



**WIRRAL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR WIRRAL**

**SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

**PARKING STANDARDS**

**HABITATS REGULATION ASSESSMENT  
SCREENING OPINION IN RESPECT OF NATURA 2000  
SITES**

**JUNE 2007**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report sets out the screening process to establish if the proposed Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – Parking Standards needs be subject to Appropriate Assessment under Regulation 48, 49 and 54 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c) 1994 Regulations before the Council decides formally adopt the SPD.
- 1.2 Directive 92/43/EEC (the Habitats Directive) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora is implemented in UK law by the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c) Regulations 1994, (the “Habitats Regulations”) which apply also to areas classified under the EU Wild Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC). The Regulations aim to protect a network of sites in the UK that have rare or important habitats and species in order to safeguard biodiversity. This has given rise to the network of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) under the EU Birds Directive and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) under the Habitats Directive. These sites form part of the Natura 2000 network under Article 3(1) of the Habitats Directive.
- 1.3 Under the Habitats Regulations, Competent Authorities have a duty to ensure that all the activities they regulate have no adverse effect on the integrity of any of the Natura 2000 sites. Regulation 48 of the Habitats Regulations requires the Competent Authority to assess the possible effects of proposals on, or potentially affecting, any Natura 2000 sites. This includes screening for potential impacts on European sites, and where significant effects seem likely, then the plan or project must be subject to an Appropriate Assessment of its implications on the site (Regulation 48(1)). In the light of the conclusions of the assessment the competent authority shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned (Regulation 48(5)).
- 1.4 A recent ruling by the European Court of Justice confirmed that the requirements of Appropriate Assessment apply to land use plans. The Government has indicated that revisions to the Habitats Regulations, which transpose this requirement into UK law, are due to come into force in October 2006. Accompanying Guidance is also due to be published by the Department for Communities and Local Government, following consultation on a draft ‘Planning for the Protection of European Sites: Appropriate Assessment’ (issued by DCLG in August 2006). In the meantime, Guidance for Appropriate Assessments is contained within PPS 9: “Biodiversity and Geological Conservation” and the accompanying Circular 06/2005: “Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their impact within the planning system”. However, this advice predates the ECJ judgement and therefore does not reflect the fuller application of the Habitats Directives to plans and projects in the UK as determined by the European Court. For this reason and pending the adoption of formal guidance from the UK Government, whilst regard is to be had to PPS9 and

Circular 06/2005 (paragraphs 54 and 55), more reliance should now be placed upon the EC publication “Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites – Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC” (November 2001).

1.5 The following Natura 2000 sites are relevant for this assessment:

- Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area
- Dee Estuary Special Protection Area
- Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential Special Protection Area
- Dee Estuary possible Special Area of Conservation
- Ribble and Ault Estuary Special Protection Area

1.6 The first stage is to produce a screening opinion for the project or plan, which examines the likely effects, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, upon the European sites and consider whether it can objectively be concluded that these effects will not be significant and therefore an appropriate assessment is not required. In accordance with these requirements this screening opinion has been produced to examine the potential of the proposed Supplementary Planning Document for Parking Standards for having significant effects on the above sites in order to determine whether or not an appropriate assessment is required.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 The EC guidance identifies four main stages in an appropriate assessment:

- Stage One – Screening
- Stage two – Appropriate Assessment
- Stage Three – Assessment of Alternative Solutions
- Stage Four – Assessment of Compensatory Measures

2.2 This document is concerned only with Stage 1

2.3 Stage one – Screening comprises four steps:

1. Determining whether the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary for the management of the site

2.4 This requires only that the Council identifies whether the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary to the management (conservation) of the site.

2. Describing the project or plan and any others that in combination have the potential to significantly affect the Natura 2000 site

2.5 In order to describe the plan it will be necessary to identify all elements that either alone or in combination have the potential for a significant effect on the site.

3. Characteristics of the site and identification of possible effects

2.6 Characterisation of the site as a whole or where impacts are most likely to fall in order to identify possible effects.

4. Assessing the significance of any effects

2.7 Effects identified above are tested for significance.

2.8 The Appendices attached to this report document this process.

### **3 CONCLUSIONS**

3.1 As a result of this screening process, the Council has concluded that the proposed Supplementary Planning Document – Parking Standards will not have significant effects.

