

# Site Improvement Plan

## Paston Great Barn

Site Improvement Plans (SIPs) have been developed for each Natura 2000 site in England as part of the Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 sites (IPENS). Natura 2000 sites is the combined term for sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protected Areas (SPA). This work has been financially supported by LIFE, a financial instrument of the European Community.

The plan provides a high level overview of the issues (both current and predicted) affecting the condition of the Natura 2000 features on the site(s) and outlines the priority measures required to improve the condition of the features. It does not cover issues where remedial actions are already in place or ongoing management activities which are required for maintenance.

The SIP consists of three parts: a Summary table, which sets out the priority Issues and Measures; a detailed Actions table, which sets out who needs to do what, when and how much it is estimated to cost; and a set of tables containing contextual information and links.

Once this current programme ends, it is anticipated that Natural England and others, working with landowners and managers, will all play a role in delivering the priority measures to improve the condition of the features on these sites.

The SIPs are based on Natural England's current evidence and knowledge. The SIPs are not legal documents, they are live documents that will be updated to reflect changes in our evidence/knowledge and as actions get underway. The information in the SIPs will be used to update England's contribution to the UK's Prioritised Action Framework (PAF).

The SIPs are not formal consultation documents, but if you have any comments about the SIP or would like more information please email us at [IPENSLIFEProject@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:IPENSLIFEProject@naturalengland.org.uk), or contact Natural England's Responsible Officer for the site via our enquiry service 0300 060 3900, or [enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk)

**This Site Improvement Plan covers the following Natura 2000 site(s)**

**UK0030235     Paston Great Barn SAC**

## Site description

Paston Great Barn is a large medieval thatched barn constructed of flint and limestone. The Great Barn is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and its adjoining outbuildings are listed as Grade II\* by English Heritage. It supports one of the only known breeding colony of barbastelle bats in East Anglia and remains the only confirmed maternity roost known in a building in the UK. The colony has been known since 1996 and the barn is regularly used as a summer maternity roost, as well as supporting the species through the winter.

## Plan Summary

*This table shows the prioritised issues for the site(s), the features they affect, the proposed measures to address the issues and the delivery bodies whose involvement is required to deliver the measures. The list of delivery bodies will include those who have agreed to the actions as well as those where discussions over their role in delivering the actions is on-going.*

| Priority & Issue                           | Pressure or Threat | Feature(s) affected   | Measure   | Delivery Bodies   |
|--|--------------------|-----------------------|---|---|
| 1 Change to site conditions                | Threat             | S1308 Barbastelle bat | Ongoing building maintenance to building  | Natural England, Bat Conservation Trust, North Norfolk Historic Buildings Trust                                   |
| 2 Wildfire/ arson                          | Threat             | S1308 Barbastelle bat | Review the fire plan and maintain the fire break                                | Natural England, Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service , Bat Conservation Trust, North Norfolk Historic Buildings Trust |
| 3 Offsite habitat availability/ management | Threat             | S1308 Barbastelle bat | Survey surrounding habitat to identify areas used by bats                       | Natural England, Bat Conservation Trust   |
| 4 Public Access/Disturbance                | Threat             | S1308 Barbastelle bat | Erect a sign, and undertake a visitor survey                                    | Natural England, Bat Conservation Trust, North Norfolk Historic Buildings Trust                                   |
| 5 Predation                                | Threat             | S1308 Barbastelle bat | Undertake investigation to quantify the issue and implement any recommendations | Natural England, Bat Conservation Trust   |

## Issues and Actions

*This table outlines the prioritised issues that are currently impacting or threatening the condition of the features, and the outstanding actions required to address them. It also shows, where possible, the estimated cost of the action and the delivery bodies whose involvement will be required to implement the action. Lead delivery bodies will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the action, but not necessarily funding it. Delivery partners will need to support the lead delivery body in implementing the action. In the process of developing the SIPs Natural England has approached the delivery bodies to seek agreement on the actions and their roles in delivering them, although in some cases these discussions have not yet been concluded. Other interested parties, including landowners and managers, will be involved as the detailed actions are agreed and delivered. Funding options are indicated as potential (but not necessarily agreed or secured) sources to fund the actions.*

