

8. Environment

A number of statutory and non-statutory designations occur in areas underlain by the silica sand resource. It is known that mineral extraction may have the potential to significantly affect some of these habitats.

8.1 Special Areas of Conservation: These European designated sites are subject to the provisions contained within *Directive 92/43/EEC (the Habitats Directive)* on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora; these provisions were transposed into UK legislation through the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010*.

Roydon Common and Dersingham Bog SAC

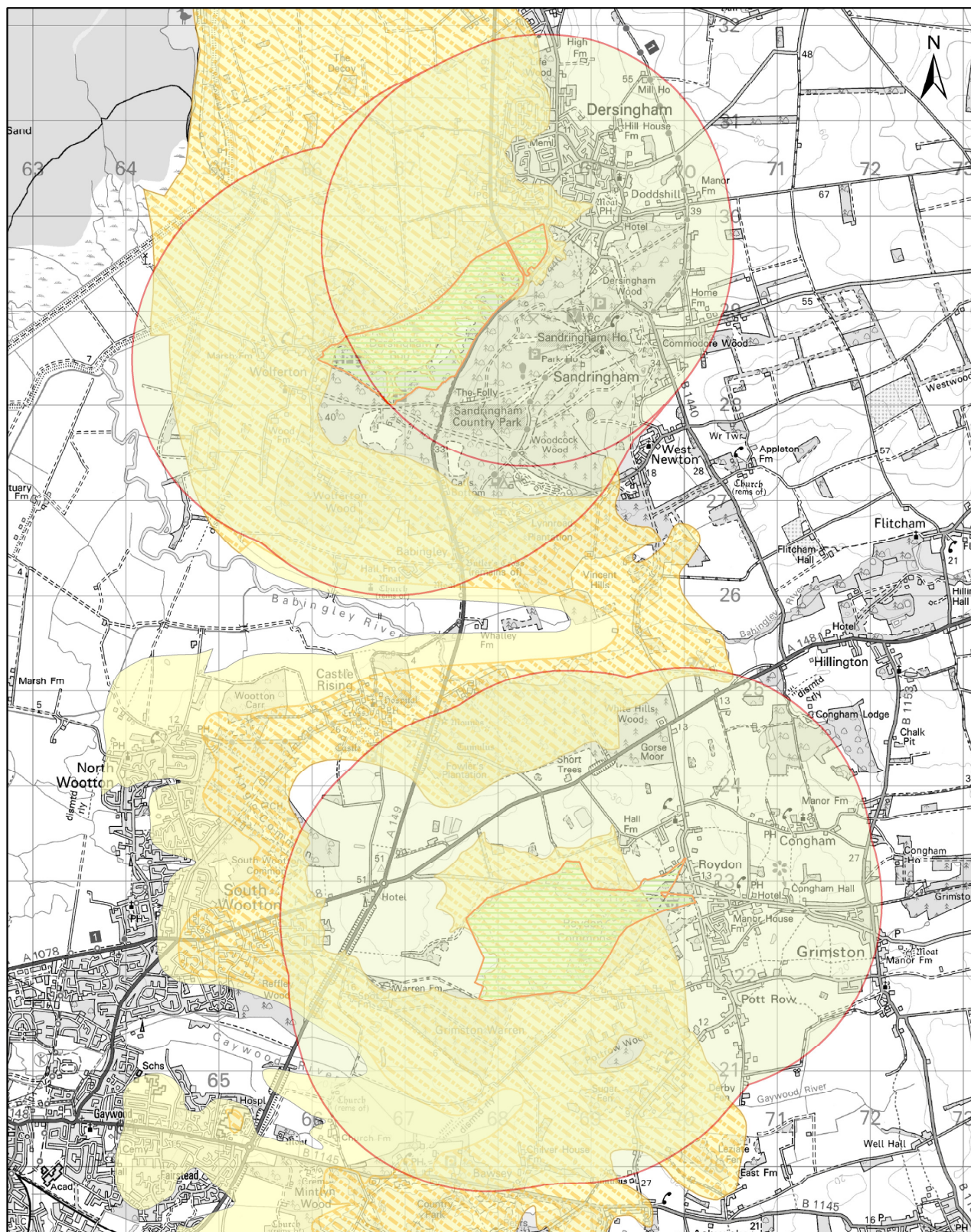
8.1.1 The Roydon Common and Dersingham Bog SAC occurs within the silica sand resource. It is also designated as two wetlands of international importance: Roydon Common Ramsar site and Dersingham Bog Ramsar site. It is known from evidence provided at the previous Examination in Public that an uncertainty exists for significant effects on the designated habitat as a result of changes in the chemical composition of the groundwater supplying the SAC due to mineral extraction. The precautionary principle is engaged through the Habitats Regulations, such that where there is uncertainty it should be assumed that the potential exists for those effects. This was a key consideration in the decision not to allocate proposed silica sand site MIN 41 in the Minerals Site Specific Allocations Plan.