3.2 The conclusions of the Council were confirmed by Natural England by letter dated 29<sup>th</sup> March 2007

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## APPENDIX 1 – SCREENING MATRIX

<p><b>Brief Description of the Project or Plan</b></p>	<p>Supplementary Planning Document – Parking Standards is intended to provide advice on design, layout and parking provision, which will be applied during the course of determining planning applications.</p> <p>This will supplement Policies TRT3 and TR9 of the Adopted Wirral Unitary Development Plan (2000)</p> <p>The SPD will cover the whole of the Wirral MBC area</p>
<p><b>Brief Description of the Natura 2000 site</b></p>	<p><b>Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area</b></p> <p>The Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area encompasses all or part of the Mersey Estuary SSSI and the New Ferry SSSI. It is a large, sheltered estuary which comprises large areas of Saltmarsh and extensive intertidal sand and mudflats, with limited areas of brackish marsh, rocky shoreline and boulder clay cliffs, within a rural and industrial environment. The intertidal flats and saltmarshes provide feeding and roosting sites for large and internationally important populations of waterfowl. During the winter, the site is of major importance for duck and waders. The site is also important during spring and autumn migration periods, particularly for wader populations moving along the west coast of Britain.</p> <p>The site qualifies under <b>Article 4.1</b> of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it used regularly by 1% or more of the Great Britain populations of the following species listed in Annex 1 in any season:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> 3,040 individuals representing 1.2% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1993/94-1997/98)</li> </ul> <p>The site qualifies under <b>Article 4.2</b> of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it used regularly by 1% or more of the biogeographical populations of the following regularly occurring migratory species (other than those listed in Annex 1) in any season:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i> 4,513 individuals (passage) representing 3.5% of <i>britannica</i> subspecies /population (5 year peak mean 1993/4- 1997/8)</li> <li>• Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> 6,476 individuals (wintering) representing 2.2% of the North Western Europe (non-breeding) subspecies/population (5 year peak mean 1993/4-1997/8)</li> <li>• Teal <i>Anas crecca</i> 11,723 individuals (wintering) representing 2.9% of the North Western Europe (non-breeding) subspecies/population (5 year peak mean 1993/4 – 1997/8)</li> <li>• Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i> 1,169 individuals (wintering) representing 1.9% of the North Western Europe (non-breeding) subspecies/population (5 year peak mean 1993/4-1997/8)</li> <li>• Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i> 48,789 individuals (wintering) representing 3.7% of the <i>alpina</i></li> </ul>



	<p>Western Europe (non-breeding) subspecies/population (5 year peak mean 1993/4-1997/8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Black-tailed godwit <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> 976 individuals (wintering) representing 2.8% of the <i>islandica</i> population (5 year peak mean 1993/4-1997/8)</li> <li>• Redshank <i>tringa totanus</i> 4,993 individuals (wintering) representing 3.8% of the <i>britannica</i> population (5 year peak mean 1993/4-1997/8)</li> </ul> <p>Assemblage qualification</p> <p>The site qualifies under <b>Article 4.2</b> of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by over 20,000 waterbirds (waterbirds as defined by the Ramsar Convention) in any season:  In the non-breeding season, the area regularly supports 104,599 individual waterbirds (5 year peak mean 1993/4-1997/8) including great crested grebe <i>Podiceps cristatus</i>, Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>, wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i> teal <i>Anas crecca</i> pintail <i>Anas acuta</i> ringed plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>, golden plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>, grey plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>, lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>, dunlin <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>, black-tailed godwit <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>, curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i> and Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i></p> <p>Non-qualifying species of interest: Bewick's swan <i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>, whooper swan <i>Cygnus cygnus</i>, merlin <i>Falco columbarius</i>, peregrine <i>Falco peregrinus</i>, ruff <i>Philomachus pugnax</i>, bar-tailed godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i> and short-eared owl <i>Asio flammeus</i> (all Annex 1 species) occur in non-breeding numbers of less than European importance (less than 1% of the GB population).</p> <p>The Mersey Estuary was classified as a Special Protection Area on 20 December 1995.</p> <p>An extension to the Mersey Estuary SPA, to include the New Ferry SSSI, was classified on 23 June 2004.</p> <p><b>Dee Estuary Special Protection Area</b></p> <p>The Dee Estuary lies on the border between England and Wales on the north-west coast of Britain. It is a large funnel-shaped, sheltered estuary which supports extensive areas of intertidal sand and mudflats and saltmarsh. Where agricultural reclamation has not occurred, the saltmarshes grade into transitional brackish and swamp vegetation on the upper shore. The site also includes the three sandstone islands of Hilbre, with their important cliff vegetation and maritime heathland and grassland. The two shorelines of the estuary show a marked contrast between the industrialised usage of the coastal belt in Wales and residential and recreational usage in England. The site is of major importance for waterbirds; during the winter, the intertidal flats, saltmarshes and fringing habitats including coastal grazing marsh/fields provide feeding and roosting sites for large internationally important numbers of ducks and waders; in summer the site supports nationally important breeding colonies of two species of tern. The site is also important during migration periods, particularly for wader populations moving along the west coast of Britain and for Sandwich terns post-breeding.</p>
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The site qualifies under **Article 4.1** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the Great Britain populations of the following species listed in Annex 1 in any season:

