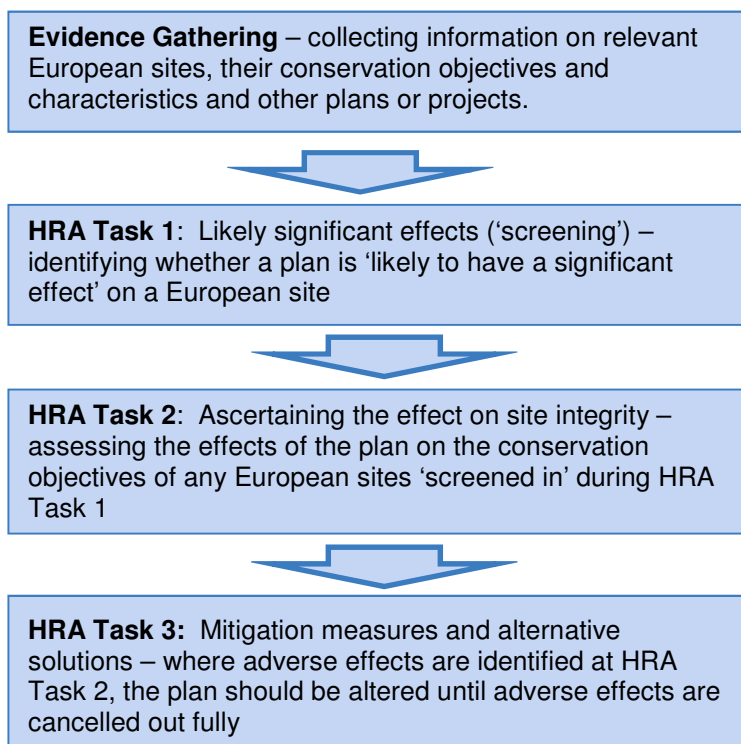
*“A competent authority, before deciding to ... give any consent for a plan or project which is likely to have a significant effect on a European site ... shall make an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of that site's conservation objectives... The authority shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the European site”.*

- 1.2.4 Over the years the phrase ‘Habitats Regulations Assessment’ (HRA) has come into wide currency to describe the overall process set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, from screening through to IROPI. This has arisen in order to distinguish the process from the individual stage described in the law as an ‘appropriate assessment’. Throughout this report we use the term Habitat Regulations Assessment for the overall process and restrict the use of Appropriate Assessment to the specific stage of that name.

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The HRA has been carried out in the continuing absence of formal central Government guidance, although general EC guidance on HRA does exist<sup>1</sup>. The former Department for Communities and Local Government released a consultation paper on the Appropriate Assessment of Plans in 2006<sup>2</sup>. As yet, no further formal guidance has emerged. However, Natural England has produced its own internal guidance<sup>3</sup> as has the RSPB<sup>4</sup>.
- 2.1.2 Figure 2 below outlines the stages of HRA according to current draft CLG guidance. The stages are essentially iterative, being re-visited as necessary in response to more detailed information, recommendations and any relevant changes to the plan until no significant adverse effects remain.



**Figure 2. Four-Stage Approach to Habitat Regulations Assessment**

Source: CLG, 2006

<sup>1</sup> European Commission (2001): Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive.

<sup>2</sup> CLG (2006) Planning for the Protection of European Sites, Consultation Paper

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.ukmpas.org/pdf/practical\\_guidance/HRGN1.pdf](http://www.ukmpas.org/pdf/practical_guidance/HRGN1.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Dodd A.M., Cleary B.E., Dawkins J.S., Byron H.J., Palframan L.J. and Williams G.M. (2007) *The Appropriate Assessment of Spatial Plans in England: a guide to why, when and how to do it*. The RSPB, Sandy.

## 2.2 HRA Task 1 – Screening for Likely Significant Effects (LSE)

- 2.2.1 The first stage of any Habitat Regulations Assessment is a Likely Significant Effect (LSE) test - essentially a risk assessment or screening exercise to decide whether the full subsequent stage known as Appropriate Assessment is required. The essential question is:

*"Is the Plan, either alone or in combination with other relevant projects and plans, likely to result in a significant effect upon European sites?"*

- 2.2.2 The objective is to 'screen out' those plans and projects that can, without any detailed appraisal, be said to be unlikely to result in significant adverse effects upon European sites, usually because there is no mechanism for an adverse interaction with European sites.
- 2.2.3 Since this assessment is within the context of an existing Core Strategy and associated HRA, we have also used this screening exercise as the basis to confirm that there are no new mechanisms for any likely significant effects on European sites which might arise from the further details of development contained within the AAP that were not identified at the Core Strategy level and thus addressed by avoidance or mitigation measures included within Core Strategy policy.

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## 3 Screening

- 3.1.1 The following tables present the screening assessments for each modification. Green shading in the final column indicates a modification that has been screened out of further consideration due to the absence of any mechanism for an adverse effect on European sites. Orange shading indicates the need for further consideration.

