ARUP

West Yorkshire Combined Authority

The Mayor's West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Reference: Final

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This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client. It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.

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1. Introduction

Ove Arup and Partners Ltd. (Arup) was commissioned by West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) to undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Mayor's West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (LTP), henceforth referred to as the "LTP".

1.1 Report Objectives

The purpose of this report is to provide the necessary information for the competent authority to carry out a HRA in accordance with Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species (amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019[1], hereafter referred to as 'the Habitats Regulations'. It has been prepared to inform the HRA process and the competent authority on the implications of the LTP on European sites protected by the Habitats Regulations.

This report covers Stage 1 (Screening Assessment) and Stage 2 (Appropriate Assessment) of the Habitats Regulation Assessment process in relation to the West Yorkshire LTP.

1.2 Report Structure

The report includes:

- Section 2: Habitats Regulations Assessment.
- Section 3: Background to The Mayor's West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (LTP).
- Section 4: Methodology.
- Section 5: Designated Sites.
- Section 6: Stage 1 Screening Assessment.
- Section 7: Stage 1 Screening Conclusion.
- Section 8: Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment.
- Section 9: Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment Conclusions.

[1] The EU Exit Regulations retain the requirements and interpretation of the 2017 Regulations, but with adjustments necessary to reflect the UK's exit from the European Union (see Reg. 4).

2. Habitats Regulations Assessment

The Habitats Regulations 2017 set out the stages of assessment which must be undertaken to determine if a plan or project could significantly harm the designated features of a European site. European sites comprise Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), designated under Council Directive 92/43/EEC ('the Habitats Directive') and Council Directive 79/409/EEC ('the Birds Directive'), as incorporated into UK law. Guidance from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) states any proposals affecting a proposed SAC, potential SPA, proposed or listed wetland of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention (Ramsar sites), or sites secured as compensation for damage to a European site, must also be subject to HRA Assessment.

Regulation 63 of the Habitats Regulations requires a competent authority to make an 'appropriate assessment' of the implications of a plan or project for that site in view of its conservation objectives, before deciding to undertake or give consent for a plan or project which: (a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European important site (either alone or in combination with other plans or project); and, (b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of that site.

The HRA process employs the precautionary principle, and Regulation 63 ensures that where a project is "*likely to have a significant effect,*" it can only be consented if the competent authority can ascertain (following an appropriate assessment) that it "*will not adversely affect the integrity of the European site*."

All plans and projects should identify any such possible effects early in the plan/project making process and then either alter the plan/project to avoid them or introduce mitigation measures to the point where no adverse effects occur. The competent authority is to agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it would not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, having obtained the opinion of the general public.

An in-combination assessment is required for effects which are not significant alone, but when combined with other 'residual' effects could give rise to a likely significant effect. Whilst not explicit in Regulation 63(5), case law (European Court of Justice, 2004) informs us that an in-combination assessment is required at both Stage 1 (screening) and Stage 2 (Appropriate Assessment).

Regulation 63 (2) of the Habitats Regulations 2017 states that as the applicant for this Plan, WYCA must provide such information as the competent authority may reasonably require for the purposes of the assessment, or to enable it to determine whether an Appropriate Assessment is required.

Regulation 63 of the Habitats Regulation 2017 also states that consent should only be granted for a plan or project once the relevant competent authority has ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of European sites.

Regulation 64 describes that where an Appropriate Assessment has been carried out and it cannot be ascertained that a plan or project would not adversely affect the integrity of a European site, consent will only be granted if there are no alternative solutions, there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) for the development, and compensatory measures have been secured.

The stages outlined below indicate that if likely significant effects can be ruled out in either Stages 1 or 2, a plan or project can be withdrawn from further assessment. Most plans or projects are resolved in Stages 1 and 2 because the iterative assessment process drives design change to avoid or minimise effects resulting from plans or projects. Plans and projects can only pass Stages 3 and 4 of a HRA if there are no feasible alternative solutions, IROPI has been demonstrated, and the necessary compensatory measures can be secured. This means that where issues cannot be resolved at Stage 2, few plans and projects are taken forward to Stages 3 and 4.

The applicant's role at each stage of the HRA process is summarised as follows:

- Screening (Stage 1) – determination of whether a plan or project will give rise to likely significant effects (LSE) on the conservation objectives of the qualifying features (interest features) of the European site, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, i.e. determination of whether LSE can be ruled out. It should be noted that in 2018 a Court of Justice of the European Union ruling (referred to as the 'People over Wind' ruling) determined that 'mitigation' i.e. measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of projects on European sites, should not be taken into account when forming a view on LSE during HRA screening.
- Informing the Appropriate Assessment (Stage 2) – where LSE cannot be ruled out at Stage 1, or there is uncertainty as to whether LSE would occur, applicants must report on and provide evidence of examination of adverse effects on the integrity of a European site, to inform the competent authority undertaking the Appropriate

Assessment. If an adverse effect on the integrity of the site can be avoided, with or without mitigation, the project can be consented. If not, derogations would have to be sought through Stages 3 and 4 of the HRA process. These are considered only in exceptional circumstances, where a strict set of legal tests must be met.

- Assessment of alternatives (Stage 3) – formal assessment and reporting of alternative solutions if the proposal fails the integrity test as an adverse effect on site integrity cannot be ruled out.
- Assessment of IROPI (Stage 4) – where the alternative solutions assessment reports that there are no alternative solutions to the project and this has been agreed with the relevant statutory environmental body (SEB), an assessment of IROPI shall be undertaken.
- Assessment of compensatory measures – where IROPI are established and reported, an assessment shall be compiled on measures to compensate for the adverse impact of the project. This should be used as basis for consultation with the relevant SEB to seek their representation on the sufficiency of the proposed compensation.

3. Background to The Mayor's West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (LTP)

The West Yorkshire Combined Authority was established in 2014 to bring together economic development and transport functions across West Yorkshire in a more strategic way. In May 2021, the Combined Authority became a Mayoral Combined Authority. The five West Yorkshire District Councils are Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield. As the strategic transport authority for the region, the Combined Authority has a statutory duty to produce an LTP for West Yorkshire and keep it under review.

The Combined Authority is currently developing a new plan covering the period 2026-2040. The Mayor's West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan core principles and strategies will replace the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040, which is the current local transport plan for West Yorkshire.

A 12-week statutory public and stakeholder consultation was undertaken on the new LTP policies and preferred approach between July and October 2025. The next step is the LTP being presented for approval at the Combined Authority meeting in March 2026. The LTP will be adopted and published shortly after.

3.1.1 LTP objectives and network principles

Underpinning the LTP are four objectives and six network principles. The LTP's four objectives are as follows:

- Boosting productivity: through a better-connected and more attractive West Yorkshire, which expands labour markets, increases innovation and creates jobs, supporting equitable and well-distributed growth.
- Enabling inclusive growth: by connecting people and communities with education, training, health and leisure opportunities to deliver equal access for all, and to eliminate transport related social exclusion.
- Tackling the climate emergency: through fair and inclusive decarbonisation, reduction of air and noise pollution, enhancement of biodiversity, and resilience to climate events.

- Improving health and wellbeing: of people and communities and reducing disparities in public health by promoting physical activity, supporting sense of place and improving air quality.

The LTP's six network principles of the LTP are as follows:

- Safe: reducing crime and ensuring that people feel safe when travelling. Zero fatalities in the West Yorkshire road network.
- Inclusive and affordable: a welcoming network that provides equal access to opportunities for all, removes disadvantage and has affordable fares and tickets.
- Integrated: joined up ways to travel, services, timetables, tickets, fares and information.
- Zero-emission: cleaner, green options for travel, through electrification and alternative fuels.
- Active: everyone can access opportunities for walking, cycling and wheeling to help them live healthier lives.
- Reliable and resilient: a well-maintained network that is in good condition, punctual, provides a wide range of choices, and can withstand extreme weather.

4. Methodology

4.1 Gathering Information

The policies and information within the LTP was used to analyse whether it will have any adverse effects on the integrity of European sites.

4.2 Scoping of European Sites

The European sites included within the scope of this HRA Appropriate Assessment have been identified using criteria aligned with DMRB LA 115 (Highways England, 2020).[2] These criteria state that European sites shall be included within the screening where the following are met:

- Criterion 1: The project or plan boundary is within 2km of a European site or functionally linked land (i.e. Areas of land or sea occupied by the qualifying interests (species) of a European site that lie beyond the boundary of the site. Such areas support activities such as feeding, roosting and migration).
- Criterion 2: The project or plan boundary is within 30km of a SAC, where bats are noted as one of the qualifying interests.
- Criterion 3: The project or plan boundary crosses or lies adjacent to, upstream of, or downstream of, a watercourse which is designated in part or wholly as a European site.
- Criterion 4: The project or plan boundary has a potential hydrological or hydrogeological linkage to a European site containing a groundwater dependent terrestrial ecosystem (GWDTE) which triggers the criteria for assessment of European sites in accordance with DMRB LA 113 Road drainage and the water environment (Highways England, 2020)[3].
- Criterion 5: The project or plan has an Affected Road Network (ARN) which triggers the criteria for assessment of European sites in DMRB LA 105 Air quality (Highways England, 2020)[4].

