



Redcar & Cleveland Teesmouth & Cleveland Coast SPA Recreation Management Plan

November 2017



**Redcar & Cleveland Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area
Recreation Management Plan**

A framework to mitigate the impact on the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area and Ramsar site, of increased visitors from residential and tourism/leisure development

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Recreation Management Plan supports implementation of the Redcar & Cleveland Local Plan, in particular Policy N4 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation, to ensure that adverse effects on the integrity of the Teesmouth & Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area/ Ramsar are avoided. This document will be a material planning consideration when considering planning applications for **residential developments (which would result in the net addition of one or more units) and tourism/leisure proposals (both allocated in the Local Plan and windfall) within 6km of the SPA/ pSPA**. This Management Plan will be used to inform guidance on contributions in the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document.
- 1.2 The Recreation Management Plan subsumes those elements of a Foreshore Management Plan that are considered necessary and proportionate to mitigate for potential adverse effects due to Local Plan policies. It does not preclude the production of a more wide-ranging Foreshore Management Plan, as listed in Natural England's Site Improvement Plan for the SPA, should opportunity and circumstances permit.
- 1.3 The Recreation Management Plan is a working document. In particular it may need to be updated should monitoring demonstrate that it is not being effective or that the zone to which it applies (currently a boundary of 6km from the SPA/pSPA) is not the most appropriate. It may therefore be necessary to either increase or decrease the zone to which the Recreation Management Plan applies. Estimated costs for delivery of mitigation may also be subject to change.

2. Background

- 2.1 Special Protection Areas are strictly protected, European sites which are designated under the EU Birds Directive for their important bird populations. They are translated into UK legislation under the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2010 (as amended), also known as the Habitats Regulations. Under Regulation 61 of that legislation any plan or project which would be likely to have a significant effect on a European site must undergo an appropriate assessment of its likely effects. Except in certain cases, where a plan or project is of Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Importance and also where suitable compensation can be provided, permission can only be granted where it can be shown that the plan or project, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, would not have an adverse effect on the European site, in terms of the Conservation Objectives of that site.
- 2.2 The Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area (the SPA) is a complex of discrete coastal and wetland habitats centred on the Tees estuary and spanning the three boroughs of Hartlepool, Stockton-on-Tees and Redcar & Cleveland. Habitats include sandflats, mudflats, rocky foreshore, saltmarsh, sand dunes, wet grassland and freshwater lagoons. Additional non-designated areas are also used for foraging and roosting; where this use is significant these non-designated areas are considered as functionally linked land and significant effects on them may also be subject to appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations. Together these sites support internationally important populations of breeding and non-breeding waterbirds.
- 2.3 The SPA is classified for its breeding Little Tern, passage Sandwich Tern and Redshank, wintering Red Knot and an assemblage of over 20,000 wintering waterbirds. The full citation for the SPA is given in Appendix 2.

- 2.4 Natural England is consulting on a potential extension of the SPA (the pSPA) which will include additional areas of land. Notably, in terms of the potential impacts on the SPA from recreation and tourism, these additional areas would include the intertidal area as far south as Marske and Coatham Marsh. The pSPA would include additional interest features of breeding Common Tern and Avocet, though neither currently breeds in Redcar & Cleveland.
- 2.5 The conservation objectives of the SPA, with regard to the qualifying features are: Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring:
- The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features;
 - The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features;
 - The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely ;
 - The population of each of the qualifying features; and,
 - The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.”
- 2.6 The conservation objectives should be read in conjunction with Regulation 35 Conservation Advice, which provides further details. The Conservation Advice lists non-physical disturbance as potentially causing deterioration or disturbance to the SPA. Specifically it lists as a key danger, persistent disturbance to breeding Little Tern, describing this as a management issue which requires resolving. It also lists disturbance by poorly-controlled dogs as potentially being of significance to the internationally important populations of regularly occurring migratory species and the internationally important assemblage of waterbirds.
- 2.7 The Site Improvement Plan for the Teesmouth & Cleveland Coast SPA was updated by Natural England in 2014. It lists a series of priority issues, the features they affect, the proposed measures to address the issues and the delivery bodies whose involvement is required to deliver the measure. Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council is listed as a Delivery Lead Body on two actions:
- 2E: Develop Foreshore Management Plan
 - 2G: Manage foreshore use in line with Foreshore Management Plan.
- 2.8 As noted above, this Recreational Management Plan in effect subsumes part of the Foreshore Management Plan, in so far as it seeks to mitigate the potential adverse impacts arising from new development as proposed in the Local Plan.
- 2.9 A management plan for the Teesmouth & Cleveland Coast European Marine Site, which is the intertidal areas of the SPA, was drawn up in 2009 by the European Marine Site Management Group. This group was formed from the Relevant Authorities, which includes the Local Authorities of Redcar and Cleveland, Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees as well as certain regulatory bodies. One of the objectives of the EMS Management Plan was:
- “To specify management measures to address gaps in the current management regime in order to achieve the conservation objectives for the site, and incorporate these into an action plan within the management scheme.”
- 2.10 The Management Plan was accompanied by an Action Plan, which listed actions that were required to maintain or improve the conservation status of the EMS, with each action being assigned to a specific Relevant Authority or combination of Relevant Authorities.

