

5.0 THEME FOUR – TOURISM and LEISURE

5.1 TOURISM

- 5.1.1 The history of tourism in the East Riding is inextricably linked with the development of the rail network. Withernsea, Hornsea and Bridlington all became popular destinations for visitors from the urban conurbations of South and West Yorkshire. The opening of the Hull to Withernsea railway in 1864 transformed Withernsea from a coastal hamlet to a seaside resort. Within four months of the railway opening 64,000 visitors travelled to the resort.
- 5.1.2 The decline in this market started with the demise of most of the rail links to the coast in the 1960's and has continued as traditional "bucket and spade" tourism has been replaced by cheap overseas package holidays. There has also been a decline in traditional heavy industries in core market areas such as South and West Yorkshire.
- 5.1.3 Tourism is still an important component of the coastal economy however, recent figures showing that it was worth £229 million in 1999, (£146 million of this in Bridlington). Recently the short break market has been more effectively targeted, through dedicated marketing initiatives. In addition, Bridlington has established itself as a destination for business tourism.
- 5.1.4 Along the coast, the majority of accommodation provision is through static or mobile caravan sites. These provide around 50,000 bed spaces. The amount of serviced accommodation, especially away from Bridlington, is small. This general trend is also reflected in a study undertaken for the Flamborough Headland Heritage Coast Project in 1998. This showed that non-serviced accommodation made up 77.8% of all tourist expenditure. The economic impact of tourism on a rural area (albeit one approximate to the major resort of Bridlington), was emphasised in the same study as shown in table 3, below
- 5.1.5 The Council's Tourism Marketing Plan 2001-2002 targets key segments for coastal tourism, namely "seaside seniors" and "resort families". Marketing activities aimed at these segments will result in significant visitor numbers and expenditure on the coast.

Table 3: Economic impact of tourism to the Flamborough Heritage Coast area

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Total Tourism expenditure | 1998 | 1997 |
| | £11.2 million | £11.3 million |
| Total Tourist days | 1998 | 1997 |
| | 563,000 | 559,000 |
| Total Tourist numbers | 1998 | 1997 |
| | 176,000 | 170,000 |
| Employment supported | 1998 | 1997 |
| Direct | 247 | 247 |
| Indirect | 56 | 56 |
| Total | 303 | 303 |

5.1.6 In addition, two key partnerships are providing the focus to attract domestic short break tourism and overseas visitors. These are:

- The Hull and East Yorkshire Tourism Association, which is committed to the development and promotion of short breaks. This has generated in excess of 20,000 requests for its short breaks brochure in 2001.
- Yorkshire Coast and County – an overseas marketing consortium that provides a focus for all overseas marketing activities and has developed its own web site.

5.1.7 Plans to create a marina development in the Bridlington area have been discussed since the late 1960s. In 1997, the Bridlington Regeneration Partnership commissioned feasibility studies to assess the potential for a marina and associated commercial, retail, leisure and residential development. The marina development should be seen as a continuation of the work that has already been undertaken (such as the award winning South Promenade) and is being undertaken to address and reverse the resort's decline.

5.1.8 The marina development (which was subject to a public inquiry as of February 2002) will incorporate commercial, retail and residential development and will stimulate new private investment, as well as helping to



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reposition Bridlington in the tourism market. The refurbishment of The Spa into a major conference facility will also boost the economy by extending the visitor season. It is envisaged that the economic benefits will reach much further than Bridlington and that tourism expenditure will increase along the coast as a result.

5.1.9 At the southern end of the coastal zone, and away from the immediate coastal strip, there is some potential for tourism development, a factor that has been recognised by the Withernsea and Southern Holderness Regeneration partnership in their regeneration strategy. While it is recognised that recapturing the former glory of the tourism industry is not a possibility in areas such as this, opportunities have been identified for a more specialist market linked with the unique features and wildlife importance of Spurn, or the distinctive churches of Holderness. This is best demonstrated through the work of the “Hidden Holderness” group – part of the Withernsea and Southern Holderness Regeneration Partnership. One of the key issues has to be what can be done to attract even a fraction of the visitors who arrive in the country through the Port of Hull and who currently head straight for York or further afield.

