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Executive Summary

This report forms part of the Habitat Regulations Assessment for the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy 2011-2026. The potential impact on European Nature Conservation Sites, of the amount, type and broad location of development that is proposed within the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy, is assessed. Thorne and Hatfield Moors Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA) and the South Pennine Moors SAC and SPA were identified as the European Sites that had the potential to be impacted by the plan proposals. Initial assessment within the screening exercise identified a number of policies as having the potential to impact upon European Sites. However a more detailed examination of these policies indicated that lower tier plans or projects would be better placed to assess these impacts. This is because the strategic overarching level of this plan means that details relating to the scale and location of projects are not suitably specific for a meaningful assessment to be made. It is therefore considered that no further work with respect to the Habitat Regulations is required in relation to the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy.
1. **Introduction**

1.1 **Habitat Regulations Assessment of Development Plans**

1.1.1 Under the provisions of the Habitats Directive, and translated into UK law by the Habitats Regulations\(^1\), a competent authority must carry out an assessment of whether a plan or project will significantly affect the integrity of any European Site, in terms of impacting the site’s conservation objectives.

1.1.2 This report forms part of the Habitat Regulations Assessment for the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy 2011-2026. The assessment has been undertaken by Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council on behalf of the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive and the four south Yorkshire Authorities. The area covered in this report is the combined administrative areas of the four South Yorkshire Authorities (Sheffield, Doncaster, Rotherham and Barnsley). It is acknowledged that the Transport Strategy extends beyond the South Yorkshire boundary to the Sheffield City Region. However, for the purposes of this assessment, the area which has been appraised is the administrative boundaries of the four local authorities. This is because it is felt that the Local Transport Plans for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire are more appropriate documents to appraise in terms of Habitat Regulations Assessment for the areas outside South Yorkshire.

1.2 **Natura 2000 Sites**

1.2.1 Natura 2000 sites are a network of sites spanning Europe that are considered to represent natural habitats of the highest value for nature conservation. The sites can be important for plants and animals that are rare or considered threatened in a European context. The network of sites were established under the 1992 Habitats Directive\(^2\) and 1979 Birds Directive\(^3\) and

\(^1\) The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994

consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). These sites are often simply referred to as ‘European Sites’. SACs are designated for their importance for habitats while SPAs are designated for their importance for birds. In addition to SPA and SAC sites, Ramsar\textsuperscript{4} sites are designated areas important for their wetland habitats. Planning Policy Statement 9 states that Ramsar sites should receive the same level of protection as SPA and SAC sites. This means that any Ramsar sites should be taken into account in the HRA process.

1.3 Report Aims

1.3.1 This report aims to:

- Identify the European sites within South Yorkshire.
- Summarise the reasons for designation of each of these the sites.
- Screen each of the policies within the South Yorkshire Transportation Strategy for their potential to impact upon a European site.
- Identify any outstanding issues that need further investigation.

\textsuperscript{4} Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat. Ramsar (Iran), 2nd February 1971.
2. Sites Information

2.1 European Sites to be Considered

2.1.1 The following European Sites lie within the South Yorkshire boundary:

- Thorne Moors SAC and SPA
- Hatfield Moors SAC and SPA
- South Pennine Moors SAC
- Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) SPA

Appendix 1 contains a map showing the location of the above sites in relation to the South Yorkshire boundary.

2.1.2 Consultation will be undertaken with Natural England to determine if any European sites outside this boundary are likely to be affected.

2.1.3 Information on each of the above sites was collected to help inform the Habitat Regulations Assessment process. This included Standard Data forms for SAC’s and SPA’s. Details of the conservation objectives of each of the sites were also obtained from Natural England. Together this information was used to identify which aspects of the draft plan have the potential to affect site integrity.

2.2 Reasons for Site Designation

2.2.1 The reasons for site designation are detailed below.

Hatfield Moor SAC
Hatfield Moor SAC is designated due to the presence of degraded raised bog that is considered capable of natural regeneration. It is the second largest site of this type in the UK (after Thorne Moors). The site is relic of a once extensive area of bog and fen peatlands in the Humberhead Levels.
Historical peat extraction on the site means little of the original habitat remains however, since mineral working ceased the bog is being restored. The site includes birch woodland, dwarf shrubs such as heathers, bog species and sphagnum mosses. It is also notable for its invertebrate species including the mire pill beetle.