**Table 5. HRA Screening of the Walthamstow Town Centre AAP Modifications**

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
MM1	<p>Change the name of the 'Strategic Objectives' to 'Walthamstow Town Centre Area Action Plan Objectives' Therefore the newly named objectives should be renumbered e.g. WTCO1 etc.</p> <p>Add the following sentence after the first sentence of paragraph 9.1: The AAP is a key mechanism to enable the delivery of the aims and objectives of the Core Strategy.</p> <p>Include an 'Area Wide policies map after 'Strategic Objectives' box.</p>	There is no mechanism for a likely significant effect to arise from this change as it concerns presentation details of the AAP.
MM2	<p>Delete part b of the policy WTC2 as follows:</p> <p>Encourage housing and HMOs above shops or on the upper floors of buildings, particularly along High Street and Hoe Street; and</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>Amend paragraph 9.5 as follows:</p> <p><b>An increase in housing numbers and intensification</b><del>Housing-led mixed use developments will</del> <b>create a critical mass and</b> add to the vitality of the town centre. Mixed use development <b>which includes retail and restaurants uses</b> will enhance the retail function of the centre, stimulate the evening/weekend economy, provide community uses and prevent 'dead' zones within the centre. <del>Where sites are proposed for mixed use schemes we will seek that the non residential uses are located on the ground and lower floors and that new homes be built above on the upper floors.</del></p> <p>Amend first sentence of paragraph 9.6 as follows:</p> <p><b>In accordance with policy CS2</b>, we will seek to make the most efficient and effective use of land in the centre. We will seek to optimise housing densities in accordance with the London Plan (2012) density matrix. Walthamstow is a</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>location where higher housing densities are considered to be acceptable. Housing densities should be appropriate to the character and context of the Walthamstow area and should protect the amenity of occupiers and surrounding properties. As a general rule, higher density development should be focused around the Walthamstow Central transport hub.</p> <p>Amend third sentence of paragraph 9.7 paragraph as follows:</p> <p>However, to ensure that Walthamstow develops as a mixed and balanced community, <b>where practical</b> the Council will seek to ensure that all housing developments within the centre <del>does</del> provide larger family homes (3 bed plus) on site in accordance with DM5 - Housing Mix.</p> <p>Amend paragraph 9.8 paragraph as follows:</p> <p>In accordance with CS2 and DM3, we aim to maximise the number of quality affordable homes <b>in the town centre</b> by <del>we will seek a tenure mix of 60% affordable/social rented and 40% intermediate housing.</del> In accordance with CS2, rents on affordable rented properties need to be 'significantly lower' than market housing rents. <del>Within the intermediate tenure it is the Council's preference for this to be in the form of Shared Ownership housing.</del> Shared ownership housing helps people who cannot afford to buy a home outright.</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>Through shared ownership residents buy a share of the property and pay a rent on the remaining share. Gradually, over time, a resident can buy further shares in the property until they eventually own the home outright. This will <b>seek to</b> increase home ownership opportunities within the centre, which in turn will reduce the level of population churn in the area. This will encourages community cohesion and stability. <del>Shared ownership homes must be affordable to residents in the borough who are in housing need.</del></p> <p>Delete paragraph 9.9 as follows:</p> <p>Within the centre much of the existing housing is above existing shops. Such housing can revitalise town centres, provide natural overlooking thus improving safety and security for people and provide additional customers for local businesses. <del>In accordance with DM6 – Dwelling Conversions,</del> <b>w</b><del>We</del> propose to continue to support housing above shops either through the conversion of storage space above shops or through building new homes on top of existing buildings within the centre. <del>We will also support HMOs above shops in accordance with our overall strategy in relation to the management of HMOs in the borough.</del></p> <p>Implementation Plan - Town Centre Neighbourhood - Action 6</p> <p>Delete action 6</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA																																																
	<p>Insert to following table and additional paragraph after paragraph 9.5 as follows:</p> <p><b>Table 1 – Housing delivery in WTC AAP</b></p> <table><tr><th>Site Type</th><th colspan="5">Net Capacity (No. of proposed units less demolished units)</th></tr><tr><th></th><th>Total</th><th colspan="4">Financial Year</th></tr><tr><th></th><th></th><th>2011</th><th>2015</th><th>2020</th><th>2025 onwards</th></tr><tr><th></th><th></th><th>-</th><th>-</th><th>-</th><th></th></tr><tr><th></th><th></th><th>2014</th><th>2019</th><th>2024</th><th></th></tr><tr><td><b>S i t e s designated in WTC AAP (large sites)</b></td><td>1599</td><td>121</td><td>504</td><td>674</td><td>300</td></tr><tr><td><b>S i t e s designated in WTC AAP (small sites)</b></td><td>113</td><td>0</td><td>113</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td><b>Large sites not designated in</b></td><td>69</td><td>69</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr></table>	Site Type	Net Capacity (No. of proposed units less demolished units)						Total	Financial Year						2011	2015	2020	2025 onwards			-	-	-				2014	2019	2024		<b>S i t e s designated in WTC AAP (large sites)</b>	1599	121	504	674	300	<b>S i t e s designated in WTC AAP (small sites)</b>	113	0	113	0	0	<b>Large sites not designated in</b>	69	69	0	0	0	
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	<p>the AAP but with its boundary</p> <table><tr><td>Small sites</td><td>274</td><td>148</td><td>31</td><td>47</td><td>48</td></tr><tr><td>n o t designated in the AAP but with its boundary</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>2055</td><td>338</td><td>648</td><td>721</td><td>348</td></tr></table> <p>As it can be seen from table 1 above the majority of housing will be delivered on the identified Opportunity Sites within the AAP. In addition, units will be delivered through means such as the conversion of the space above shops and other smaller housing developments.</p>	Small sites	274	148	31	47	48	n o t designated in the AAP but with its boundary						Total	2055	338	648	721	348	
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Total	2055	338	648	721	348															