2.11 The latest revision of the Action Plan was in 2013. The updated actions mainly concerned publicising the EMS through various means, with some actions relating to continuing the recreational disturbance monitoring. The EMS officer was the lead on all of the updated actions. The only updated action that was specific to Redcar was the installation of interpretation panels at South Gare and at Redcar. The panels were produced but were not installed due to there being no conclusions on suitable locations. Implementation of the Action Plan has been in abeyance since the EMS officer post was lost in 2015 however one of the actions was a repeat of the Recreational Disturbance Study across the boroughs of Hartlepool and Redcar & Cleveland. This was fulfilled, for the borough of Redcar & Cleveland, by INCA on behalf of Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council in 2016/17.

3. Recreational disturbance

- 3.1 The Habitats Regulations Assessment (2016) of the emerging Local Plan concluded that there was potential for impacts on the SPA through increased visitors from the proposed residential and tourist/leisure development. This was specifically from the concomitant increase in disturbance to the bird species for which the SPA is designated.
- 3.2 Human disturbance of birds can have several impacts. Birds may be more alert, resulting in a reduction in the amount of food eaten, or they may fly away from the disturbance. A bird which flies away forgoes valuable feeding time whilst in the air and also uses energy in flying. Ultimately, the consequence of human disturbance can be increased bird mortality, or a reduction in the amount of energy a bird has to fly back to its breeding grounds. This could potentially lead to alterations in population and/or distribution patterns of SPA species.
- 3.3 A total of 168 hours of survey of recreational disturbance to SPA birds have been carried out in Redcar & Cleveland across 8 years from September 2010 to March 2017. The surveys were all carried out in the period when passage wader and wintering waterbird interest features of the SPA would be present, i.e. September to March. Of these 168 hours, a total of 75.5 hours survey was carried out by INCA in 2016/17 in order to determine the current baseline of recreational disturbance and of SPA bird numbers.
- 3.4 The 2016/17 survey covered the whole of the Redcar coast from South Gare to the point at Marske that would form the southern boundary of the pSPA. It divided the coast into five areas and recorded the level of activity and disturbance across each site separately. Maps of each of the five survey areas are shown in Appendix 3. The number of recreational events varied by a factor of almost four between sites, as did the variation in the percentage of recreational events causing disturbance at each site. A summary of the number of events and the level of disturbance for each site is given in Table 1.
- 3.5 As each area was counted separately the number of disturbances per hour can be aggregated to give a total for the number of disturbances for the whole of the Redcar frontage, which works out at nine per hour. Coatham Sands North was not surveyed for disturbance due to the distances involved, 1-3km from the observer, making it difficult to determine whether birds were moving in response to disturbance. Given the low number of recreational events and the relatively low number of birds there it is likely that disturbances per hour there would make no significant difference to the total. However, even allowing for a similar level of disturbance to Coatham Sands South, which was much more heavily used for recreation, this would only result in ten disturbances per hour.

Table 1. Recreational disturbance data from 2016/17

Site	No. survey hours	No. recreational events	Recreation events per hour	No. disturbances	Disturbances per hour	% events causing disturbance
Coatham Sands North	18.5	253	14	Not recorded	N/A	N/A
Coatham Sands South	21.5	757	34	28	1	4
Marske Sands	15.5	463	30	38	2	8
Redcar Rocks	13	275	21	52	4	19
South Gare	7	60	9	11	2	18

- 3.6 The number of birds also showed considerable variation between sites, with the highest numbers of birds being found at Redcar Rocks and South Gare, sites which in 2016/17 also had the highest levels of disturbance. Coatham Sands and Marske Sands had much fewer birds but two to four times the level of recreational activity as Redcar Rocks and South Gare. It is likely that disturbance levels are lower at Coatham Sands and Marske Sands as there are fewer birds to disturb but it is impossible to predict the likely population levels if there were fewer recreational events.
- 3.7 Dog walking was the most common recreational activity in 2016/17, as was the case in all previous surveys. Across all sites dog walking accounted for 74% of recreational events with comparatively little variation between sites. This was higher than the corresponding figure for all surveys from 2010 but previous year's surveys also included Bran Sands, where dog walking was not the most frequent event. Bran Sands was excluded from the 2017 survey. This was partly because there was thought to be sufficient existing data but also because the main activity there is bait digging and the Redcar & Cleveland Local Plan was not predicted to result in an increase in bait digging.

4. Mitigation requirements

- 4.1 A review of bird disturbance studies from the North East, and consultation with Natural England, has identified that 6km is a suitable threshold distance to use when assessing the likelihood that new housing allocations or leisure and tourism proposals impact on the SPA (as illustrated on the map in Appendix A). This threshold is considered to represent the distance within which approximately 75% of the visitors to the SPA are likely to originate. (NB. some sites in the Greater Eston area also fall within 6km of the SPA but in those cases the SPA is on the north side of the River Tees, which forms a barrier to their access, so these sites are not included. The potential, marine extension along the River Tees channel is also inaccessible for recreational purposes as it is fronted by industrial development. Therefore, it is not considered that an increased population as a result of allocations in this area would result in significant effects on the SPA/pSPA). Other sites within 6km of the pSPA are also included in this assessment as Natural England are due to go out to formal consultation on the proposals prior to the Local Plan being adopted therefore all references to the SPA throughout the remainder of this document should be taken to include the pSPA.
- 4.2 Mitigation requirements are primarily aimed at reducing disturbance to the wintering and passage waterbird interest features which are distributed throughout the SPA. It is considered that breeding Little Tern may recolonise Redcar & Cleveland although the only potential nest site is a small area at the northern extreme of South Gare. As disturbance is particularly critical for this interest feature, mitigation requirements for certain leisure developments may need to go beyond those currently set out in this Recreational Management Plan and could, for example, include zoning, wardening and seasonal restrictions.
- 4.3 The need to provide mitigation measures could apply to development under the following Publication Local Plan policies:
- REG1 Coatham
 - REG 3 Skelton (pSPA)
 - ED9 Leisure and Tourism
 - ED11 Caravan Sites and Tourist Accommodation
 - ED12 New Hotel and Guest House Accommodation
 - ED13 Equestrian Development
 - H3 Housing Allocations
 - H3.10 Corporation Road, Redcar
 - H3.11 St Hilda's Church, Redcar
 - H3.12 Land adjacent Rye Hills School, Redcar
 - H3.16 Land at Mickle Dales
 - H3.17 West of Kirkleatham Lane, Redcar
 - H3.24 Stanghow Road (pSPA)
 - H5 Sub-division and conversion of buildings to residential uses
 - H6 Houses in Multiple Occupation
- 4.4 The Appropriate Assessment of the Local Plan has concluded that residential development with 6km of the SPA is likely to have an adverse impact through increased disturbance. Any residential development, whether allocated or windfall (unallocated in the Local Plan), that results in the net provision of new units, within 6km of the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA will be required to contribute towards strategic mitigation, in particular but not necessarily confined to, that outlined in sections 5 and 6.