- Bar-tailed Godwit *limosa lapponica* 1,150 individuals (wintering) representing 2.2% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1994/5-1998/9)
- Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* 392 pairs (breeding) representing 3.2% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1995-1999)
- Little Tern *Sterna albifrons* 69 pairs (breeding) representing 2.9% of the GB population (5 year mean 1995-1999)
- Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis* 957 individuals (autumn passage) representing 2.3% of the GB population (5 year mean 1995-1999)

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 occurring migratory species (other than those listed in Annex 1) in any season:

- Redshank *Tringa totanus* - 8,795 individuals (passage) representing 5.9% of the Eastern Atlantic (wintering) population (5 year mean 1994/5-1998/9)
- Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* – 7,725 individuals (wintering) 2.6% Northwestern Europe population (5 year mean 1994/5-1998/9)
- Teal *Anas crecca* - 5,251 individuals (wintering) representing 1.3% of the Northwestern Europe population (5 year mean 1994/5-1998/9)
- Pintail *Anas acuta* – 5,407 individuals (wintering) representing 9.0% of the Northwestern Europe population (5 year mean 1994/5 – 1998/9)
- Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* – 22,677 individuals (wintering) representing 2.5% of the European and NW Africa (wintering) population (5 year mean 1994/5 – 1998/9)
- Grey Plover *pluvialis squatarola* 1,643 individuals (wintering) representing 1.1% of the Eastern Atlantic (wintering) population (5 year mean 1994/5 – 1998/9)
- Knot *canutus islandica* 12,394 individuals (wintering) representing 3.5% of the NE Canada/Greenland/Iceland/NW European population (5 year mean 1994/5-1998/9)
- Dunlin *Calidris alpina* 27,769 individuals (wintering) representing 2.0% of the N Siberia/Europe/West Africa population (5 year mean 1994/5-1998/9)
- Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa islandica* 1,747 individuals (wintering) representing 2.5% of the Iceland population (breeding) (5 year mean 1994/5-1998/9)
- Curlew *Numenius arquata* 3,899 individuals (wintering) representing 1.1% of the European population (breeding) (5 year mean 1994/5-1998/9)
- Redshank *Tringa totanus* 5,293 individuals (wintering) representing 3.5% of the Eastern Atlantic population (wintering) (5 year mean 1994/5-1998/9)

	<p>Assemblage qualification</p> <p>The site qualifies under <b>Article 4.2</b> of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it used regularly by over 20,000 waterbirds (waterbirds as defined by the Ramsar Convention) in any season:</p> <p>In the non-breeding season, the area regularly supports 120,726 individual waterbirds (5 year peak mean 1994/5-1998/9) including Great Crested Grebe <i>Podiceps cristatus</i> , Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>, Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i>, Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>, Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i>, Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus oastralegus</i>, Grey Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>, Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>, Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i>, Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i>, Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina</i>, Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>, Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>, Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i> and Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>.</p> <p><b>Non-qualifying species of interest:</b> Leach's Petrel <i>Oceanodroma leucorhoa</i>, Little Egret <i>Egretta garzetta</i>, Berwicks Swan <i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>, Whopper Swan <i>Cygnus cygnus</i>, Smew <i>Mergellus albellus</i>, Hen Harrier <i>Circus cyaneus</i>, Merlin <i>Falco columbarius</i>, Peregrine <i>Falco peregrinus</i>, Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>, Ruff <i>Philomachus pugnax</i>, Wood Sandpiper <i>Tringa glareola</i>, Short-eared Owl <i>Asio flammeus</i>, and kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i> (all Annex 1 Species) occur in non-breeding numbers of less than European importance (less than 1% of the GB population)</p> <p>The Dee Estuary was classified as a special protection area on 17 July 1985</p> <p><b>Dee Estuary possible Special Area of Conservation</b></p> <p>The Dee Estuary possible Special Area of Conservation (pSAC) includes the Dee Estuary, an area of intertidal sandflats on the north-west coast of the Wirral and Gronant Dunes and Talacre Warren north east of Presatayn. The area is being put forward as a pSAC because of the size, biological interest and quality of the estuary and its saltmarshes, intertidal mudflats and sandflats, sand dunes, drift line vegetation and sea cliffs and the presence of petalwort and sea and river lampreys that migrate through the area. The Dee Estuary is the sixth largest estuary in the UK</p> <p><b>European priority interests</b></p> <p><b>1. Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation ("grey dunes")</b>  – for which the area is considered to support a significant presence</p> <p><b>European interest(s)</b></p> <p><b>2. Annual vegetation of drift lines</b>  – which is considered to be rare as its total extent in the United Kingdom is estimated to be less than 100 hectares;</p>
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- for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.
- 3. Atlantic Salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae*)**
  - for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom
- 4. Embryonic shifting dunes**
  - which is considered to be rare as its total extent in the United Kingdom is estimated to be less than 1000 hectares,
  - for which the area is considered to support a significant presence
- 5. Humid dune slacks**
  - for which the area is considered to support a significant presence
- 6. River Lamprey (*Lampetra fluviatilis*)**
  - for which the area is considered to support a significant presence
- 7. Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide (Intertidal)**
  - for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom
- 8. Petalwort (*Petalophyllum ralfsii*)**
  - for which the area is considered to support a significant presence
- 9. Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*)**
  - for which the area is considered to support a significant presence
- 10. Glasswort (*Salicornia*) and other annuals colonising mud and sand**
  - for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the united kingdom
- 11. Shifting dunes along the shoreline with marram (*Ammophila arenaria*) (“white dunes”)**
  - for which the area is considered to support a significant presence
- 12. Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts**
  - for which the area is considered to support a significant presence
- 13. Estuaries**
  - for which the area is considered to support a significant presence

**Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential Special Protection Area**

The Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore SPA is located on the north-west coast of England at the mouths of the Mersey and Dee estuaries. The site comprises intertidal habitats at Egremont foreshore, man-made lagoons at Seaforth Nature Reserve and the extensive intertidal flats at North Wirral Foreshore. Egremont is most important as a feeding habitat for waders at low tide whilst Seaforth is primarily a high-tide roost site, as well as a nesting site for terns. North Wirral Foreshore supports large numbers of feeding waders at low tide and also includes important high-tide roost sites. The most notable feature of the site is the exceptionally high density of wintering Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*. Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore has clear links in terms of bird movements with the nearby Dee Estuary SPA, Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA, and (to a lesser extent) Mersey Estuary SPA.

This site qualifies under **Article 4.2** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of

the following migratory species:

**Over winter;**

- Redshank *Tringa totanus*, 1,981 individuals representing at least 1.3% of the wintering Eastern Atlantic - wintering population (5 year peak mean 1991/2 - 1995/6)
- Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*, 1,138 individuals representing at least 1.6% of the wintering Western Palearctic - wintering population (5 year peak mean 1991/2 - 1995/6)
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**Assemblage qualification: A wetland of international importance.**

The area qualifies under **Article 4.2** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by regularly supporting at least 20,000 waterfowl Over winter, the area regularly supports 20,269 individual waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1991/2 - 1995/6) including: Dunlin *Calidris alpina alpina*, Knot *Calidris canutus*, Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*, Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*, Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*, Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*, Redshank *Tringa tetanus*

**Ribble and Ault Estuary Special Protection Area**

The SPA includes land within Ribble Estuary SSSI and Sefton Coast SSS and comprises of intertidal sand and mudflats, saltmarsh, marshy grassland.

The site qualifies under **Article 4.1 of the Directive (79/409/EEC)**. During the breeding season the area regularly supports:

*Philomachus pugnax* (Western Africa - wintering) 9.1% of the GB breeding population Count as at late 1980s  
*Sterna hirundo* (Northern/Eastern Europe - breeding) 1.5% of the GB breeding population  
Count as at 1996

**Over winter the area regularly supports:**

*Cygnus columbianus bewickii* (Western Siberia/North-eastern & North-western Europe) 3.9% of the GB population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98, *Cygnus Cygnus* (Iceland/UK/Ireland) 3.3% of the GB population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98, *Limosa lapponica* (Western Palearctic - wintering) 37.9% of the GB population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98, *Pluvialis apricaria* (North-western Europe - breeding) 1.4% of the GB population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98

The site qualifies under **Article 4.2 of the Directive (79/409/EEC)**.

**During the breeding season the area regularly supports:**

*Larus fuscus* (Western Europe/Mediterranean/Western Africa) 1.5% of the breeding population  
Count as at 1993, *Larus ridibundus* (North-western Europe - breeding) 7.1% of the population in Great Britain Count as at

