

**Core Strategy and Development Plan 2015 – 2033  
(CSDP) Examination**

**Statement of Common Ground  
as agreed between  
Sunderland City Council and  
Natural England**

**August 2019**

## Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared jointly between Sunderland City Council (the Council) and Natural England (NE).
- 1.2 The Statement sets out the confirmed points of agreement between the Council and NE with regards to Main Modifications proposed to the submitted Core Strategy and Development Plan (CSDP) 2015-2033 and the supporting Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

## Background

- 2.1 The Council submitted its CSDP in December 2018. As part of this, the Council submitted the city-wide HRA in support of the Plan (SD.10) and a supplementary HRA for North Sunderland Regeneration Areas (SP.70). These documents set out the mitigation required for site HGA8: Fulwell, however it was recognised that additional work was required to identify appropriate mitigation for site HGA7: North Hylton.
- 2.2 In December 2018, the Council, Natural England and Hellens Group signed a Statement of Common Ground (SD.8k) for this work to be prepared and submitted in advance of the examination hearing sessions.
- 2.3 Whilst preparing the additional HRA work to identify appropriate mitigation in consultation with Natural England, it became evident that the most appropriate form of mitigation would be for the development of site HGA7 to make a financial contribution towards the SAMM measures already identified for the other North Sunderland sites set out within SP.70.
- 2.4 The Council therefore prepared an updated HRA for the Plan (EX1.014) and a supplementary HRA for North Sunderland Regeneration sites (EX1.015) which identified the necessary mitigation for both HGA7 and HGA8, in addition to a number of other SHLAA sites within the Sunderland North spatial area. These documents were submitted to the Inspector in April 2019.
- 2.5 Following the conclusion of the Examination Hearing Sessions which took place in May and June 2019, the Inspector issued a note to the Council (EX18.002) setting out the Main Modifications which were considered necessary to make the CSDP 'sound'. This included, amongst other things, the removal of proposed site allocation HGA7: North Hylton.
- 2.6 In response to the Inspector's note, the Council published a note (EX18.003) setting out its proposals to consult on the Main Modifications proposed by the Inspector in addition to those agreed during the Examination Hearing sessions and in response to the Inspector's Preliminary Questions.
- 2.9 The Council has given consideration to proposed Schedule of Main Modifications and whether any of the proposed modifications would have any impact upon the HRA work previously undertaken in support of the CSDP.
- 2.10 It is considered that the only modification which would impact upon the HRA work is the removal of site HGA7, as it was proposed that this would contribute towards the SAMM measures identified within the updated HRA for North Sunderland Regeneration sites (EX1.015).

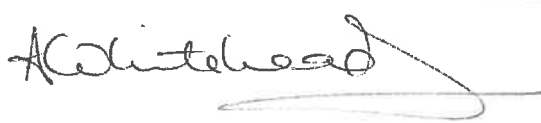
2.11 As the necessary HRA work was previously undertaken on the basis of the policies and allocations within the CSDP excluding site HGA7, it is considered that the submission documents from December 2018 (SD.10 and SP.70) provide an appropriate assessment of the HRA impacts resulting from the CSDP and identify an appropriate mitigation strategy for these impacts. These documents will therefore form the basis of the required mitigation.

## Agreed matters

3.1 The Council and NE are satisfied that the HRA report (SD.10) and HRA for North Sunderland Regeneration sites report (SP.70) provide an appropriate assessment of the potential impacts of the CSDP (as proposed to be amended through the Schedule of Main Modifications) upon the European designated sites.

## Statement of Common Ground

Signed on behalf of Sunderland City Council		
Name and position	Signature	Date
Catherine Auld Assistant Director of Economic Regeneration		23/8/2019

Signed on behalf of Natural England		
Name and position	Signature	Date
Andrew Whitehead Team Leader – Sustainable Development and Marine		21 August 2019