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
MM3	<p>Amend Policy WTC3 part D as follows:</p> <p><del>Resist the loss of any retail floorspace within the Selborne Walk 'Shopping Precinct';</del></p> <p>For any floorspace within the The Selborne Walk 'Shopping Precinct' to change use from A1 retail the council will require the applicant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Demonstrate that the proposed use is capable of attracting a significant number of shoppers/visitors to the centre;</li> <li>* Demonstrate that there is an overriding need (as justified by evidence) for the proposed use or activity in the centre;</li> <li>* Demonstrate how the proposed use contributes to the Council's regeneration objectives, aspirations and priorities of Walthamstow Town Centre; and</li> <li>* Demonstrate how the proposed use will contribute to the vitality and viability and shoppers' experience of the shopping centre and Walthamstow town centre generally.</li> </ul> <p>Delete this part F of the policy as follows:</p> <p><del>Encourage the re-use of vacant units within the centre, particularly in the 'St James Street Quarter';</del></p> <p>Amend the part G of the policy as follows:</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>Resist the sub-division of <del>larger</del> units within the Primary Shopping Frontage and 'Shopping Precinct'; and</p> <p>New addition bullet point to policy WTC3 after h:</p> <p><b>Support the combining of units within the 'Shopping Precinct' in order to create 'larger' retail units in the town centre.</b></p> <p>New bullet point to policy WTC3 after h. as follows:</p> <p><b>The Council will support the development of small (200sq.m or less) storage and distribution units within St James Street Quarter and storage space within an existing unit, for the purposes of collection and distribution of online goods, in the primary and secondary shopping frontages.</b></p> <p>Additional justification after paragraph 10.35 as follows:</p> <p><b>Strategic and Distribution</b></p> <p><b>In the UK less than half of retail spending now takes place on high streets. The U.K. Internet economy represented 7.2% of U.K sales. This share is likely to grow by about 10% annually and it is estimated that it will reach 10% of GDP</b></p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>by 2015. These changes in future retail demand provide an opportunity to broaden the role and function of Walthamstow town centre. The Council will therefore support uses such as 'click and collect' initiatives in the town centre to accommodate this changing demand. 'Click and Collect' initiatives are where items are ordered online and specified for collection at a designated specified location.</p> <p>Add a new paragraph after 10.23 to state:</p> <p><b>Independent Traders</b></p> <p>The Council seeks to support existing independent traders and to encourage new independent traders to locate within the centre. While Independent traders are welcomed throughout the town centre, the Council will actively encourage independent traders to locate on the Market and in the St James Street Quarter. In order to support the development of the Market and St James Street Quarter (see paragraph 10.23) the Council will encourage</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p><b>independent traders to locate here in order to develop a distinct 'offer', improve the retail 'offer', add vibrancy and creating a unique identity.</b></p> <p>Amend paragraph 10.12 as follows:</p> <p>The second site is the existing Selborne Walk Shopping Centre located in the heart of the centre and <del>primary shopping frontage</del> is designated as 'Shopping Precinct' frontage. The Mall has indicated a legitimate need to expand in order to protect its market share. <del>The focus of retail will remain the eastern end of the High Street as it maximises the benefit from pedestrian movement from Walthamstow bus and train stations.</del></p>	
MM4	<p>Amend policy WTC4 part A as follows:</p> <p>Develop Opportunity Sites identified and designated for leisure, entertainment and cultural uses in sections 16 - 33 to provide approximately 6-7,000 sq.m of new leisure, entertainment and cultural floorspace.</p> <p>Amend policy WTC4 part b i as follows:</p> <p>Actively encouraging and <b>supporting</b> A3 and D2 uses within this frontage.</p>	<p>There is no mechanism for a likely significant effect to arise from this change which is concerned only with social usage, social infrastructure and some details of retail matters.</p>