	<p>1996</p> <p><b>Over winter the area regularly supports:</b>  <i>Anas acuta</i> (North-western Europe) 4.6% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98  <i>Anas crecca</i> (North-western Europe) 1.8% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98  <i>Anas Penelope</i> (Western Siberia/North-western/North-eastern Europe) 6.8% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98, <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i> (Eastern Greenland/Iceland/UK) 5.2% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98, <i>Aythya marila</i> (Northern/Western Europe) 1.0% of the population in Great Britain 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98, <i>Calidris alba</i> (Eastern Atlantic/Western &amp; Southern Africa - wintering) 2.9% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98, <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i> (Northern Siberia/Europe/Western Africa) 2.8% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98, <i>Calidris canutus</i> (North-eastern Canada/Greenland/Iceland/Northwestern Europe) 19.7% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98, <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> (Europe &amp; Northern/Western Africa) 2.1% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98, <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> (Iceland - breeding) 1.8% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98, <i>Melanitta nigra</i> (Western Siberia/Western &amp; Northern Europe/North-western Africa) 2.7% of the population in Great Britain 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98, <i>Numenius arquata</i> (Europe - breeding) 1.7% of the population in Great Britain 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98, <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> (North-western Europe) 2.4% of the population in Great Britain 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98, <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> (Eastern Atlantic - wintering) 6.2% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 -1997/98, <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> (North-western Europe) 1.6% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98, <i>Tringa tetanus</i> (Eastern Atlantic - wintering) 1.7% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98, <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> (Europe - breeding) 0.8% of the population in Great Britain 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98</p> <p><b>On passage the area regularly supports:</b>  <i>Calidris alba</i> (Eastern Atlantic/Western &amp; Southern Africa - wintering) 6.5% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993 – 1997, <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> (Europe/Northern Africa - wintering) 3.3% of the population 5 year peak mean 1993 – 1997, <i>Numenius phaeopus</i> (Europe/Western Africa) 13.9% of the population in Great Britain 5 year peak mean 1993/94 - 1997/98</p> <p><b>Article 4.2 Qualification (79/409/EEC): An Internationally Important Assemblage of Birds</b></p> <p><b>During the breeding season the area regularly supports:</b> 29236 seabirds (5 year peak mean 01/10/2002) Including: <i>Larus ridibundus</i> , <i>Larus fuscus</i> , <i>Sterna hirundo</i> .</p> <p><b>Over winter the area regularly supports:</b>  323861 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 01/10/2002) Including: <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> , <i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i> , <i>Cygnus cygnus</i> , <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i> , <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> , <i>Anas penelope</i> , <i>Anas crecca</i> , <i>Anas acuta</i> , <i>Aythya marila</i> ,</p>
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	<i>Melanitta nigra</i> , <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> , <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> , <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> , <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> , <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> , <i>Calidris canutus</i> , <i>Calidris alba</i> , <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i> , <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> , <i>Limosa lapponica</i> , <i>Numenius arquata</i> , <i>Tringa totanus</i> .
<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	
Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site	None – the SPD proposes standards only related to new development and conversions of existing buildings. It does not in itself establish the principle for new development, rather it will supplement existing planning policies TRT3 and TR9 in the adopted Wirral Unitary Development Plan, which support general locational policies in the UDP and reduction of unnecessary traffic. The SPD does not propose any development which would result in direct loss of SPA/SAC habitat or otherwise result in indirect impacts on the SPA/SAC
Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size and scale</li> <li>• Land-take</li> <li>• Distance from the natural 2000 site or key features of the site;</li> <li>• Resource requirements (water abstraction etc)</li> <li>• Emissions (disposal to land, water or air)</li> <li>• Excavation requirements</li> <li>• Transportation requirements</li> <li>• Duration of construction, operation, decommissioning etc</li> <li>• other</li> </ul>	None – as above
Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result	No changes identified

of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction of Habitat area</li> <li>• Disturbance to key species</li> <li>• Habitat or species fragmentation</li> <li>• Reduction in species density</li> <li>• Changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc)</li> <li>• Climate change</li> </ul>	
Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as whole in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site;</li> <li>• Interference with key relationships that define the function of the site</li> </ul>	No impacts identified
Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss</li> <li>• Fragmentation;</li> <li>• Disruption</li> <li>• Disturbance</li> <li>• Change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc)</li> </ul>	N/A
Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of	There are no likely significant impacts identified



elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known.	
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## APPENDIX 2 - FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS REPORT

Name of project or plan	Supplementary Planning Document – Parking Standards
Name and location of Natura 2000 site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area</li> <li>• Dee Estuary Special Protection Area</li> <li>• Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential Special Protection Area</li> <li>• Dee Estuary possible Special Area of Conservation</li> <li>• Ribble and Ault Estuary Special Protection Area</li> </ul>
Description of the project or plan	The Supplementary Planning Document – Parking Standards will not set a new policy framework. It will supplement Policies TRT3 and TR9 from the Unitary Development Plan for Wirral adopted in February 2000. The SPD will provide additional advice on the design, layout and parking provision for development throughout the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral and will be a material consideration when determining individual planning applications.
Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (provide details)?	No
Are there other plans or projects that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)?	No
<b>The Assessment of Significance of Effects</b>	
Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site	No likely effects
Explain why these effects are not considered significant	N/A
List of agencies consulted	Natural England & Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service
Summary of consultation response(s)	Natural England concur with the conclusion that Appropriate Assessment is not required under Regulations 48, 49 and 54 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c) Regulations 1994.