- 4.5 This will involve, as a minimum, provision of information to the LPA on the number of residents that are predicted as part of the development. In some circumstances, the applicant may also be required to supply further information as is deemed necessary to assess the likely significant effect on the SPA.
- 4.6 The housing allocations in the Redcar & Cleveland Local Plan that are within 6km of the SPA are predicted to result in an overall increase in the population across the entire borough of 3.7% though the percentage increase within the 6km boundary of the SPA (including the pSPA) will be slightly higher than this. The housing allocations in the Local Plan that have not already received permission (as at November 2017) are anticipated to result in an increase in the population of approximately 1% within 6km of the SPA (including the pSPA). In terms of mitigation for housing therefore, the measures in this Recreational Management Plan must be sufficient to prevent the concomitant 1% increase in disturbance that would be predicted to arise as a result of the housing policies in the Local Plan. The proposed measures to counter this 1% increase are set out in section 5.
- 4.7 The scale and location of windfall housing developments are by definition somewhat unpredictable. As such it is not possible to determine in advance the scale of mitigation that would be required. Nevertheless it can be assumed that the nature of the mitigation would be such that it would principally address the need to reduce disturbance from walkers or dog walkers, particularly in the form of providing alternative areas to walk. A number of potential, additional mitigation measures have been identified and are set out in Section 6. It is crucial that mitigation measures allow for flexibility to enable the most suitable mitigation measures to be implemented for each development therefore it is possible that additional or alternative measures beyond those listed in Section 6 may be required and this would be considered on a case by case basis.
- 4.8 Depending on the location and scale of development resulting from policies ED9, ED11, ED12 and ED13 there is also the possibility that mitigation measures would be required. In addition to those measures set out in Section 5, further potential mitigation measures are again set out in Section 6, with the proviso that additional or alternative mitigation measures may be required should appropriate assessment show them to be necessary to prevent an adverse effect on the SPA.
- 4.9 Policy REG 1 allocates 8.7ha of land at Coatham for mixed use related to leisure and tourism and ancillary uses. This land formerly had a leisure use, Coatham Bowl, but currently does not have this function. It is difficult to predict to what extent this policy has the potential to increase disturbance. Depending on the activity, leisure uses could actually draw people away from using the beach however in general it would be predicted to draw more people to the area, some of which would use the beach. It is unlikely that people who use leisure facilities in this area would also be engaged in dog walking on the SPA as part of the same visit. A more likely scenario is that people using the leisure facilities might also walk on the beach themselves or that the leisure facilities might encourage beach use.
- 4.10 Policy REG 1 has the potential to result in activities that might be more disturbing to SPA birds than simply an increase in the levels of current users, for example the development of beach or water sports. In such circumstances, mitigation measures may need to go beyond the type and scale of those indicated in Section 6 and could for example include zoning and seasonal restrictions on activities or more active wardening. The requirement for further mitigation in addition to those outlined in sections 5 and 6 would be considered on a case by case basis.

The cost of any such measures that are deemed necessary to prevent an adverse effect on the SPA would need to be fully funded by the development.

- 4.11 In all such cases developers should contact the Council for further guidance on suitable mitigation strategies prior to the submission of a planning application.

5. Mitigation proposals

- 5.1 The proposals set out in this section are considered to be sufficient to counter the predicted 1% increase in disturbance on the SPA from allocated housing sites. This mitigation may also be sufficient to counter some increase in disturbance from certain leisure and tourism proposals. The timing of the implementation of these measures will be dependent to some extent on the timing and nature of proposals coming forward but the efficacy of these measures will be assessed through the monitoring schedule proposed in Appendix 1, with further mitigation proposed in Section 6 should these measures not be sufficient. Mitigation measures will remain in place for the life of the development. The mitigation requirements of future developments will be assessed following future Local Plan reviews.
- 5.2 Please note the costs listed in the tables below are approximate figures based on 2017 estimated costs. These costs will be subject to review and may be increased.