[2] Highways England (2020) Design Manual for Roads & Bridges LA 115 Habitats Regulations Assessment.

[3] Highways England (2020) Design Manual for Roads and Bridges LA 113 Road drainage and the water environment.

[4] Highways England (2019) Design Manual for Roads and Bridges LA 105 Air Quality.

The criteria above have been utilised in this assessment for consistency with National Highways (formerly named 'Highways England') best practice for road schemes. However, it should be noted that due to the high-level nature of the LTP which lacks detailed information on location of infrastructure development or traffic modelling data, it is not possible to filter sites based on criteria 4 and 5. Therefore these criteria have not been utilised during this screening assessment. These will need to be considered, as part of a project-level when detailed project design proposals are brought forward.

4.3 Consideration of Impacts 'Alone' and 'In-combination'

An assessment is undertaken to determine if the LTP in the absence of mitigation will give rise to LSE on the European sites 'alone'. The HRA assesses all 50 policies listed within LTP.

Each of the LTP policies have been examined to see if the LTP could lead to LSE on the European sites. However, as the LTP is developed at a strategic level, new infrastructure requirements, extent of improvements to existing transport links, and associated development that may arise as a result of these interventions is unknown at this stage. The HRA is therefore also undertaken at the strategic level. The precautionary principle is taken where the HRA cannot objectively demonstrate there will be no LSE on a European site.

Where screening concludes that significant effects are likely (alone or in-combination), or that sufficient uncertainty remains, then that potential effect will be taken forward to Stage 2 – Appropriate Assessment (Section 8).

When considering in-combination effects, the competent authority should take account of:

- All current and proposed plans or projects of which it is aware (and the applicant should make the authority aware of such plans or projects); and
- the effects of past plans or projects, if they have an ongoing effect on the conservation objectives of the site.

The LTP is set at a strategic level, therefore no detail is provided of any infrastructure development proposals including their design, specific location or timescales for construction. In some cases, an indication of a potential development location is provided, however in the absence of further information this is insufficient to provide a detailed assessment of impacts in the HRA.

For European sites where no LSE as a result of a policy are concluded, the potential exists for in-combination effects with other plans or projects. However, given the strategic nature of the LTP, there will inevitably be a delay between adoption of the plan and any subsequent development. Without detailed information relating to individual project proposals and timescales, it is not possible to predict which other plans and projects will be relevant to such a future project in combination assessment. There is a need to consider the potential for in-combination effects at the plan stage, but that assessment is relevant to any subsequent development in its own right, and needs to be scoped accordingly.

Therefore, the in-combination assessment is taken forward to the Appropriate Assessment stage where potential for in-combination effects may be considered alongside mitigation measures which may be required.

Where LSE are ruled out during the HRA screening, they have been ruled out alone with no residual effect or credible pathway for effect e.g. the strategic ambition is a general aspiration with no proposed development.

4.4 Nutrient Neutrality

It is key to highlight the consideration of nutrient neutrality during future assessments. In March 2022 Natural England provided competent authorities with advice (Advice for development proposals with the potential to affect water quality resulting in adverse nutrient impacts on habitats sites, Natural England 2022)[5] for development proposals that have the potential to affect water quality in such a way that adverse nutrient impacts on designated sites cannot be ruled out. As part of the advice (Annex C) Natural England listed existing sites in unfavourable condition due to excessive nutrients which require a HRA and where nutrient neutrality is being deployed as mitigation. This published list did not include any of the designated sites screened into this HRA. This list of catchments and whether nutrient neutrality is relevant to future iterations of the LTP, or associated projects, should be re-assessed as part of any future plan or project level HRA.

[5] Natural England (2022) Advice for development proposals with the potential to affect water quality resulting in adverse nutrient impacts on habitats sites, available at: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f18301c875c48000cba2145/t/62386f8064b3fd465e5d55c6/1647865729238/NE+NN+Advice+16_03_2022-issue-1-final.pdf [accessed 25/02/24]

4.5 Reporting and Consultation as part of the HRA

This HRA was made available for consultation alongside the draft LTP and Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) during the statutory consultation period, which ran for 12 weeks from July to October 2025.

As part of this process, statutory bodies, including Natural England and the Environment Agency, were consulted and provided with access to the HRA and associated documents. No comments in relation to this HRA were received during the consultation period.

5. Designated Sites

The LTP will apply to West Yorkshire, bringing together the local authorities of Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield. Whilst Table 5.1 lists all European sites within the Local Transport Authority boundaries and up to 2km from the LTP boundary; additional European sites have been scoped in where hydrological or hydrogeological connectivity exists, as detailed in Table 5.2 and in line with the criteria set out in Section 4.2. No SACs with bats listed as a qualifying interest were identified within 30km of the Site. Designated sites scoped in to the HRA are shown in Drawing 1 and Drawing 2, Appendix B.

Table 5.1 European designated sites within 2km of the LTP boundary.

Site	Distance	Reason for designation
SACs		
South Pennine Moors	**Within**	Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for the selection of the site: • European dry heaths • Blanket bogs • Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles
Denby Grange Colliery Ponds	**Within**	Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of the site: • Great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*
Kirk Deighton	300m north	Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of the site: • Great crested newt
North Pennine Moors	1.1km north-west	Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for the selection of the site: • European dry heaths • *Juniperus communis* formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands • Blanket bogs • Petrifying springs with tufa formation • Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation • Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of the site:

Site	Distance	Reason for designation
		• Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix* • Calaminarian grasslands of the *Violetalia calaminariae* • Siliceous alpine and boreal grasslands • Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates • Alkaline fens • Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels • Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of the site: • Marsh saxifrage *Saxifraga hirculus*.
SPAs		
Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1)	**Within**	Species present within the site, and site evaluation for them: • Short-eared owl *Asio flammeus*. Estimated population of 22 pairs, during breeding season the site supports <2% of the national population of this species. The population within this site are not considered isolated within their extended distribution range. • Merlin *Falco columbarius*. Estimated population of 30 pairs, during breeding season the site supports <2% of the national population of this species. The population within this site are considered not isolated, but are on the margins of their area of distribution.

Site	Distance	Reason for designation
		• European golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria.* Estimated population of 435 pairs, during breeding season the site supports <2% of the national population of this species. The population within this site are not considered isolated within their extended distribution range.
South Pennine Moors Phase 2	**Within**	Species present within the site, and site evaluation for them: • Short-eared owl. Estimated population of 3 pairs, during breeding season the site supports <2% of the national population of this species. The population within this site are not considered isolated within their extended distribution range. • Merlin. Estimated population of 28 pairs, during breeding season the site supports >2-15% of the national population of this species. The population within this site are considered not isolated, but are on the margins of their area of distribution. • European golden plover. Estimated population of 292 pairs, during breeding season the site supports <2% of the national population of this species. The population within this site are not considered isolated within their extended distribution range.
North Pennine Moors	1.1km north	Species present within the site, and site evaluation for them: • Hen harrier *Circus cyaneus.* Estimated population of 11 pairs, during breeding season the site supports <2% of the national population of this species. The population within this site are considered not isolated, but are on the margins of their area of distribution. • Merlin. Estimated population of 136 pairs, during breeding season the site supports >2-15% of the national population of this species. The population within this site are not considered isolated within their extended distribution range. • Peregrine falcon *Falco peregrinus*. Estimated population of 15 pairs, during breeding season the site supports <2% of the national population of this species. The population within this site are not considered isolated within their extended distribution range.

Site	Distance	Reason for designation
		• European golden plover. Estimated population of 1400 pairs, during breeding season the site supports >2-15% of the national population of this species. The population within this site are not considered isolated within their extended distribution range.

Table 5.2 Watercourses designated as European designated sites that are hydrologically connected to the Site.