**Thorne Moor SAC**

Thorne Moor SAC is designated due to the presence of degraded raised bog considered capable of regeneration. It is the largest area of this habitat type in the country. Due to restoration work, a small proportion of the site contains active raised bog, a second reason for the site designation. A variety of species are present including sphagnum mosses, cotton grasses, heather, cranberry and bog rosemary.

**Thorne and Hatfield Moor SPA**

Parts of Thorne and Hatfield Moors are designated as an SPA as the area regularly supports a population of Nightjar during the breeding season. Thorne and Hatfield Moors is the most northerly site designated an SPA because of the presence of breeding nightjar. The site supports approximately 1.8% of the national population of this species.

**South Pennine Moors SAC**

The South Pennine Moors is an important area designated due to the presence of European dry heath, blanket bog, old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum*, northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix* and transition mires and quaking bogs.

**Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) SPA**

The Peak District Moors is designated as an SPA as it regularly supports breeding populations of short eared owl *Asio flammeus*, merlin *Falco columbarius* and golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria*. The site supports 2.2% of the breeding GB population of short eared owl, 2.3% of the breeding GB population of merlin and 1.9% of the breeding GB population of golden plover.
2.3 Conservation Objectives and Site Vulnerabilities

2.3.1 During the Habitat Regulations Assessment process the vulnerabilities of a site are identified by considering issues that could act to compromise that site’s conservation objectives, and hence threaten the site’s integrity. The integrity of a site is defined, in paragraph 20 of ODPM Circular 06/2005\(^5\), as:

‘the coherence of its ecological structure and function, across its whole area, that enables it to sustain the habitat, complex of habitats and/or the levels of populations of the species for which it was classified’.

2.3.2 The conservation objectives and site vulnerabilities of each of the sites considered in this report are detailed below in Table 1.

Table 1: Conservation Objectives and Site Vulnerabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Conservation Objectives</th>
<th>Site Vulnerabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thorne Moors and Hatfield Moors SAC</td>
<td>To have no loss in area of lagg fen and bog.</td>
<td>Recreational Pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To have no obvious modification in habitat structure.</td>
<td>Recreational pressure resulting in physical damage to habitats, trampling, erosion, fractionation and accidental fires.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To maintain vegetation composition.</td>
<td>Agricultural Drainage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To maintain species indicating local distinctiveness.</td>
<td>Agricultural drainage in the land adjacent to Thorne and Hatfield Moors has the potential to alter the water balance on the sites.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<th>Site Vulnerabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nitrogen deposition can therefore lead to an increase in nutrient levels that would have a significantly adverse impact on the lowland raised mire habitat.</td>
<td><strong>Water Abstraction</strong>&lt;br&gt;A change in the water table (increase or decrease) has the potential to have a significant negative impact on the type of habitat present on Thorne and Hatfield Moors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA</strong></td>
<td><strong>Recreational Disturbance</strong>&lt;br&gt;Nightjar are vulnerable to recreational disturbance caused by people and dogs. As a summer resident to the UK this pressure is most acute during the breeding season.</td>
<td><strong>Climate Change</strong>&lt;br&gt;Thorne and Hatfield Moors comprise degraded bog habitat that is critically dependant on water. Rainfall is a crucially important resource needed to maintain and restore the habitat. Climate change has the potential to threaten the integrity of both sites were it to result in a fall in the amount of rainfall they receive. Climate change is thought to be caused by increases in the levels of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere. Greenhouse gases include carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxides and fluorocarbons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To monitor the number of calling male birds each year and maintain a stable or increasing population.</td>
<td><strong>Foraging Habitat</strong>&lt;br&gt;Nightjars forage within 3km of their breeding habitat. Loss of suitable foraging habitat within this radius could therefore be detrimental to the breeding success of the nightjar population.</td>
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<tr>
<td>To not lose any more than 5% of the current nightjar habitat.</td>
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<tr>
<td>To maintain a mosaic of habitat types.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Pennine Moors SAC</strong></td>
<td><strong>Recreational Pressure</strong>&lt;br&gt;Recreational pressure resulting in physical damage to habitats, trampling, erosion, fragmentation and accidental fires.</td>
<td><strong>Inappropriate Management</strong>&lt;br&gt;Overgrazing by sheep can result in direct damage to vegetation and burning as a tool for grouse moor management can cause habitat damage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To maintain the current extent of blanket bog habitats. Losses can only be accepted in cases where bog is restored to a more diverse form.</td>
<td><strong>Hydrological Impacts</strong>&lt;br&gt;Heathland and blanket bog are vulnerable to changes in hydrological conditions such as agricultural drainage causing changes in the water table.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For there to be no loss of ancient semi natural woodland stands.</td>
<td><strong>Pollution</strong>&lt;br&gt;Nitrogen enrichment from air pollution can lead to changes in the vegetation while the application of fertilisers and pesticides can also potentially damage habitats.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To maintain the current extent of dry heath habitats. In areas where heath is mixed with grassland a loss can be accepted if it is through restoration to dry heath.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>To maintain the current extent of wet heath habitats.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site</td>
<td>Conservation Objectives</td>
<td>Site Vulnerabilities</td>
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</table>
| Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) SPA | To maintain the mosaic of upland habitats including acid grassland, bog, bracken, heathlands, fen, rivers and streams. The extent of all of these habitats should be maintained unless loss is as a result of restoration to another notified habitat type. | Habitat Loss  
Breeding bird species are susceptible to habitat loss and degradation. This could be caused by many of the factors outlined above including recreational pressure, overgrazing, poor management and hydrological changes.  
Agricultural Intensification  
Agricultural intensification around the edge of the moors can result in a reduction in feeding habitat for birds.  
Recreational Pressure  
Increased visitor numbers also have the potential to lead to a rise in nesting failures though disturbance during the breeding period. |
3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This assessment has been undertaken by Doncaster Council Natural Environment Team on behalf of South Yorkshire Local Transport Executive. This report is separate to, but complements, the Strategic Environmental Assessment and seeks solely to consider the impacts of implementing the plan on European Nature Conservation Sites. The main three stages within an assessment under the Habitat Regulations are set out below:

Stage 1: Screening and Scoping

Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment

Stage 3: Assessment of Alternative Solutions

3.2 Stage 1: Screening and Scoping

3.2.1 The screening stage identifies if a policy or plan will have an impact on a European Site and therefore if an ‘Appropriate Assessment’ is needed. The first stage is to identify which policies or plans will have no effect on any European Site. Categories A-E listed in Table 2 identify common reasons why a policy or plan may not need an Appropriate Assessment. Categories F and G identify reasons why a plan or project might impact upon a European Site. In chapter 4 each policy is considered in turn and the results of the screening exercise recorded.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Purpose of Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>The policy will not itself lead to development (e.g. it is a policy about design or other qualitative criteria for development).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>The policy makes provision for a number or type of development, the location of which is to be considered in a lower tier plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>The policy is intended to protect the natural environment including biodiversity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>The policy is intended to conserve or enhance the natural, built or historic environment, where enhancement will not have an effect on a European Site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>The policy helps steer development away from sensitive sites as it promotes development in other areas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| F        | The plan or policy is likely to have an impact on a European Site as it will lead to the following;  
  - The plan or policy chooses land or steers future built development in an area where a European site is located.  
  - The plan or policy is a proposal for Major built Development (including quarrying, and wind farms) adjacent to or in an area that includes a European site.  
  - An amount or type of development that regardless of where it is located could impact a European site. |
| G        | The plan or policy when considered in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on a European site. |
3.3 Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment

3.3.1 If stage 1 identifies the need for an Appropriate Assessment then more detailed work will need to be undertaken to establish exactly what the potential impacts of the plan are on European site integrity. An iterative process is then undertaken that aims to change the policy in a manner that removes any risk of a negative impact on a site.

3.3.2 In making the assessment of how site integrity is impacted by a project or plan then it is essential that the precautionary principle is adopted. The key premise of the precautionary principle is that in situations where an impact on site integrity cannot definitely be ruled out, then an adverse impact should be assumed.

3.4 Stage 3: Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest

3.4.1 In the unlikely scenario that it is not possible to adapt a plan or policy sufficiently to avoid any adverse impact on a European site then it would be necessary to establish whether there are any imperative reasons of overriding public interest that mean the plan should progress. If it is considered that such reasons exist, which outweigh the damage that will be caused to the site, then the next stage is to notify the Government Office who will consider whether the plan or project should proceed.
4. Core Strategy Habitat Regulations Assessment

4.1 Screening and Scoping Results

4.1.1 Table 3 contains the full results of the screening and scoping exercise.

4.1.2 Policies A, C and G were initially assessed as having the potential to negatively impact upon Thorne and Hatfield Moors. Following further consideration, the amendments conclude that, the level of detail provided within the scope of the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy is insufficient for this to be properly assessed at this stage. In addition, given the purpose and scope of the local transport plan it would be inappropriate to include more detail within the document. It is therefore recommended that further consideration under the habitat regulations, of issues such as increased air pollution, are undertaken within appropriate lower tier plans. These future assessments must take into account in combination impacts on European Sites.