Alternative Greenspace

Fox Rush Community Woodland

Current condition

- 5.3 There are no figures for the current visitor usage of Fox Rush Community Woodland however it is considered that it is currently very underused. The main factors contributing to the low level of usage are that the site is unobtrusive and not well signed; car parking is limited and the site is not widely promoted. In addition the site itself comprises a number of paths through dense woodland, creating something of a maze effect so that connections between routes are not necessarily obvious and may be off-putting to some potential users. These points are illustrated in Photographs 1 – 3.
- 5.4 Nevertheless there are around 6km of paths within the woodland that could potentially create a varied series of walks and there is the potential to create further internal linkages between paths. Paths have been upgraded to a crushed stone surface.
- 5.5 There is currently pedestrian access from the north-west side at Dormanstown but there is no pedestrian access from the south side.
- 5.6 It has been agreed with Natural England that access to this site as alternative green infrastructure will be the main mitigating factor for the proposed housing immediately to the south at land to west of Kirkleatham Lane (H3.17) which has outline planning permission. However given its location on Kirkleatham Lane and that many people would need to drive past it to get to the coast, it also has the potential to be significant for reducing visits to the coast from other areas.
- 5.7 The management plan for Fox Rush Community Woodland is due to be updated in 2018 and the proposed improvements, listed in Table 2, will be incorporated into that revised management plan.



Photograph 1. The car park. Current maximum capacity 9-10 cars



Photograph 2. The site entrance. There is a brown sign but the turn in is difficult to see and the car park is obscured by a tall hedge. In addition the turning into the car park is tight.



Photograph 3. The main path leading from the car park.

Proposed Improvements

5.8 A series of improvements are proposed to provide mitigation for recreational disturbance on the SPA. These are listed in Table 2, along with indicative costs.

Table 2. Fox Rush Community Woodland – proposed improvements

Improvement	Benefits	Indicative costs
Increase the capacity of the car park to around 20 cars	Enable more car visitors to access the site	£16K to extend and rationalise existing surface
Lay the hedge on the road frontage of the car park	Make the site evident to passing motorists Improve security Increase confidence in using the site.	Redcar & Cleveland Council countryside team would accommodate these works in house
Develop a leaflet to promote the site	Increase awareness of the site across the borough and to visitors to the borough	Approx £1.5K
Create 2 No. way-marked routes	Give visitors more confidence in navigating around the site	£750 inc labour
Create new linkages between existing paths	Provide alternative routes to maintain interest	Redcar & Cleveland Council countryside team would accommodate these works in house
Selective thinning of dense trees to provide more open main routes	Give visitors more confidence in navigating around the site	Redcar & Cleveland Council countryside team would accommodate these works in house
Improve drainage	Make the site more accessible in winter	£5k
Maintenance of paths and car park	Maintain long term function	Approx £32k

Improvement	Benefits	Indicative costs
Create signage from Coatham Marsh to the site	Encourage visitors away from the coast to the site	Approx £1k
Create a well-signed access from the proposed housing estate to the south at land to the west of Kirkleatham Lane (H3.17)	Encourage residents to use the site for walking and dog walking rather than access the coast	To be secured through detailed planning permission
Provide events on the site (one event per year)	Encourage new visitors	Warden time (2 person days per event) = £288 per event

Kirkleatham Showground and woodland

Current condition

- 5.9 This site consists of two elements, the open showground and the woodland on its western boundary. Around 9ha of the woodland is accessible and has a wide surfaced path running through it and paths off to the side at the southern end. The showground is a significant expanse of grassland (16ha) with open access right across it. It is mainly used by residents from the adjoining housing immediately to the north and east as there is no designated parking next to it. The primary mitigation benefit provided by this site would be by providing a large open space for residents of the proposed new housing on Kirkleatham Lane. The access to the showground is approximately 150m to the south of the proposed housing with access to the woods approximately 450m to the east. There is an existing pedestrian crossing between the proposed housing and the site across Kirkleatham Lane.

Proposed improvements

- 5.10 There is no requirement for any modifications to the site to accommodate recreation from the proposed housing west of Kirkleatham Lane as there is a huge capacity for walkers and dog walkers however signs directing people from the proposed housing to the site would be beneficial. The cost of this could be met as part of the development. It will also be necessary to provide a link through, or around, the proposed housing to link this site to Fox Rush Community Woodland.
- 5.11 As with Fox Rush Community Woodland there is the potential to attract users, particularly dog walkers, who might otherwise drive on to the coast. This could be facilitated by the provision of a “brown” sign providing direction from Kirkleatham Lane.

Table 3. Kirkleatham Woodland and Showground – proposed improvements

Improvement	Benefits	Indicative costs
Create a well-signed access from the proposed housing estate to the north at land to the west of Kirkleatham Lane (H3.17)	Encourage residents to use the site for walking and dog walking rather than access the coast	To be secured through detailed planning permission
Install “brown” sign from Kirkleatham Lane	Make the site evident to passing motorists	Approx £1k

Interpretation/ Education

Current situation

- 5.12 With the demise of the EMS officer post there are currently no educational activities in relation to the SPA. Signs, which informed the public about the EMS and the code of conduct for avoiding disturbance to SPA birds, were designed for Redcar but never installed. The only signage that promotes the SPA is located on Redcar Sea Front and is shown in Photograph 4. The sign does ask that people keep their dogs on leads, especially near to Redcar Rocks, in order to protect the birds.



Photograph 4. Signage near to Redcar Rocks

Proposed mitigation

- 5.13 Measures to raise awareness of the SPA and the need to avoid disturbance to SPA birds are listed in Table 4.

