

Arnside & Silverdale National Landscape Management Plan 2026 - 2031

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

1.0 Overview

The EU Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna (92/43/EEC) were ratified into English law by means of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (The Habitats Regulations). The regulations include the identification and notification of sites of significant environmental importance. Within the UK these sites are designated Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), covering habitats and non-avian species and Special Areas of Protection, covering birds and their supporting habitats.

The directive, through section 24 of the Habitats Regulations requires that:

Where it appears to the appropriate nature conservation body....relates to an operation which forms part of a plan or project which:

- a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European 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*

It must make an appropriate assessment of the implication for that site in view of that site's conservation objectives.

In light of the conclusions of that assessment, it may give consent for the operation only after having ascertained that plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the site.

The basic intent of the regulations is to ensure that the proposed plan or project does not detrimentally impact the European protected site, that any risks are identified either alone or in combination, and the overall integrity of the site is maintained and where possible, enhanced.

The assessment is commonly known as a Habitats regulations assessment or HRA. Advice and Guidance on the completion of a HRA is provided by Natural England and the Local Government association.

2.0 HRA Approach

2.1 Plans or Projects

The first stage is to identify whether a plan or project would fall within the regulations.

The National Landscape Management plan is defined as a plan or project under the regulations and will require a HRA.

2.2 European Sites

Following identification as a plan or project, it must be determined whether the proposal may effect a European site, usually due to proximity or clear pathways for interaction. These pathways can be direct, in that the spatial area of the plan contains and/or overlaps European designated site boundaries or indirect, in that there is a clear pathway for interaction such as hydrological linkage or known ecological interactions between designated features (eg. birds). An assessment should also take into account land areas that have clear functional linkage in terms of habitat quality, connectivity and/or species populations with the designated site.

National Landscape Management Plan may have the potential to affect several European sites. The following initial screening outlines the sites within a 20km radius and identifies which will be subject to the HRA process.

European Sites within a 20km radius of Arnside & Silverdale National Landscape

European Site	Included?	Justification
Morecambe Bay Pavements SAC (UK0014777) ¹	Y	Within NL Boundary
Morecambe Bay SAC (UK0013027) ²	Y	Within NL Boundary
Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA (UK9020326)	Y	Within NL Boundary
Leighton Moss SPA (UK9005091)	Y	Within NL Boundary
Witherslack Mosses SAC (UK0030302) ³	N	Lowland Moss Habitat, upstream from NL with no identifiable pathways for impact or interaction
Roudsea Woods and Mosses SAC (UK0019834) ⁴	N	Lowland Moss Habitat, upstream from NL with no identifiable pathways for impact or interaction
Yewbarrow Woods SAC (UK0030306) ⁵	N	Woodland habitats, no identifiable pathways for impact.
Calf Hill and Crag Woods SAC (UK0030306) ⁶	N	Woodland habitats, no identifiable pathways for impact.
Bowland Fells SPA (UK9005151)	N	Upland bird features (Hen Harrier). No supporting habitat within NL and no recent records of species within NL
Ingleborough Complex SAC (UK0012782) ⁷	N	Limestone Pavement. No identifiable pathways for impact.
River Kent SAC (UK0030256) ⁸	Y	Riverine habitats and species. Upstream from NL. Small potential for interaction as River Kent catchment is within NL boundary.

2.3 HRA process

The HRA process is split into 4 broad stages:

- 1) **Screening** – initial assessment of the (in this case) plan policies against the site conservation objectives and designated features for likely significant adverse effect. If no likely significant adverse effect can be identified the process is complete and no further assessment is required. The potential for in-combination effects with other plans and/or policies should also be identified where relevant.
- 2) **Appropriate assessment** – any plan policies that have been identified as having a likely significant effect are assessed in more detail against the site features. Potential impacts and scale of impacts are identified, and mitigation measures are developed. Mitigation should be implemented prior to commencement of the plan and designed to reduce impacts to the lowest possible level.
- 3) **Derogation** – If no mitigation measures are identified and/or mitigation measures are not considered appropriate, compensatory measures may need to be developed providing that the plan policy is deemed to be of exceptional or overriding public interest. The derogation stage is complex and if reached, would likely need supplementary work to best define it and agree it with Natural England and other relevant statutory bodies.

