

7 Summary of Effects on Site Integrity

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 English Nature (2004; now Natural England) has produced guidance on determining site integrity which includes a 'simple, pragmatic checklist' for assessing likely effects on integrity. This requires the assessor to pose a series of five questions to consider whether the Appropriate Assessment has shown:

- ▶ That the area of Annex 1 habitats (or composite features) will not be reduced?
- ▶ That there will be no direct effect on the population of the species for which the site was designated or classified?
- ▶ That there will be no indirect effects on the populations of species for which the site was designated due to loss or degradation of their habitat (quantity/quality)?
- ▶ That there will be no changes to the composition of the habitats for which the site was designated (e.g. reduction in species structure, abundance or diversity that comprises the habitat over time)?
- ▶ That there will be no interruption or degradation of the physical, chemical or biological processes that support habitats and species for which the site was designated or classified?

7.1.2 The guidance suggests that if the answer to all of these questions is 'Yes' then it is reasonable to conclude that there is not an adverse effect on integrity. If the answer is 'No' to one or more of the questions then further site-specific factors need to be considered in order to reach a decision. Such factors include:

- ▶ Scale of impact;
- ▶ Long term effects and sustainability;
- ▶ Duration of impact and recovery/reversibility;
- ▶ Dynamic systems;
- ▶ Conflicting feature requirements;
- ▶ Off-site impacts; and
- ▶ Uncertainty in cause and effect relationships and a precautionary approach.

7.1.3 This two-step process is applied to determine whether there will be adverse effects on Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar, and South Wight Maritime SAC.

7.2 Solent and Southampton Water SPA

Step-one tests

Has the Appropriate Assessment shown:	Y/N
That the area of habitats (or composite features) will not be reduced?	Yes
That there will be no direct effect on the population of the species for which the site was designated or classified?	Yes
That there will be no indirect effects on the populations of species for which the site was designated or classified due to loss or degradation of their habitat (quantity/quality)?	Yes
That there will be no changes to the composition of the habitats for which the site was designated (eg reduction in species structure, abundance or diversity that comprises the habitat over time)?	Yes
That there will be no interruption or degradation of the physical, chemical or biological processes that support habitats and species for which the site was designated or classified?	Yes

7.2.1 The ecological integrity of Solent and Southampton Water SPA is unlikely to be adversely affected as a result of Vinci Ringway's proposals for the Isle of Wight Highways PFI. Step-two tests are not necessary.

7.3 Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar

Step-one tests

Has the Appropriate Assessment shown:	Y/N
That the area of habitats (or composite features) will not be reduced?	Yes
That there will be no direct effect on the population of the species for which the site was designated or classified?	Yes
That there will be no indirect effects on the populations of species for which the site was designated or classified due to loss or degradation of their habitat (quantity/quality)?	Yes
That there will be no changes to the composition of the habitats for which the site was designated (eg reduction in species structure, abundance or diversity that comprises the habitat over time)?	Yes
That there will be no interruption or degradation of the physical, chemical or biological processes that support habitats and species for which the site was designated or classified?	Yes

7.3.1 The ecological integrity of Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar site is unlikely to be adversely affected as a result of Vinci Ringway's proposals for the Isle of Wight Highways PFI. Step-two tests are not necessary.

7.4 South Wight Maritime SAC

Step-one tests

Has the Appropriate Assessment shown:	Y/N
That the area of annex I habitats (or composite features) will not be reduced?	Yes
That there will be no direct effect on the population of the species for which the site was designated or classified? *	N/A *
That there will be no indirect effects on the populations of species for which the site was designated or classified due to loss or degradation of their habitat (quantity/quality)? **	Yes **
That there will be no changes to the composition of the habitats for which the site was designated (eg reduction in species structure, abundance or diversity that comprises the habitat over time)?	Yes
That there will be no interruption or degradation of the physical, chemical or biological processes that support habitats and species for which the site was designated or classified?	Yes

* SAC not designated for any Annex 2 species

** Considered as typical species for the purposes of the assessment

7.4.1 The ecological integrity of South Wight Maritime SAC is unlikely to be adversely affected as a result of Vinci Ringway's proposals for the Isle of Wight Highways PFI.

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