Table 4. Proposed mitigation around education and interpretation

Mitigation	Indicative costs
Install two signs about the European site and the need to reduce disturbance to the SPA birds. One sign to be installed on Redcar frontage the other as close to South Gare as possible.	Approx £1k
Produce leaflets about the SPA bird interest and the need to minimise disturbance to them	Approx £1.5k
Publish articles on the SPA and its birds in the Council's magazine (at least one article annually)	Redcar & Cleveland Council would accommodate this in-house

SPA Management

Current Management

- 5.14 The only management that has taken place in recent years to reduce disturbance to SPA birds is the fencing of an area of suitable habitat at South Gare to provide a safer roosting location for Little Terns. In 2016, funding from EU Life allowed the fencing to be re-instated after the practice had been discontinued for some years and also enabled some wardening, including visitor surveys, by R&C Council trainee wardens. This funding was not available in 2017 and no funding sources are anticipated in the foreseeable future. Little Terns had ceased breeding at South Gare, their only site in Redcar & Cleveland, in 1995 but in recent years, 2015 and 2017 there have been breeding attempts by one and two pairs respectively and it is possible that the Little Tern colony could relocate back to South Gare though there is currently only a small area of habitat that would appear to be potentially suitable for them.

Proposed Management

- 5.15 Given the current levels of recreational activities at South Gare, regardless of a predicted 1% increase, it is unlikely that any attempts by Little Terns to recolonise South Gare would be successful. Annual fencing of the potential nest site has the potential to increase the chances of the Little Tern colony being viable by several orders of magnitude. As such it would mitigate any negative effects from a predicted 1% increase in recreational activities from allocated housing sites.

Table 5. Proposed management

Action	Benefits	Indicative costs
Annual fencing of Little Tern breeding area	Provides protection from disturbance by dog walkers and other beach users	4 x Person days (8 x staff 4 hours) to erect and 2 x person days 4 x staff 4 hours) to dismantle the fence (£1440 per annum). Some cost for replacement fencing

6. Potential mitigation

6.1 This section sets out some additional measures which could be implemented by way of mitigation should monitoring demonstrate that the measures set out in section 5 have not been successful in preventing an increase in disturbance beyond the baseline level. These measures also have the potential to mitigate for disturbance due to windfall housing developments and Local Plan policies relating to recreation however, as stated in Section 4, such developments may require additional, bespoke mitigation which will be considered on a case by case basis.

Alternative Greenspace

Errington Woods

Current condition

6.2 Errington Woods has an active “Friends” group but the site is not actively promoted beyond its locality. There are a number of paths within the wood and scope to increase and improve them if required. It has the potential to attract more visitors in particular from the Markse/Saltburn locations which lie within 6km of the pSPA.

Potential improvements

6.3 Improvements that could provide further mitigation for recreational disturbance on the SPA are listed in Table 6.

Table 6. Errington Woods – proposed improvements

Improvement	Benefits	Indicative costs
Install “brown” sign from the A174	Make the site evident to passing motorists	Approx £1k
Develop a leaflet to promote the site	Increase awareness of the site across the borough and to visitors to the borough	Approx £1.5K
Interpretation and signage within the wood	Promote a range of walking routes within the wood to encourage repeat visits	Approx £2k

Education/ interpretation

6.4 There is the potential for additional signage about the European site and the need to reduce disturbance to SPA birds to be installed at Marske Stray, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Potential mitigation around education and interpretation

Mitigation	Indicative costs
Install a sign about the European site and the need to reduce disturbance to the SPA birds at Marske Stray	Approx £2k

SPA Management

Potential Management

- 6.5 In addition to the fencing of the Little Tern colony described in Section 5, there is the potential to undertake further management to benefit Little Terns. In particular this could involve wardening of the colony. There may also be the possibility to make minor modifications to the habitat at South Gare to make it more suitable for nesting Little Terns. This might include raising a section of the upper beach level or limited vegetation removal. Such works would need Natural England's consent as the site is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Potential actions are listed in Table 6. As noted in Section 4, certain leisure activities may require further mitigation measures still, such as zoning or seasonal restrictions, to be decided on a case by case basis.

Table 6. Potential management/ monitoring actions

Action	Benefits	Indicative costs
Warden visits site during nesting season	Monitor nesting success. Liaise with the public	Warden time £72 per half day visit
Small-scale habitat modification for Little Terns (subject to Natural England consent)	Improve Little Tern nesting opportunities	£2k

Appendix 1. Monitoring Schedule

Introduction

- 1.1 The housing policies in the Redcar & Cleveland Local Plan are predicted to result in an increase of approximately 1% of residents living with 6km of the SPA/pSPA. This in turn is predicted to result in an increase of approximately 1% in the levels of disturbance of SPA birds from recreational activities. Leisure and tourism policies in the Local Plan also have the potential to increase recreational disturbance however whether this occurs and the extent to which it occurs cannot be predicted and will depend on the nature of the activities that come forward as a result of those policies.