¹ [Morecambe Bay Pavements - Special Areas of Conservation](#)

² [Morecambe Bay - Special Areas of Conservation](#)

³ [Witherslack Mosses - Special Areas of Conservation](#)

⁴ [Roudsea Wood and Mosses - Special Areas of Conservation](#)

⁵ [Yewbarrow Woods - Special Areas of Conservation](#)

⁶ [Calf Hill and Cragg Woods - Special Areas of Conservation](#)

⁷ [Ingleborough Complex - Special Areas of Conservation](#)

⁸ [River Kent - Special Areas of Conservation](#)

2.4 HRA Format

The HRA will take the form of a series of screening tables, each of the strategic objectives (and select actions) will be assessed against the protected site features. A judgement will be made as to whether the objective or outcome will have a likely significant effect (LSE) on the site feature, either alone or in combination with other objectives or actions. This LSE decision will be briefly justified.

The following categorisation is used for LSE screening:

LSE	Code
Objectives/actions are compatible	+
Objectives/actions are compatible in principle but may be subject to project-level HRA screening	-
No Likely Significant Effect as pathways for harm/interaction cannot be reasonably established	N
Likely Significant Effect, potentially requires mitigation measures (to be established through Appropriate Assessment)	LSE
Likely Significant Effect in combination with other action (state action), potentially requires mitigation measures (to be established through Appropriate Assessment)	LSE-IC

Where relevant, references are made to Conservation and Species Advice Packs (CSAP's). CSAP's are produced by Natural England and provide information, advice and guidance on management of European Sites. Actions that align with CSAP's are considered to be aligned with EU site objectives.

Any actions found to have an LSE will be re-assessed and mitigation proposed in a further appropriate assessment (AA) table.

3.0 HRA Screening

A&SNL Management Plan Strategic Objectives & Actions			Morecambe Bay Pavements SAC	Morecambe Bay SAC	River Kent SAC	Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA	Leighton Moss SPA	Notes on LSE decision
S1 Landscape & Seascape	1a	Primary Purpose	+	+	+	+	+	Primary purpose to conserve and enhance landscape compatible with EU site objective
	1b	Utilise LSCA	+	+	+	+	+	LSCA includes consideration of EU sites.
	1c	Principles of ELC	+	+	+	+	+	ELC includes consideration of EU sites
	1d	Improve understanding	+	+	+	+	+	Improvements in understanding relevant to landscape include improvements to understanding of EU sites contained within.
	1e	Tranquility	N	N	N	+	+	Tranquillity considered to be a factor in condition of SPA (Bird) – disturbance pressure
	1f	Dark Skies	N	N	N	+	+	Dark Skies considered to be a factor in condition of SPA – invertebrate prey, disturbance pressure
	1g	Climate Change projects	-	-	-	-	-	Subject to project-level HRA where applicable
	1h	CC adaptation planning	+	+	+	+	+	CC adaptation includes measures for EU sites
	1i	Support CC plans	+	+	+	+	+	Subject to separate HRA
	1j	Wildlife risk plans	+	+	+	+	+	Reduction in wildfire risk and improved reaction planning compatible with EU Site objectives – reduction in harm from natural events.
S2 Geodiversity	2a	Designated sites	+	+	+	+	+	Specific action to conserve protected sites – SAC with geological features, Geological SSSI
	2b	Raise awareness	+	+	+	+	+	Improvements in understanding relevant to landscape include improvements to understanding of European sites contained within.
	2c	Integrate interpretation	+	N	N	N	N	Geodiversity interpretation relevant for SAC pavements – improving understanding
	2d	Local organisations	+	N	N	N	N	Supporting efforts of local organisations involved in Geodiversity Conservation relevant to SAC pavements
	2e	Geotrails	+	N	N	N	N	Geodiversity interpretation relevant for SAC pavements – improving understanding
	2f	Geodiversity Plans	+	N	N	N	N	Plan includes consideration of SAC pavement features
S3 Biodiversity	3a	PLTOF outcomes	+	+	+	+	+	Specific action to conserve/enhance protected sites, Protected landscape Targets and Outcomes Framework
	3b	LWS condition	+	+	+	+	+	Specific action to conserve/enhance protected sites – functional linkage to EU Sites
	3c	Priority Habitat	+	+	+	+	+	Specific action to conserve/enhance priority habitats – functional linkage to EU Sites
	3d	Raise awareness	+	+	+	+	+	Improvements in understanding relevant to landscape include improvements to understanding of EU sites contained within.
	3e	Integrate interpretation	+	+	+	+	+	Biodiversity interpretation relevant for all sites – improve understanding
	3f	INNS	+	+	+	+	+	INNS control, relevant for all EU sites condition. INNS reference in CSAP for EU sites.
	3g	BOOM legacy	-	-	-	-	-	Species reintroductions subject to project-level HRA
	3h	Saline habitats extent	N	-	-	-	-	Subject to project-level HRA where applicable
	3i	Grazing pressure	N	+	+	+	N	Grazing pressure on saltmarsh limiting EU site condition. Grazing pressure reference in CSAP, saltmarsh
	3j	SMP projects	N	-	-	-	-	Subject to project-level HRA where applicable
	3k	Dynamic coast	N	-	-	-	-	Subject to project-level HRA where applicable
	3l	Restore hydrology	N	+	+	+	+	Historic drainage and modification limiting EU site condition. Reference in CSAP, coastal features
	3m	Recreational disturbance	N	+	+	+	+	Recreational disturbance limiting EU site condition, notably SPA features. Reference in CSAP, disturbance
	3n	Woodland & parkland	+	N	N	N	N	Specific action to conserve/enhance priority habitats – functional linkage to EU Sites
	3o	Ancient trees	+	N	N	N	N	Specific action to conserve/enhance priority habitats and habitat features – functional linkage to EU Sites
	3p	Create Woodland habitat	+	+	+	-	-	Specific action to conserve/enhance priority habitats – functional linkage to EU Sites, water quality. Planting schemes in close proximity to SPA may require project-level HRA.
	3q	Woodland connectivity	+	N	N	N	N	Specific action to conserve/enhance priority habitats
	3r	Ash die-back	+	+	+	N	N	Improved resilience of woodland habitats, including woodland SAC. Referenced in CSAP, Ash die-back
	3s	Inappropriate afforestation	+	N	N	+	+	Specific action for native woodland. ‘right tree, right place’ best practice including consideration of SPA features that require open habitats.
	3t	Limestone mosaic	+	N	N	+	+	Specific action to conserve/enhance priority habitats – functional linkage to EU Sites
	3u	Create species rich grassland	+	+	+	+	+	Specific action to increase/conserve/enhance priority habitats – functional linkage to EU Sites