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>Amend policy WTC4 part c i as follows:</p> <p>Actively encouraging and supporting A3, B1, and D2 and social infrastructure uses within this frontage.</p> <p>Additional point to Policy WTC4 after part b i as follows:</p> <p><b>The Council will resist A2 uses with this frontage.</b></p> <p>Amend Policy WTC4 part c iii as follows:</p> <p>Encouraging the development of smaller retail premises, generally resisting the combining of any units and requiring at least 80% of the retail provision units within this frontage to remain in unit sizes of less than 80 sq.m or less in size.</p> <p>Additional point to Policy WTC4 after part c iii as follows:</p> <p><b>The Council will resist A2 uses with this frontage.</b></p> <p>Additional point to Policy WTC4 after part c iii as follows:</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>Where business (B1) use is proposed within the 'St James Street Quarter', it should seek to encourage 'active frontages' and be in keeping with the street scene. Therefore, frontages to business uses should be in the style of a retail shop front.</p> <p>Amend paragraph 10.13 as follows:</p> <p>Any extension (or increase in retail floorspace inside the shopping centre) to the shopping centre. Such an extension would provide the opportunity to provide not only additional floorspace, but also provide larger retail units which will attract retailers with higher space requirements who are not able to locate within the centre as there are no suitably sized units currently within the primary shopping frontage or 'Shopping Precinct'. Both the Princess Foundation Masterplan (2007) and the MacCreanor Lavington and Gort Scott Masterplan (2011) explored the potential for expansion of the shopping centre.</p> <p>Amend paragraph 10.17 as follows:</p> <p>Due to the historical development of the centre, the nature of the size of retail units is are 'small'. While this has other positive impacts it can undermine retail development and quality as 'higher quality' retail multiple retailers do not have sufficiently</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>sized units to allow them to locate within the centre. In order to improve the quality of the retail offer, we will require the provision of 'larger' modern retail units within any extension to 'Selborne Walk Shopping Precinct'. We consider a 'larger' retail unit to be of 400 sq.m or more. The provision of 'larger' modern units will provide 'higher end' retailers with sufficiently size units to be able to locate within the town centre. In addition, in order to maintain sufficiently sized units we will protect the existing 'larger' retail units within the centre by resisting the sub -division of 'larger' units and support the combining of 'smaller' units within the 'Primary Shopping Frontage' and Shopping Precinct.</p> <p>Add the following sentence to the end of the paragraph 10.18 as follows:</p> <p>This masterplan should particularly address servicing arrangements and improvements to the permeability and access ability in the town centre.</p> <p>New paragraph after 10.18 as follows:</p> <p><b>Diversification of Uses</b></p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>It is widely accepted that high streets aren't just about shopping. They need to accommodate and provide space for other uses and activities. We want to create a town centre that people choose to use. Success on this front will rely on creating people friendly public realm and on updating and inventing a supportive economy of civic and cultural infrastructure and attractions. We seek to promote the centre for uses such as educational, recreational and cultural. Diversifying the uses on or near the High Street will broaden the appeal of the centre and give people more reasons to visit and use the centre on a day to day basis.</p> <p>Amend the paragraph 10.19 as follows:</p> <p><del>We aim</del>In order to build upon the existing level of retail floorspace and <del>will aim to</del> upgrade and improve the overall quality of the retail offer in an effort to strengthen and improve Walthamstow's regional market positioning and it's overall market share. In accordance with policy CS14 and DM26, we will continue to maintain a balance of uses within the centre through strong management of the Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages. Figure 10.3 sets out the shopping frontage designations. There are a number of retail units located on the periphery of the centre (outside of the retail frontages). These retail units draws retail activity away from the retail core of the centre broadening the retail focus of the centre. We will actively</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>seek to encourage these uses to relocate within the designated shopping frontages within centre. We will do this by marketing and promotion of sites to local businesses as they come forward. In addition, to further focus the retail within the core of the centre, the ground floor shop frontages located within the current Selborne Walk Shopping Centre is designated as a 'Shopping Precinct'. The Selborne Walk Shopping Centre is a purpose built shopping centre and as such and we will resist the permanent loss of any retail floorspace within the designated frontage of the 'Shopping Precinct'. <del>Proposals for A3 Non-retail units such as restaurants should continue to be located on the upper floor or in a dedicated section (food court). In the 'food court' area.</del></p> <p>Amend the final sentence of paragraph 10.20 as follows:</p> <p>The further diversification of the economy will broaden the local economy and increase the number and range of job opportunities within the centre.</p> <p>Amend the first sentence of paragraph 10.21 as follows:</p> <p><b>In accordance with the London Plan</b>, we aim to develop Walthamstow as a regional visitor destination with a 'more than locally significant night-time cluster'.</p> <p>Amend the paragraph 10.22 as follows:</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>The Arcade, EMD Cinema and HSBC sites are offers an unrivalled and unique opportunity to develop <del>the town centre</del> <b>as a regional visitor destination</b> given the fact they are located in extremely close proximity to one another and are close to the transport hub of Walthamstow Central. It is our ambition that the uses on these sites should have synergy and a complementary offer to each other. The combination of these schemes will act as the catalyst for the regeneration of the area through generating increased visits, footfall and spend in the town centre and making Walthamstow a more desirable place to live as the leisure offer is improved and increased. <b>As stated in the policy 7.9 of the London Plan (2011), regeneration schemes should identify and make use of heritage assets and reinforce the qualities that make them significant so they can stimulate environmental, economic and community regeneration.</b>The EMD Cinema is critical to regenerating the town centre, developing a regional appeal and attracting large numbers of people from all parts of London and elsewhere. Firstly, the EMD Cinema has an exceptional interior, which would provide a magnificent atmosphere for entertainment if restored. Secondly, the building has the capacity to adapt to meet modern requirements and, in so doing, create an attractive facility that mixes historic with contemporary. Thirdly, the building also offers a unique experience as it is the only place in Britain where it is possible to regularly see cinema in a largely unaltered 1930s super cinema, an experience that was a dominant part of cultural life of London and the rest of the country for about four decades (Geddes 2012). In order to support the development of this</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>location as a regional visitor destination, we <del>will</del> have designated frontages as a 'Leisure and Entertainment Hub' (10.3). In order to support this designation, we will actively encourage <b>and support</b> leisure, entertainment, cultural, restaurant and cafés uses to locate in this frontage (see proposals WTCP 5,6,7). We will further support this designation by allowing no less than 30% of the frontage to be for retail (A1) uses.</p> <p>Amend the paragraph 10.23 as follows:</p> <p><b>The Council seeks to support existing independent shops and to encourage new independent shops to locate within the centre.</b> We also seek to establish a 'St James Street Quarter' at the western end of the High Street. This area of the High Street already has a significant number of existing independent traders, restaurants, cafés and ethnic food shops and is a Conservation Area (figure 10.2). Establishing the 'St James Street Quarter' will bring added vibrancy and a different offer to this part of the centre creating its own identity. In order to support the development of this end of the High Street we will designate this area as the 'St James Street Quarter'. In order to support this designation, we will actively encourage <b>and support</b> cultural uses, small start up businesses (B1) and restaurant and cafes uses to locate in this frontage. We will further support this by designation by allowing no less than 30% of the frontage to be for retail (A1) uses. Business uses can</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>further support the development of the 'St James Street Quarter' by creating commercial activity and a creative element. <del>Where business use is proposed within the 'St James Street Quarter', it should seek to encourage 'active frontages' and be in keeping with the street scene. Therefore, frontages to business uses should be in the style of a retail shop front. See our Shop Front guidance for further information.</del> In addition, in order to maintain its unique character, <b>support independent retailers/business owners</b> and maintain the areas diversity, we will seek to protect and <del>providesupport</del> small unit sizes in this <del>designation</del> area. The agglomeration of units <del>will</del><b>can</b> seriously erode the diversity of offer and the nature of the area and as such <b>we will generally resist the combining of units in this area</b> and seek to ensure that 80% of units within this frontage are no larger than 80 sq.m. In addition, we will encourage the development of smaller units in this area. The St James Street Quarter will be further supported by the incorporation of niche stalls and traders within the market at this end of the market on the High Street. In addition, the South Grove development will create additional footfall both during the day and the evening helping to sustain and add the vitality and viability of the end of the High Street. <b>We will seek to ensure that access and permeability from South Grove to the High Street is greatly improved. We will also seek funding sources to further preserve and enhance the conservation areas at this end of the High Street.</b></p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>Amend heading before paragraph 10.31 as follows:</p> <p>Hot food Takeaway, Estate Agents and Betting Shops</p> <p>Delete last sentence of paragraph 10.31 as follows:</p> <p><del>Units within the 'St James Street Quarter' will be particularly targeted through this initiative.</del></p> <p>-</p> <p>Additional policy bullet points numbered WTC4 b ii and WTC4 c iv to state:</p> <p><b>No more than 5% of uses shall consist of A5 uses in accordance with policy DM24, DM26 and paragraph 10.31.</b></p> <p>Amend Paragraph 10.31 as follows:</p> <p>Strong concerns relating to the recent growth in the number and concentration of betting shops, Estate Agents and Hot Food Takeaways in the centre have been raised by the local community. There are currently a high number and concentration of such uses within the centre. As stated previously, A2 services which include Estate Agents and are overrepresented (15.8%) in the town centre. In addition, the town centre has seen a 43% rise in the number of betting</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p><b>shops within the town centre in the last five years.</b> There are concerns that this use of retail frontage and associated behaviour have a negative impact on the centre and undermine its vitality and viability. <del>Further development of betting shops and hot food takeaways will not be supported.</del> Proposals for betting shops and hot food takeaways should be in accordance with Development Management Policy DM26 - Managing Changes of Use in Town Centres and policy DM24 - Health and Well Being. In line with DM24, no more than 5% of units within the 'St James Street Quarter' and 'Leisure and Entertainment Hub' shall consist of A5 uses.</p>	
MM5	<p>Amend paragraph 10.35 as follows:</p> <p><del>The Core Strategy (2012) proposes that Approximately 3,800 10,000 sqm of new employment commercial floorspace should be provided within the centre. In accordance with policy CS8 and DM20, in order to support new business and commercial uses we will seek to protect the existing employment areas in the centre. We will seek to protect the existing uses within the designated Borough Employment Areas of which includes Hatherley Mews and East London Office centre. We want to harness the dynamism and adaptability of new SMEs. We want</del></p> <p><b>to reveal and value the vibrancy and economic resilience they represent, to ensure they play a central role in the future diversification and regeneration of the town centre.</b></p>	<p>There is no mechanism for a likely significant effect to arise from this change which add clarity to issues of employment floorspace but do not alter the overall quantum of employment development being delivered through the AAP.</p>

