



Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document

Habitat Regulations Assessment: Screening Assessment



October 2025



1. Introduction

- 1.1 It is a requirement under the Habitats Directive to establish the potential effects of “plans or projects” on designated European sites, and therefore Ramsar sites.
- 1.2 The first stage in the HRA process is to establish whether a “significant effect” is likely. This is referred to as the “screening stage”. If it is found that a significant effect is not likely, then no further action is required. If potential effects are identified and deemed to be significant then Appropriate Assessment is required and used as a tool to help modify the plan or project to ensure that impacts are removed, or if this is not possible mitigated to prevent an adverse effect upon the integrity of the site.

2. HRA Screening Assessment

- 2.1. The purpose of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of land use plans is to ensure that protection of the integrity of European sites is part of the planning process. The requirements for HRA of plans and projects is outlined in the European Communities (1992) Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora otherwise known as the Habitats Directive. The Habitats Directive requirement to carry out HRA for land use plans is primarily transposed into English law under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.
- 2.2. European sites are Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Ramsar sites. There are no European sites within the Borough. However, there are sites located in adjacent or more distant authorities. These sites are the Rochdale Canal SAC (located 4km from the Borough), South Pennines SAC (13km), Manchester Mosses SAC (10-16km) and Rixton Clay Pits SAC (17km).

3. HRA Screening Conclusions

- 3.1. The Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD expands upon existing policies within the adopted Development Plan (principally H2/4 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan), it does not introduce new policies or proposals. The SPD does not result in development itself and seeks to provide guidance on the determination of planning applications for houses in multiple occupation. The Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD is therefore not likely to have significant adverse effects on the integrity of European sites or Ramsar sites and further Appropriate Assessment is not required.
- 3.2. It is important to note that this screening assessment is based on the consultation version of the SPD. Consequently, if the content or purpose of the SPD should materially change then the SEA/HRA screenings will need to be re-assessed and updated.

Bury
Council