A&SNL Management Plan Strategic Objectives & Actions			Morecambe Bay Pavements SAC	Morecambe Bay SAC	River Kent SAC	Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA	Leighton Moss SPA	Notes on LSE decision
S3 Biodiversity (continued)	3v	Grassland connectivity	+	+	+	+	+	Specific action to conserve/enhance protected sites & associated priority habitats
	3w	Conservation grazing	+	+	+	+	+	Specific action to conserve/enhance protected sites & associated priority habitats
	3x	Freshwater wetlands	N	+	+	+	+	Specific action to conserve/enhance protected sites, Protected landscape Targets and Outcomes Framework
	3y	Create wetlands	N	+	+	+	+	Specific action to increase/conserve/enhance priority habitats – functional linkage to EU Sites
	3z	Wetland connectivity	N	+	+	+	+	Specific action to conserve/enhance protected sites. Modification of watercourses limiting EU site condition. Referenced in CSAP
	3aa	Water quality	N	+	+	+	+	Water quality limiting site condition, reference in CSAP and WFD monitoring – water quality
	3bb	Biodiversity measures in built development	N	N	N	N	N	Built development subject to HRA where relevant. Action to include biodiversity measures not explicitly relevant to EU sites.
	3cc	Verges and landscaping	N	N	N	N	N	Biodiversity measures in urban landscaping not explicitly relevant to EU sites
	3dd	Wild gardening	N	N	N	N	N	Biodiversity measures in urban landscaping not explicitly relevant to EU sites
	3ee	Community greenspace	+	N	N	+	+	Specific action to create/conserve/enhance priority habitats – functional linkage to EU Sites
	3ff	Community engagement	+	+	+	+	+	Biodiversity interpretation relevant for all sites – improve understanding
S4 Historic & Cultural Heritage	4a	SM's at risk	N	N	N	N	N	Conservation, enhancement and raising awareness of heritage assets. No pathways for impact to EU sites
	4b	Conserve designated heritage assets	N	N	N	N	N	
	4c	Conserve non-designated heritage assets	N	N	N	N	N	
	4d	Heritage character	N	N	N	N	N	
	4e	Supporting features	N	N	N	N	N	
	4f	Quarries	+	N	N	N	N	Conservation of quarry sites as proxy supporting habitat for Limestone Pavement SAC
	4g	Industrial heritage	N	N	N	N	N	Conservation, enhancement and raising awareness of heritage assets. No pathways for impact to EU sites
	4h	Maritime heritage	N	N	N	N	N	
	4i	Landscape heritage	N	N	N	N	N	
	4j	Traditional boundaries	+	N	N	N	N	Specific action to conserve/enhance priority habitats – functional linkage to EU Sites, hedges, stone walls
	4k	Historic orchards	+	N	N	N	N	Specific action to conserve/enhance priority habitats – functional linkage to EU Sites
	4l	AES actions	N	N	N	N	N	Conservation and raising awareness of heritage assets. No pathways for impact to EU sites
	4m	Historic ponds	N	+	+	N	+	Specific action to conserve/enhance priority habitats – functional linkage to EU Sites
	4n	Historic gardens	N	N	N	N	N	Conservation and raising awareness of heritage assets. No pathways for impact to EU sites
	4o	Medieval heritage	N	N	N	N	N	Conservation, enhancement and raising awareness of heritage assets. No pathways for impact to EU sites
	4p	Notable finds	N	N	N	N	N	
	4q	HER	N	N	N	N	N	
	4r	Local organisations	N	N	N	N	N	
	4s	Heritage interpretation	N	N	N	N	N	
	4t	Oral history research	N	N	N	N	N	
S5 Access, Enjoyment & Wellbeing	5a	Events programme	-	-	-	-	-	Where included biodiversity interpretation can be potentially relevant for all sites – improve understanding. Landscape events within EU sites may require project level HRA depending on scale and activity.
	5b	Supported walks	N	N	N	N	N	No pathways for impact
	5c	Interpretation materials	N	N	N	N	N	Where included biodiversity interpretation can be potentially relevant for all sites – improve understanding. Wider landscape interpretation not explicitly relevant to EU sites
	5d	Website	N	N	N	N	N	
	5e	Interpretation strategy	N	N	N	N	N	
	5f	Youth education	N	N	N	N	N	
	5g	Creative arts	-	-	-	-	-	Creative arts projects within EU sites may require project level HRA depending on scale and activity.
	5h	PROW network	-	-	-	-	-	Maintain/enhance access management including within EU sites. Extension and improvement to access network within EU sites may require project level HRA depending on scale and activity.