### Data collected to carry out the Assessment

Who carried out the assessment?	Sources of Data	Level of Assessment completed	Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed
Wirral MBC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee; English Nature; Wirral MBC	Desktop study is sufficient to support the conclusions of this screening opinion	Website at <a href="http://www.wirral.gov.uk">www.wirral.gov.uk</a> or at Council offices

### Overall Conclusion

The Supplementary Planning Document – Parking Standards does not set a new framework for development, but it will supplement existing Policies TRT3 and TR9 of the Adopted Wirral Unitary Development Plan. The SPD does not promote development but aims to provide guidance on design, layout and parking provision for any future developments that may come forward.

On the basis of the information above it is the Council’s opinion that the proposed plan to which the screening opinion relates

a) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site(s), but

b) is not likely to have a significant effect on the:

- Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area
- Dee Estuary Special Protection Area
- Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential Special Protection Area
- Dee Estuary possible Special Area of Conservation
- Ribble and Ault Estuary Special Protection Area

either alone or in combination or in combination with other plans or projects, and

Accordingly, no “appropriate assessment” is required to be made under Regulation 48, 49 and 54 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats and c) Regulations before the Council decides undertake, or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for this plan.

**APPENDIX 3 – PRELIMINARY TEST OF SIGNIFICANCE FOR SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT – PARKING STANDARDS**

**Impact on the Draft Generic Conservation Objectives for: Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area, Dee Estuary Special Protection Area and the Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential Special Protection Area, Ribble and Alt Estuary Special Protection Area**

<b>Draft Generic Conservation Objectives</b>	<b>Interest Features / Target</b>	<b>Likely Effects of Supplementary Planning Document – Parking Standards</b>	<b>Conditions / Mitigation Measures</b>	<b>Conclusions / Implications</b>
Embryonic saltmarsh:  Marshy Grassland (Ribble & Ault Estuary)	Embryonic shifting dunes  <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand.  No reduction in area and any consequent fragmentation without prior consent.  Vegetation characteristics and Food availability  No significant change in vegetation height throughout areas used for feeding and roosting level. No significant reduction in presence and abundance of prey species. No significant reduction in presence and abundance of food species.	The SPD proposes standards only related to new development and conversions of existing buildings. It does not in itself establish the principle for new development, rather it will supplement existing planning policies TRT3 and TR9 in the adopted Wirral Unitary Development Plan, which support general locational policies and reducing unnecessary traffic. The SPD does not propose any development which would result in direct loss of SPA/SAC habitat or otherwise result in indirect impacts on the SPA/Sac . No impact on the interest feature.	None required	Appropriate Assessment not required

<b>Draft Generic Conservation Objectives</b>	<b>Interest Features / Target</b>	<b>Likely Effects of Supplementary Planning Document – Parking Standards</b>	<b>Conditions / Mitigation Measures</b>	<b>Conclusions / Implications</b>
Intertidal sand and mudflats – To maintain the designated habitats in favourable condition, which is defined in part in relation to a balance of habitat extent (Intertidal sand and mudflats).	<p>Mudflats, sand flats, wader and wildfowl feeding grounds / roosting grounds / refuges.</p> <p>No reduction in area and any consequent fragmentation without prior consent.</p>	As above	None required	Appropriate Assessment not required
Sand and Mudflats – maintain the quality of the sand and mudflats which are used as feeding grounds by waders and the saltmarsh which is used by wildfowl.	<p>Distribution and extent of - all/range of biotopes. Specific biotope – distribution Specific biotope – extent Specific biotope - Species composition Sediment character: 1. Particle size analysis (partly)</p> <p>Intertidal mud and sandflats provide rich feeding grounds for internationally important numbers of knot, redshank, turnstone etc.</p> <p>Coast defence structures provide loafing and roosting habitat.</p>	As above	None Required	Appropriate Assessment not required
Intertidal sand and	Intertidal mud and	As above	None required	Appropriate Assessment not

<b>Draft Generic Conservation Objectives</b>	<b>Interest Features / Target</b>	<b>Likely Effects of Supplementary Planning Document – Parking Standards</b>	<b>Conditions / Mitigation Measures</b>	<b>Conclusions / Implications</b>
mudflats Wading bird roosts and wildfowl refuges.	<p>sandflats provide rich feeding grounds for internationally important numbers of knot, turnstone, black-tailed Godwit etc.</p> <p>Wading bird roosts and wildfowl refuges – maintain (by protection from disturbance) the areas that are used by wading birds as high tide roosts or refuge by wildfowl.</p> <p>Coast defence structure provide loafing and roosting habitat.</p>			required
Intertidal sand and mudflats	Intertidal mud and sandflat invertebrate communities which provide feeding habitat for waterfowl.	As above	None required	Appropriate Assessment not required
All interest Features	All interest features	<p>Other Plans and Projects considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development plans for neighbouring districts – Sefton, Liverpool, Flintshire, Ellesmere Port and Neston: All adopt a restrictive approach to development in the coastal zone and reflect requirements of the Habitats Regulations</li> </ul>	None required	Appropriate Assessment not required