5.1.10 The Withernsea and Southern Holderness Tourism Research Project was commissioned by East Riding of Yorkshire Council. This identified the area’s poor competitive position in relation to the northern part of the coastal zone, due to both its geographical position and the lack of a tourism and leisure product. While underlining that the tourism industry will never be in the same manner as in the past, it stresses the strengths of the area in terms of potential product and puts forward the hypothesis that there needs to be some fundamental issues to be tackled. These are:



- Reaching and maintaining basic environmental standards,
- Making Withernsea a pleasant place to be,
- Adding product – extra things to see and do in the area,
- More going on – giving additional reasons to return
- Civic pride – working to ensure that everyone welcomes visitors.

5.1.11 Hornsea, too, has particular opportunities and strengths that it can draw on to boost tourism. The “Hornsea Area Regeneration” partnership and its Market Town status mean that this focus will be ensured.

5.1.12 While the tourism industry is seen as crucial to the economic vitality of the coastal zone, it is important to balance this with the environmental features of the coast and the communities that live there. Any tourism development should complement the coastal zone and seek to enhance the nature conservation value of the coast. Tourism development that has a negative impact on the environment is self-defeating as it is the natural features of the coast that the majority of visitors appreciate the most. Initiatives such as the David Bellamy award scheme for caravan and holiday parks highlights the positive steps that can be taken to both protect the physical environment but also contribute to sustainability more generally. There are many initiatives that could be promoted with tourism businesses such as reducing waste and power use, recycling, purchasing locally etc and guidance that both promotes existing schemes and individual actions will be produced to highlight the contributions businesses in this key sector can make.

5.1.13 “Green tourism” is seen as an area of potential significant growth throughout the coastal zone. Tourism that not only avoids impact but draws on the unique features of the coast while contributing to economic stability and growth should be encouraged, particularly in relation to the marina development and the Heritage Coast areas. The importance of a good quality environment to developing sustainable tourism cannot be underestimated. East Riding Council will be developing a sustainable tourism strategy in the near future to reflect these issues and to build on this market. The key to any such strategy is that it makes economic sense for businesses to develop this aspect of their operations.

5.1.14 A rich wildlife resource can be one of the key elements in attracting visitors to rural areas, where they spend money on local goods and services, providing income and employment. The RSPB’s Bempton Cliffs Nature Reserve, for instance, attracts around 45,000 visitors every year, primarily to see the breeding sea birds. The reserve employs eleven paid staff who nearly all live within four miles of the reserve. Visitors stay in local accommodation and the reserve uses local services such as the village post office for banking. While a full economic analysis has not been undertaken for



Bempton, a visitor survey carried out in 1998 gave an indication on visitor expenditure. It was found that visitor spending resulting from visiting the reserve amounted to £407,000. Using a local employment multiplier (at 2000 prices) this is the equivalent of 11 full-time jobs in the local area. While such opportunities have been recognised at Bempton there is obvious capacity to develop “wildlife tourism” elsewhere in the coastal zone, especially around the Humber Estuary and Spurn. This would tie in with attempts to extend the tourism season and attract more staying visitors.

5.1.15 There is also scope for developing cultural tourism throughout the East Riding Coastal Zone, particularly in areas that have suffered from downturns in traditional tourism. The marketing of historic churches, castles and villages as an educational resource, and a cultural tourism resource by creating tourist trails, and advertising these through promotional literature has been recognised as a particular opportunity and has been central to the planning of both the Nortrail Project and the National Heritage Byways Project. (see below). Cultural tourism could be linked to opportunities for local communities to value, develop and market their own cultural assets, utilising funding available through the Local Heritage Initiative.