4.1.3 Policy E looks to develop new high speed rail links to the region. Without details of the proposed route of such a scheme it is not possible to rule out the potential for damage to European Sites. Assuming a full ecological assessment is used to inform the route choice it is very likely this impact will be screened out once more detailed plans are proposed. It is therefore felt that a later stage in the development of this project would be a more appropriate opportunity to assess any potential impacts on European Sites.

4.1.4 Policies G and Q have the potential to result in increased visitor pressure on Thorne Moors, Hatfield Moors and the South Pennine Moors by making these sites more accessible or increasing the number of people living in proximity to them. It is not however possible to quantify any impacts on
these sites until more precise project plans are developed. It is therefore a recommendation of this report that a further assessment under the Habitat Regulations should be undertaken once delivery plans have been developed that will implement these policies. At this later stage it will be possible to quantify both the scale and location of any possible impacts.
## Table 3: Policy Screening Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy being screened</th>
<th>Categorisation in initial screening with explanation</th>
<th>Comments and recommendations where initial screening is Category F or G</th>
<th>Categorisation following detailed consideration of the issues and taking into account changes to plan or policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy A</strong></td>
<td><strong>F - likely impact / G - in combination impact</strong></td>
<td>Increased road traffic will result in increased levels of nitrous oxide gases in the air. Research by Natural England(^6) has shown that the dry deposition of pollutants, such as nitrous oxides, is estimated to take place up to 200m from a source such as a dual carriageway. The link road would be over 5km from Hatfield Moors thus it is not considered likely to impact on this site. While impacts of this policy from direct deposition of air pollutants are considered unlikely it is still important that plans for a link road to Robin Hood Airport consider the impact of growth and increased access to this area on European Sites such as Thorne and Hatfield Moors.</td>
<td><strong>B – Lower Tier Plan</strong> Detailed plans for a link road from the M18 to Robin Hood Airport are being developed. It is considered more appropriate to screen for possible impacts once more detailed project plans are developed. These should take into account possible in combination effects on sites such as Thorne and Hatfield Moors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To improve surface access to international gateways.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Policy B</strong></td>
<td><strong>A - Does not lead directly to development</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td><strong>A - Does not lead directly to development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To improve the reliability and resilience of the national road network using a range of</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improving efficiency reduces congestion and should therefore help to reduce air pollution.</td>
<td>While the policy itself does seek to encourage growth in the logistic sector it concentrates primarily on ways in which greater efficiency can be achieved. Greater efficiency should lead to less congestion and less air pollution. Increased road traffic will result in increased levels of nitrous oxide gases in the air. Research by Natural England(^7) has shown that the dry deposition of pollutants, such as nitrous oxides, is estimated to take place up to 200m from a source such as a dual carriageway. The growth of the logistics sector may increase traffic on the M18 and M180. The M18 is over 2km from Thorne and Hatfield Moors. The M180 is over 800m from Hatfield Moors and 4km from Thorne Moors. It is therefore considered that dry deposition of</td>
<td>B – Lower Tier Plan It is considered more appropriate to assess the impacts of the individual proposals relating to the growth of the logistics sector at the delivery plan stage when specific project details are available for consideration. It is important that this type of assessments considers in combination impacts so that incremental growth is fully taken into account.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy C) To promote efficient and sustainable means of freight distribution, while growing SCR’s logistics sector.</td>
<td>F - likely impact / G - in combination impact The policy looks to develop sustainable distribution while seeing growth in the Sheffield City Region’s logistics sector. Growth in the logistics sector may lead to more lorries on the roads and hence increased air pollution.</td>
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\(^7\) The ecological effects of diffuse air pollution from road transport. Report Number 580. English Nature.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Policy being screened</th>
<th>Categorisation in initial screening with explanation</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pollutants is unlikely to be an issue. While the policy does support growth in the logistics sector the impacts of this would be better assessed at the project stage when more details about the nature of any proposals are available and any possible in combination effects can be assessed.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Policy D) To improve rail services and access to stations, focusing on interventions that can be delivered in the short term. | A – Does not lead directly to development  
This policy seeks to improve the efficiency of rail services as well as improving access to stations, by public transport, bike and on foot. | N/A | A - Does not lead directly to development |
| Policy E) To ensure SCR is served by high speed rail. | F – likely impact  
This policy is about developing high speed rail connections into the Sheffield City Region. Dependant on the location of such links this could impact on European sites. | The precise details of such schemes including information such as route choice have not yet been defined. The potential for impacts should therefore be accessed in a lower tier plan. | B – Lower Tier Plan  
Details of a possible scheme have not yet been defined. The impact of developing high speed rail links within the Sheffield City Region would be better accessed at a later stage in the planning process. |
| Policy F) To improve connectivity between major settlements. | A - Does not lead directly to development / E - Steers development away from sensitive sites.  
The policy seeks to improve links by bus, tram and train between the main centres in the Sheffield City Region. | N/A | A - Does not lead directly to development / E - Steers development away from sensitive sites. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy being screened</th>
<th>Categorisation in initial screening with explanation</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Policy G) To deliver interventions required for development and regeneration. | F - likely impact / G - in combination impact  
The policy seeks to support the delivery of regeneration projects for employment, retail or housing by opening up potential development sites through transport improvements. These projects may have a variety of impacts such as increased road traffic, air pollution and higher population levels. All of these factors have the potential to negatively impact sites such as Thorne and Hatfield Moors. | The plan identifies a list of proposals that will be supported. More precise details of each of these projects will be developed through Sheffield, Rotherham, Doncaster and Barnsley’s respective Core Strategies as well as in individual planning applications. It is considered more appropriate to fully assess the impacts of these projects and possible in combination impacts at a planning application stage. | B – Lower Tier Plan  
It is considered more appropriate to assess the impacts of implementing this policy once detailed proposals are developed, possibly at a planning application stage. This is because until more details are available the size and precise impacts on European Sites cannot accurately be quantified. Assessments such as this must consider in combination effects. |