### 1 Change to site conditions

If Paston Great Barn is not adequately maintained then it will not provide a suitable habitat for the roost. Currently the adjacent road is resulting in water spraying up the side of the barn and a crack is developing.

| Action | Action description  | Cost estimate | Timescale | Mechanism                                     | Funding option  | Delivery lead body | Delivery partner(s)  |
|--------|---|---------------|-----------|---|---|--------------------|--|
| 1A     | Carry out appropriate maintenance of the building fabric to maintain suitable conditions for the roost. | £20,000       | 2015-20   | National Nature Reserve (NNR) management plan | Natural England (NNR running costs), External funding | Natural England    | Bat Conservation Trust, North Norfolk Historic Buildings Trust |

### 2 Wildfire/ arson

A fire at Paston Great Barn would likely destroy the roost if present, or make conditions unsuitable for a roost. A fire break is in place but there is no current funding available to maintain it.

| Action | Action description  | Cost estimate | Timescale | Mechanism                                     | Funding option  | Delivery lead body | Delivery partner(s)                    |
|--------|---|---------------|-----------|---|---|--------------------|--|
| 2A     | Maintain the fire break around the building through regular vegetation clearance by a contractor. | £3,500        | 2015-20   | National Nature Reserve (NNR) management plan | Natural England (NNR running costs), External funding | Natural England    | North Norfolk Historic Buildings Trust |

| <i>Action</i> | <i>Action description</i>   | <i>Cost estimate</i> | <i>Timescale</i> | <i>Mechanism</i>      | <i>Funding option</i> | <i>Delivery lead body</i> | <i>Delivery partner(s)</i>   |
|---------------|---|----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|--|
| <b>2B</b>     | Review the fire plan and update it to ensure that there is an early response to any fire that starts within the building. | Staff time           | 2015-17          | Partnership agreement | Staff time            | Natural England           | Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service , North Norfolk Historic Buildings Trust |

### 3 Offsite habitat availability/ management

Removal and/or unsympathetic management of hedgerows, trees and other semi-natural habitat features used by the bats will result in their decline or even potentially the loss of the roost; however the important areas and routes used by the bats is currently unknown. It is therefore not possible to target advice and funding toward managing and protecting the important areas used by bats.

| <i>Action</i> | <i>Action description</i>  | <i>Cost estimate</i> | <i>Timescale</i> | <i>Mechanism</i>                      | <i>Funding option</i> | <i>Delivery lead body</i> | <i>Delivery partner(s)</i> |
|---------------|--|----------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>3A</b>     | Offsite surveys to determine foraging behaviours and areas used by bats, develop recommendations for habitat maintenance, and create and identify funding options. | £18,000              | 2015-20          | Investigation / Research / Monitoring | Not yet determined    | Natural England           | Bat Conservation Trust     |

| <i>Action</i> | <i>Action description</i>  | <i>Cost estimate</i> | <i>Timescale</i> | <i>Mechanism</i>  | <i>Funding option</i>  | <i>Delivery lead body</i> | <i>Delivery partner(s)</i> |
|---------------|--|----------------------|------------------|---|--|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>3B</b>     | Encourage landowners of surrounding important bat habitats to manage areas positively for bat species. | Not yet determined   | 2016-20          | Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE): Common Agricultural Policy 2014-20 (New Environmental Land Management Scheme) | Rural Development Programme (RDPE), Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Voluntary conservation organisation | Natural England           | Bat Conservation Trust     |

#### 4 Public Access/Disturbance

A permissive path occurs on the southern edge of the site and any increase or change in its use could result in disturbance to foraging bats.