5.2 POLICY AIMS:

- TO1. To contribute to an increase in the overall spend by visitors to the coastal zone, whether by increasing numbers directly or exploiting particular market segments**
- TO2. To support tourism developments that meet the socio-economic needs of the area, and the principles of sustainability, such as the Yorkshire Marina.**
- TO3. To ensure that micro, small and medium sized businesses in the coastal zone have the ability to benefit from any increase in tourism while at the same time ensuring an increase in product quality**
- TO4. To ensure that any new tourism development is consistent with the landscape and environmental qualities of the coastal zone and that global environmental issues are also taken into account**
- TO5. To ensure high quality product standards in all tourism provision and the meeting of national standards where applicable.**
- TO6. To encourage businesses at risk from erosion to re-locate where appropriate, and to investigate opportunities for providing assistance in this**
- TO7. To ensure that opportunities to develop tourism as part of the regeneration of coastal areas are taken.**
- TO8. To encourage the principles of sustainability are taken into account in all aspects of tourism provision**

5.3 LEISURE AND RECREATION

5.3.1 Formal access points to the foreshore can be found at many points along the coast, especially in proximity to the resorts. Elsewhere numerous informal access points exist, used particularly by beach anglers.

5.3.2 East Riding of Yorkshire Council own considerable landholdings in the Flamborough area, that are managed as Countryside Sites for the enjoyment of visitors and locals, as well as the conservation of their specific features. South of this, and away from the resorts, public recreational facilities are limited.

5.3.3 Along the coastline itself, away from Flamborough Headland, Public Rights of Way are few, especially running parallel to the coast. This is due to any public footpaths that might have existed having been lost to erosion. In many places, however, informal access along the cliff top still exists. Away from the coastal