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S5 Access, Enjoyment & Wellbeing (continued)	5i	Tramper Scooters	-	-	-	-	-	Extension and improvement to accessible Tramper scooter network within EU sites may require project level HRA depending on scale and activity.
	5j	Coastal Footpath	N	-	-	-	-	King Charles III England Coastal Footpath subject to HRA during development works
	5k	Key viewpoints	N	N	N	N	N	No pathways for impact
	5l	Accessibility audit	-	-	-	-	-	Maintain/enhance access management including within EU sites. Extension and improvement to access network within EU sites may require project level HRA depending on scale and activity.
	5m	Highways network	N	N	N	N	N	No pathways for impact
	5n	Countryside Code	+	+	+	+	+	Compliance with Countryside Code relevant for all sites – improve understanding, recreational disturbance
S6 Sustainable Economy, Tourism & Transport	6a	Commercial activity	+	+	+	+	+	No harm to designation from commercial activity (including tourism)
	6b	Visitor attractions	N	N	N	N	N	Not explicitly relevant to EU sites. No pathways for impact
	6c	Sustainable transport	N	N	N	N	N	
	6d	Visitor survey	+	+	+	+	+	Data & information to inform management of EU site anthropogenic risks – Recreational disturbance
	6e	Transport study	N	N	N	N	N	Not explicitly relevant to EU sites. No pathways for impact
	6f	Destination branding	N	N	N	N	N	
	6g	Highways safety	N	N	N	N	N	
	6h	EV infrastructure	N	N	N	N	N	
	6i	Evolving Leighton Moss	N	N	N	N	-	Expansion of conservation visitor attraction within EU site. Not required for management of EU site and will require project level HRA.
	6j	Arnside Viaduct footpath	N	N	N	-	N	Access infrastructure within EU site. Not required for management and will require project level HRA
S7 Planning & Place Making	7a	Landscape capacity	N	N	N	N	N	Not explicitly relevant to EU sites. No pathways for impact
	7b	Landscape specific	N	N	N	N	N	
	7c	Design guidance	N	N	N	N	N	
	7d	BNG strategy	+	+	+	+	+	Meet BNG strategy, general provision to create/conserves/enhance priority habitats & improve functional linkage to EU Sites
	7e	Seek to further purpose	+	+	+	+	+	Primary purpose to conserve and enhance landscape compatible with EU site objective
	7f	Major development	N	N	N	N	N	Not explicitly relevant to EU sites. No pathways for impact
	7g	Affordable housing	N	N	N	N	N	
	7h	Housing associations	N	N	N	N	N	
	7i	LNRS/NRP outcomes	+	+	+	+	+	
	7j	Protected Sites	+	+	+	+	+	Specific action to conserve/enhance protected sites & associated priority habitats
	7k	PROW & Open Space	N	N	N	N	N	Biodiversity measures in urban landscaping not explicitly relevant to EU sites
	7l	Key settlement landscapes	N	N	N	N	N	Not explicitly relevant to EU sites. No pathways for impact
	7m	Design	N	N	N	N	N	
	7n	Existing development	N	N	N	N	N	
	7o	Community benefits	N	N	N	N	N	
	7p	Farm diversification	-	-	-	-	-	
	7q	Essential infrastructure	-	-	-	-	-	No pathways for impact in principle however, depending on locations, size, scale and type of development may require project-level HRA
	7r	Caravans/chalets	N	N	N	N	N	Not explicitly relevant to EU sites. No pathways for impact
	7s	accommodation	N	N	N	N	N	
	7t	Wastewater	N	+	+	+	+	Water quality limiting site condition, reference in CSAP and WFD monitoring – water quality
	7u	renewables	-	-	-	-	-	No pathways for impact in principle however, depending on size, scale and type of infrastructure and location may require project-level HRA
	7v	Overhead wires	-	-	-	-	-	
	7w	Vertical structures	N	N	N	-	-	
	7x	Adverts	N	N	N	N	N	No pathways for impact