| Policy H) To develop high quality public places. | A - Does not lead directly to development / D - Enhance the natural or built environment  
The policy is about design and enhancement of public places. | N/A | A - Does not lead directly to development / D - Enhance the natural or built environment |
| Policy I) To focus new development along key | E - Steers development away from sites  
The policy seeks to focus | N/A | E - Steers development away from sites |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy being screened</th>
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<th>Comments and recommendations where initial screening is Category F or G</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>public transport corridors and in places adjacent to existing shops and services.</td>
<td>development along existing public transport corridors. This will direct development away from European sites.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Policy J | To apply parking policies to promote efficient car use, while remaining sensitive to the vulnerability of urban economics. | A - Does not lead directly to development
This policy is about promoting efficient car use through parking policies and will not lead directly to development. | N/A A - Does not lead directly to development |
| Policy K | To develop public transport that connects people to jobs and training in both urban and rural areas. | A - Does not lead directly to development
This policy looks to provide more efficient ways for people to get to and from work, through methods such as developing better public transport links and encouraging car sharing. | N/A A - Does not lead directly to development |
| Policy L | To reduce the amount of productive time lost on the strategic road network and to improve its resilience and reliability. | A - Does not lead directly to development
The policy is about improving the resilience of the transport network. It will not lead directly to development. | N/A A - Does not lead directly to development |
| Policy M | To ensure our networks are well maintained. | A - Does not lead directly to development
This policy is about maintaining our existing transport networks and will not lead directly to new development. | N/A A - Does not lead directly to development |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy being screened</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy N)</strong> To develop user-friendly public transport, covering all parts of the SCR, with high quality of integration between different modes.</td>
<td>A - Does not lead directly to development This policy is about making a user friendly transport network and will not lead directly to new development.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>A - Does not lead directly to development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy O)</strong> To ensure public transport network is accessible to all.</td>
<td>A - Does not lead directly to development This policy is about making public transport accessible to all and will not lead directly to new development.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>A - Does not lead directly to development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy P)</strong> To work with operators to keep fares affordable, especially for travellers in need.</td>
<td>A - Does not lead directly to development The policy is about the price of fares. No aspect of this policy will lead directly to development.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>A - Does not lead directly to development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy Q)</strong> To provide efficient and sustainable access to our green recreational spaces, so that they can be enjoyed by all residents and attract tourism.</td>
<td>F - likely impact / G - in combination impact This policy could lead to increased visitor pressure on both Thorne and Hatfield Moors and the South Pennine Moors. Doncaster Council has produced an Open Access Management Plan for Thorne and Hatfield Moors. This includes measures that will help to alleviate the pressure of increased numbers of visitors on Thorne and Hatfield Moors. Specifically the plan includes measures such as employing wardens, using interpretive signs and managing the habitats on site. In terms of the South Pennine Moors the plan recognises the need to</td>
<td>B - Makes provision for a type of development the location of which is to be considered in a lower tier plan. It is considered more appropriate to assess the impacts of implementing this policy once specific proposals are developed within a delivery plan. This is because until more details are available the size and precise location of any impacts on European Sites cannot be quantified.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy being screened</td>
<td>Categorisation in initial screening with explanation</td>
<td>Comments and recommendations where initial screening is Category F or G</td>
<td>Categorisation following detailed consideration of the issues and taking into account changes to plan or policy</td>
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<td>Policy R) To work to improve the efficiency of all vehicles and reduce their carbon emissions.</td>
<td>A - Does not lead directly to development The policy is about improving vehicle efficiency. No aspect of this policy will lead directly to development.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>A - Does not lead directly to development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy S) To encourage active travel and develop high-quality cycling and walking networks.</td>
<td>A - Does not lead directly to development This policy is about developing walking and cycling networks and the facilities required by walkers and cyclists. The goal of this is to reduce the number of journeys made by car.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>A - Does not lead directly to development</td>
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<td>Policy T) To provide information and travel advice for the users of all modes of</td>
<td>A - Does not lead directly to development The policy is about providing travel advice. No aspect of this policy will</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>A - Does not lead directly to development</td>
</tr>
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<td>transport, so that they can make informed travel choices.</td>
<td>lead directly to development.</td>
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| Policy U) To support the generation of energy from renewable sources, and use energy in a responsible way. | A - Does not lead directly to development  
This policy is about using energy more efficiently and encouraging the production of energy in a renewable manner. | N/A | A - Does not lead directly to development |
| Policy V) To improve air quality, especially in AQMA areas. | A - Does not lead directly to development  
The policy aims to improve air quality. Improvements in air quality should benefit Thorne and Hatfield Moors. No aspect of this policy will lead directly to development. | N/A | A - Does not lead directly to development |
| Policy W) To encourage safer road use and reduce casualties on our roads. | A - Does not lead directly to development  
The policy aims to improve road safety. No aspect of this policy will lead directly to development. | N/A | A - Does not lead directly to development |
| Policy X) To work with the police to enforce traffic laws. | A - Does not lead directly to development  
The policy encourages partnership working. No aspect of this policy will lead directly to development. | N/A | A - Does not lead directly to development |
| Policy Y) To focus safety efforts on vulnerable groups. | A - Does not lead directly to development  
The policy aims target safety | N/A | A - Does not lead directly to development |
<table>
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<tr>
<td>Policy Z) To improve safety and the perception of safety on public transport.</td>
<td>A - Does not lead directly to development The policy seeks to improve safety and the perception of safety. No aspect of this policy will lead directly to development.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>A - Does not lead directly to development</td>
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</table>
4.2  Cumulative Impacts