Site	Distance	Reason for designation
SACs		
Rochdale Canal	3.6km south-west	Annex II species that are a primary reason for the selection of the site: • Floating water-plantain *Luronium natans*
River Derwent	15.9km east	Annex II species that are a primary reason for the selection of the site: • River lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis* Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site: • Watercourses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site: • Sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus* • Bullhead *Cottus gobio* • Otter *Lutra lutra*
Humber Estuary	20.5km east	Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for the selection of the site: • Estuaries • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide

Site	Distance	Reason for designation
		Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site: • Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time • Coastal lagoons • Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand • Atlantic salt meadows • Embryonic shifting dunes • Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* “white dunes” • Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation “grey dunes” • Dunes with *Hippopha rhamnoides* Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site: • Sea lamprey • River lamprey • Grey seal *Halichoerus grypus*
SPAs		
Lower Derwent Valley	19.4km east	Species present within the site, and site evaluation for them: • Northern shoveler *Anas clypeata.* Estimated population of 50 pairs, during breeding season the site supports >2-15% of the national population of this species. The population within this site are not considered isolated within their extended distribution range.

Site	Distance	Reason for designation
		• Eurasian teal *Anas crecca.* Estimated population of 10 breeding females, during breeding season the site supports >2% of the national population of this species. The population within this site are not considered isolated within their extended distribution range. • Eurasian Wigeon *Anas Penelope.* Estimated population of 9323 individuals, during breeding season the site supports >2-15% of the national population of this species. The population within this site are not considered isolated within their extended distribution range. • Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus bewickii.* Estimated population of 47 individuals, during winter the site supports <2% of the national population of this species. The population within this site are not considered isolated within their extended distribution range. • Ruff *Philomachus pugnax.* Estimated population of 133 individuals, during winter the site supports >15-100% of the national population of this species. The population within this site are not considered isolated within their extended distribution range. • European Golden Plover. Estimated population of 6000 individuals, during winter the site supports >2-15% of the national population of this species. The population within this site are not considered isolated within their extended distribution range. The site supports an estimated waterbird assemblage of 40,600 individuals over winter.
Humber Estuary	20.5km east	The Humber Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) is designated primarily for its significance as a habitat for various bird species, particularly migratory and wintering waterfowl. The estuary spans extensive mudflats, saltmarshes, and reedbeds, creating a nutrient-rich environment that supports a diverse range of avian species. The SPA also supports large populations of waterbirds during migration seasons, an internationally important assemblage of approximately 154,000 waterfowl. Its unique tidal flats and wetlands provide food and shelter for birds traveling along the East Atlantic flyway. The designation for this SPA names 38 Annex II bird species that are present within the site, covering both breeding and wintering populations.

Site	Distance	Reason for designation
Ribble & Alt Estuaries	42km west	This site is designated primarily for its importance as a habitat for a variety of waterbirds, especially during winter and migration periods. The estuary supports significant populations of 29 different Annex II species, including populations of overwintering, breeding and wading species. The site is noted to support a seabird assemblage of approximately 29,000 individuals, and a waterbird assemblage of approximately 324,000 individuals. Overall, the estuary's intertidal zones, saltmarshes, and other wetland habitats offer food and protection for birds, enhancing their chances of survival during seasonal migrations.
Mersey Estuary	58km south-west	The Mersey Estuary SPA is designated primarily for its significant populations of overwintering and migratory bird species, which utilise the estuary's extensive mudflats, saltmarshes, and brackish marshlands for feeding and roosting. The SPA designation acknowledges the estuary's role as a key habitat for species such as Eurasian teal, northern pintail *Anas acuta*, dunlin *Calidris alpina*, redshank *Tringa totanus*, and oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*, which are present in internationally important numbers. These habitats support large numbers of birds, making it a critical stopover and wintering site along migratory routes. The estuary supports populations of 14 different Annex II species listed on the designation, including breeding and overwintering birds, as well as some populations that are present on passage.
Ramsar		
Humber Estuary	20.5km east	The Humber estuary qualifies as a Ramsar Site under the following criterion: Criterion 1. The wetland contains a representative, rare, or unique example of a natural or near-natural wetland type found within the appropriate biogeographic region. The site is a representative example of a near-natural estuary with the following component habitats: dune systems and humid dune slacks, estuarine waters, intertidal mud and sand flats, saltmarshes, and coastal brackish/saline lagoons. Criterion 3. The wetland supports populations of a plant and/or animal species important for maintaining biological diversity of a particular biogeographic region. The Humber Estuary supports a breeding colony of grey seals, the second largest grey seal colony in England.

Site	Distance	Reason for designation
		Criterion 5. The wetland regularly supports more than 20,000 waterbirds. The Humber estuary supports an assemblage of an estimated 154,000 waterfowl. Criterion 6. The wetland regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of on species/subspecies of waterbird. This criterion applies to 12 bird species present within the Humber Estuary Criterion 8. The wetland regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species/subspecies of wetland-dependent non-avian animal species. The Humber Estuary acts as an important migration route for both river lamprey and sea lamprey between coastal waters and their spawning areas.
Lower Derwent Valley	24km east	Lower Derwent Valley qualifies as a Ramsar Site under the following criterion: Criterion 1. The wetland contains a representative, rare, or unique example of a natural or near-natural wetland type found within the appropriate biogeographic region. The site represents one of the most important examples of traditionally managed species-rich alluvial flood meadow habitat remaining in the UK. Criterion 2. The wetland supports vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered species or threatened ecological communities. The site has a rich assemblage of wetland invertebrates including 16 species of dragonfly and damselfly, 15 British Red Data Book wetland invertebrates as well as a leafhopper *Cicadula ornata* for which Lower Derwent Valley is the only known site in Great Britain. Criterion 4. The wetland supports plant and/or animal species at a critical stage in their life cycles, or provides refuge during adverse conditions. The site qualifies as a staging post for passage birds in spring. Of particular note are the nationally important numbers of ruff and whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*. Criterion 5. The wetland regularly supports more than 20,000 waterbirds. Lower Derwent Valley supports approximately 32,000 wintering waterfowl. Criterion 6. The wetland regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of on species/subspecies of waterbird. This criterion applies to two bird species present within the site, Eurasian wigeon and Eurasian teal.

Site	Distance	Reason for designation
Ribble & Alt Estuaries	42km west	Ribble & Alt Estuaries qualifies as a Ramsar Site under the following criterion: Criterion 2. The wetland supports vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered species or threatened ecological communities. This site supports up to 40% of the Great Britain population of natterjack toads *Bufo calamita.* Criterion 5. The wetland regularly supports more than 20,000 waterbirds. Ribble & Alt estuaries supports approximately 89,500 wintering waterfowl. Criterion 6. The wetland regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of on species/subspecies of waterbird. This criterion applies to six bird species present within the site.
Mersey Estuary	58km south-west	The Mersey Estuary qualifies as a Ramsar Site under the following criterion: Criterion 5. The wetland regularly supports more than 20,000 waterbirds. Lower Derwent Valley supports approximately 32,000 wintering waterfowl. Criterion 6. The wetland regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of on species/subspecies of waterbird. This criterion applies to two bird species present within the site, Eurasian wigeon and Eurasian teal.

6. Stage 1 Screening Assessment

The first step in the HRA assessment is to determine whether the plan is exempt from assessment. For a plan to be exempt from assessment, the whole of the plan must be exclusively directly connected with or necessary to the management of the European site(s) potentially affected. The following four criteria must be affirmative:

1. The document is directly connected with, or exclusively concerned with the essential conservation management of, one or more qualifying features of one or more European sites in order to meet the site's conservation objectives to sustain or restore favourable conservation status of the qualifying features it addresses, and is not merely broadly compatible with the conservation objectives.
2. There are no adverse effects on any qualifying features of any other European site.
3. There is no other purpose that the document seeks to achieve that could have any conceivable effect on any qualifying feature of any other European site(s).
4. This confirmation has been made on a case-specific basis and a general or systematic exemption has not been relied on.

The LTP fails the first criteria as it is not directly connected with the conservation management of European sites. The next stage is to determine whether the plan can be excluded from assessment. Plans which are not explicitly identified in the Habitats Regulations will need to be assessed and critically whether it or any part of it would be likely to have a significant effect on a European site. It is not possible to rule out potential for LSE, and therefore it also cannot be eliminated from further assessment.

Consequently, an assessment of each LTP policy action in relation to impacts on European designated sites was undertaken. Each LTP policy action was pre-screened and categorised in line with pre-screening categories (Table 6.2) within DTA Publications Ltd. (2022).[6] The purpose of the categories is to provide a list which can be cross-referenced in the 'assessment and reasoning'.