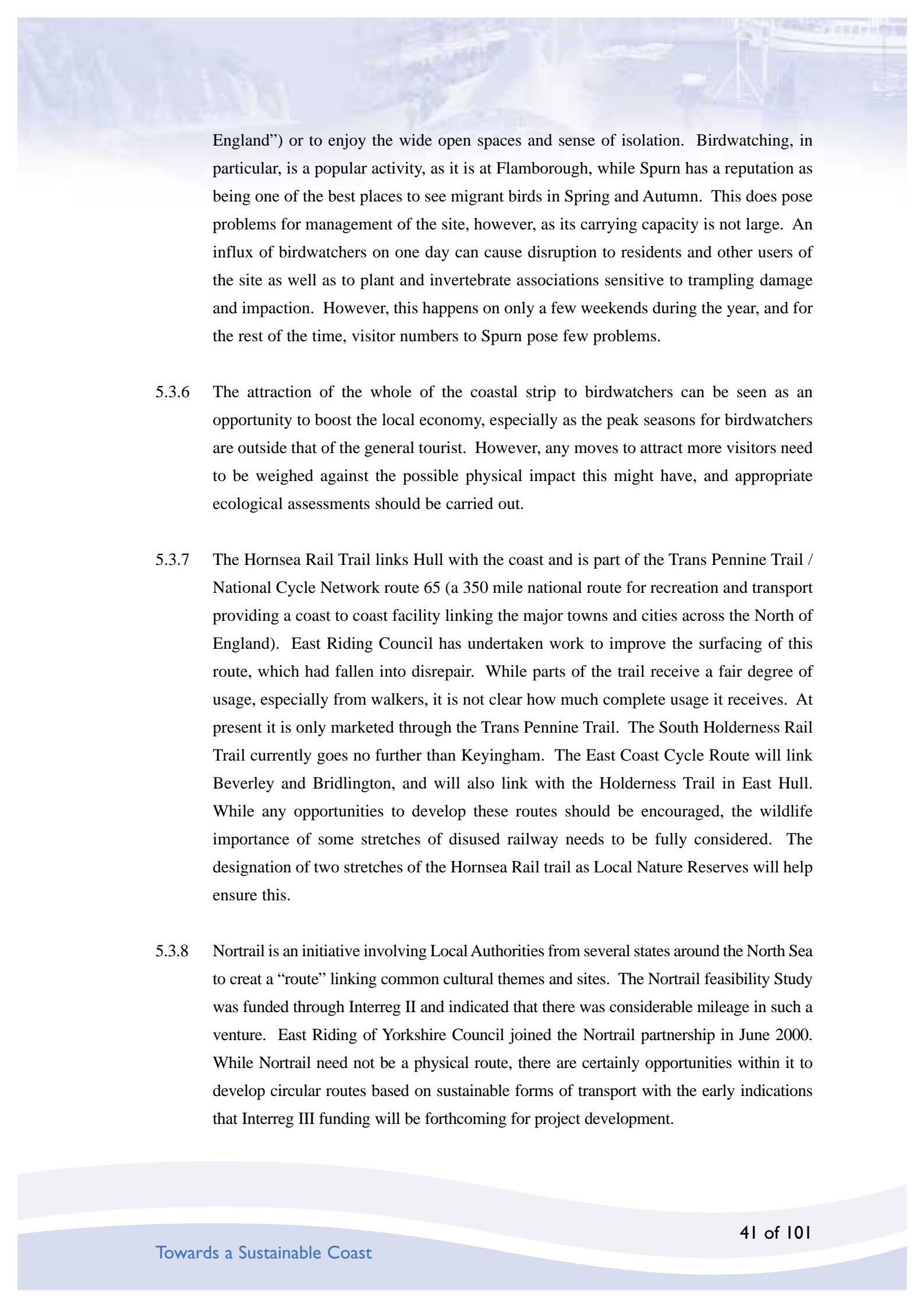


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strip, the network of public footpaths is good, providing opportunities for informal recreation. There is a lack of circular routes, however, although the quiet nature of many of the lanes means that walking can be a relatively safe and pleasurable experience.

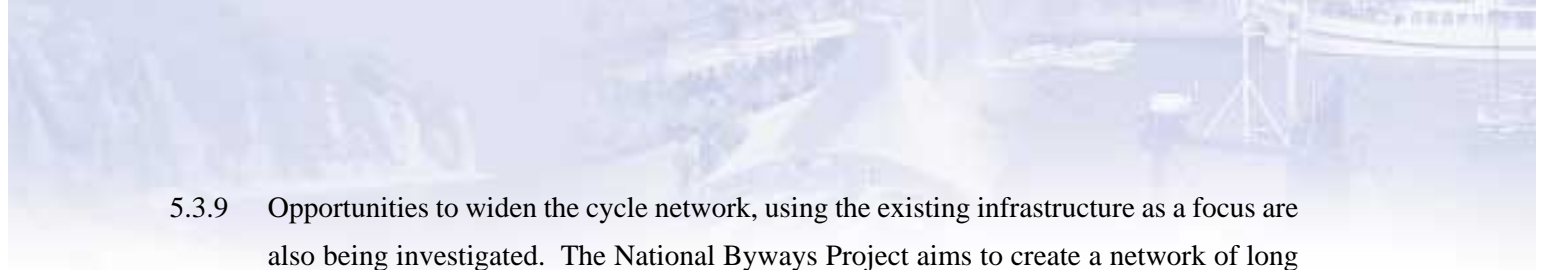
5.3.4 Landward of the town of Hornsea lies Hornsea Mere, an important recreational site for both visitors and residents, and one of the key features for the marketing of Hornsea. Boat hire is an important element of this and allows public enjoyment in an area that is also of special wildlife interest. A Water Level Management Plan is being developed for Hornsea Mere that will provide a means by which the water level requirements for a range of activities including flood defence, conservation and recreation can be balanced and integrated.