4.2.1  As part of the Habitat Regulations Assessment process it is necessary to consider the cumulative impacts of other plans and project that might have an in combination impact on a European Site. In order to do this it is useful to consider the findings of Habitat Regulations Assessment work undertaken for other plans in the area. The findings of appropriate assessments undertaken for Doncaster, Sheffield and Barnsley’s Core Strategies are outlined below.

4.2.2  The screening exercise that was undertaken for Sheffield’s Core Strategy found that the proposals within the plan were not likely to directly affect the content and qualitative state of any Natura 2000 sites. The issue of increased visitor pressure on the South Pennine Moors was expected to be relatively small, and was addressed through the National Park Management Plan. In terms of economic development, and the potential for an increase in traffic along routes across the South Pennine Moors, no negative impact was expected. This is as the service sector was considered the prime area for growth and the majority of new development sites are to the east of the city and thus furthest from the South Pennine Moors. In terms of air pollution no impact was considered likely.

4.2.3  In 2010 Doncaster Council undertook an assessment under the Habitat Regulations of the publication version of their Core Strategy. This screening exercise concluded there were no outstanding issues with respect to impacts on European Sites from the development proposed within the plan. Several lower tier plans or projects were however identified as requiring further assessment with respect to the Habitat Regulations. These included the Allocations Development Plan, Green Belt Review and individual planning applications. Issues to consider include air pollution, recreational pressure and mineral extraction.