<b>Draft Generic Conservation Objectives</b>	<b>Interest Features / Target</b>	<b>Likely Effects of Supplementary Planning Document – Parking Standards</b>	<b>Conditions / Mitigation Measures</b>	<b>Conclusions / Implications</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shoreline Management Plan: advocates combination of hold the line or do-nothing – no direct impact in terms of habitat loss</li> <li>• Regional Spatial Strategy: aims to protect coastal resources and afford the strongest level of protection to sites of international nature conservation importance</li> <li>• Seaforth Dock Harbour Revision Order – no direct interaction identified, loss of bird feeding grounds insignificant.</li> <li>• Gwynt-y-Mor offshore wind farm – no significant coastal impact identified.</li> <li>• Seaforth Wind Turbines – no significant impacts identified, minor exclusion of roosting habitat during construction/operation.</li> <li>• Area 457 aggregate licence application - no significant coastal impact identified.</li> <li>• Neptune New Brighton – only temporary insignificant impacts identified</li> </ul> <p>In combination effects unlikely due to the scale of predicted impacts of other plans/projects and initial conclusions in relation to Core Strategy outlined above.</p>		

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## APPENDIX 4 – PRELIMINARY TEST OF SIGNIFICANCE FOR SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT – PARKING STANDARDS

### Impact on the Dee Estuary pSAC Conservation Objectives

Conservation Objectives for Dee Estuary pSAC	Interest Features	Likely Effects	Conditions / Mitigation Measures	Conclusions / Implications
To maintain the “estuaries” features of the Dee Estuary pSAC in favourable condition.	Maintain total extent of all estuarine communities. Maintain spatial distribution of all estuarine communities. Maintain individual extent of estuarine habitat features/ Maintain the variety and extent of any notable sediment and rocky substrates within the estuary. Maintain the variety and extent of notable sub tidal sediment communities. Maintain the variety and extent of notable intertidal hard substrata communities. Maintain the spatial and temporal patterns of salinity, suspended sediments and nutrient concentrations within specified limits.	The proposed standards only relate to new development and use of existing buildings. It does not in itself establish the principle for new development, rather it will supplement existing planning policies TRT3 and TR9 in the adopted Wirral Unitary Development Plan, which support general locational policies in the UDP and reduction of unnecessary traffic. The SPD does not propose any development, which would result in direct loss of SPA/SAC habitat or otherwise result in indirect impacts on the SPA/Sac. No impact on the interest feature	None Required	Appropriate Assessment not required
Maintain the “Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand” feature of the Dee Estuary pSAC in favourable condition.	Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand, subject to natural processes: Maintain the total extent of pioneer saltmarsh vegetation communities within the site. Maintain the presence of	As above	None Required	Appropriate Assessment not required

<b>Conservation Objectives for Dee Estuary pSAC</b>	<b>Interest Features</b>	<b>Likely Effects</b>	<b>Conditions / Mitigation Measures</b>	<b>Conclusions / Implications</b>
	<p>pioneer saltmarsh vegetation communities as part of transitions from intertidal sediment communities to higher saltmarsh.</p> <p>Maintain the abundance of typical species of the pioneer saltmarsh vegetation communities.</p> <p>Maintain the abundance of notable species of the pioneer saltmarsh vegetation communities.</p> <p>Regardless of natural processes the overall extent and abundance of common cord grass <i>Spartina anglica</i> is not increasing within the pioneer saltmarsh zone.</p>			
<p>Intertidal environment not covered by seawater at low tide. Maintain the “mudflats and sandflats” feature of the Dee Estuary pSAC in favourable condition.</p>	<p>Maintain the total extent of mudflat and sandflat communities within the site.</p> <p>Maintain the proportions of individual mudflat and sandflat communities within the site.</p> <p>Maintain the topography of the intertidal flats and the dynamic processes of channel migration and sinuosity across the flats.</p> <p>Maintain the abundance of typical species of the mudflat and sandflat feature within</p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>None Required</p>	<p>Appropriate Assessment not required</p>