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S7 Planning & Place Making (continued)	7y	Lighting guidance	N	N	N	+	+	Dark Skies considered to be a factor in condition of SPA – invertebrate prey, disturbance pressure
	7z	Undeveloped coast	N	+	+	+	+	Provision to preserve undeveloped coast, relevant for coastal/marine SPA & SAC
	7aa	Historic Assets	N	N	N	N	N	Conservation, enhancement and raising awareness of heritage assets. No pathways for impact to EU sites
S8 Farming, Forestry & Rural Land Use	8a	Farm Advice	+	+	+	+	+	Specific action to support conserve/enhance priority habitats – functional linkage to EU Sites
	8b	Nature-friendly farming	+	+	+	+	+	Increase in nature-friendly farming practices, wider biodiversity benefits
	8c	FiPL	+	+	+	+	+	Specific action to conserve/enhance priority habitats – functional linkage to EU Sites
	8d	Farmer Networks	N	N	N	N	N	Not explicitly relevant to EU sites. No pathways for impact
	8e	Skills support	N	N	N	N	N	
	8f	Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF)	N	+	+	+	+	Specific action to improve water quality – functional linkage to EU Sites, Water Framework Directive
	8g	Climate resilience	+	+	+	+	+	CC adaptation includes measures for EU sites
	8h	Apprenticeships	N	N	N	N	N	Not explicitly relevant to EU sites. No pathways for impact
	8i	Sustainable fisheries	N	+	+	+	+	Sustainable fisheries management within EU sites
	8j	Rural diversification	N	N	N	N	N	Not explicitly relevant to EU sites. No pathways for impact
	8k	Healthy Soils	N	N	N	N	N	
	8l	Soil Carbon	N	N	N	N	N	
	8m	Conservation grazing	+	N	N	N	+	Specific action to conserve/enhance priority habitats – functional linkage to EU Sites
	8n	Traditional Livestock	N	N	N	N	N	Not explicitly relevant to EU sites. No pathways for impact
	8o	Gamebird management	+	+	+	+	+	Compliance with GL43 release licence within 500m buffer of EU sites
S9 Governance & Ways of Working	9a	Seek to further purpose	N	N	N	N	N	Not explicitly relevant to EU sites. No pathways for impact
	9b	NL Partnership	N	N	N	N	N	
	9c	Collaboration in partnerships	N	N	N	N	N	
	9d	Community organisations	N	N	N	N	N	
	9e	Volunteering	N	N	N	N	N	
	9f	Joint decision making	N	N	N	N	N	
	9g	Communications	N	N	N	N	N	
	9h	Academic institutions	N	N	N	N	N	
	9i	Multi-objective approach	-	-	-	-	-	No pathways for impact in principle however, depending on size, scale and type of project and location may require project-level HRA
S10 Funding & Finance	10a	Increase capacity	N	N	N	N	N	Not explicitly relevant to EU sites. No pathways for impact
	10b	Green finance	-	-	-	-	-	No pathways for impact in principle however, depending on size, scale and type of project and location may require project-level HRA
	10c	CC investment	-	-	-	-	-	
	10d	Rural development funding	N	N	N	N	N	Not explicitly relevant to EU sites. No pathways for impact
	10e	Funding bids	-	-	-	-	-	No pathways for impact in principle however, depending on size, scale and type of project and location may require project-level HRA
	10f	Individual gifting	N	N	N	N	N	Not explicitly relevant to EU sites. No pathways for impact
	10g	NL Grants fund	N	N	N	N	N	