4.2.4  In February 2010 Barnsley Council undertook an Appropriate Assessment screening exercise with respect to their Core Strategy. Potential
risks to the South Pennine Moors SPA and SAC from Barnsley’s Core Strategy were identified as increased housing numbers leading to greater visitor or recreational disturbance and increased traffic causing air pollution. With respect to housing and employment sites it was considered more appropriate to undertake a detailed assessment in the Development Sites and Places Development Plan Document. In terms of recreational pressures potential impacts were screened out due to the proposed housing growth being relatively small and new developments being required to provide on site green space.

4.2.5 The policies within the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy do not suggest additional growth above and beyond that proposed within Sheffield, Doncaster or Barnsley’s Core Strategy. It is therefore considered that there will be no cumulative impact related to implementing all of these plans.

4.2.6 Rotherham is at an earlier stage in the production of their Core Strategy and has not yet undertaken any Habitat Regulations Assessment work. Possible cumulative impacts would therefore need to be considered at a later date.

4.2.7 The policies proposed in the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy echo many of those detailed in the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Spatial Strategy. The Transport Strategy is not considered to go above and beyond the amount of development proposed within the Regional Spatial Strategy. So while the Transport Strategy does provide a greater level of detail about how transport will be developed within the region, it is not considered that there will be any cumulative impacts associated with implementing both plans.

**4.3 Climate Change**

4.3.1 It is generally accepted that the world’s climate is likely to change as a result of human impacts. Models suggest warmer and wetter weather is the most likely scenario to face much of Britain including South Yorkshire. The
health of ecosystems is heavily determined by the climate to which they are subjected and changing our climate is likely to impact all the European Nature Conservation sites within or in close proximity to South Yorkshire.

4.3.2 Our climate is expected to change and it generally accepted, that, while addressing this issue needs to be taken on a worldwide scale, individual actions at a more local level have an essential role to play. Transport and the associated greenhouse gas emissions will contribute to climate change. That said, it is considered that the South Yorkshire Transport Plan includes a range of measures aimed to reduce the potential for climate change. For example policy C looks to promote efficiency and sustainability in the logistics sector. Policy I seeks to reduce car use by promoting development in sustainable sites that are well served by public transport. Policies K, N and O seek to make improvements to public transport and hence reduce private car mileage and associated emissions. Policy R looks at making vehicles more efficient and reducing their carbon emissions, while policy S seeks to encourage the use of more sustainable forms of transport such as cycling and walking. Finally policy U looks at ways generating renewable energy can be incorporated into transport related schemes.

4.3.3 It is therefore considered that while the policies within the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy are not able to remove the potential threat from climate change, faced by European sites, they do go some way towards reducing the causes of climate change.

4.4 Conclusions and Recommendations

4.4.1 No policies within the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy were identified as having a significant negative impact on a European Site. Several lower tier plans or projects were identified as being more appropriate opportunities to consider the impacts of implementing the Strategy. Once delivery plans are developed, the specific impacts of projects can be more accurately assessed. At this point further assessment under the habitat
regulations may need to take place. As discussed within the screening table it is essential that any subsequent Habitat Regulations Assessment work of lower tier plans or projects considers possible cumulative impacts and in combination effects when determining whether there is an impact on any European Sites.

4.4.2 Natural England has made two recommendations regarding the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy. The first of these is that the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Authorities are made aware that the scope of this assessment only covers the four South Yorkshire authorities, and that they should undertake similar screening exercises with respect to the way that the Transportation Strategy may affect European Sites in their areas. These assessments should include consideration of any cross boundary impacts.

4.4.3 The second recommendation is that the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy should make it clear that any development or proposals that deliver the strategy’s objectives should also consider their impacts on European Nature Conservation sites. It is therefore recommended that the following text is incorporated into the document:

> It is important to note that while the SCR transport strategy specifies our key priorities at a high level it does not provide overriding backing to plans or projects that are shown to have significant effects on the integrity of European sites of nature conservation importance. All plans or projects that stem from the SCR transport strategy and would be likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, will need to comply with the requirements of the Habitat Regulations.

4.4.4 If the above recommendations are incorporated into the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy then it is considered that no further work is required in relation to this document with respect to the Habitat Regulations.
Appendix 1

Map showing locations of European Sites