[6] DTA Publications: The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook. Available by subscription at: www.dtapublications.co.uk (Accessed February 2025)

Table 6.1 Pre-screening policy categories (DTA Publications, 2022)[6]

Category	Policy Description	Screening Category
A	General statement of policy/general aspiration.	Screened out
B	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals.	Screened out
C	Proposal referred to but not proposed by the plan.	Screened out
D	General plan-wide environmental protection/site safeguarding/threshold policies.	Screened out
E	Policies or proposals which steer change in such a way as to protect European sites from adverse effects.	Screened out
F	Policy that cannot lead to development or other change.	Screened out
G	Policy or proposal that could not have any conceivable effect on a site.	Screened out
H	Policy or proposal the (actual or theoretical) effects of which cannot undermine the conservation objectives (either alone or in combination with other aspects of this or other plans or projects).	Screened out
I	Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone.	Screened in
J	Policy or proposal with an effect on a site but unlikely to be significant alone, so need to check for LSE in combination.	Screened in
K	Policy or proposal unlikely to have a significant effect either alone or in-combination.	Screened out after the in-combination test
L	Policy or proposal which might be likely to have a significant effect in combination.	Screened in after the in-combination test
M	Bespoke area, site or case-specific policies or proposals intended to avoid or reduce harmful effects on a European site.	Screened in

The findings of the Stage 1 Screening for the European sites under consideration are provided in Table 6.2 below. Justification for the conclusions drawn are provided in Appendix A.

Table 6.2 Results of the HRA Stage 1 screening.

Potential Impacts	Relevant Strategic Ambitions and Policies
Describe the individual elements of the LTP likely to give rise to impacts on the European sites.	There are 50 listed policies within the LTP, split across the six network principles listed in Section 3. Only one of the 50 policies within the LTP has been screened in for further assessment, shown in Table 9.2. The policy, titled "*Mass Transit Phase 1 Delivery"* states: *"Our ambition is for a new Mass Transit Network that will eventually connect the whole of West Yorkshire, taking into account the needs of vulnerable users as part of the integrated Weaver Network. We will start by connecting communities between Leeds and Bradford with Phase One of the network guided by the approach set out in our Mass Transit Vision."* Section 2 of the LTP provides the following in relation to the aims of Mass Transit Phase 1 which seeks to provide "*the missing link on our public transport network, providing reliable, high capacity, and high frequency services into the heart of our most densely populated urban area*s". For this policy, there is a possibility that, if implemented in one or more particular ways, a likely significant effect on a European site could arise. Using the precautionary principle, LSE alone cannot be ruled out for this policy. LSE may arise via several pathways for effect, such as direct land take, hydrological changes, water pollution events, noise and vibration, air quality, lighting, invasive species and biosecurity, and increased recreational pressure, discussed in Section 8. As such, this policy will require a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment to be undertaken. The specific actions or details necessary for evaluating the potential impacts on European sites have not been provided for 26 of the given policies (Table 9.3), and so they have been screened out of further assessment at this time. These policies lack detail relating to infrastructure development proposals, including their design, specific location or timescales for construction. The lack of detail and strategic nature of these policies mean that a detailed assessment of impacts cannot currently be conducted. The remaining policies focus on either broad environmental protection or site safeguarding measures, do not result in any development or changes, or are incapable of having any

Potential Impacts	Relevant Strategic Ambitions and Policies
	conceivable effect on a European site, and so have been screened out from further assessment (Table 9.4). Details of the screening criteria are provided in Table 9.1.
Provisions included within the LTP to protect European sites.	The zero emission network principle within the LTP focuses on "*Cleaner, green options for travel, through electrification and alternative fuels.".* Underpinning the vision for a leading transport network within the LTP are themes of People, Place and Planet. The LTP states: "*Our Weaver Network will benefit our planet. We have an ambition for West Yorkshire to be a zero-carbon region by 2038 and to reverse the decline in biodiversity. This will create a healthier environment for everyone by reducing the negative impacts of transport, helping to decouple economic growth from environmental harm."* Three of the four policies grouped within this principle have been scoped out from further assessment due to their focus on environmental protection through decarbonisation and reducing harmful impacts of transport (including poor air quality and noise pollution). Whilst not assessed as part of the HRA, these policies have the potential to have a positive impact on European sites, for example through improved air quality.
Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the LTP on the European sites by virtue of: • size and scale; • land take; • resource requirements (i.e. water extraction etc.); • emissions (disposal to land, water or air); • excavation requirements; • duration of construction, operation, decommissioning etc.; and • other.	Potential impacts of the *Mass Transit Phase 1 Delivery* policy, screened in for further assessment (Table 9.2), are dependent on how the policy is implemented. It is possible that if implemented in one or more particular ways, the proposals may have a significant effect on a European site. Pathways for effect may include the following: • construction of new transport infrastructure in directly within or within proximity to European sites; • hydrological changes; • air quality; • noise; • lighting; and • additional recreational pressure.

Potential Impacts	Relevant Strategic Ambitions and Policies
	Using the precautionary principle, LSE alone cannot be ruled out for this policy (*Mass Transit Phase 1 Delivery*; Table 9.2). However, owing to the high-level nature of the policy the likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts cannot be quantified at this stage.
Describe any likely changes to the European sites arising as a result of: • reduction of habitat area; • disturbance to key species; • habitat or species fragmentation; • reduction in species density; • changes in key indicators of conservation value (e.g. water quality); and • climate change.	Potential impacts of the *Mass Transit Phase 1 Delivery* LTP policy screened in for further assessment (Table 9.2) are dependent on how the policies/proposals is implemented. It is possible that if implemented in one or more particular ways, the proposals may have a significant effect on a European site. Pathways for effect may include the following (further discussed in Section 8): • construction of new transport infrastructure in directly within or within proximity to European sites; • hydrological changes; • air quality; • noise; • lighting; and • additional recreational pressure. Using the precautionary principle, LSE alone cannot be ruled out for the screened in policy. However, owing to the high-level nature of the policy, the likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts cannot be quantified at this stage.
Describe from the above those elements of the project, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known	Based on findings of the HRA Stage 1 Screening Assessment (Appendix A), it is considered that LSE alone on European sites cannot be ruled out from the *Mass Transit Phase 1 Delivery* LTP policy currently screened in for further assessment (Table 9.2). The scale and magnitude of impacts is currently unknown.

7. Stage 1 Screening Conclusions

The key results of the HRA screening undertaken are summarised below:

- 50 LTP policies covering six network ambitions were subject to HRA screening assessment.
- The WYCA boundary covers a large area across northern England. Consequently, numerous European sites were identified within the scope of this HRA screening assessment (Table 5.1, and Appendix B-1 Drawing 1 and Drawing 2) according to the screening criteria adopted (Section 4.2).
- LSE can be ruled out with no residual effects for the majority of the LTP policies across the six network principles. Many policies listed are general aspirations, and do not currently include any proposals for construction of new infrastructure or changes to the existing transport network that could impact European sites. However, it is possible that in the future, plans for development and/or projects could arise in order to achieve the listed aspirations within these policies. Any projects arising from these policies will be subject to a project-level HRA on a case-by-case basis, and a full assessment carried out to determine whether the project could give rise to LSE and/or resulting in adverse effect on the integrity of a European site and its conservation objectives.
- A Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment was required for one of the policies under the “integrated” network principles. This policy relates to the delivery of the Mass Transit Phase 1 scheme, whereby communities between Leeds and Bradford will be connected by a new mass transit network. This is likely to lead to significant development within the area. Consequently, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment was required to determine whether any LSE resulting from these policies could affect the integrity of a European site and its conservation objectives.

8. Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment

The *Mass Transit Phase 1 Delivery* LTP policy has been taken forward to Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment, as this policy could result in the upgrade of existing infrastructure and/or construction of new infrastructure which may be in proximity to or affect a European site. *Mass Transit Phase 1 Delivery* LTP policy states:

"*Our ambition is for a new Mass Transit Network that will eventually connect the whole of West Yorkshire, taking into account the needs of vulnerable users as part of the integrated Weaver Network. We will start by connecting communities between Leeds and Bradford with Phase One of the network guided by the approach set out in our Mass Transit Vision*."

It seeks to provide "*the missing link on our public transport network, providing reliable, high capacity, and high frequency services into the heart of our most densely populated urban areas.*"However, the level of detail and information within the LTP is insufficient to undertake assessment of the LSE resulting from this individual policy. Therefore, this plan level Appropriate Assessment provides a list of potential impacts at the construction and operation phases of projects associated with this policy. The information provided within this document should be built on, and used to assist lower-level plans and/or projects. This includes a thorough assessment of the qualifying features, conservation objectives, current condition of the site (including supplementary advice if available) and potential impacts on qualifying features as a result of each proposed plan/project to determine appropriate mitigation (if required) and adverse effects on integrity of the site.