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
MM6	<p>Additional bullet point to policy WTC6 after g as follows:</p> <p><b>H. Improve the integration of the bus station with Selborne Road and Hoe Street.</b></p> <p>Additional bullet point to policy WTC6 after newly inserted h (see above) as follows:</p> <p><b>I. Extension of Queens Road Station platform and the creation of an entrance/exit on the northern side of the Chingford to Liverpool Street rail line.</b></p> <p>Additional wording to WTC6 part c as follows:</p> <p>Simplify the layout of the the gyratory system on Hoe Street to reduce traffic congestion, improve traffic flows within the centre and improve the pedestrian and cycling environment and <b>strengthen the bridge over the Chingford to Liverpool Street Line;</b></p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
MM7	<p>Amend part a of policy WTC7 as follows:</p> <p>Improve permeability and support a range of improvements to promote and enhance the environment for pedestrians and cyclists (also see policy WTC8) as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Establish a pedestrian and cycle link between Queens Road station and Walthamstow Central station;</li> <li>ii. We will also seek to create more routes through/under the rail line to improve north/south links;</li> <li>iii. Improved pedestrian and cycle links to Walthamstow Village and Walthamstow Wetlands;</li> <li>iv. Improved permeability as part of the redevelopment proposals at South Grove and Brunner Road Industrial Units by improve existing and creating new links from these site into the High Street and to St James Street Station;</li> <li>v. We would seek to ensure that these routes are safe, secure and attractive. Improve the key junctions of entrance/exit of Walthamstow overground bus station,</li> </ul>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>Hoe Street/Selborne Road/Station Approach, Hoe Street and Church Hill and High Street and Palmerston Road;</p> <p>vi. We will introduce a number of traffic calming measures to reduce speed limits within the centre, particularly on Hoe Street, Palmerston Road, South Grove and St James Street in order to slow traffic and make roads safer and more attractive to other road users; and</p> <p>vii. Adequate safe and secure cycle parking will be incorporated in the centre as part of public realm improvements and new development.</p> <p>Delete part c of the policy WTC7 as follows:</p> <p><del>Require new development to provide Transport Assessments and Travel Plans in accordance with Development Management Policy DM14 – Co-Ordinating Land Use.</del></p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
MM8	<p>Additional bullet point to policy WTC8 after c as follows:</p> <p><b>D. Where proposals support the regeneration and sustainable transport objectives of the plan, support will be give to proposals that result in the loss of parking within the town centre.</b></p> <p>Delete part c of policy WTC8 as follows:</p> <p><del>Ensure that all new retail, leisure, community and cultural uses provide levels of car and cycle parking in accordance with DM17 and appendix 4.</del></p> <p>-</p> <p>Amend paragraph 11.10 as follows:</p> <p>Whilst the town centre is generally accessible by public transport, walking and cycling many people arrive and will continue to arrive at the centre by car. Retailers and market traders within the centre rely on sufficient provision of parking for their customers and servicing. Whilst significant and co-ordinated effort is needed to minimise growth in private car use, such efforts must be balanced against the operational needs of businesses operating within the centre. Proposals for non-housing uses should seek to limit the provision of parking in accordance with sustainable transport principles.</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>Parking and loading do have an important role to play in our high streets. However, an increasing body of research evidence indicates that other factors, such as the quality of the local environment, type and mix of shops may be much more influential in people's choice of shopping locations. Recent studies conducted in London have found that the share of shoppers arriving by public transport, walking and cycling is greater than that of those that come by car (walking is the most important mode for accessing local town centres). Transport for London has found that while car drivers spend more on a single trip, walkers and bus users spend more over a week or a month. In 2011, in London town centres, walkers spent £147 more per month than those travelling by car. Compared with 2004, spending by public transport users and walkers has risen; spending by car users has decreased. Shoppers often cite traffic congestion as making an urban centre location unattractive, so it is important to ensure an appropriate balance between convenience for drivers and the needs of others. While parking will be a factor in shaping the future of our high streets, car ownership is declining across London (and in Waltham Forest), and the Council is keen to ensure that our town centres are attractive to people arriving by a variety of transport modes. Parking on the public highway can obstruct buses and create safety hazards for pedestrians and cyclists. Our parking management system is designed to ensure efficient, safe, fair and sustainable use of limited road and parking space. New retail, employment uses, tourism, cultural, leisure and entertainment uses will have to meet the parking standards as set out in Development Management policy DM17 - Parking.</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
MM9	<p>Amend WTC11 part b as follows:</p> <p>-</p> <p>Improve and enhance new shop fronts and fascias located on Hoe Street and High Street in accordance with High Street Life (2011).</p> <p>In order to improve and enhance the street scene and public realm generally the Council will seek to apply the following principles to new shop fronts within the AAP boundary:</p> <p>i. Avoid boxed fascia signs and keep fascia signage within the original shop framework (usually between the cornice and top of the pilaster);</p> <p>ii. Reinstall original pilasters and cornices where they have been removed;</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>iii. Preserve and repair good quality or original shop fronts and features;</p> <p>iv. Where possible clean brickwork of upper building facades and avoid painting, particularly in the Walthamstow St James Conservation Area;</p> <p>v. Where possible use traditional materials that are in keeping with the age and heritage of the building;</p> <p>vi. Where possible make shop entrances accessible to all;</p> <p>vii. Where proposed, awnings should be compatible with the character of the original building in relation to size, shape, position and style;</p> <p>viii. In the Walthamstow St James Conservation Area stall risers should be retained and reinstated where they have been removed. In all other areas within the AAP boundary, stall raisers are preferred,</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>however where a modern look is required laminated security glass extending to ground level may be acceptable;</p> <p>ix. Window displays should be visible at night and therefore security glass is preferable to security shutters. Where shutters are required internal shutters are preferred. However all forms of shutter must be open in nature such as brick bond. Solid or perforated shutters will not generally be acceptable except where security is a particular issue, or where the shop is open in design. When providing roller shutters any housing must be concealed behind the fascia, or if this is not practicable its projection minimised;</p> <p>x. Where possible upper floor windows made from uPVC/aluminium should be replaced with timber sashes/casements as appropriate, particularly in the Walthamstow St James Conservation Area;</p> <p>xi. Relocate air conditioner units and satellite dishes away from the façade;</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>xii. Corner shops should take advantage of their location by providing window displays on both frontages that bring interest and vitality to the street scene; and</p> <p>xiii. Subdivision of shopfronts (including the incorporation of kiosk windows) should not negatively impact on the street scene and also relate to the proportions of the host building.</p> <p>Delete paragraph 12.23 as follows:</p> <p><del>In order to improve the streetscape, we seek to apply the following principles to new shop fronts and fascias within the town centre:</del></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><del>1. Shop front fascia signage to be uniform depth and aligned horizontally, or if on hill, stepped in line with stepping of properties;</del></li> <li><del>2. Reinstate original pilasters and cornices to shop fronts;</del></li> <li><del>3. Preserve and repair good quality shop fronts and features;</del></li> <li><del>4. Paint pilasters, consoles and windows a uniform colour;</del></li> </ol>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. New shop fronts to be made from timber with hand-painted sign Boards;</li> <li>6. Repaint / clean brickwork of upper building façade. Uniform paint colour throughout;</li> <li>7. Shop front entrances are made accessible to all;</li> <li>8. Relocate blade signage to higher level, to prevent interference with fascia signs;</li> <li>9. Through guidance, improve window displays, remove stickers and other intrusions on windows;</li> <li>10. Introduce fabric awnings, and replace where in poor condition, to encourage activities to spill onto High Street;</li> <li>11. Stall risers at low level preferred, otherwise glass at lower level to be laminated security glass;</li> <li>12. Introduce new security shutters where possible: to be internal to shop fronts and allow views of the window display when shop is closed;</li> <li>13. Replace PVC windows with timber sashes/ casements as appropriate;</li> <li>14. Relocate air conditioner units and satellite dishes away from Façade;</li> <li>15. Remove street lighting and fix to facades above shop fronts; and</li> <li>16. No "To Let" signs permitted on key segments of High Street.</li> </ul>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
	<p>Delete the 4th, 5th and 6th sentences of paragraph 12.25 as follows:</p> <p>We will seek to protect shop fronts which are located within 'Shop Front Character Areas' (figure 12.1). Shop fronts located within this parade have recently been improved and are considered to be high quality and special in character. We will seek to protect these shop fronts located within this parade by resisting inappropriate development which would detract and alter their special character. In order to provide sufficient protection we will apply an Article 4 Direction on properties located within this parade which will remove 'permitted development rights' to make changes to the shop fronts (and upper levels) and signage. This will mean that changes/amendments to shop fronts and signage will require planning permission. As 'permitted development rights' have been removed, no planning application fee will be charged. The Council will work with the shop keepers within this parade to ensure they have premises which meet their needs whilst still retaining the character of the parade.</p>	
MM10	<p>A new figure after figure 10.4 demonstrating the following:</p> <p>Map the Archaeological Priority Zone in the town centre. References in each Opportunity site to be deleted.</p>	There is no mechanism for a likely significant effect to arise from this change which is concerned with archaeology