Aims and Objectives

- 1.2 The aim of this monitoring schedule is to measure the effectiveness of the Recreation Management Plan (RMP) in minimising disturbance to SPA birds. The purposes of the monitoring would be twofold, firstly to assess the performance of the mitigation measures against agreed objectives and secondly, in cases where mitigation does not appear to be performing as envisaged, to inform any modifications to the mitigation to ensure that it achieves its objectives.
- 1.3 The monitoring programme will have the following objectives:
 1. To establish the following baselines: bird numbers on the SPA/pSPA; recreational disturbance on the SPA/pSPA; visitor numbers and profiles for the SPA/pSPA; visitor numbers and profiles for Alternative Greenspace;
 2. To determine whether there is a change in recreational disturbance and bird usage on the SPA/pSPA over time and as far as possible to determine to what extent that is the result of policies in the Local Plan;
 3. To determine whether the Alternative Greenspace areas (namely Fox Rush Community Woodland and Kirkleatham Showground and Wood) are working as anticipated in terms of attracting recreational visits away from the SPA/pSPA;
 4. To test whether the use of the 6km boundary when determining effects on the SPA/pSPA from Local Plan policies, is appropriate in the case of Redcar & Cleveland.
- 1.4 The way in which the four objectives will be implemented is set out below with a summary of the monitoring requirements given in Table 1.

2. Establish baselines

Recreational disturbance and bird numbers on the SPA/pSPA

- 2.1 The winter 2016/17 recreational disturbance study which was carried out by INCA is both the most recent and most comprehensive study of its kind in Redcar and is considered to form a suitable baseline for recreational disturbance monitoring. This study covered the whole of the intertidal area from South Gare to Marske, including the intertidal area of pSPA at Marske for which there was no previous data. The study also recorded SPA bird numbers on each study site so also forms a suitable baseline in terms of bird numbers.

Visitor numbers and profile on the SPA/pSPA

- 2.2 The recreational disturbance study recorded numbers of people and the types of recreational activity on each sector of the Redcar foreshore. This information will be supplemented by automatic counters of vehicles in car parks which give direct access to the foreshore.
- 2.3 A survey of visitors to South Gare was undertaken in summer 2016 using the visitor survey forms that had been devised as part of the European Marine Site Management Plan. (A blank form is appended to this monitoring schedule). A total of 40 individuals or groups were interviewed and the home postcode was given for 26 of the respondents. Of these 77% were from within the borough, with 65% being from Redcar itself. Only 7% of respondents were from outside of a TS postcode.
- 2.4 The survey only provided a small sample, which was limited to one part of the SPA and only to the period when breeding Little Tern might potentially be present. The survey will be repeated until a total of 100 responses, including postcode, has been obtained. These will be spread across the entire foreshore within the SPA/pSPA with the remaining interviews conducted across the period September- March 2017/18 when the passage and wintering waterbird interest features would be present.

Visitor numbers and profile of the Alternative Greenspaces

- 2.5 Visitor surveys to establish the current level of use will therefore be undertaken at both sites. For Fox Rush, which has a single, dedicated car park, automatic counters will be used to give numbers of cars using the site. Automatic counters will also be used at Kirkleatham Showground & Wood if a suitable location can be identified. In addition to recording the number of visits by car, a questionnaire survey will be undertaken to gain more information on how visitors use and view those sites, including whether they use it as an alternative to the coast. (A draft blank questionnaire is appended). A total of 100 responses will be obtained across both sites. Baseline surveys of Fox Rush and Kirkleatham Showground & Wood will be undertaken up to the end of 2018, spread across the seasons.

3. Determine changes on the SPA/pSPA

- 3.1 It would be very labour intensive to repeat the entire 2016/17 recreational disturbance survey over a single winter and in any case it is considered more useful in identifying changes in disturbance to have more frequent, smaller-scale studies than less frequent large scale studies. Consequently monitoring will be rotated between the five study sites that were used in the 2016/17 survey though as both the numbers of birds and the level of disturbance was highest at Redcar Rocks it is recommended that this site is prioritised and is surveyed more frequently than the other sites.
- 3.2 As the objective is to monitor changes in levels of disturbance due to the Local Plan, monitoring of impacts from the housing allocations will be triggered once 25% of the housing allocations without permission (as at November 2017) have been built out; i.e. this is point at which there would be predicted that there would be a 0.25% increase in recreational disturbance from new residents. It is considered that any increase below this level will be unlikely to have a significant effect. Monitoring will consist of repeat recreational disturbance studies, bird counts and visitor surveys at individual study sites. Recreational disturbance studies/ bird counts will total a minimum of 35 hours and visitor surveys will obtain at least 30

responses. This monitoring will be repeated whenever a further 0.25% of the housing allocations are built out, or every two years whichever is sooner.

- 3.3 Monitoring for the impacts of leisure and tourism policies will be dependent on the proposals coming forward under those policies. Any proposal which is predicted to increase the number of visitors to the SPA/pSPA by 0.25% or more will trigger monitoring as for housing in the previous paragraph. Monitoring will be repeated whenever a further 0.25% increase in visitors to the SPA/pSPA is predicted or every two years. Depending on the nature of the leisure and tourism proposals that come forward under the Local Plan policies it is possible that additional, bespoke monitoring programme may be required however this will be agreed when determining the application.
- 3.4 Monitoring requirements for housing and leisure would be aggregated so for example a 0.25% increase from housing and a 0.25% increase from leisure would require twice the survey effort of either increase in isolation.
- 3.5 If neither housing allocations or leisure and tourism policies trigger a predicted 0.25% increase in visitors to the SPA/pSPA within 5 years of the adoption of the Local Plan then it is recommended that the 2016/17 recreational disturbance study/ bird survey and the baseline visitor surveys of the SPA/pSPA are repeated, as it is possible that the baseline would have changed due to factors unrelated to the Local Plan.