As detailed within Table 9.2, the potential pathways for effect on European sites may include (but are not restricted to):

- Direct land take – this policy is likely to predominately affect existing transport corridors and urban areas, and as such direct land take may be minimal, or within less sensitive habitats. However, there is insufficient information at this stage to rule out a reduction in habitat for which the European site is designated, or habitat that supports faunal species for which the European site is designated (termed functionally linked land). A reduction in habitat area may also lead to fragmentation (resulting in an increase in edge effects or susceptibility of habitats to damage); habitat isolation; and severance (which may impact life cycles of species e.g. aquatic habitat of fish being severed or impacts on plant dispersal).

- Hydrological changes – an increase or decrease in water entering European sites/changes in groundwater level has potential to impact vegetation communities. This could result in loss of important plant species and impacts on fauna reliant on specific plants or vegetation communities. Furthermore, the sites may become more prone to the effects of drought or flood events. Changes to hydrology within watercourses may impact hydrogeology and flow types, subsequently affecting life cycles of fish species as well as accretion and deposition of habitats in channel which are reliant on certain flow types e.g. gravel banks.
- Water pollution – direct impacts from contaminated run-off or accidental spills which lead to direct mortality of flora or fauna for which the site is designated, or cascading up trophic levels to qualifying features. Changes to nutrient levels of the watercourse which may cause increase growth of algal blooms leading to changes in oxygen and light levels.
- Air quality – an increase in deposition of air quality pollutants such as nitrogen or ammonia which can lead to direct smothering of vegetation (detrimental to particularly sensitive species) or changes in nutrient levels of soils, which may impact individual species and species assemblages above and below ground.
- Noise and vibration – direct disturbance to species for which the site is designated. This may lead to a reduction in area which species are able to utilise, or abandonment of nests in the case of breeding birds. Disturbance may also indirectly lead to higher mortality or reduced breeding success if species are spending more time foraging or unable to gather higher quality food for themselves or for young. Noise and vibration disturbance also has potential to impact fish migration and movement.
- Lighting – an increase in lighting could make the site less favourable to species for which it is designated and subsequently lead to severance of habitats.
- Additional recreational pressure – as a result of new infrastructure providing easier access to, or construction of developments closer to, European designated sites. Impacts on qualifying features could include increased trampling, disturbance or nutrient inputs e.g. from dog walking.
- Invasive species and biosecurity – the spread of invasive species may be a result of changes in nutrient levels, ecosystem dynamics, poor biosecurity during construction or human spread through increased recreation.

It should be noted that any project proposal relating to the LTP policies will be subject to a project level HRA. Consequently, the competent authority will determine whether the proposed project fails or passes the HRA test on a case-by-case basis. Each project should follow the mitigation hierarchy, where avoidance measures are included within the early design process to ensure any potential significant effects can be reduced through the proposed location, scale, duration and construction methods. If impacts cannot be avoided, suitable mitigation measures will need to be applied. The type of mitigation proposed will be project and species/habitat specific, however the following provide an example of how mitigation may be used to reduce/remove adverse effects on integrity:

- Schedule construction works to occur outside of sensitive periods for qualifying features of the European site e.g. breeding, wintering or migratory periods.
- Implement standard best practice measures e.g. pollution prevention, as part of management plans and procedures to reduce the risk of an adverse effect.
- Utilise construction techniques which minimise impacts such as noise/vibration/soil compaction to reduce the risk of an adverse effect.

As part of the assessment, in-combination effects will also need to be considered. Where significant effects alone can be ruled out, an assessment as to whether other plans or projects may act in-combination will be required. The pathways for in-combination effects are similar, but not limited to, those outlined for the plan/project alone.

The LTP includes the following text in relation to potential impacts on European sites:

In addition to delivering the vision and objectives, it is important that the Mayor's Local Transport Plan contributes to sustainable development by protecting the environment, protecting the health and quality of life of residents and visitors, and promoting equality of opportunity and sustainable economic growth.

Given the high-level nature of the LTP, details on the nature, timing, duration, scale or location of potential infrastructure improvements or developments are not included, nor are any high-level mitigation measures identified. Subsequently, it is not possible to determine the likelihood of adverse effects on the integrity of European sites.

9. Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment Conclusions

The key results of the HRA Appropriate Assessment are summarised below:

- The policy taken forward to Appropriate Assessment may result in upgrading of existing infrastructure or construction of new infrastructure. However, details on the nature, timing, duration, scale and location of potential projects are currently unknown.
- The LTP states that the transport plan should "*contribute to sustainable development by protecting the environment, protecting the health and quality of life of residents and visitors, and promoting equality of opportunity and sustainable economic growth*." However, no detail on mitigation measures that can be used to rule out adverse effects are included.
- Based on the high-level nature of the plan information and uncertainty regarding future project scope, potential impacts on designated European sites and associated mitigation options are currently unknown. Therefore, it is not possible to rule out potential adverse effects on the integrity of European sites as a result of the LTP.
- When further detail on individual plans or projects are brought forward, these will be assessed through the HRA process, which is intended to be iterative. If adverse effects on the integrity of European sites cannot be ruled out alone or in-combination following the addition of mitigation measures, a Stage 3 Assessment of Alternatives will be required. However, it should be noted that most plans or projects are resolved in Stages 1 and 2 because the iterative assessment process drives design change to avoid or minimise effects on designated sites.

Disclaimer

This report is the result of work undertaken in January 2026. This report refers, within the limitations stated, to the information provided within the Local Transport Plan. Changes in legislation, guidance, best practice, etc. may necessitate a re-assessment/survey. No warranty is given as to the possibility of future changes of the document provided.

This report is produced solely for the benefit of West Yorkshire Combined Authority, and no liability is accepted for any reliance placed on it by any other party. This report is prepared for the proposed uses stated in the report and should not be used in a different context.

Appendix A

HRA Assessment Results

The first step in the HRA assessment is to determine whether the plan is exempt from assessment. For a plan to be exempt from assessment, the whole of the plan must be exclusively directly connected with or necessary to the management of the European site(s) potentially affected. The following four criterion must be affirmative:

5. The document is directly connected with, or exclusively concerned with the essential conservation management of, one or more qualifying features of one or more European site in order to meet the site's conservation objectives to sustain or restore favourable conservation status of the qualifying features it addresses, and is not merely broadly compatible with the conservation objectives.
6. There are no adverse effects on any qualifying features of any other European site.
7. There is no other purpose that the document seeks to achieve that could have any conceivable effect on any qualifying feature of any other European site(s).
8. This confirmation has been made on a case-specific basis and a general or systematic exemption has not been relied on.

The LTP fails the first criteria as it is not directly connected with the conservation management of European sites. The next stage is to determine whether the plan can be excluded from assessment. Plans which are not explicitly identified in the Habitats Regulations will need to be assessed and critically whether it or any part of it would be likely to have a significant effect on a European site. It is not possible to rule out potential for LSE and therefore it also cannot be eliminated from further assessment.

Consequently, an assessment of each LTP policy action in relation to impacts on European designated sites was undertaken. Each LTP policy action was pre-screened and categorised in line with pre-screening categories (Table 9.1) within DTA Publications Ltd. (2022).[6] The purpose of the categories is to provide a list which can be cross referenced in the 'assessment and reasoning'.

Table 9.1 Pre-screening categories (DTA Publications, 2022)[6]

Category	Description	Screening Category
A	General statement of policy/general aspiration.	Screened out
B	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals.	Screened out
C	Proposal referred to but not proposed by the plan.	Screened out
D	General plan-wide environmental protection/site safeguarding/threshold policies.	Screened out
E	Policies or proposals which steer change in such a way as to protect European sites from adverse effects.	Screened out
F	Policy that cannot lead to development or other change.	Screened out
G	Policy or proposal that could not have any conceivable effect on a site.	Screened out
H	Policy or proposal the (actual or theoretical) effects of which cannot undermine the conservation objectives (either alone or in combination with other aspects of this or other plans or projects).	Screened out
I	Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone.	Screened in
J	Policy or proposal with an effect on a site but unlikely to be significant alone, so need to check for LSE in combination.	Screened in
K	Policy or proposal unlikely to have a significant effect either alone or in-combination.	Screened out after the in-combination test
L	Policy or proposal which might be likely to have a significant effect in combination.	Screened in after the in-combination test
M	Bespoke area, site or case-specific policies or proposals intended to avoid or reduce harmful effects on a European site.	Screened in

Table 9.2 HRA Stage 1 Screening findings for the LTP policies - Screened in policies.