3.1 HRA Screening supplementary considerations

A number of Management Plan Actions are considered to be “compatible in principle but may be subject to project-level HRA screening”. Two specific actions are particularly sensitive from an EU sites perspective and although have been screened out require further detail:

Action 6i – Evolving Leighton Moss

Support the RPSB in the ‘Evolving Leighton Moss’ Project to further develop the reserve as a Conservation and Environmental visitor hub for the area.

“Evolving Leighton Moss” is an RSPB-led project to improve the visitor experience, infrastructure and facilities at the RSPB Leighton Moss site. The reserve visitor centre is located adjacent to Leighton Moss SPA and footpaths and birdwatching hides associated with the reserve are located within the SPA itself.

Proposals are currently in a development phase but are likely to involve:

- Expansion/alterations to the Myers Farm buildings containing the RSPB visitor centre, café and office space.
- Increased visitor capacity and expected footfall within the SPA (i.e more visitors using the hides and footpaths)
- Increased wastewater production and energy usage from the expanded visitor operations

The Management Plan action is explicit in supporting development of a visitor attraction within and immediately adjacent to Leighton Moss SPA. In most circumstances this action would potentially constitute a likely significant effect to the integrity of the EU site from the plan. However, given the principles of the evolving Leighton Moss project to improve visitor experience (interpretation of the EU site features) increase revenue (which will fund management of the site) it is considered to be compatible with the purpose of the National Landscape, notably that “Sustainable social and economic development, and enjoyment and recreation, are encouraged in ways that support the primary purpose” and is consistent with the Plan objectives.

The principle of supporting the Evolving Leighton Moss project is not in itself a risk to the EU site, however it is recognised that a project-level HRA will be required as development work progresses and, depending on the outcome of the HRA screening mitigation may be required for both construction and operational effects.

Action 6j – Arnside Viaduct footpath

Support scoping and potential development of the Arnside to Grange Trial, a proposed walking, wheeling and cycling route from Arnside to Grange-over-Sands utilising the Arnside railway viaduct to provide a new sustainable travel link and tourism asset.

Action 6j refers to a community-led project supported by Westmorland and Furness Council and Morecambe Bay Partnership to create a pedestrian and cycle access route between Arnside and Grange-over-Sands. Technical appraisal and feasibility work has been conducted but the project has not secured funding and is still considered to be in a development phase.

The project would likely require the installation of a structure within Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA/SAC. The structure would take the form of pathway/cycleway attached to the existing railway viaduct. The structure may require its own footings or could potentially be retrofitted to the viaduct itself. There is the potential need for groundworks to create a usable path on the seaward side of the railway embankment towards Grange-over-Sands. The construction and operation phase of the project would involve working within the SPA/SAC and may involve the direct loss of SPA/SAC area.

As with the RSPB evolving Leighton Moss project, the Management Plan action is supportive of the principle to improve multi-user access and this is compatible with the purpose of the designation and the Plan objectives. The principle of supporting the project is not in itself a risk to the EU site, however it is recognised a project-level HRA will be required as development work progresses, and mitigation (or potentially compensation) may be required.

4.0 HRA Screening conclusion

Based on the screening process, the Objectives and Actions included within the draft Management Plan are considered to have no Likely Significant Effect on the EU sites.

A significant number of Actions can be considered to be compatible with EU Site Objectives and will contribute towards maintaining/enhancing site condition and integrity.

It is recognised that several actions, although compatible in principle may result in projects that require a project-level HRA. It is not within the scope of the screening to consider these any further as no substantive details are available to inform a decision.

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