4. Determine the effectiveness of Alternative Greenspaces

- 4.1 The triggers for repeat monitoring on the SPA/pSPA, as set out in section 2 above, will trigger repeat monitoring of the Alternative Greenspaces. If the levels of housing or leisure development do not trigger a repeat survey then the survey will be repeated in 5 years in any case in order to establish a new baseline.
- 4.2 The Alternative Greenspaces will be required to have demonstrated that they have accommodated an increase in visitors, equivalent to that which is predicted would have occurred on the SPA/pSPA as a result of Local Plan policies without mitigation.

5. Test the appropriateness of the 6km boundary

- 5.1 The visitor surveys on the SPA/pSPA will gather further information on the distances that visitors are coming from. The 6km buffer has been used in the assessment of likely significant effect as that is the distance within which 75% of visitors are predicted to travel. If the visitor surveys demonstrate that 75% of visitors are encapsulated by a different buffer then the buffer will be adjusted accordingly.

Table 1. Monitoring requirements

Monitoring action	Survey effort	Timing & Frequency
Assess current visitor use of the SPA	A further 75 visitor survey responses	One off in winter 2017/18 to establish baseline
Assess current visitor use of Alternative Greenspace	100 visitor survey responses plus automatic car counters	One off in 2018 to establish baseline
Repeat recreational disturbance studies on SPA	30 hours on a single study site in any given survey year. Locations of survey site to be rotated across five study sites across the SPA	Once triggered at a maximum interval of every 2 years
Repeat visitor surveys of the SPA	A minimum of 30 visitor survey responses	Once triggered at a maximum interval of every 2 years
Repeat visitor surveys of Alternative Greenspace	A minimum of 30 visitor survey responses	Once triggered at a maximum interval of every 2 years
Repeat all baseline surveys	As original baseline surveys	Only undertaken if repeat surveys are not triggered within 5 years.

Reporting & Mitigation Review

- 5.2 A report of the results of each of the monitoring studies will be produced within three months of that particular study being completed. The information will be made publically available and in particular will be shared with Natural England and the RSPB.
- 5.3 The final repeat recreational disturbance study and visitor surveys will be the year following the allocated housing sites being built out. Should further windfall sites or leisure development come forward after that point, which would be predicted to increase visitors to the SPA by a further 0.25% or more, then the surveys will be repeated in order to monitor the effects of those proposals.
- 5.4 Should monitoring show that the mitigation is not being successful in countering the predicted increase in disturbance on the SPA, further mitigation measures will be implemented and monitoring will be continued until such time as mitigation has been demonstrated to be effective.

Visitor Questionnaires

Alternative Greenspace Visitor Questionnaire (draft)

(NB. This visitor questionnaire is based on the questionnaire used by the Thames Basin Heaths Partnership but may be subject to minor amendment)

Date & time:

Name of greenspace:

Gender of respondent: M/F

Home postcode:

1a). How long have you lived in this locality?	1b). Do you live in a property built after 2017?
--	--

2). How do you travel here?	
-----------------------------	--

3). How long have you been coming here?	
---	--

4a). How often do you come here?	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Other
4b). How much time do you usually spend here?	Less than 20mins	20-40mins	40 mins-1 hour	More than 1 hour

5). What is the reason for your visit?	Dog walking:	Number of dogs:	Other:
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6). Is this your first choice of places to visit in the area?	Yes	No
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6a (i). What is it that you like so much about [name of greenspace]?
6a (ii). What other places do you visit in the area?

[IF NO] 6b). Because [name of greenspace] is not your first choice of places to visit, could you tell me where it is that you prefer to go?	
---	--

6c). What is it about that particular place that draws you there in preference to coming here?	
--	--

7). If there was one single thing that would improve [name of greenspace], what would it be?	
--	--

8). What other improvements would make [name of greenspace] more attractive to you?

9). **[If 6a (ii) or 6b is SPA]** Have you heard of the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast European Marine Site Coastal Code, or met one of our rangers?

European Marine Site Visitor Survey Form

(NB. This European Marine Site questionnaire may be subject to minor amendment)

Site location

Date

1. Using the following list please rank the **top three** activities you carry out at this site. (1 being most often and 3 being least often).

Bait digging collection

Horse Riding

Sea angling

Bird Watching

Dog Walking

Walking

Diving

Sand yachting

Windsurfing/kitesurfing

Off road driving

Kite flying

Other

2. What is it about this particular site that makes you visit it?
Please rank the **top three** features. (1 being most often and 3 being least often).

Rights of Way

Ease of parking

The natural environment

Views

Ease of access

Tranquillity

Feels safe

Good for children

Convenient/close to home

3. How often do you visit the site?

Daily

Couple of times a week

Weekly

Couple of times a month

Monthly

Less often

4. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements

a) Visiting the coast makes me happy.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree No comment

b) It is important that my children can visit this site in the future.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree No comment

c) Nature conservation has little reference to my life.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree No comment

d) Some areas of the coastline should be regulated to protect it for the future.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree No comment

e) Teesmouth and Cleveland Coastline contains important habitats which need conserving.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree No comment

5. Do any of the recreational activities happening here bother you and how much?

(Please tick all that apply).

Activity	No negative effects	Negative effects but I would stay in the same area	Negative effects and would move to another area	Negative effects and would consider not returning
Bait digging/ Collection				
Bird watching				
Diving				
Dog Walking				
Horse riding				
Off road motorbikes/quads				
Sand yachting/kite flying				
Sea angling				
Walking				
Wind surfing/kite Surfing				

6. Do you think the site could be improved in any way? Please describe:

7. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
“My main recreational activity has no effect on coastal birds using the site”.

- Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree Strongly disagree No comment

8. A Code of Conduct has been produced outlining best practice for all users of the site. Are you aware of this document?

- Yes No

How do you think this should be communicated to the users of the site?
(Please tick all you think should apply)

- Leaflet available in shops Leaflet available through you club
- Local magazines Website
- Local newspapers Other _____

9. Are you a member of any of the following? (Please tick all that apply).

- British Kite Flying Association North East Kite Surfers UK Windsurfing Association
- Cleveland Divers Redcar Divers Uni of Teesside Riding Club
- Crimdon Pony World Redcar Fisherman Huts Association Uni of Teesside Sub Aqua Club
- Hartlepool Divers Club Tees and Hartlepool Yacht Club Whitby Sea Anglers
- North East Kite Flyers Teesside BASC Teesmouth Bird Club

Other _____

10. Does your main recreational activity already have its own code of conduct?

Yes No Don't know

11. If your main recreational activity already has its own code of conduct do you follow it?

Yes No Sometimes

12. Do you believe you would follow a code of conduct if one was created?

Yes No Sometimes

13. Do you believe other users would follow a code of conduct for their activity?

Yes No Sometimes

Are there any particular groups you feel are less likely to follow a code of conduct?

14. Do you think is this site is a (Please tick all that you think apply).

European Marine Site Ramsar site Special Protection Area
 Site of Special Scientific Interest Local Nature Reserve
 None of the above I don't know _____

15. Would you say you use the coast because there is nowhere suitable to do your activity closer to your home?

Yes No Maybe

16. If a suitable area of green space was provided close to your home would you consider using it as an alternative to the coast?

Yes No Maybe

17. What might attract you to going somewhere else rather than the coast?

18. Please give details of your group

Number of males Number of females

19.

<input type="checkbox"/> 17 and under	<input type="checkbox"/> 25 – 29	<input type="checkbox"/> 60 – 64
<input type="checkbox"/> 18 – 19	<input type="checkbox"/> 30 - 44	<input type="checkbox"/> 65 and over
<input type="checkbox"/> 20 – 24	<input type="checkbox"/> 45 – 59	

20. To help understand where visitors have come from it is very useful to know the first part of your postcode.

Postcode: _____

Appendix 2. Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA citation

EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds Special Protection Area (SPA)

Name: Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA

Unitary Authority/County: Durham County Council, Hartlepool Borough Council, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.

Consultation proposal: The existing Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA was classified on 15 August 1995; an extension to that area has been recommended to enlarge the area within the Tees Estuary and along part of the foreshore to the north because of the site's European ornithological interest.

The Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area is a wetland of European importance, comprising intertidal sand and mudflats, rocky shore, saltmarsh, freshwater marsh and sand dunes. Large numbers of waterbirds feed and roost on the site in winter and during passage periods; in summer Little Terns breed on the sandy beaches within the site.

Boundary of SPA: The original SPA includes all or parts of Seal Sands SSSI; Seaton Dunes and Common SSSI; Cowpen Marsh SSSI; Redcar Rocks SSSI; and South Gare and Coatham Sands SSSI. The extended area is within or coincident with the above SSSI boundaries and will also include parts of Durham Coast SSSI and all of Tees and Hartlepool Foreshore and Wetlands SSSI. For boundary of extended SPA see map.

Size of SPA: The extension covers an area of 304.75 ha, giving a revised SPA area of 1247.31 ha.

European ornithological importance of SPA: The extended SPA is of European importance because:

- a) the site qualifies under **article 4.1** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the GB populations of the following species listed on Annex I, in any season:

Annex I species	5 year peak mean	% of GB population
Little Tern <i>Sterna albifrons</i>	40 pairs – breeding (1995 – 1998)	1.7%
Sandwich Tern <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	1,900 individuals – passage (1988 – 1992)	6.8%

- b) the site qualifies under **article 4.2** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the biogeographical populations of the following regularly occurring migratory species (other than those listed on Annex I), in any season:

Migratory species	5 year peak mean	% of population
Knot <i>Calidris canutus islandica</i>	5,509 individuals – wintering (1991/92 – 1996/96)	1.6% NE Can/Grl/Iceland/UK
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus totanus</i>	1,648 individuals – passage (1987 – 1991)	1.1% Eastern Atlantic (wintering)

- c) the site qualifies under **article 4.2** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by over 20,000 waterfowl in any season:

Period	Season	Population
1991/92 – 1995/96	Wintering	21,312 individuals

- d) the wintering waterfowl assemblage qualifying under **article 4.2** includes the wintering species of European importance, as well as the following species in numbers of national importance:

Species	5 year peak mean	% of GB population
Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	140 individuals – wintering (1993/94 – 1997/98)	1.1%
Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	1,030 individuals – wintering (1993/94 – 1997/98)	1.4%
Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>	1,265 individuals – wintering (1987/88 – 1991/92)	1.3%
Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>	129 individuals – wintering (1991/92 – 1995/96)	1.3%
Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i>	601 individuals – wintering (1993/94 – 1997/98)	2.6%

Non-qualifying species of interest: Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* (Annex I species) occurs on passage in small numbers and once bred (1996).

Status of SPA:

- 1) Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast was classified as a Special Protection Area on 15 August 1995.
- 2) Consultations commenced on the proposal to extend the site on 29 September 1999.
- 3) The extended area of Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA was classified on 31 March 2000.

Appendix 3. Map showing the survey areas for the 2016/17 recreational disturbance study
(NB. the survey areas and observer locations as shown on the map are approximate)