Network Principle	Policy Wording	Will the policy action lead to likely significant effects on the European sites?	Assessment and reasoning	Potential effects
Integrated	**Mass Transit Phase 1 Delivery** Our ambition is for a new Mass Transit Network that will eventually connect the whole of West Yorkshire, taking into account the needs of vulnerable users as part of the integrated Weaver Network. We will start by connecting communities between Leeds and Bradford with Phase One of the network guided by the approach set out in our Mass Transit Vision.	Yes	**Category I:** This policy looks to deliver a new Mass Transit Network, a major programme which will lead to the construction of new transport infrastructure between Leeds and Bradford.	At this stage, taking a precautionary approach, it is not possible to rule out this policy from resulting in a likely significant effect on European sites. Pathways for effect may include the following: • construction of new transport infrastructure in directly within or within proximity to European Sites; • hydrological changes; • air quality; • noise; • lighting; • additional recreational pressure.

Table 9.3 HRA Stage 1 Screening findings for the LTP policies - Screened out due to lack of sufficient detail provided within statements of general aspirations.

Network Principle	Policy Wording	Assessment and reasoning
Safe	**Deliver vision zero** We will deliver the objectives set out in our Vision Zero strategy, which states that we want to achieve no serious injury or death on our roads by 2040 while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all in West Yorkshire.	**Category A** These policies are general aspirations, and do not outline any development proposals, their design, precise location, or timeframes for construction. In addition, they are too general to be able to identify effects on particular European sites. The LTP seeks to protect European sites. This includes any potential direct or indirect impacts on these sites which may arise from new or upgraded transport interventions which will be appropriately assessed, mitigated and/or compensated for, in line with existing best practice and relevant legislation over the lifetime of the Plan. Therefore, should any infrastructure proposal arise, the need for a HRA will be identified and undertaken at the project design and consultation stage.
	Personal safety and security We will improve personal safety and security for all, in our places and on our Weaver Network, through design, infrastructure and service interventions, with a particular focus on the most at risk groups.	
	Removing barriers to accessing our network. We will make our Weaver Network accessible, ensuring that no-one is excluded. This will include improving access through new and enhanced infrastructure and services, such as transport interchanges, stations and stops, and improving access to them, public transport vehicles and active travel routes, information and ticketing.	
Inclusive and affordable	**Delivering high quality and healthy places for people** We will deliver high quality and healthy places that respond to the need to adapt to climate change and enhance biodiversity, providing spaces for sitting, socialising, play, enhancing nature and green and blue infrastructure. As well as creating spaces for pop up events and economic activity. This will be achieved in part through roadspace reallocation where appropriate, balancing the needs of sustainable transport and removing certain types of vehicle traffic and parking, in line with our West Yorkshire Streets for Everyone Strategy.	
	Connecting rural areas We will extend the reach of our Weaver Network into areas with a lower level of connectivity,	

Network Principle	Policy Wording	Assessment and reasoning
	particularly in rural areas, improving access to services and opportunities for employment, education and leisure through active travel and flexible public and shared transport options, alongside improved digital connectivity. This will be delivered in line with our Streets for Everyone Strategy.	
Active	**Active Travel as the natural choice for shorter journeys** We will make walking, wheeling and cycling the natural choice for shorter journeys, meeting or exceeding national guidance, in line with our West Yorkshire Streets for Everyone Strategy and Active Travel Vision and LCWIP ambition, seeking to improve travel experience by integrating green and blue infrastructure into active journeys where possible.	
	Integrating active travel We will ensure that our high quality, inclusive and accessible, facilities for people walking, wheeling and cycling are integrated within the Weaver Network, connecting people to key services, including providing secure and convenient cycle parking at interchanges and key destinations.	
	Extending our active travel network We will deliver high quality walking, wheeling and cycling routes and supporting infrastructure as part of our Weaver Network. This will be coordinated with land use planning to deliver on and off our highways, joining up disconnected areas providing better integration with public transport infrastructure. We will seek opportunities to maximise user experience through integration with blue green infrastructure.	
	Connected and safe neighbourhoods We will join up neighbourhoods and make sure that people are safe walking, wheeling and cycling	

Network Principle	Policy Wording	Assessment and reasoning
	for the first and last 'miles' of active or multi-modal journeys. This will be done by reducing the dominance of non-local traffic on neighbourhoods and improving active travel environments.	
Reliable and resilient	**Improving digital connectivity** We will improve wired and wireless coverage, improving connection speeds and access across the region and enable homeworking, appointments and other remote activities to reduce the pressure on the need to travel.	
	Urban Traffic Management Control We will improve investment and innovation in network efficiency to deliver and maintain a consistent high quality traffic signal control service for West Yorkshire, optimising the movement of public transport in line with the delivery of bus franchising and reducing congestion on our roads. We will deliver a long-term strategy for Urban Traffic Management Control in West Yorkshire.	
	Key Route Network We will review the West Yorkshire Key Route Network (KRN), in line with the public transport network, strengthening our partnership approach to managing and maintaining the KRN. We will work with National Highways to co-ordinate this with the Strategic Route Network (SRN), as well as with other partners for cross-boundary networks. This will ensure the efficiency and accessibility of public transport alongside other modes.	
	Destination Parking We will develop a fair, equitable and inclusive place-based approach to car parking, which is regionally consistent and proportionate to public transport accessibility levels.	
Integrated	**Prioritising sustainable alternatives to travel by car**	

Network Principle	Policy Wording	Assessment and reasoning
	We will prioritise measures and investment that promote greater use of bus, tram, rail, walking and cycling in line with our targets, and which deliver an integrated transport network.	
	Investment in transport interchanges We will deliver leading multi-modal transport interchanges facilitating public transport use, that are safe and welcoming spaces, accessible for all, with cycle parking, taxi and private hire vehicle drop off and pick up, and car and motorcycle parking provision where appropriate. We will ensure appropriate levels of capacity and capability, that ensure resilience to climate change and enhance places, are either delivered or maintained to support major stations' integral roles as gateways to the region.	
	Park and ride We will implement a West Yorkshire Park and Ride Strategy enabling improved access to the Weaver Network and to increase sustainable mode share.	
	Enhanced wayfinding We will ensure that our Weaver Network is easy to navigate and legible for everyone by improving existing infrastructure and embedding enhanced and consistent wayfinding in future schemes.	
	Shared transport We will develop and promote shared transport options, including shared transport hubs, that are integrated with our public transport, active travel networks and taxi and private hire vehicle provision.	
	Mass transit We will deliver a new West Yorkshire Mass Transit Strategy, that builds on our Mass Transit	

Network Principle	Policy Wording	Assessment and reasoning
	Vision and outlines how we will develop a mass transit network that integrates with a franchised bus network, rail, active travel and shared transport.	
	Transport and land use planning We will work with planning authorities to develop a strategic approach to integrating development and land use across West Yorkshire with existing and planned transport infrastructure, including Mass Transit. The strategic approach will identify key connections and opportunities for growth across the sub-region, and align development with transport infrastructure to deliver sustainable growth, with a focus on Spatial Priority Areas. In undertaking this approach, we would seek to increase accessibility through sustainable transport to housing and employment opportunities, and to services such as education and healthcare.	
	Transit-oriented development We will work with planning authorities to develop and integrate transport and land use planning on our transport network delivering a transit oriented approach to development, including - Maximising growth opportunities through land use types, growth and place-making. - Ensuring that development aligns with Mass Transit, the franchised bus network, rail and the wider transport network - Promoting higher density development around transport hubs. - Ensuring wider placemaking matters, through opportunities to promote active travel and co-benefits such as green infrastructure.	
	Delivering sustainable development We will work with planning authorities and developers to ensure new developments are accessible and that they positively promote walking, cycling, bus and Mass Transit through the prioritisation of sustainable transport modes, taking account of the site vision, type of	

Network Principle	Policy Wording	Assessment and reasoning
	development and its location. We will continue to seek site-specific mitigation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and through the Community Infrastructure Levy (or future amended legislation) where the Local Planning Authority has a scheme in place for strategic infrastructure.	
	Future mobility and technology We will undertake feasibility studies, and identify opportunities and interventions which help unlock options for future mobility, digitally connected technology, autonomous vehicles and the concept of a 'future city'.	
	Urban Centre Movement Strategies We will work in partnership to develop urban centre movement strategies across West Yorkshire with a focus on the Corridors of Opportunity as set out in our Local Growth Plan. These strategies will transform the transport network in support of the delivery of growing urban centres and Mass Transit across West Yorkshire, starting with Phase 1 in Bradford and Leeds.	
	Bus Franchising We will deliver bus franchising as per the decision taken by the Combined Authority in March 2024. This will help to deliver our vision for bus and establish bus as a key mode of choice for travel in West Yorkshire and deliver against our customer proposition.	
	Strategic Rail We will make best use of powers included within the Railways Reform Bill, and through the English Devolution Bill, alongside strategic mechanisms such as the White Rose Agreement, to deliver our priorities for rail as set out in our Rail Strategy.	