| <i>Action</i> | <i>Action description</i>   | <i>Cost estimate</i> | <i>Timescale</i> | <i>Mechanism</i>                      | <i>Funding option</i>                                 | <i>Delivery lead body</i> | <i>Delivery partner(s)</i>                                     |
|---------------|---|----------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|--|
| <b>4A</b>     | Provide appropriate signs so users of the path do not disturb bats.   | £2,000               | 2015-20          | Advice: Signage                       | Natural England (NNR running costs), External funding | Natural England           | Bat Conservation Trust, North Norfolk Historic Buildings Trust |
| <i>Action</i> | <i>Action description</i>   | <i>Cost estimate</i> | <i>Timescale</i> | <i>Mechanism</i>                      | <i>Funding option</i>                                 | <i>Delivery lead body</i> | <i>Delivery partner(s)</i>                                     |
| <b>4B</b>     | Visitor monitoring to determine use and potential impacts to bats entering and leaving the building, to inform any further action to be taken to prevent disturbance. | £2,500               | 2015-17          | Investigation / Research / Monitoring | Natural England (NNR running costs)                   | Natural England           | n/a  |

#### 5 Predation

An increase in predator numbers such as owls would cause disturbance to foraging bats.

| <i>Action</i> | <i>Action description</i>   | <i>Cost estimate</i> | <i>Timescale</i> | <i>Mechanism</i>                             | <i>Funding option</i> | <i>Delivery lead body</i> | <i>Delivery partner(s)</i> |
|---------------|---|----------------------|------------------|--|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>5A</b>     | Monitor the owl population around the site and undertake a desk study to quantify any changes.  | £1,500               | 2015-18          | Investigation / Research / Monitoring        | Not yet determined    | Natural England           | Bat Conservation Trust     |
| <i>Action</i> | <i>Action description</i>   | <i>Cost estimate</i> | <i>Timescale</i> | <i>Mechanism</i>                             | <i>Funding option</i> | <i>Delivery lead body</i> | <i>Delivery partner(s)</i> |
| <b>5B</b>     | Implement any recommendations from the results of the aforementioned desk study regarding bat predators and their effects on bat populations in the area. | Not yet determined   | 2018-20          | Mechanism not identified / develop mechanism | Not yet determined    | Natural England           | Bat Conservation Trust     |

## Site details

The tables in this section contain site-relevant contextual information and links

### Qualifying features

#UK Special responsibility

**Paston Great Barn SAC** S1308 *Barbastella barbastellus*: Barbastelle bat

### Site location and links

#### Paston Great Barn SAC

Area (ha) **0.95**      Grid reference **TG322345**      [Map link](#)

Local Authorities      Norfolk

Site Conservation Objectives      [European Site Conservation Objectives for Paston Great Barn SAC](#)

European Marine Site conservation advice      [n/a](#)

Regulation 33/35 Package      [n/a](#)

Marine Management Organisation site plan      [n/a](#)

## Water Framework Directive (WFD)

*The Water Framework Directive (WFD) provides the main framework for managing the water environment throughout Europe. Under the WFD a management plan must be developed for each river basin district. The River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) include a summary of the measures needed for water dependent Natura 2000 sites to meet their conservation objectives. For the second round of RBMPs, SIPs are being used to capture the priorities and new measures required for water dependent habitats on Natura 2000 sites. SIP actions for non-water dependent sites/habitats do not form part of the RBMPs and associated consultation.*

### **Paston Great Barn SAC**

River basin

[Anglian RBMP](#)

WFD Management catchment

Broadland Rivers

WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)

n/a

## Overlapping or adjacent protected sites

| Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| Paston Great Barn SAC                         | Paston Great Barn SSSI |

| National Nature Reserve (NNR) |                       |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Paston Great Barn SAC         | Paston Great Barn NNR |

| Ramsar                |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Paston Great Barn SAC | n/a |

| Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) |     |
|--|-----|
| Paston Great Barn SAC  | n/a |

| <i>Version</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Comment</i> |
|----------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1.0            | 19/12/2014  |                |

[www.naturalengland.org.uk/ipens2000](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ipens2000)

