

**HABITAT REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT
SCREENING OPINION**

**Houses in Multiple Occupation
Supplementary Planning Document**

Tameside Council

March 2026

Introduction

- 1.1 It is a requirement under the terms of the Habitats Directive, transposed into UK Law in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) to establish the potential effects of “plans or projects” on designated European sites of nature conservation importance and 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.

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.
- 2.2. European sites are Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and are taken to include Ramsar sites. A small part of the South Pennine Moors SPA/SAC lies within the Borough of Tameside.

HRA Screening

- 3.1. The Tameside Council Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document will not result in development itself. Rather, it seeks to provide guidance on the determination of planning applications for houses in multiple occupation. The Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD will not therefore have any significant adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and can be Screened Out of the need for further Assessment.
- 3.2. This screening opinion 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.

Derek Richardson
Principal Ecologist
GMEU
2nd March 2026