5.3.5 At Spurn, at the southern end of the open coast, the unique landscape has also been designated as Heritage Coast. Spurn peninsular itself is a National Nature Reserve owned and managed by the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust. This site is visited by thousands of people each year, either out of curiosity (Spurn has been called “the oddest place in



England”) or to enjoy the wide open spaces and sense of isolation. Birdwatching, in particular, is a popular activity, as it is at Flamborough, while Spurn has a reputation as being one of the best places to see migrant birds in Spring and Autumn. This does pose problems for management of the site, however, as its carrying capacity is not large. An influx of birdwatchers on one day can cause disruption to residents and other users of the site as well as to plant and invertebrate associations sensitive to trampling damage and impact. However, this happens on only a few weekends during the year, and for the rest of the time, visitor numbers to Spurn pose few problems.

- 5.3.6 The attraction of the whole of the coastal strip to birdwatchers can be seen as an opportunity to boost the local economy, especially as the peak seasons for birdwatchers are outside that of the general tourist. However, any moves to attract more visitors need to be weighed against the possible physical impact this might have, and appropriate ecological assessments should be carried out.
- 5.3.7 The Hornsea Rail Trail links Hull with the coast and is part of the Trans Pennine Trail / National Cycle Network route 65 (a 350 mile national route for recreation and transport providing a coast to coast facility linking the major towns and cities across the North of England). East Riding Council has undertaken work to improve the surfacing of this route, which had fallen into disrepair. While parts of the trail receive a fair degree of usage, especially from walkers, it is not clear how much complete usage it receives. At present it is only marketed through the Trans Pennine Trail. The South Holderness Rail Trail currently goes no further than Keyingham. The East Coast Cycle Route will link Beverley and Bridlington, and will also link with the Holderness Trail in East Hull. While any opportunities to develop these routes should be encouraged, the wildlife importance of some stretches of disused railway needs to be fully considered. The designation of two stretches of the Hornsea Rail trail as Local Nature Reserves will help ensure this.
- 5.3.8 Nortrail is an initiative involving Local Authorities from several states around the North Sea to create a “route” linking common cultural themes and sites. The Nortrail feasibility Study was funded through Interreg II and indicated that there was considerable mileage in such a venture. East Riding of Yorkshire Council joined the Nortrail partnership in June 2000. While Nortrail need not be a physical route, there are certainly opportunities within it to develop circular routes based on sustainable forms of transport with the early indications that Interreg III funding will be forthcoming for project development.

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- 5.3.9 Opportunities to widen the cycle network, using the existing infrastructure as a focus are also being investigated. The National Byways Project aims to create a network of long distance routes and local circuits, utilising byways and quiet country lanes. Figures show that such routes can contribute significantly to rural areas and such development will complement any capital developments through Nortrail.
- 5.3.10 The East Coast Cycle Route (to be completed in 2003), Nortrail, National Byways and the initiatives described in the Transport Section should all be seen as an integrated scheme to increase recreational and local cycle use in the coastal zone. The development of “bike trailer buses”, successfully used elsewhere would provide the link between the public transport network and also ensure that the busy B1242 is not seen as a barrier to increased cycle use.
- 5.3.11 The proposed marina development will increase recreational marine use markedly in Bridlington Bay and provide a focus for water sport activities. The speed limits and bans on motorised watersports in some parts of the Lake District, will also increase the opportunity for Bridlington to become a regional centre for such activities. The sheltered nature of Bridlington Bay makes it an ideal location. While there is no evidence that such usage will impact on the Marine SAC at Flamborough or on other forms of recreation in the Flamborough Headland Heritage Coast, current and future usage will be monitored and assessed.
- 5.3.12 Along the East Riding coast a significant amount of recreational angling takes place. Most of this is beach angling, but at Flamborough Headland the practise of cliff angling, especially around Bempton cliffs is common. Several national and international shore angling events are held along the coast and in 2003 the World Junior Shore Angling competition will be held.

5.4 POLICY AIMS:

- RE1. To provide on-site interpretive, information and education materials to educate and inform both visitors and local people**
- RE2. To encourage and develop opportunities for water based recreation, including angling, around resorts, that are consistent with other forms of recreation and the environment.**
- RE3. To ensure that people of all abilities have the opportunity to enjoy recreational and leisure facilities on the coast.**



Bridlington