8.1.2 Therefore, based on objections from Natural England and the Environment Agency to sites for silica sand extraction proposed during the production of the Minerals Site Specific Allocations Plan, an assumption has been made that any proposed specific sites within 2 km of Roydon Common and Dersingham Bog SAC will need to include enhanced evidence to indicate that no significant effects on the SAC or Ramsar sites are likely from silica sand extraction, including effects on groundwater quantities and composition.

8.1.3 If insufficient suitable Specific Sites are proposed in response to the 'call for sites' the County Council would continue the Silica Sand Review by defining Preferred Areas and/or Areas of Search. It is proposed that such areas would exclude the 2 km area of land around Roydon Common and Dersingham Bog SAC.

8.1.4 The map overleaf shows the location of the SAC (which is also designated as two Ramsar sites) and the 2km enhanced evidence area.

Question 2: Should enhanced evidence on the potential effects of silica sand extraction on the Roydon Common and Dersingham Bog SAC and Roydon Common and Dersingham Bog Ramsar sites be provided in areas closer than 2km from the SAC/Ramsar, or should a different distance from these sites be used? In your answer, please provide information/evidence to support your view.



Legend

- Roydon Common & Dersingham Bog SAC - Area within which hydrology and hydrochemical assessment to meet the Habitats Directive required
- Roydon Common and Dersingham Bog (SAC)
- Leziate sand resource-highest potential for glass sand
- Mineral Safeguarding Area (Silica Sand)

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2.5 1.25 0 2.5 Kilometres

The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC

8.1.5 Parts of The Wash and North Norfolk SAC impinge on the north-western extent of the silica sand resource. The majority of qualifying features for this SAC are marine in nature, although coastal lagoons, common seals and otters may be found in close proximity to the shoreline. Therefore, areas proposed for allocation within 250 metres of the SAC boundary will need to provide enhanced evidence to show that significant effects on the qualifying features will not occur as a result of silica sand extraction. The area of the Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC, which is relevant to the silica sand resource in Norfolk, is also designated as The Wash Special Protection Area and The Wash Ramsar site.

8.1.6 If insufficient suitable Specific Sites are proposed in response to the ‘call for sites’ the County Council would continue the Silica Sand Review by defining Preferred Areas and/or Areas of Search. It is proposed that such areas would exclude land closer than 250 metres from The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC, The Wash SPA and The Wash Ramsar.

8.1.7 The map overleaf shows the location of the SAC and the 250 metre enhanced evidence area.

Question 3: Should enhanced evidence on the potential effects of silica sand extraction on the Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC, The Wash SPA and The Wash Ramsar be provided in areas closer than 250 metres from the SAC/SPA/Ramsar, or should a different distance from these sites be used? In your answer, please provide information/evidence to support your view

Relevant chapter of the National Planning Policy Framework:

11. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

13. Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

Relevant Norfolk Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Policies:

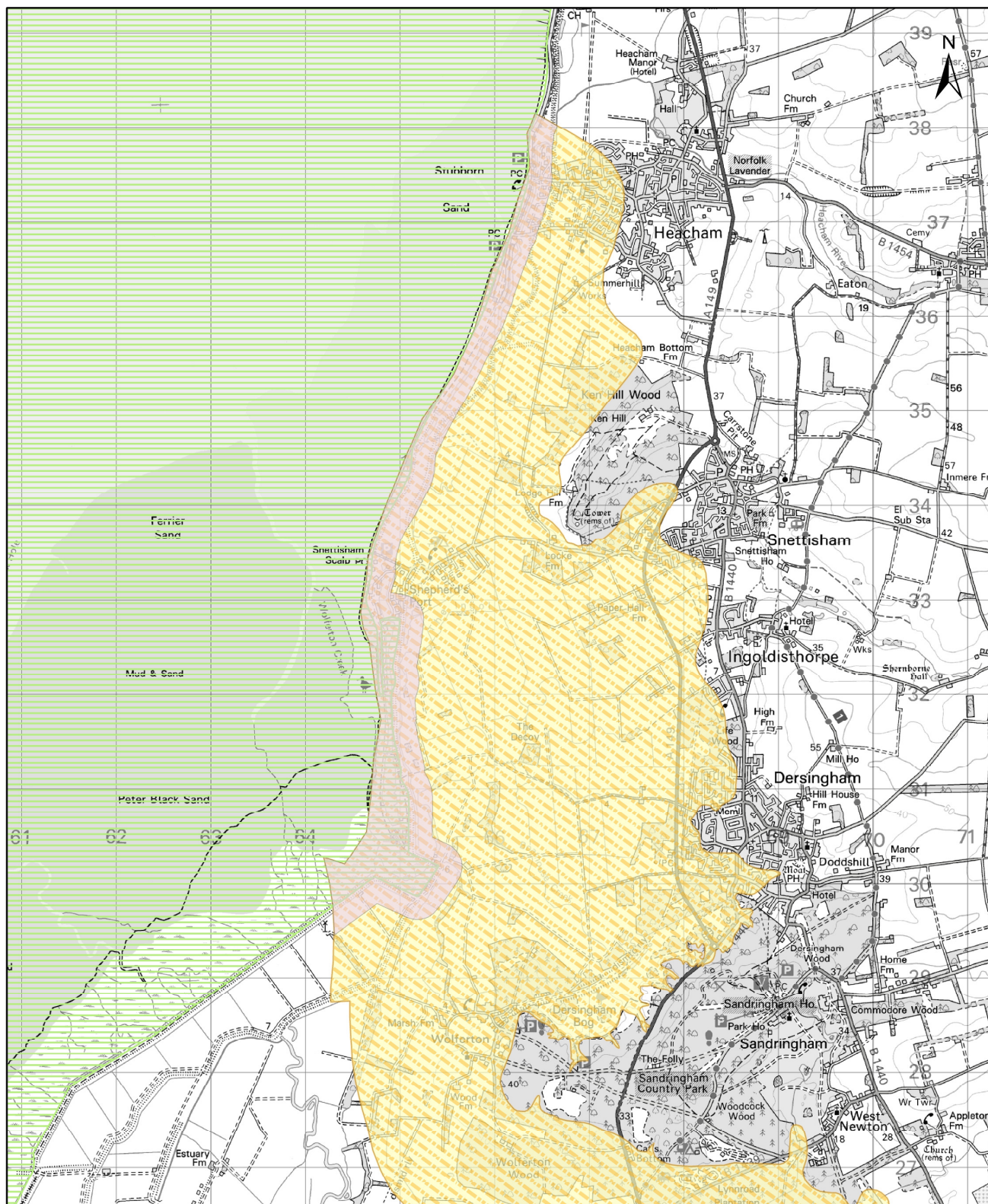
CS2 – General locations for mineral extraction and associated facilities

CS14 – Environmental Protection

Relevant King’s Lynn and West Norfolk Core Strategy Policies:

CS01 – Spatial strategy

CS12 – Environmental assets



Legend

- The Wash & North Norfolk Coast SAC - Area within which evidence should include assessment to meet the Habitats Directive
- The Wash & North Norfolk Coast (SAC)
- Leziate sand resource-highest potential for glass sand
- Mineral Safeguarding Area (Silica Sand)

2.5 1.25 0 2.5 Kilometres

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Norfolk County Council