Table 9.4 Stage 1 Screening findings for the LTP policies - Remaining screened out policies.

Network Principle	Policy Wording	Assessment and reasoning
Safe	**Embedding safety in design** We will embed safety in the design of our schemes, including safe roads and places, aligning with the delivery objectives set out in Vision Zero and our Policing and Crime Plan and taking into account vulnerable road users. We will deliver walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure that will meet and exceed best practice and designed with climate adaptation in mind. We will embed approaches to enhance safety and perceptions of safety across interchanges for all modes and across our bus, rail and mass transit networks.	**Category F:** This policy relates to embedding safety in the design of future development and will not in itself lead to development.
	Time and space to move safely We will seek to ensure that all users of our streets have the right time and space to move safely, by having suitable signal timings, street design and markings, with a focus on the most at risk groups, and in line with our West Yorkshire Streets for Everyone Strategy.	**Category G:** This policy relates to improving existing street design, and would lead only to small-scale improvement works. The policy is not deemed to have any conceivable effects on European sites.
	Improved perceptions of safety We will embed best practice across the transport network to improve perceptions of personal safety and security for everyone, with a particular focus on those groups most at risk, building on the work of our West Yorkshire Police and Crime Plan.	**Category F:** This policy relates to improving perceptions of safety across the network and will not lead to any development.
	Connecting disadvantaged communities We will connect isolated urban communities to opportunities including education, employment, leisure as well as access to services, prioritising sustainable transport options and tackling community severance.	**Category F:** This policy relates to connecting isolated communities through provision of opportunities and will not in itself lead to any development.

Network Principle	Policy Wording	Assessment and reasoning
	Affordable fares and tickets We will ensure fares and tickets offer good value for money across our Weaver Network, so that cost is not a barrier to access, in order to reduce transport related social exclusion. We will work with partners to apply this to cross-boundary travel.	**Category F:** This policy relates to providing affordable fares and tickets for the transport network, and as such will not lead to development or other change.
	Transport for children and young people We will ensure that our Weaver Network meets the needs of children and young people, embedding safety, improved network legibility and wayfinding, and access to travel information and payment mechanisms, enabling access to education and other opportunities and promoting sustainable, independent travel.	**Category F:** This policy relates to providing ease and access of the transport network for young people and will not in itself lead to development or other change.
Zero-emission	**Zero emission public transport** Through franchising, we will invest in a publicly owned, zero emission bus fleet. This will be delivered in line with our ambition of having a fully zero emission bus fleet by 2036. We will promote the electrification of rail and deliver a mass transit system which contributes significantly to reducing emissions from travel.	**Category D:** This policy focuses on promoting electrification of public transport, working towards zero-emission modes of transport.
	Reducing the harmful impacts of transport. We will reduce the harmful impacts of passenger and freight transport on our communities, including poor air quality, severance, noise pollution and damage to natural environments. We will prioritise areas that have the highest impacts on health and wellbeing for groups most at risk. This works alongside increasing sustainable mode shift and improving access to sustainable transport options.	**Category D:** This policy focuses on reducing harmful environmental and community health impacts of the transport network.
	Alternative fuels. We will take an evidence led approach to supporting the development of alternative fuels infrastructure, including hydrogen and electrification to enable the	**Category D:** This policy focuses on decarbonisation of trucks and

Network Principle	Policy Wording	Assessment and reasoning
	decarbonisation of heavy vehicles such as trucks and buses and advocating for sustainable aviation fuels.	buses, reducing environmental health risks and promoting sustainability in the transport network.
	Charging infrastructure We will work with industry and support public and private investment to deliver, operate and maintain inclusive infrastructure for charging of zero emission cars, vans and motorcycles, ensuring regional coverage.	**Category G:** The policy is likely to require small-scale, minimally intrusive works to deliver and maintain charging infrastructure. The policy is not deemed to have any conceivable effect on European sites.
Active	**Encouraging walking, cycling and wheeling** We will encourage and support people to walk, wheel and cycle for short and medium-distance journeys through a range of interventions including training, marketing campaigns and events.	**Category F:** This policy relates to encouraging active travel and will not lead to development.
	Access to cycles We will work in partnership to support and promote cycle sharing, in an accessible and inclusive way, to improve access to cycles across West Yorkshire.	**Category F:** This policy relates to encouraging active travel via improved access to cycles and will not lead to development.
Reliable and resilient	**Reallocating space for public transport priority** We will reallocate space on our streets, and protect dedicated infrastructure, to give priority to public transport on, but not limited to, the core bus network and mass transit Phase 1 Route. In accordance with the delivery of bus franchising, we will consider a range of evidenced targeted bus priority interventions in line with Bus Priority National Guidance in order to improve bus reliability and journey times across our network, and in line with our West Yorkshire Streets for Everyone Strategy.	**Category F:** This policy relates to ensuring public transport, including the future mass transit phase 1 project, will be reliable and resilient, and will not in itself lead to development.

Network Principle	Policy Wording	Assessment and reasoning
	Network Management We will deliver a West Yorkshire Network Management Strategy, with a focus on improving network efficiency and safety and delivering a consistent highway network offer in the context of bus franchising. We will invest in technology and strengthen our partnership approach to the management of disruption, through a review of the benefits of network management mechanisms under bus franchising.	**Category F:** This policy relates to the delivery of the West Yorkshire Network Management strategy and will not in itself lead to development.
	On street car parking We will make productive use of kerb space to better serve the community for walking, wheeling, cycling or public transport. Parking on street on, but not limited to, the Core Bus Route network should be limited if it conflicts with the need to allocate road space particularly for buses.	**Category G:** The policy is likely to require small-scale, minimally intrusive works to make productive use of space for car parking. The policy is not deemed to have any conceivable effect on European sites.
	Sustainable freight and logistics We will work in partnership to help deliver a freight and logistics sector that is reliable and resilient and reduces negative impacts on communities and the environment, with a particular focus on removing barriers to boost the competitiveness of West Yorkshire's Advanced manufacturing sector, investigating options for modal shift of freight traffic and improving safety.	**Category F:** This policy focuses on delivering a reliable and resilient freight and logistics sector and will not lead to development.
	Asset management and resilience Recognising the strategic and economic importance of our assets in the region, we will take a proactive and coherent regional approach to asset management across our Weaver Network to ensure reliability and resilience. Our assets and supporting infrastructure will be designed with climate change mitigation and adaptation	**Category F:** This policy relates to delivering an improved approach to asset management and design,and will not lead to development.