<b>Conservation Objectives for Dee Estuary pSAC</b>	<b>Interest Features</b>	<b>Likely Effects</b>	<b>Conditions / Mitigation Measures</b>	<b>Conclusions / Implications</b>
	the site.			
Maintain the “Atlantic salt meadow” feature of the Dee Estuary pSAC in favourable condition.	<p>Maintain the total extent of Atlantic saltmarsh meadow within the site.</p> <p>Maintain the proportions of Atlantic salt meadow communities within the site.</p> <p>Maintain the donation of Atlantic salt meadow vegetation communities and their transitions to fresh water and terrestrial vegetation within the site.</p> <p>Maintain the morphology of saltmarsh creeks and pans and the processes of their evolution.</p> <p>Maintain and there is no increase in grazing intensity and maintain the extent of ungrazed areas of salt meadow within the estuary.</p> <p>Maintain the relative abundance of typical species of the Atlantic salt meadow vegetation communities.</p> <p>Maintain the abundance of notable species of the Atlantic salt meadow vegetation communities within the site.</p>	As above	None Required	Appropriate Assessment not required
Maintain the “annual vegetation drift lines” feature of the Dee Estuary pSAC in	Maintain the extent of coarse sediment / shingle formations capable of supporting drift line vegetation communities.	As above	None Required	Appropriate Assessment not required

<b>Conservation Objectives for Dee Estuary pSAC</b>	<b>Interest Features</b>	<b>Likely Effects</b>	<b>Conditions / Mitigation Measures</b>	<b>Conclusions / Implications</b>
favourable condition.	Maintain the presence of annual drift line vegetation communities. Maintain the presence of typical species of the annual drift line vegetation communities.			
River Lamprey – maintain <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (river lamprey) feature of the Dee Estuary pSAC in favourable condition.	The migratory passage of both adult and juvenile river lamprey through the Dee Estuary between Liverpool Bay and the River Dee is unobstructed by physical barriers and / or poor water quality.	As above	None Required	Appropriate Assessment not required
Sea Lamprey – maintain <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (sea lamprey) feature of the Dee Estuary pSAC in favourable condition.	The migratory passage of both adult and juvenile sea lamprey through the Dee Estuary between Liverpool Bay and the River Dee is unobstructed by physical barriers and / or poor water quality.	As above	Non Required	Appropriate Assessment not required
Sand and Mudflats – maintain the quality of the sand and mudflats which are used as feeding grounds by waders and the saltmarsh which is used by wildfowl.	Intertidal mud and sandflats provide rich feeding grounds for internationally important numbers of knot, redshank, turnstone etc.  Coast defence structures provide loafing and roosting habitat.	As above	None Required	Appropriate Assessment not required
Wading bird roosts	Intertidal mud and sandflats	As above	None Required	Appropriate Assessment not

<b>Conservation Objectives for Dee Estuary pSAC</b>	<b>Interest Features</b>	<b>Likely Effects</b>	<b>Conditions / Mitigation Measures</b>	<b>Conclusions / Implications</b>
and wildfowl refuges – maintain (by protection from disturbance) the areas that are used by wading birds as high tide roosts or refuge by wildfowl.	provide rich feeding grounds for internationally important numbers of knot, turnstone, black-tailed Godwit etc.  Coast defence structure provide loafing and roosting habitat.			required
All interest features - In combination and cumulative effects of the Project considered with other major plans and programmes such as Burbo Bank Offshore wind farm, Seaforth Dock Harbour Revision Order, Gwynt-y-Mor offshore wind farm, Seaforth Wind Turbines and Area 457 aggregate licence application, on the conservation objectives and designated features	All interest features	Other Plans and Projects considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development plans for neighbouring districts – Sefton, Liverpool, Flintshire, Ellesmere Port and Neston: All adopt a restrictive approach to development in the coastal zone and reflect requirements of the Habitats Regulations</li> <li>• Shoreline Management Plan: advocates combination of hold the line or do-nothing – no direct impact in terms of habitat loss</li> <li>• Regional Spatial Strategy: aims to protect coastal resources and afford the strongest level of protection to sites of international nature conservation importance</li> <li>• Seaforth Dock Harbour Revision Order – no direct interaction identified, loss of bird feeding grounds insignificant.</li> <li>• Gwynt-y-Mor offshore wind farm – no significant coastal impact identified.</li> <li>• Seaforth Wind Turbines – no</li> </ul>	None Required	Appropriate Assessment not required

Conservation Objectives for Dee Estuary pSAC	Interest Features	Likely Effects	Conditions / Mitigation Measures	Conclusions / Implications
		<p>significant impacts identified, minor exclusion of roosting habitat during construction/operation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area 457 aggregate licence application - no significant coastal impact identified.</li> <li>• Neptune New Brighton – only temporary insignificant impacts identified</li> </ul> <p>In combination effects unlikely due to the scale of predicted impacts of other plans/ projects and initial conclusions in relation to Core Strategy outlined above.</p>		