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
MM11	<p>Amend the final sentence of paragraph 12.29 as follows:</p> <p>We will seek to preserves and enhance the Listed Buildings and other buildings of historic interest in the centre. We will also seek to ensure that development proposals in conservation areas preserve or enhance their character and appearance; retain buildings, trees and other features which make a positive contribution to their character and appearance and replace buildings, features and spaces that detract from their quality with sympathetic redevelopment, alterations and other improvement (note English Heritage's guidance on the Setting of Heritage Assets) In addition, we will also seek funding for 'projects' which will preserve and enhance'.</p> <p>Additional text to paragraph 12.32 as follows:</p> <p>A number of successful public art interventions have already been undertaken which include 'Street Gallery' initiative on 99p store on wall on High Street. Public art can be used to improve and 'activate' blank frontage.</p> <p>Amend WTC10 b to state:</p> <p>"development close to which forms the settings of heritage assets should...."</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
MM12	<p>Paragraph is proposed to be included after 12.25 under the heading:</p> <p><b>Building Heights</b></p> <p>In assessing future development proposals within the town centre the Council recognises the need for schemes to be sensitive to local character and the physical context of the area, whilst balancing these considerations against the wider regeneration objectives for the town centre and the need to promote growth and investment. Within this context, it is also recognised that, in seeking to meet the strategic objectives of the AAP, some areas within the town centre will be subject to significant potential change and intensification, sometimes involving proposals for higher buildings. Therefore in managing this change, the Council will adopt a plan-led approach in assessing proposed schemes of increased height and scale against the criteria set out in development plan policies CS15, DM29 and DM31. In particular, proposals involving higher buildings will need to be appropriately located, clearly demonstrate their approach to addressing impact on local character and context, and be of a high quality of urban and architectural design.</p>	<p>There is no mechanism for a likely significant effect to arise from this change which is concerned with building heights.</p>