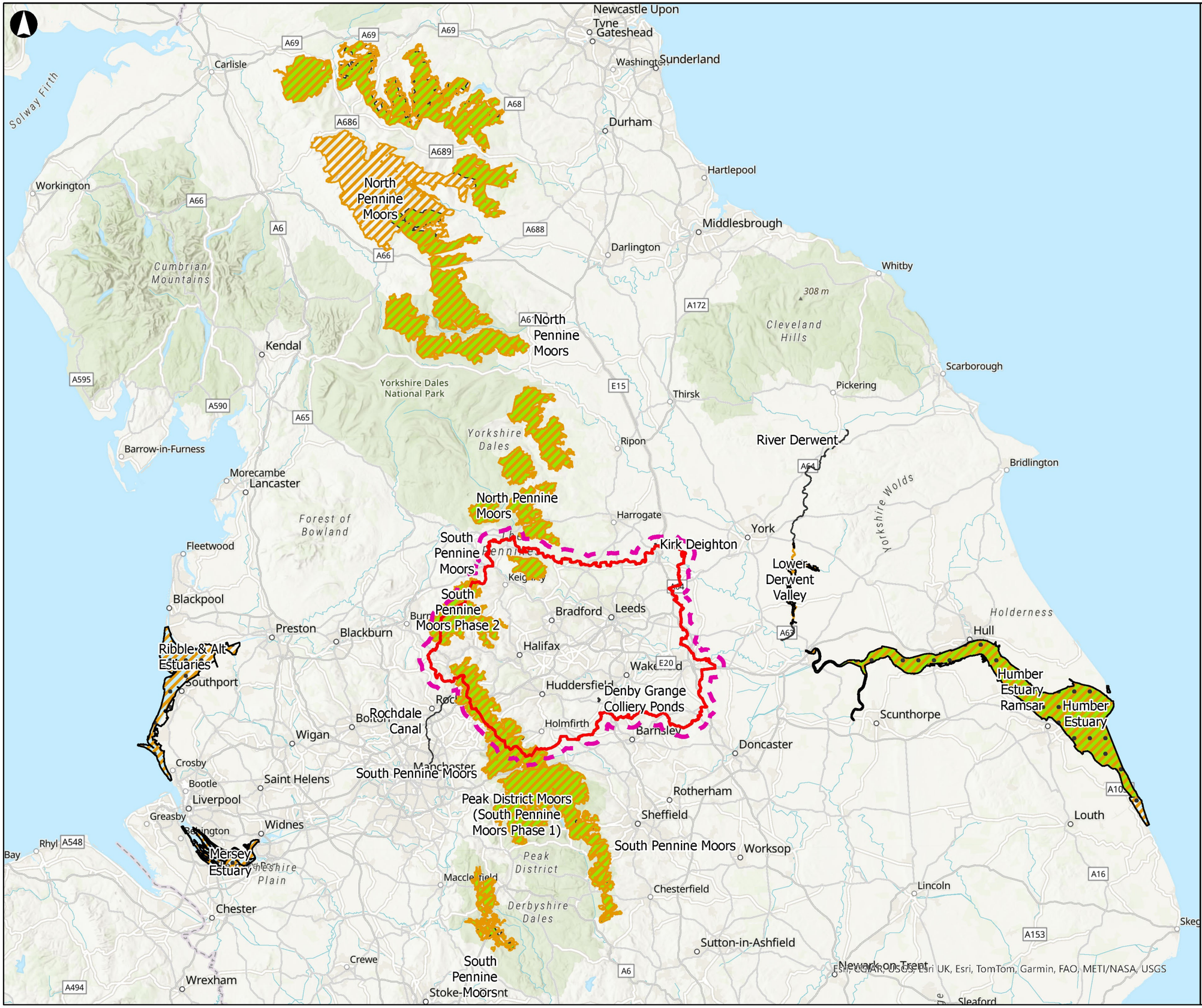
Network Principle	Policy Wording	Assessment and reasoning
	measures, blue green infrastructure, and supporting natural habitats in mind, whilst contributing to a consistency of offer across our leading transport network.	
Integrated	**Consistent branding and marketing** We will ensure that our Weaver Network is promoted through consistent branding and marketing, that promotes sustainable choices and becomes widely recognisable and trusted.	**Category F:** Policy relates to branding and marketing and as such will not lead to development or other change.
	Customer service and travel information We will provide the right tools and access to information, in an accessible and inclusive way, for people to travel with confidence on our Weaver Network and ensure help is available should their journey not go to plan.	**Category F:** Policy relates to travel information and customer service, and as such will not lead to development or other change.
	Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles We will ensure that taxis and private hire vehicles can play their part in our Weaver Network, including through drop off and pick up at transport interchanges where needed and working towards common standards for licensing across the region.	**Category G:** The policy is likely to require small-scale, minimally intrusive works to allow easy access to taxis and private hire vehicles in the transport network. The policy is not deemed to have any conceivable effect on European sites.
	Integrated Fares and tickets We will provide a multi-modal, integrated fares and ticketing offer, in line with our Fares and Ticketing Strategy, that is accessible across diverse passenger needs which represents value for money, making paying for travel simple, easier, convenient and flexible. We will work with partners to improve cross-boundary travel.	**Category F:** Policy relates to fares and tickets, and as such will not lead to development or other change.

Network Principle	Policy Wording	Assessment and reasoning
	Network integration Our Weaver Network will provide joined up services and timetabling across bus, mass transit and rail. The transport network will integrate across all modes, offering an attractive and easy alternative to owning and using a car. We will work with partners to improve cross-boundary service integration and seek opportunities to improve transport with neighbouring regions.	**Category F:** Policy relates to better integration of the existing transport network, and as such will not lead to development or other change.
	Raising new funding locally We will develop equitable options for raising new funding locally, including workplace parking levies, introducing where appropriate at our most accessible locations. This will help tackle congestion, while encouraging mode shift through greater uptake of sustainable transport options and raising important local contributions to reinvest in major transport investments principally Mass Transit and our bus network.	**Category F:** Policy relates to raising funding locally and as such will not lead to development or other change.

Appendix B

Drawings

Drawing 1 European Designated sites screened into the HRA.
Drawing 2 European Designated sites screened into the HRA (scaled to LTP boundary extent).



A3

01/02/2026 20:45

Legend

- LTP Boundary
- 2km Buffer
- Ramsar
- Special Protection Area
- Special Area of Conservation

Coordinate System: British National Grid

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Metres

0 10,000 20,000 40,000

Rev	Date	By	Chkd	Appd	Authd
01	02/02/2026	GL	TH	FM	FM

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Client
West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Project Name
The Mayor's West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan

Drawing Title
Drawing 1 - European Designated sites screened into the HRA.

Scale at A3
1:825,000

Role
HRA

Suitability
Issue

Project Number
297762-00

Rev
01

Drawing Number
Drawing 1

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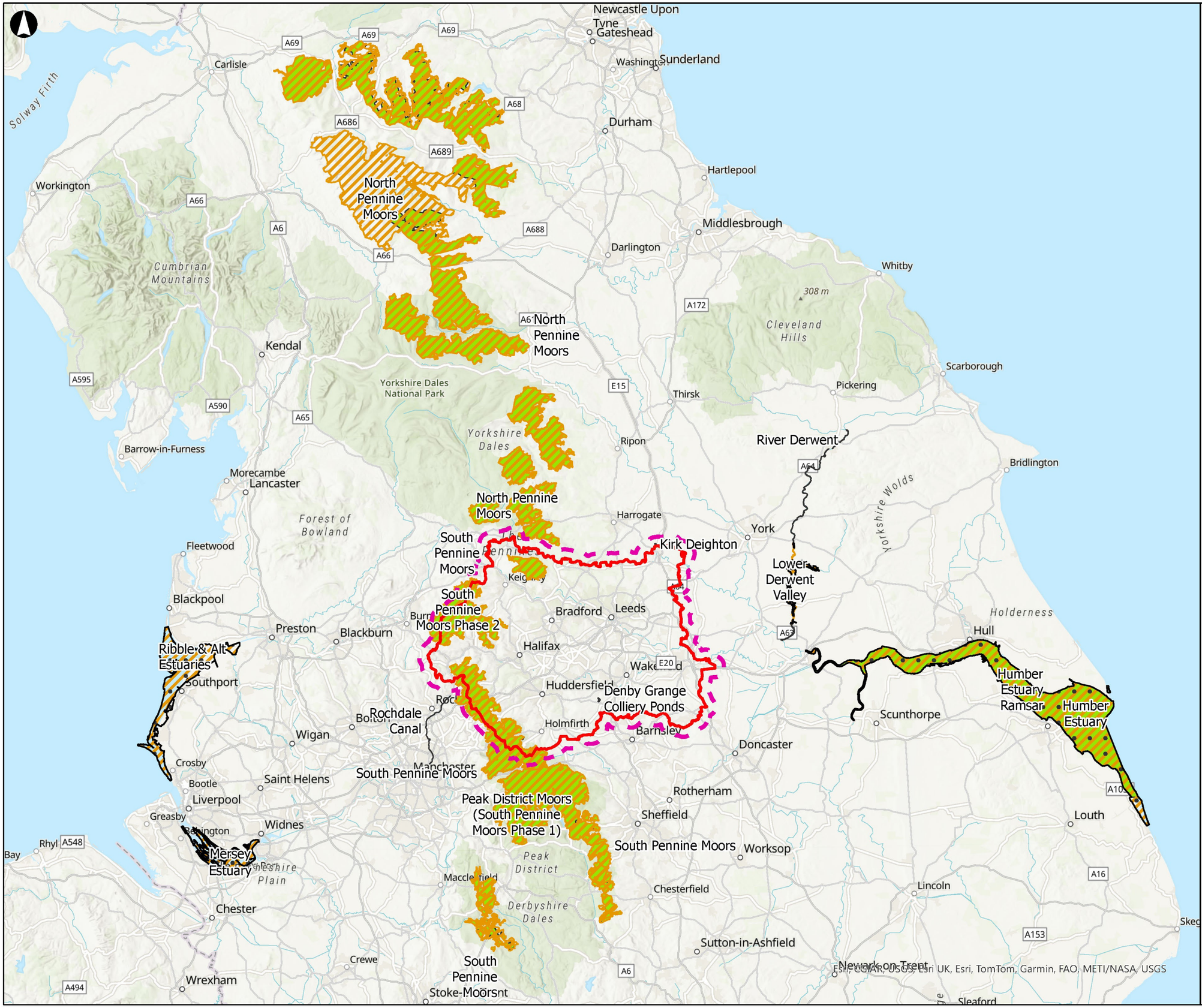

A3

01/02/2026 20:45

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Rev
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Drawing Number
Drawing 1

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