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
MM13	<p>Amend paragraph 13.17 as follows:</p> <p>New development should meet the requirements set out in DM11 - Resource Efficiency and High Environmental Standards and DM35 - Water to ensure they contribute the development of a sustainable town centre. In particular, new development should reduce surface water run off and aim to achieve green run off rates in accordance with policy 5.13 of the London Plan (2011).</p> <p>Additional sentence to the end of paragraph 13.16 as follows:</p> <p>While the Council seek to increase access to the Wetlands they also seek to ensure and protect against this having a detrimental impact on the area.</p> <p>Amend paragraph 13.15, second sentence as follows:</p> <p>They are designated as both a RAMSAR site and Special Protection Area which demonstrates its international importance.</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
MM14	<p>Amend sentence as follows in Current Use:</p> <p><del>Social club and vacant petrol station</del></p> <p>Amend Retention of social paragraph as follows:</p> <p><del>Retention of social infrastructure</del></p> <p>-</p> <p><del>New proposals should include social infrastructure as part of redevelopment plans. Proposals should include, as a minimum, the existing level of floorspace currently provided on site.</del></p> <p>-</p> <p>New heading and sub text as follows after 'Commercial Use':</p> <p><b>Contamination</b></p> <p><b>Give the site's previous use as a petrol station, proposals should include removal/mitigation of contaminated underground storage tanks in order to provide an environment suitable for residential uses.</b></p> <p>Amend site plan as follows:</p> <p>Redraw site boundary to exclude social club.</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
MM15	<p>Amend 'proposed land use' as follows:</p> <p><del>Retail led extension(s)</del> Increase in retail floorspace with housing on the upper floors.</p> <p>Amend paragraph headed 'Larger Retail Units' as follows:</p> <p>Encourage larger retail units (400 sq.m and above) within the <del>primary retail retail frontage shopping precinct</del>, particularly within any extension of the Selborne Walk Shopping Centre. In addition, to further support the development of larger units the combination of units will be supported and whilst the sub-division of larger units will be resisted within the shopping precinct.</p> <p>Under the heading 'Green Roof' amend as follows:</p> <p>Redevelopment proposals should include a publicly accessible space and green roof to further compensate the loss of green space. In addition, the roof space could be used as a public space.</p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
MM16	<p>Additional text under the heading 'Anchor Store' as follows:</p> <p>South Grove offers the opportunity to develop an 'anchor store' which will draw retail footfall to this area of the centre and also result in 'linked trips' in this end of the High Street. An anchor store will create additional footfall both during the day and the evening helping to sustain and revitalise this end of the High Street and the development of the St James Street Quarter.</p> <p>Amend paragraph under 'Context' as follows:</p> <p>The under-utilised South Grove site...</p> <p>The immediate area is generally a mix of retail, office, storage.....</p> <p>Amend 'Retail Floorspace' as follows:</p> <p>Retail Floorspace: 5,000 - <del>7,000</del>10,000 sq.m net</p> <p>Amend 'Number of Units as follows:</p> <p>Number of Units: 90 - 250300</p> <p>Amend first sentence under the 'Activity' as follows::</p> <p>Where proposals include a superstore/foodstore and/or other large footprint uses....</p>	<p>There is no mechanism for a likely significant effect to arise from this change which is concerned only with shopping provision.</p>

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
MM17	<p>Amend first sentence under heading 'Proposed Use' as follows:</p> <p>A mixed use development including <del>retail</del>, commercial, social infrastructure and residential uses (including live/work).</p> <p>Additional text under the heading 'Compatible Uses' as follows:</p> <p>Given the existing uses and nature of this site, commercial uses are considered to be acceptable.</p> <p>Delete Retail Floorspace as follows:</p> <p><del>Retail Floorspace: 1,000 – 2,000 sq.m</del></p> <p>Delete Paragraph related to Retail Use as follows:</p> <p><del>Any provision of new retail floorpace on this site should seek to complement the retail offer on the South Grove site</del></p>	

Modification Number	Modification	Implications for HRA
MM18	<p>Amend 'Proposed Use' as follows:</p> <p>Residential led mixed use including retail and or restaurant uses and or social infrastructure.</p> <p>Amend final sentence under heading 'Activity' as follows:</p> <p><del>No residential</del> <b>Social Infrastructure</b> use: should be located in the ground floor with residential on the upper floors.</p>	There is no mechanism for a likely significant effect to arise
MM19	<p>Additional action as follows:</p> <p>Policy: WTC10</p> <p>Action: <del>Seek</del> funding for for enhancement and preservation of Conservation areas</p> <p>Phasing: Short/Medium</p> <p>Lead Partner: LBWF/English Heritage</p> <p>Funding: LBWF/Funding source</p> <p>Cost: L</p> <p>Amend Implementation Plan table as follows:</p> <p>Add a column called '<b>Strategic Objectives</b>' and inserting relevant strategic objectives of the plan with with the Actions of the Implementation Plan</p>	There is no mechanism for a likely significant effect to arise from this change which is concerned only with monitoring.

## **4 Conclusions of Screening**

- 4.1.1 It has been possible to conclude that a likely significant effect would not arise from any of these modifications as they do not alter the overall quantum and location of development and are concerned with matters that do not present an impact pathway linking to any European sites.

## Appendix 1: Background on European Sites Referenced in this Document

### Epping Forest SAC

#### Introduction

Epping Forest SAC covers over 1,600 ha of Essex and the London Borough of Waltham Forest, with 70% of the site consisting of broadleaved deciduous woodland. Epping Forest is one of only a few remaining large-scale examples of ancient wood-pasture in lowland Britain and has retained habitats of high nature conservation value including ancient semi-natural woodland, old grassland plains and scattered wetland. The semi-natural woodland is particularly extensive, forming one of the largest coherent blocks in the country. Most is characterised by groves of over-mature pollards and these exemplify all three of the main wood-pasture types found in Britain: beech-oak, hornbeam-oak and mixed oak. The Forest plains are also a major feature and contain a variety of unimproved acid grasslands, which have become uncommon elsewhere in Essex and the London area. In addition, Epping Forest supports a nationally outstanding assemblage of invertebrates, a major amphibian interest and an exceptional breeding bird community.

#### Features of European Interest<sup>5</sup>

The site is designated as an SAC for its:

- Beech forests on acid soils; an example of such habitat toward the north-east of its UK range, containing a notable selection of bryophytes, fungi and dead-wood invertebrates;
- Stag beetle (*Lucanus cervus*), for which this is one of only four known outstanding localities in the UK;
- Dry heaths; and
- Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath.

#### Historic Trends and Current Conditions

Deteriorating air quality and under-grazing are the two key pressures that currently affect the site. While recreational pressure is a considerable impact in some areas, these are localised; however, funding of management on the SAC is governed largely by donation and contributions from the Corporation of London and it is likely that the ability to adequately manage recreation on the SAC will come under increasing pressure as the population of northeast London, Epping Forest district and East Hertfordshire district increases.

Within the London Borough of Waltham Forest itself none of the SSSI management units that underpin the SAC are in favourable condition – some are considered to be recovering from unfavourable status, but others are showing no improvement or are declining. In all cases, poor

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<sup>5</sup> Features of European Interest are the features for which a European sites is selected. They include habitats listed on Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive, species listed on Annex II of the EC Habitats Directive and populations of bird species for which a site is designated under the EC Birds Directive.

air quality is cited in the most recent condition assessment process (2010) as a primary factor for this condition. There are localised concerns over recreational pressure, but the condition assessment reports state that the site would be able to withstand this in a more robust manner were it not for the stress imposed by atmospheric pollutants.

### Key environmental conditions

The following key environmental conditions have been identified for the maintenance of the interest features of Epping Forest SAC:

- Controlled recreational activity;
- Good air quality;
- Maintenance of grazing regimes;
- Unpolluted water;
- Absence of nutrient enrichment;
- Absence of non-native species.

## Lee Valley SPA and Ramsar

### Introduction

The Lee Valley comprises a series of embanked water supply reservoirs, sewage treatment lagoons and former gravel pits along approximately 24 km of the valley. These waterbodies support internationally important numbers of wintering gadwall and shoveler, while the reedbeds support a small but internationally important population of bittern.

The Lee Valley SPA/Ramsar consists of four Sites of Special Scientific Interest, of which Turnford and Cheshunt Pits SSSI, Rye Meads SSSI and Amwell Quarry SSSI all lie outside of Waltham Forest borough on the Hertfordshire/Essex border. Walthamstow Reservoirs SSSI lies within London Borough of Waltham Forest. The Special Protection Area is managed by the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority and by Thames Water.

The Walthamstow Reservoirs contain one of the country's major heronries and a particularly large concentration of breeding wildfowl. They are also an important gathering area for moulting tufted duck and in winter attract nationally significant populations of wildfowl and other wetland birds. They were mainly constructed in the latter half of the nineteenth century and comprise ten relatively small, shallow, water storage basins. Several of the reservoirs are fringed by sloping earth banks and these, together with the presence of wooded islands, form distinctive habitat features. The reservoirs serve an active part in Thames Water's strategic water supply infrastructure.

During the winter months the reservoirs are a favoured area for a variety of wetland birds and in particular, large numbers of wildfowl. The populations of shoveler and tufted duck consistently reach levels of national significance, while great crested grebe, pochard and coot also occur in important numbers. The shores of the reservoirs and the banks of the Coppermill Stream are of added interest for fringes of fenland vegetation containing species that are uncommon in Greater London.

## Features of European interest

Lee Valley is designated as a SPA due to its over-wintering populations of:

- Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*, 6 individuals representing at least 6.0% of the wintering population in Great Britain (5 year peak mean, 1992/3-1995/6)
- Gadwall *Anas strepera*, 515 individuals representing at least 1.7% of the wintering Northwestern Europe population (5 year peak mean 1991/2 - 1995/6)
- Shoveler *Anas clypeata*, 748 individuals representing at least 1.9% of the wintering Northwestern/Central Europe population (5 year peak mean 1991/2 - 1995/6)

The birds that winter on many Special Protection Areas/Ramsar sites (the Lee Valley being no exception) are not confined to the boundaries of the SPA, but in fact utilise areas of 'supporting habitat' located outside the boundaries and sometimes many kilometres distant..

Lee Valley qualifies as a Ramsar site under two criteria:

- **Criterion 2: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species or threatened ecological communities.** The site supports the nationally scarce plant species whorled water-milfoil *Myriophyllum verticillatum* and the rare or vulnerable invertebrate *Micronecta minutissima* (a water-boatman).
- **Criterion 6: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of waterbird.**
  - Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:  
Shoveler *Anas clypeata*, 287 individuals, representing an average of 1.9% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
  - Species with peak counts in winter:  
Gadwall *Anas strepera*, 445 individuals, representing an average of 2.6% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9- 2002/3)

## Historic Trends and Current Conditions

Although parts of the SPA currently experience high levels of visitor pressure, it is not currently deemed to be at levels that threaten the SPA/ Ramsar site<sup>6</sup>.

During the most recent condition assessment of the SSSI units that underpin the SAC (2008), the Walthamstow reservoirs were listed as recovering from unfavourable condition. The assessment noted that "There has been a slight fall in the number of breeding Grey Heron and Tufted Duck. Wintering Cormorant, Shoveler and Tufted Duck and breeding Pochard remain favourable. The site is in good condition and the fall in numbers is no reflection of site management."

## Key environmental conditions

The following key environmental conditions were identified for this site:

<sup>6</sup> JNCC (2000) Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands – Lee Valley <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/pdf/RIS/UK11034.pdf>

- Minimal disturbance
- Maintenance of grazing / mowing regimes
- Consistent freshwater flows and volumes
- Consistent water quality
- Good air quality
- Unpolluted water
- Absence of nutrient enrichment
- Absence of non-native species
- The maintenance of adequate supporting habitat outside the boundaries of the European site

It is understood that most of the off-site supporting habitat for gadwall and shoveler relates to nearby water bodies (i.e. within approximately 2 km). It is understood that bittern does not significantly utilise habitat outside the boundaries of the SPA/Ramsar site.